



# NEXT STEPS

**STEP 1**

## THE CENTRAL CITY STORY

Pastor Brandon and his family were a part of a thriving and dynamic church in Birmingham, AL called *Church of the Highlands*. Pastor Brandon attended their Highlands College program where he received training in pastoral ministry. He and his wife, Jonica, both served in many roles during their time at Highlands, knowing there would come a day that God was going to call them into full-time ministry.

In November of 2015, Brandon and Jonica received a call from one of the pastors at Highlands telling them about this church in Macon, GA that needed a Lead Pastor. Pastor Brandon, Jonica, and their family decided to take a Saturday trip to Macon to visit this church and see what it was all about. Upon visiting the church facility, nothing really connected for them. So, they decided to visit around the city, since they knew nothing of the area...other than what Google had told them. Once arriving in the downtown area, God began to show them a vision of what Macon needed...a church that would be a light into a dark city. It was in this moment, while driving down Poplar Street, they knew God was calling them to Macon.

After meeting with the Elders of the existing church, Pastor Brandon was asked to lead the church into the next season of what God wanted to do. Once they were on the ground, they began the process of relaunching *Emmanuel Church* into *Central City Church*. Doing everything from remodeling the building to renaming and rebranding the church...this process took approximately nine months to see happen. During this process, they continued to gather as a church adding to their numbers weekly. On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, *Central City Church* held its first service, welcoming people join.

Today, many people call *Central City* home. Whether in-person or online, God has drawn people to this church due to its *LIFE-GIVING* atmosphere and welcoming culture. Pastor Brandon and Jonica still believe in the vision God gave them to *be a light in a dark city* and they live this out by helping every person they can become a fully engaged follower of Christ.

We're excited for you to be a part of this ongoing story!

## **GOD'S WORD TELLS US**

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves His children, too. We know we love God's children if we love God and obey His commandments. Loving God means keeping his commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome. For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith. And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God. - 1 John 5:1-5 (NLT)

## **OUR PRAYER FOR YOU**

### ***That you will become a fully engaged follower of Christ!***

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people." (Ephesians 1:17-18 NIV)

### **Our spiritual journey consists of four steps:**

#### 1. **LOVE GOD.**

##### **We know that when we get to Know God, we will Love God!**

"Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life—they don't know God..." (1 Timothy 6:21 TLB)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21 NIV)

"[I pray]...that you may know Him better [personally]." (Ephesians 1:17-18 NIV)

##### **At Central City, we help people Know God through SUNDAY SERVICES.**

#### 2. **LOVE PEOPLE.**

##### **We know that when we Find Freedom, we will Love People!**

"[I pray]...that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened [focused and

clear]." (Ephesians 1:17-18 NIV)

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16 NIV)

##### **At Central City, we help people Find Freedom through LIFE GROUPS.**

#### 3. **DO YOUR BEST.**

##### **We know that when we Discover Purpose, we will Do Your Best!**

"[I pray]...that you may know the hope to which He has called you." (Ephesians 1:17-18 NIV)

"All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be." (Psalm 139:16 NIV)

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." (Romans 12:6 NIV)

##### **At Central City, we help people Discover Purpose through taking NEXT STEPS.**

#### 4. **HAVE FUN.**

##### **We know that when we Make a Difference, we will Have Fun!**

"[I pray]...that you may grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life He has for His followers [in His holy people]." (Ephesians 1:17-18 MSG)

"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT)

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples...I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:8, 11 NIV)

"God has given gifts to each of you from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another." (1 Peter 4:10 NLT)

##### **At Central City, we help people use their gifts to Make a Difference on the SERVE TEAM.**

## HOW WE OPERATE

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As you consider investing your heart, time, family, and finances into the life of a church, it is important for you to feel confident in church leadership. Our goal in sharing the details of Central City's government is that you can better understand that our church is structured to support the values of integrity, accountability, and spiritual authority.

Our church government is made up of two groups of leadership.

### We are...

#### Guided by **PASTORAL-STAFF**.

Our Pastoral-Staff team is led by the Senior Pastor, Brandon Anderton. This team oversees the day-to-day ministry and operations of the church. The pastoral-staff serves the congregation and are responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the church.

#### Protected by **OVERSEERS**.

Our Overseers are pastors of respected congregations and ministries who love Central City Church and its Senior Pastor. They provide spiritual guidance and protection to the church and to the pastor. Not only do these pastors provide a spiritual covering, but they also provide counsel regarding any major financial commitments of the church.

## LIFE OF GENEROSITY

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At Central City Church, we believe in and practice tithing for the support of Christ's body, the church, as God commands. We recognize that giving 10% of our income is the Biblical standard for giving.

### GIVING

Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. (Deuteronomy 14:22-26 NIV)

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much

blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." (Malachi 3:10 NIV)

Giving is one of the main themes in the Bible. Jesus talked more about this subject than Heaven, Hell, or prayer. To understand what it means to be a Christ-follower, we must also understand what it means to be a *giver*.

### Tithe

The tithe, or "first fruits" of our income belong to God. We find this principle all through God's Word. Tithing, giving God the first 10% of our income to the local church, is the primary, practical way we acknowledge that God is first. (Proverbs 3:9-10)

### Offerings

An offering is giving over and above the tithe. The Bible says that by giving generously, we are able to "take hold of the life that is truly life." You aren't really living unless you are freely giving. (1 Timothy 6:18-19)

### The Gift of Giving

The gift of giving is a spiritual gift that God gives to some people. (Romans 12:8) It is a Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by giving of your material resources, far beyond the tithe, to further the work of God.

Many people love to give to God, and as they do, they want to feel confident in the organization through which they give. At Central City, we want people to understand they are giving to God *through the church, not to the church*. As we openly share the honesty, integrity, and spiritual values that guide the financial practices of Central City, we believe people can focus on what God is calling them to give and trust that He is leading our church to steward it well.

The giving of tithes and offerings is worship to Jesus and an expression of the relationship between the individual giver and the Lord. That is why we don't have people fill out pledge cards or make faith promises. Funds are not "income only," they are worship and are not considered to be a business transaction but an expression of gratitude toward God. We like to say it this way...

**Generosity is relational, not transactional!**

When you live a life of generosity through Central City Church, you are helping women be set free from the grips of sex-trafficking, couples adopt the child they've been praying for, pastors across the country/world plant life-giving churches, kids in undeveloped countries hear there's a reason to dream because of the gospel of Jesus, and the people of Israel be introduced to the One true Messiah, plus you're helping make a difference through Central City by offering a place for people to hear the Gospel and receive the care they need! When we live a life of generosity, the impact goes far beyond what we can imagine because God can do far beyond what we can imagine.

Now to Him who is able to do so much more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and forever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 BSB)

## **TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP**

### **1. BECOME A MEMBER of Central City Church.**

Being a member at Central City Church is not about adding your name to a roster; it's about connecting with the people and the vision of the church. We would love for you to be a part of our church family.

### **2. JOIN a Life Group.**

Life is better together! Visit our online directory at [centralcitychurch.net](http://centralcitychurch.net) and find a group that interest you, contact the leaders to learn more and make plans to check out the group in person.

### **3. COMPLETE Next Steps.**

Step One - Become a Member  
Step Two - Discover Your Design  
Step Three - Join the Team

### **4. GET on the Serve Team.**

You're invited to be a part of the team! Find a serve opportunity that fits your gifts and get ready to make a difference in the lives of others.

## **BECOMING A MEMBER**

### **CENTRAL CITY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

*Having received Jesus as my Lord and Savior and agreeing with the values and ideas presented in Step One of Next Steps, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to be a part of the Central City Church family. In doing so, I make the following commitment to God and my fellow church family:*

#### **1. I will protect the unity of my church by:**

**Acting in love toward other members.**

**Refusing to gossip.**

**Supporting the leaders.**

So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up. (Romans 14:19 NLT)

Live in complete harmony with each other—each with the attitude of Christ toward each other. (Romans 15:5 TLB)

Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart. (1 Peter 1:22 GNT)

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs. (Ephesians 4:29 NIV)

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. (Hebrews 13:17 NIV)

I urge, then, first of all, pray for all people. Ask God to help them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. (1 Timothy 2:1-2 NLT)

#### **2. I will share the responsibility of my church by:**

**Praying for its growth and health.**

**Inviting the unchurched to attend.**

**Warmly welcoming those who visit.**

To the church...we always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2 NIV)

Go out into the country...and urge anyone you find to come in, so that the house will be full. (Luke 14:23 TLB)

So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified. (Romans 15:7 TLB)

### **3. I will serve the ministry of my church by:**

Discovering my gifts and talents.

Using my God-given gifts to make a difference in the lives of others.

Developing a servant's heart.

Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you. (1 Peter 4:10 PH)

So Christ Himself gave...pastors and teachers, to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. (Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV)

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... taking the form of a bondservant. (Philippians 2:4-5, 7 NKJV)

### **4. I will support the testimony of my church by:**

Attending church and Life Groups faithfully.

Living a Godly life.

Giving regularly.

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."*  
Acts 2:42 NIV

*"Let us not neglect our meeting together...but encourage one another."* (Hebrews 10:25 NLT)

*"But whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the Gospel of Christ."* (Philippians 1:27 PH)

***Welcome to the Central City Church family!***

