Christ Central Church
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SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE OF LEADERSHIP

1. I am committed to pursuing a healthy leadership culture at Christ Central Church. There have been many sad examples in the global church where leaders have not represented Christ well. To safeguard against any misuse of power or position the church has the following features embedded in its structure:[1]

a. **A plurality of Elders**. I am one of (currently) six Elders who oversee the church. Elders hold responsibility for the Doctrine, Discipline and Direction of the church as an act of 'shepherding'. Elders seek to provide a safe, loving, sound, secure, and stable *foundation* upon which the church can grow and flourish. I prefer to think of the Elders as underpinning the strength of the church rather than occupying a place at the top of any hierarchy. Our leadership is embodied in our service to the community that God has entrusted to us.

b. All Elders have an **equally valued voice**, we come to decisions together and we hold one another to account. I act as the leader of the Eldership team and all Elders are permitted to shape the agenda of our times when we meet together, with the freedom to share any concerns.

c. **Trustees.** As an independent, autonomous church, we are both a UK-registered company limited by guarantee (No. 05899387) and a UK-registered charity (No. 1118477). To comply with UK law our charitable activities are governed by a board of Trustees. To ensure accountability and transparency the board is majority non-elders, with people chosen for their skills in business/charity administration. The only elder presently on the board is Pete McBeth, who is the Treasurer owing to his background in finance. The Trustee Board is chaired by Nick Buchanan and meets quarterly. I report to the Board, being present at all meetings, however, I do not hold a trustee position, or hold voting rights. All trustees are fit and proper persons and comply with our policy on Conflicts of Interest.

[1] For more on healthy leadership culture, I'd encourage you to read Powerful Leaders, by Marcus Honeysett.

d. **360 Appraisal**. Last year I instigated 360 feedback as part of my appraisal process, and all staff Elders will now be subject to this. My appraisal is conducted by the Chair of Trustees, and I invited 10 people to feed into the process anonymously. They were a mix of men and women, of different nationalities and ages, and function within the church, e.g. congregants, deacons, staff, and fellow elders. I'm glad to say it was a positive unforced response! You can request a copy of my appraisal from Nick Buchanan, via the church office.

e. **Financial Transparency**. Pete McBeth is the church treasurer. He reports on the finances of the church to the whole church body twice a year (April and September) at our 'Vision Nights', and questions are welcomed. We also file our annual accounts and as a registered charity these are available publicly via the Charity Commission's website.[2]

f. **Accountability**. We relate to a family of churches, called Commission, that embody the same values. As a safeguard and for mutual encouragement, we willingly invite relational accountability and oversight which comes through my engagement with Commission's UK Leadership Team, principally Tim Blaber (Lead Elder of Hope Church Winchester).

g. **Accessibility**. You will find me worshipping as part of the PO1 congregation and also preaching at Shore Avenue. I am available and accessible to anyone who has any questions or concerns about anything they witness or perceive at Christ Central Church. As a Bible-learning community, we are committed to active listening and welcome questions that can aid us in growing in Christlikeness. I can be contacted using the details above, or you can submit questions/concerns anonymously if you prefer via https://christcentral.church/ask.

IN THE EVENT OF ANY CONCERNS

2. Should you experience, or be concerned about, any negative interaction with me or any other leader at Christ Central Church you are encouraged to raise this with someone in the church. Dialogue is essential for growth, there are times that I, or another church member, may get things wrong and we would want the opportunity to understand the impact of any mistake and apologise and learn from it. We value you taking the time to raise it.

3. Should your concern be regarding a vulnerable adult or person under the age of 18, your first point of contact should be our Safeguarding Officer, Sue Billingham (PO1), or her Deputy, Dan Knapp (Shore Avenue). This will ensure the incident is appropriately recorded and investigated following our Safeguarding Policy[3]

4. If not a child/vulnerable adult safeguarding issue, please make use of one of the following opportunities:

[2] https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/4027321/financial-history
[3] Available online at https://christcentral.church/safeguarding.

a. Firstly, if you witness anything illegal first-hand, including, but not limited to, any form of abuse please contact the police immediately. The church is not above the law!

b. If possible, speak directly to the person involved. If it's about me, I would want to hear from you. You may feel more comfortable to do this if you take someone of your choice with you.

c. Speak to non-involved Elder – there are currently three elders in each congregation – so that they can discuss the matter with you, find the appropriate mechanism for supporting you and, if you wish, they can raise it with the person involved on your behalf. You may find this helpful if you are not comfortable raising it directly with the person involved.

d. Speak to a Trustee, contact details are available from the church office (hello@christcentral.church).

e. Raise a formal complaint, following our Whistleblowing policy.[4]

f. If you do not feel able to speak to anyone in the church about your experience due to the gravity of it, or a lack of trust in the governance structure, or any other reason, you can contact Commission via their website.[5]

I hope this document assures you of the steps we have put in place at Christ Central Church to safeguard against any abuse of leadership authority.

Yours sincerely,

Adam North
Lead Elder

Also available:
Personal Leadership Statement https://christcentral.church/statement
Christ Central Safeguarding Policy https://christcentral.church/safeguarding

[4] Available online at https://christcentral.church/whistleblowing.
[5] https://commission.global