



Hello!

Thank you for your interest in learning more about our search for a new Lead Pastor at City Line Church in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania. We are praying for God's blessing over this process and for your participation in it.

The following pages highlight who we are, what direction our church would like to take, what we are looking for, and what our geographical region offers. These descriptions have been intentionally and thoughtfully gleaned from numerous discussions and congregational surveys. We invite you to take the time to carefully read over the pastoral packet and to get to know City Line Church. If our story resounds with you, please follow the application guidelines to submit your response.

We plan to prioritize applications that are received by January 10, 2023 but will continue to accept until the position is filled. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to the Pastoral Search Committee at psc@citylinechurch.net.

May God's peace be with you,

City Line Church
Pastoral Search Committee



history

City Line is a multi-ethnic community that began in 2003 as a church plant from a Korean-American Church called Renewal Presbyterian (PCA).

We desired to build a congregation that represented the racially and ethnically diverse communities of Philadelphia while also bridging the gap between its urban and suburban populations (Our name was inspired by City Line Avenue, a street that runs between Philadelphia and its western suburbs). We have since been blessed with two long-standing pastors and various worshiping locations near City Line Avenue that have helped cultivate our original intentions.

We currently rent space in Bala Cynwyd from St. John's Episcopal Church who rents to us and to others. As a congregation we feel we are in a spiritually stable and fiscally healthy season, and are eager to move into the next chapter of our church's history.

who we are



beliefs

We believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the declaration that God has made good on his ancient promise of restoring all things in Jesus Christ, the true King. In his living, dying, and rising again, God declares an end – both now and in the future – to all the sin, death, and injustice that we experience in ourselves, our city, and our world. We believe that the good news of the Gospel, then, is not only about what Jesus has done so that we can “get into heaven”, but also about what Jesus is doing so that his kingdom of heaven – with all its perfect peace and beauty – can come to earth.

*Please see
the City Line
Church website
for a further
articulation of
our beliefs.*

vision

*Our church's
vision is built
around three
words: Inviting,
Belonging,
and Wondering.*

Though we have been separated from God by sin, He invites us into a relationship with Him through our intercessor and His Son, Jesus Christ. As we come to know God's faithfulness, grace, hope, and love through our relationship with Him, we are called to invite others into this same connectedness.

As adoptees of God's Kingdom, we experience true belonging to our Heavenly Father. In serving one another and sharing life together, we experience belonging to our church body. We desire to give those around us both a taste of God's Kingdom and of deep spiritual community.

The vast mystery of God is beyond our finite abilities to fully comprehend. Our faith journey is a lifelong process, and we at City Line desire to both wonder *about* God's mysteries together and wonder *at* God's amazing faithfulness, works, and power.

values

Community and Discipleship. The majority of City Liners attend our church because of how warm and inviting our congregation is. We place a high value on experiencing life together, seeking deep relationships with one another beyond surface conversations, being vulnerable with each other, and sharing how the Spirit is at work in our individual lives. We currently have seven life groups that meet throughout the region, and this ministry is one of the primary ways we share life together. Our regional nature, along with not having a permanent location, make it challenging to host church-wide events outside of Sunday mornings; thus, connecting through life groups is vital to the relational health of our church.

Discipleship is another more intentional way of experiencing community. By deepening spiritual connectedness with both those of more mature faith and of newer faith, we grow in our own spiritual walk. We view discipleship as a lifelong process that is vital at any age; though one of our priorities is inviting and guiding our children into a strong and robust faith in Jesus.

Diversity and Unity. City Line Church has always placed a high value on diversity, regarding it not as a cultural trend, but rather as the Kingdom call to see all nations, tribes, and languages worshiping and sharing life together. Our congregation is very diverse in ethnic and racial identity, with multiple interracial families, as well as in denominational backgrounds. We believe that living life with others who are of different cultures and worldviews is important to the health and growth of our church. When differences are approached with humility, empathy, and an eagerness to see Jesus within each other, they lead us to a deeper and richer experience of God. Diversity also helps us to unify around what is of central importance – Jesus Christ and His gospel message – and we strive to keep these as the core of our identity and mission. We may not be “of one mind” on lesser issues, but we remain focused on what unites us: growing into and sharing Christ’s love. We desire for City Line to continue to be a loving and accepting place where we get a small but real glimpse into the beauty of God’s perfect kingdom.

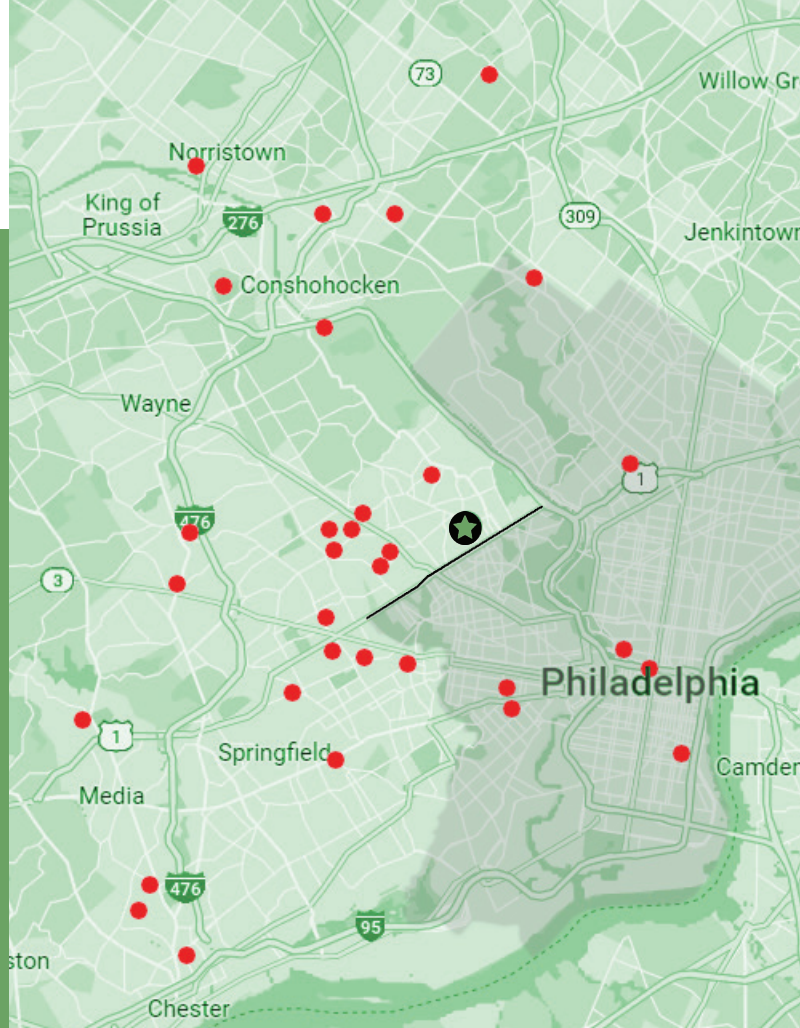
Mission Mindedness. We have had a mission mindset since our inception; however, this is also an area of growth for us. We are the hands and feet of Jesus, embodying his gospel message to the world in word and deed. Given our regional focus as a church, we see each of us as having our own unique mission field in our separate neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools; however, we also want more opportunities to serve together as a body, particularly in the city of Philadelphia. We deeply value missions, and are eager to grow in how this value is expressed.

our community...



We are a regional church, with worshipers coming from a 30-minute radius to Sunday morning worship.

City Line Avenue is part of the boundary between Philadelphia and Montgomery County, reflecting our goal to reach people both in the city and its suburbs.



...by the numbers

78

active
members

62%

of members
age 30-50

24

zip codes
represented

34

birth-5th grade
kids

100

average weekly
attendance

59%

of members
are married

7

life groups

12

middle and high
school-aged youth

ministries

About 80% of our adult members are actively engaged in one or more ministries.

Benevolence Team is responsible for coordinating the material and financial care of individuals and families within our community. We take up a special benevolence offering once every quarter.

Missions Team fulfills our call to serve and support our partner organizations that are both local and international. We devote 10% of our annual budget to missions.

SAT/College Prep Ministry is one way we care for our neighbors in Upper Darby. Our goal is to guide underserved high school students, many who are non-believers, both educationally and spiritually.

Life Groups are a place for us to provide mutual encouragement and focused support in life and faith. There are currently 7 groups that meet outside of Sunday service.

Mercy and Justice Ministry seeks to encourage and equip us to share God's mercy and justice in our individual spheres of influence.

Welcome Team helps to make our space on Sunday mornings more inviting, especially as we seek out and connect with newcomers.

Presiding Ministry ushers our congregation through various aspects of our worship together, from corporate confession to assurance of pardon, as well as praying over our children and reading Scripture.

Children's Ministry guides our children into a relationship with God through Bible stories and the practices of worshiping God. The ministry is currently divided into three communities: Preschool (Pre-K or younger), Lower Elementary (K-2nd grade), and Upper Elementary (3rd-5th grade).

Youth Ministry guides our middle and high schoolers to know and love Jesus, to own their faith, and to become lifelong worshipers of God. Our ministry also aims to help them grow both in the likeness of Christ and in their love for one another.

The Worship and Praise Ministry works to enhance our worship through praise, song, and sound.

leadership

City Line has historically been a solo-pastor church.

Other part-time roles include:

5 ordained elders (3 of whom are presently serving)

1 church administrator

1 director of youth ministry

1 director of worship

3 head teachers for children's classes

(pre-school, lower elementary, and upper elementary)

1 treasurer

1 bookkeeper

We have intentionally chosen not to ordain deacons at City Line. Instead, these roles and responsibilities are met by men and women on the benevolence, welcome, and ministry coordinating teams.

worship service

Intentional Order of Worship. Our Sunday worship style allows for us to collectively and individually commune with God. The corporate confession, worship sets, and prayers are all intentionally tailored to connect with the theme of the sermon. In addition to a mix of hymns and contemporary praise songs, we celebrate the Lord's table weekly.

Serving on Sundays. The majority of our members serve in one way or another on Sundays, whether it be welcoming attendees, leading worship, coordinating technology, presiding and praying, teaching children and youth, or serving communion. We are grateful that our servants, who are diverse in gender, age, and ethnic background, can reflect God's Kingdom.

Fellowship Space. We share our sanctuary space with another church who holds service immediately following ours, resulting in the need for quick set up and tear down each Sunday. If weather permits after service, we are able to fellowship outside the building near the playground of our rental space.

our region

Philadelphia has been and continues to be a city that is synonymous with independence and freedom. This is evidenced by its moniker as the birthplace of our nation to its deep historic ties to the Underground Railroad and abolitionist movement to its current status as a Sanctuary City, welcoming refugees and immigrants who integrally contribute to its diverse tapestry of neighborhoods. These multi-ethnic communities are one of the main reasons why Philadelphia is bursting with cultural events, unique forms of arts, and a wide variety of food cuisines. Our city is also home to Fairmount Park, the largest urban park system in North America, where you can hike, bike, ride horses, and experience the beauty of God's creation. Outside the city, you can visit everything from aquariums, battleships, amusement parks, and wineries to numerous state parks, orchards and farms, waterfalls and gorges, and limestone caves. The Philadelphia region is ideally situated for easy day trips to the Pocono Mountains (1½ hours), beaches of the Atlantic Ocean (1 hour), New York City (2 hours), and Washington DC (2½ hours).

Though its amenities and points of interest make Philadelphia an ideal place for travel and entertainment, there are many social issues that pervade our city. Philadelphia is the poorest large city in the nation, with roughly a quarter of its residents and over a third of its children living below the poverty line. This stands in sharp contrast to the suburbs including the Main Line, which is home to some of the wealthiest communities in the country. The socioeconomic divide is further amplified in the differences of educational quality and resources available through public schools. The poor reputation of Philadelphia's School District (enjoy some Abbott Elementary on us!) leads many families who possess the means to leave the city for the suburbs once their children reach school age. Additionally, there has been a sizable shift in the gap between rich and poor due to Philadelphia's change in its main economic drivers; once a manufacturing hub, the city's primary economic drivers are now higher education (with 55 colleges in the area) and medicine (with global leaders in health care, medical education and research, and pharmaceuticals and biotech all residing here). Furthermore, the hopelessness in many of the vulnerable communities has been one of the factors leading to a gun violence crisis in our city. These dynamics challenge us to be more missionally active in a city that needs Christ's hope.

where we are headed

We are grateful for the strong foundation of our welcoming community, the ways God has been at work throughout our church's history, and especially how Christ has sustained us during this transition. It is only possible for us to look at opportunities for growth because of how God has provided and continues to be faithful within our midst.

First, we recognize that we have not fully embraced our identity as a regional church; instead, we've wrestled between the desire to be a neighborhood church and the reality of being a regional one instead. As we accept our identity, we want to understand and live out the implications that being a regional church has on our location, missional direction, the depth and quality of our relationships with one another, and numerical growth.

Second, we wish to answer Jesus' call to be more outwardly focused because of an increasing love for Christ – perhaps the word “serving” should be added to our vision. We desire guidance on how our congregation can love, serve, and care for the specific communities and spheres of influence God has placed us in.

Third, related to this outward focus, we recognize that Philadelphia is a city in great need of healing and reconciliation. While we have already partnered with a few organizations and initiated several events to care for those in our city, we desire to be even more actively engaged, using our unique gifts and professions to find ways to tangibly and lastingly support those who are vulnerable.

Finally, the combination of lingering effects from the pandemic, being a regional church, and lack of a permanent location have presented challenges for our discipleship ministries. Regardless of age or lifestage, we desire to grow in how we look, act, and think like Jesus and invite others to do the same. In particular, we hope for a more permanent location that will provide for meaningful learning opportunities outside of Sunday morning worship time. We also desire for our growing youth group to become a place where they can find deep spiritual community and be spurred along to become lifelong followers of Jesus.

pastoral profile

A devoted follower of Christ:

- Demonstrates a mature walk with God that is possible only through a deep love of the gospel and extensive personal study and knowledge of God's word
- Is warm, approachable, down-to-earth, and a focused listener who desires to build relationships with individual congregants
- Shows integrity, humility, vulnerability, and a willingness to acknowledge shortcomings and seek counsel to address them
- Is deeply empathetic and able to build bridges in a congregation that thrives on being relational
- If married, leads, cares for, and prioritizes his relationships with his wife and children with Christ-like love and grace
- Submits to the care of other pastor(s) and/or spiritual mentors for ongoing accountability, confession, friendship, and growth

A community-oriented shepherd:

- As the only pastor of a small church, is willing to take on more of a generalist's role and care for many facets of the church
- Facilitates personal discipleship opportunities and helps achieve our desire to deepen relationships within a congregation that is geographically spread out
- Cultivates and builds multi-ethnic, multi-generational, and socioeconomically diverse relationships both within the City Line family and with outsiders
- Is able to energize and support existing leadership and staff, as well as invigorate and inspire new volunteer involvement
- Will not only lead but also engage with City Line's community

A Christ-centered preacher:

- Is gifted in communicating gospel-centered and hope-filled messages to an intergenerational audience, including youth
- Has a passion for studying and preaching the Word in a way that not only challenges deep thinkers but that also can be understood by young believers and seekers/explorers
- Has experience in leading congregants from diverse educational and church backgrounds in biblically sound teaching
- Can discern biblical truth and deliver it in a way that is applicable to modern everyday life
- Addresses significant contemporary cultural issues in a biblically-grounded manner

A visionary and organized leader:

- Helps develop evangelistic approaches to equip church members in sharing the gospel both in our respective communities and in the city of Philadelphia
- Collaborates with the elders to develop and implement ideas that will nourish and grow the church while still retaining its regional identity
- Offers opportunities for both men and women to serve in various leadership roles in the church, specifically supporting the current leadership structure of the church
- Helps strengthen and support our growing youth ministry and provides direction to address their spiritual needs
- Leads with a high level of administrative skill but also communicates openly and transparently with staff and church members
- Plans and leads meetings giving appropriate attention to the needs of the church's ministries, facilities, and finances
- Values and considers feedback from elders, staff, and congregation

Specific Qualifications

- Has served as an associate, assistant, or lead pastor in a like-minded church or context
- Desires to be in a solo-pastor role (unless growth necessitates expanding the staff and pastoral team)

how to apply

Step 1

Please answer the following questions in short essay format.
Please limit your total answers to two pages.

- As far as you know City Line Church's story, what stands out about our church that fits your gifts and calling to pastoral ministry?
- Please share how you think your ministry experience has prepared you to pastor a church like City Line.
- What aspects of pastoral ministry are most life-giving to you and why?
- Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your story that would be helpful as we consider your candidacy?

Step 2

Please use the following format to label all attachments, including cover letter, resume, short essay answers, and 2 sermon links: **FirstnameLastname_Resume**.
(Examples: JohnSmith_CoverLetter | JohnSmith_Resume | JohnSmith_Questions)

Step 3

Send all attachments as PDFs to psc@citylinechurch.net.
Priority consideration will be given to applications received before January 10, 2023.
Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

our committee



Richie Bollinger

Joined City Line Church in 2010

Richie works at a philanthropic foundation and maintains a small psychotherapy practice as a clinical psychologist. He lives with his wife, Katie, and their three young sons in the northwest suburbs of Philadelphia. Richie has served as an elder at City Line since 2015, and helps on the Welcome Team and teaches in the Lower Elementary children's class. He enjoys his family, friends, good conversation, running, eating, working, and spending time on his family's dairy farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.



Maria Choy

Joined City Line Church in 2004

Maria is a veteran attendee of City Line Church. She currently serves on the Justice and Mercy Team and the Mission Team, the latter of which she has been both a leader and a member. One of Maria's joys is visiting with her family, especially her 3 year old nephew. She currently lives in Ardmore and, as a physical therapist, is passionate about the healing benefits of movement.



Kobby Essien

Joined City Line Church in 2013

Kobby has lived in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs for 18 years, both as a student and as a working professional. He currently lives in Conshohocken and works for a biotechnology company in the city. Since joining City Line, Kobby has been involved in the Welcome Team, Children's Ministry, Men's Ministry, co-leading a Life Group, and the Upper Darby SAT Prep Ministry. He enjoys casual jogging, cooking, hanging out with friends, and attending cultural events in Philadelphia.

Lora Fahnestock

Joined City Line Church in 2017



Even though Lora grew up in the Midwest and has studied and worked in the Middle East and Indonesia, the place she loves to live most is Philadelphia. Lora, her husband Lauren, and their two children (ages 10 and 7) reside in the Germantown section of the city. It is her joy to spend her days supporting the communities she is a part of: her neighborhood, children's schools, and, of course, City Line Church. Since joining the church, Lora serves in a variety of ways including recently helping to establish and lead the Mercy and Justice Team. She enjoys hearing the stories of people's lives, building community, and eating large bowls of ice cream.

Julie Kao

Joined City Line Church in 2010



Julie has lived all over, including New York City, Shanghai, and Seattle, but has called Philadelphia and its suburbs her home for the last 14 years. She currently lives in Ambler with her husband, Henry, and her 2 middle school aged children, and serves at City Line as the church administrator and as a teacher/aide in the Lower Elementary children's class. Julie loves exercising and the outdoors – especially hiking through national parks, creating art, taking care of her many plants, and eating any and every cuisine.

Marquis Smith

Joined City Line Church in 2016



Marquis is from Birmingham, Alabama and moved to Philadelphia in 2014 to attend Villanova University. There, he joined InterVarsity Christian Fellowship where he was connected to City Line Church. In the six years since Marquis has been attending, he has served on the Welcome Team and helped in the Children's Ministry during City Line's annual church retreats. Marquis has also completed law school and, in 2017, participated in Gateway Philadelphia, an Urban Plunge program. In his free time, Marquis enjoys a variety of social activities including running, rock-climbing, murder mystery parties, and various "fandom-themed" events.