

*From the Desk of*

Rev. [REDACTED]

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August 18, 2021

To whom it may concern:

The free exercise of religious beliefs and practices is a right of conscience enshrined in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, every state constitution, and in many state and federal laws. This fundamental liberty is central to what it means to be an American and must be preserved and protected for every generation.

I have been informed that [REDACTED] has submitted a request for religious exemption from the COVID vaccine directive. As an ordained minister of the Gospel, serving as a pastor for over four decades, I can speak to the sincerity of her beliefs and the legitimacy of this request. [REDACTED] shared that upon being made aware of the directive to receive the COVID vaccine, she began to search the Scriptures as to how she should respond, and whether she should accept the shot.

[REDACTED] is a strong Christian who believes the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. When Jesus Christ ascended to heaven after His resurrection, He promised to send his Holy Spirit, who would guide us into all truth. Each believer in Christ receives the Holy Spirit, who leads the individual in their walk with God. We encourage every believer in making important decisions for their lives to seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit through prayer and Scripture reading. We teach that in all matters of daily life and action believers should follow their conscience, as informed by the written Word of God, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. As people of faith, we strongly believe in the Biblical sanctity of human life and the prohibition from the shedding of innocent blood. Many Christians understand this prohibition to include ingesting or benefiting from products derived from or using aborted fetal cell lines.

The Bible also states that our bodies function as the temple of the Holy Spirit within us, and that we should glorify God in our body. (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

[REDACTED] strongly believes that based on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, to inject these COVID shots would violate these sincerely held religious beliefs and would be a sin against God.

As an ordained minister, I believe her religious convictions are sincere, and well-grounded in Scriptures. To violate conscience by doing an act contrary to these sincerely held religious beliefs is itself sinful. I strongly support a religious exemption and accommodation for [REDACTED]

In service of the Lord Jesus Christ,

Rev. [REDACTED]