

Policy Regarding the Christian Community and Standards of Church for the Beach (c4tb)

I. Our Christian Community.

Church for the Beach (“C4TB”) is a Christian community that exists to exercise and express our Christian beliefs and Christian mission. These beliefs include those set forth in the C4TB *Statement of Faith* and additional beliefs set forth in this Policy or in other policies adopted by the church.

Church for the Beach is committed to connecting, building and transforming lives through loving relationships with Jesus and His family.

MISSION STATEMENT

- Bringing the message of the saving Grace and Lordship of Jesus Christ to the beach and beyond...
- Equipping and encouraging the church family with the Word: through prayer, study of scripture, worship, and fellowship.
- Accepting the challenge to demonstrate, share and spread God's love through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Committing to a lifestyle of service and stewardship.
- Helping others to achieve the same...

We exercise and express our beliefs in various ways, including:

- As a Community.* We believe that God calls people to live out their faith in community with other believers, and that accordingly our Christian community is itself an exercise and expression of our Christian beliefs; and
- Through Our Activities.* We believe that all of our activities should express our beliefs and be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. As such, all C4TB activities further our Christian mission or purposes and are an exercise and an expression by C4TB, and by each participating *representative*, of our Christian beliefs.

Our Christian community includes both *representatives* and *participants*. Our community *representatives* include our elders, staff and certain volunteers serving in leadership or direct ministry roles. The *participants* in the life of our community include our church family, guests, and volunteers serving in

ministry support roles. These *participants* contribute to our Christian community, but they do not represent C4TB unless they are also serving in one of the *representative* roles identified above.

II. General Standards for Our Christian Community.

A. Roles and Expectations for *Representatives*.

In response to God's calling on their lives, our *representatives* work together to advance our Christian mission. C4TB *representatives* are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading and/or representing our Christian community as an expression and exercise of our Christian beliefs. As such, each C4TB *representative* is an integral part of our community. Accordingly, we expect each representative to comply with the following obligations:

1. *Christian Beliefs.* All *representatives* shall affirm their agreement with our Christian beliefs, the C4TB *Statement of Faith* and shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs inconsistent with such beliefs. With respect to other Christian beliefs held by C4TB, all *representatives* must affirm our belief that their calling to serve in our Christian community requires them to respect such beliefs and to abide by community standards exercising or expressing such beliefs.
2. *Christian Conduct Standards.* All *representatives* shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) (i) model our Christian beliefs for others, (ii) perform all of their responsibilities as a service to God, and (iii) endeavor to comply with Biblical standards of conduct exercising or expressing our Christian beliefs, including Christian community standards adopted by the C4TB leadership from time to time.
3. *Distinctly Christian Activities.* Each *representative* shall be ready, willing and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as devotional worship or prayer services.

B. Additional Standards for *Community Leaders*

Our community elders, staff and church leaders (collectively, *community leaders*) are particularly responsible for defining, cultivating and leading our Christian community. As such, our *community leaders* must not only comply with the standards applicable to other C4TB *representatives*, but they must also affirm the additional distinctive Christian beliefs of our community adopted in this Policy or otherwise by the elders.

C. Roles and Expectations for *Participants*.

Although our church family, as well as certain volunteers, contractors, employees and other guests generally do not represent the Christian community, they do contribute to our community, to the

experiences of other participants and to the accomplishment of C4TB's mission. Accordingly, such persons who are serving as community *participants* (that is, they are not in a *representative* role) are required to affirm our Statement of Faith. In addition, all *participants* are expected in the course of their participation in our community to respect our beliefs, support our mission and comply with applicable community standards. We may give preference for certain participant roles to individuals who share our Christian beliefs.

D. Standards For Community Activities.

We engage in activities solely to exercise and express our Christian beliefs and to further our Christian mission or purposes. In furtherance of our purposes, we may provide services or goods to other groups and persons who are not associated with C4TB. But we may prohibit any activity by another group or person, if we determine that such activity either:

1. expresses a message of support by C4TB for any view contrary to our Christian beliefs,
2. is inconsistent with any applicable Christian community standards adopted by C4TB from time to time, or
3. materially undermines our ability to accomplish our mission or act in furtherance of our purposes.

III. Implementation.

A. Compliance with Community Standards

1. Spiritual Discernment.

The determination as to whether any particular *representative*, *participant*, or activity of C4TB complies with the applicable standards requires spiritual discernment applied to each particular circumstance and shall be made in the sole discretion of the elders. With respect to other groups or persons, C4TB may consider without limitation both the content of the proposed activities and whether the group or person is generally perceived as advocating views contrary to its Christian beliefs.

2. Noncompliance.

If any C4TB *representative* or *participant* does not comply with any applicable community standard, such individual shall have an obligation to disclose such noncompliance to C4TB. If C4TB determines, through such disclosure or otherwise, that a C4TB *representative* or *participant* is not complying with an applicable community standard, then C4TB may, in its sole discretion, determine the impact of any initial noncompliance on C4TB's exercise and expression of its Christian beliefs, and whether such individual intends or is likely to continue in such noncompliance.

C4TB may also discipline or dismiss such individual from his or her position on the basis that such individual's noncompliance either (i) reflects that the individual does not affirm the Christian beliefs required for such position or (ii) undermines the expression and exercise of the C4TB Christian community. Such action may be taken in accordance with any applicable procedures adopted by C4TB and in accordance with Matt 18:15-17

3. Mission-Based Exceptions.

In some situations, C4TB may best exercise and express its beliefs and advance its mission through a *representative, participant*, or activity not in compliance with one or more of the applicable community standards. If the elders determine, in its sole discretion, that such a situation exists, then the elders shall have the discretion to authorize an exception to this Policy. Any *representative* granted an exception shall be asked to respect our Christian beliefs, our mission, and our community standards.

4. Delegated Authority.

To exercise or express our Christian beliefs more fully, the elders may establish additional standards based on our Christian beliefs for the activities of C4TB *representatives* or other community *participants*.

B. Scope

C4TB may amend this document at any time. This document is not intended to create any express or implied contract of employment or to alter the at-will employment relationship between C4TB and its staff.

IV. Additional Standards for Our Community.

In response to current cultural trends, we have determined to articulate more specifically our Christian beliefs and associated community standards on the following subjects.

A. Human Sexuality and Marriage

1. Our Christian Beliefs.

We believe that God (i) creates people in His image as two distinct genders, male and female, and that the intended gender of an individual is determined by such individual's biological sex at birth, (ii) has instituted marriage as a lifelong covenant relationship between one man and one woman, and (iii) calls husbands and wives to exclusive sexual fidelity, and unmarried singles to abstain from sexual relations. Therefore, we believe that sexual relations outside of marriage (whether involving individuals of the same or opposite sex) are inconsistent with God's call to holiness in our lives. We further believe that pornographic materials undermine the dignity and image of God in individuals and promote sexual conduct contrary to our Christian beliefs.

2. Standards for Community Activities.

Our beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage shall apply in all policies and programs in the C4TB Christian community.¹ Among other things, in our policies and programs we will recognize only marriages consistent with our Christian beliefs. Any events sponsored by C4TB pertaining to marriage (e.g., weddings, receptions, anniversary celebrations) must involve only marriages consistent with our Christian beliefs. Also, no pornographic materials may be present in any of our venues or activities.

3. Standards for Community Representatives.

We expect all C4TB *representatives* to affirm and live in accordance with our beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage (which include refraining from sexual relations outside of marriage and avoiding pornography).² All community leaders and *representatives* may be asked to sign a statement affirming their agreement with our beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage and compliance with these standards.

4. Standards for Community Participants.

We expect all *participants* not to affirm or promote sexual relations or marriage contrary to our beliefs in connection with C4TB activities.

Participants who are not *representatives* need not affirm their agreement with our beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage, but we do ask them to affirm our belief that their calling to serve in our community requires them to honor our beliefs regarding human sexuality and marriage, to live in accordance with such beliefs, and to do nothing to undermine, subvert or publicly criticize our beliefs.

We expect all guest couples who are not married in accordance with our beliefs to refrain from sexual relations while participating in our activities. We also expect guests participating in our activities to refrain from public displays of physical affection that could interfere with our mission.

We expect all guest groups to respect our Christian beliefs while participating in our activities. We do not accept guest groups whose primary mission or objectives are to promote, encourage or support views in conflict with our beliefs, even if that is not the intended purpose of their event.

¹If necessary, the determination of gender will be based on one's God given biological gender at birth..

²Identifying oneself as having a same sex orientation does not disqualify an individual from serving as a *participant* provided such individual affirms the Christian beliefs and complies with the standards applicable to such individual's position.

For example, we would not host a Christian group formed to affirm same sex relationships even if the group's event objectives were consistent with our beliefs.

B. Religious Activities

We engage solely in activities that further our Christian mission or purposes. Because we believe that all such activities are conducted in service to God as means for spiritual growth, we consider these activities to be a form of worship.

We distinguish between exclusively religious activities and integrated religious activities. Exclusively religious activities refer to activities that primarily further only religious purposes, such as devotional worship or church services. Integrated religious activities refer to activities that substantially further both religious and nonreligious purposes. Such activities are often similar to activities conducted by nonreligious organizations and may include certain educational programs, athletic, cultural, humanitarian and social service activities. We conduct such activities in response to God's calling and in furtherance of and in accordance with our Christian beliefs. In addition, we present our Christian viewpoints in such activities as applicable.

With respect to restrictions that may be imposed on the use of funds, facilities or other benefits, we shall not agree to any restriction that would preclude us from conducting our integrated religious activities in furtherance of our Christian mission and in accordance with our Christian beliefs. To the extent consistent with this commitment, we may agree not to use designated funds, facilities or benefits for exclusively religious activities.

C. Sanctity of Life

We believe that all individuals are created by God in His image in the womb commencing at conception/fertilization. We accordingly believe as a matter of Christian conviction that no procedures should be performed for the primary purpose of terminating a pregnancy and taking the life of an unborn child (such procedures are referred to herein as abortions) except in extraordinary circumstances where other Biblical, moral principles prevail, such as where medically necessary to preserve the life of the mother. Our beliefs also prohibit paying for or otherwise facilitating such procedures.

As dictated by these beliefs, we will not as an institution fund abortions in any manner, including through a health care benefit plan that covers drugs used to induce abortions, except in the foregoing extraordinary circumstances, unless in a particular situation (i) any such drug is prescribed and used solely for a non-abortive therapeutic treatment of a covered medical condition or for an abortion in the foregoing extraordinary circumstances and (ii) coverage is approved by our duly appointed leaders deciding benefits. In addition, we shall not participate through our health care benefit plan in a program that uses the plan as a means for providing drugs used to induce abortions.

Any requirement to facilitate abortions by offering such coverage or participating in such a program, and any penalty for failing to offer such coverage or participate in such a program, would directly and substantially burden and undermine our exercise and expression of our Christian beliefs.

D. Social Media, Political Activity and Other Public Statements

In any public forum, including social media, we expect *representatives* to respect our Christian beliefs and not to challenge, disparage or undermine them. If a *representative* chooses to express his or her disagreement with a particular belief that he or she is not required to affirm, we expect such *representative* to do so in a manner that respects our belief and makes it clear he or she is not expressing the view of C4TB.

We recognize that many Christians separate religious moral issues (i.e., how Christians ought to behave) from the civil rights issues (i.e., how civil society ought to regulate behavior). For example, *representatives* may share similar religious beliefs regarding social justice and caring for the poor, but they may hold different positions related to how to apply these beliefs in the civil arena.

In some situations, advocacy for certain political positions may reasonably be construed by others as support for certain religious beliefs contrary to those held by C4TB. In such situations, we ask *representatives* to refrain from publicly advocating for such political positions.

In this regard, support for civil rights regarding same sex marriage or sexual orientation can, and often is, construed as support for beliefs inconsistent with our beliefs. Therefore, we ask *representatives* to refrain from assuming leadership as public advocates or spokespersons regarding civil rights for same sex marriage or sexual orientation.