



# Senior Pastor Opportunity Profile

## Sierra Bible Church

Sonora, California  
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## **SIERRA BIBLE CHURCH**

### **Senior Pastor Opportunity Profile**

#### **Our Goal**

Sierra Bible Church (SBC) exists to “introduce people to Jesus and together become more like Him,” which is based on the Great Commission of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20). Our goal is that through our various ministries people will be growing together in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-16) and glorifying God with one heart and voice (Romans 15:5-6).

We define our mission to be encouraging and helping Christians to be **grounded** in their faith (through commitment to Christ and His church), to be **growing** in relationship with God (through regular Bible study and prayer), to be **giving** in significant ways to other Christians (through use of their spiritual gifts and financial resources), and to be **going** to the community and the world with the good news of Jesus Christ (through personal outreach to others and involvement in world missions).

We believe this mission is accomplished when we live out the priorities of the early Christians summarized in Acts 2:42:

1. teaching and applying God’s Word to every area of life;
2. sharing in loving and serving relationships with others;
3. growing in understanding and obedience to God through prayer;
4. gathering in worship that magnifies God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

SBC has a history of prioritizing the ministry of each member of the church family. This priority is highlighted in such phrases as “every member is a minister” and “the leaders are administrators and the people are the ministers.” The outworking of this passion is seen in the proliferation of small groups and numerous ministries led by members of our church family.

The vision for the senior pastor position is to continue and build on the purpose of SBC to introduce people to Jesus and together be more like Him. This can happen when the senior pastor is a man who lives what he preaches as his daily life demonstrates his deep personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We want a leader who is an excellent communicator, with strong equipping skills and the ability to relate with people of all ages. Our new senior pastor will cast the vision for SBC through God’s Word and our church purpose, and lead the staff and congregation in fulfilling this vision.

#### **Our Community**

Sonora and the Tuolumne County area provide a quality of life that is rivaled by few other areas of the United States. Stretching from the foothills to the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Tuolumne County is both a recreation paradise and a wonderful place to live. The County contains historic gold mining towns, the pristine Emigrant Wilderness, world-renowned Yosemite National Park, numerous lakes and rivers, snow skiing and more - a perfect blend of scenic, historic and recreational attractions. Additionally, Sonora is located within a two to three hour drive of San Francisco, Sacramento and Lake Tahoe.

Tuolumne County population is estimated at 57,000 residents. Along with the thousands of people who work in retail and wholesale, trade, manufacturing, construction, other businesses, and various levels of government, the largest segment of the working population is found in the service industry. You can visit our local government website for more information about our community, activities, and statistics at [www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov](http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov).

SBC's church family bears a strong resemblance to the area's general demographics: a relatively equal mixture of vibrant young families, middle-aged adults, and seniors. This variety presents unlimited outreach, discipleship and ministry opportunities within our church and community.

### **Our Church History** \*

SBC was started by 9 families committed to establishing a Bible-teaching, Christ-centered church in the Sonora area in July of 1973. Mark Levering, then a recent graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, was invited to serve as pastor, and has remained in this position since that time. SBC met in the local Grange Hall from 1973-1981 until we constructed our own facility in 1982. When it was apparent that we were outgrowing that building, we were able to acquire and build on our present property in 1999. We have completed two multi-million dollar building projects since that time to accommodate our growing church family.

The Family Life Center is a multi-purpose building where Sunday morning church services are held, along with many other events including concerts, plays, seminars, banquets, weddings, funerals, and even basketball! In 2004, we broke ground on our second building, Promiseland, a state of the art facility where SBC conducts our children's ministries. We believe the greatest opportunity to reach our community for Jesus is through the children and young families at SBC. Promiseland welcomes hundreds of children each week, as well as special events like VBS, where they are taught to love and worship Jesus as Lord.

Through the years, we have gladly accommodated various "non-church" related community events also, such as business summits and even a grad night. We look for every opportunity to be a light in our community, and our willingness to offer our facilities has proven to be a positive witness.

### **Our Church Today** \*

SBC is a non-denominational church dedicated to the purpose of "introducing people to Jesus and together becoming more like Him." This phrase frames our doorway, and we hear it often. We conduct three identical worship services each Sunday. When you arrive on Sunday morning, you are greeted with a warm heart, a firm handshake and friendly smiles by members of our Friendship Ministries. Our church services are fueled with upbeat, contemporary music, along with relevant biblical teaching and personal application. Personal testimonies, baptisms, baby dedications, and the use of multi-media are regularly a part of our worship services. Our worship services are designed thematically and are intended to be creative and engaging encounters of worship of the Lord in meaningful and creative ways such as dramas, times of personal reflection, confession, and prayer. In each of the past couple of years, SBC has celebrated about 40 baptisms!

\*See our website for additional details at [www.sierrabile.com](http://www.sierrabile.com)

During its history, SBC has consistently grown with the community. The first service with about 60 family and friends has now become around 1,000 people meeting for services each Sunday. The addition of key church staff has further equipped the church family for ministry and broadened its impact in the community. Our ministry team now includes six full-time pastoral staff positions and four ministry staff members, as well as clerical support and dozens of lay leaders providing numerous opportunities for spiritual growth and outreach.

We have a missional focus at SBC, and it shows through our support of and involvement in God's work in the world. SBC is host to a variety of outreach programs and services within our local community, such as Celebrate Recovery, Community Needs Network and Food Bank, Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS), Moms In Touch International (MITI), Confident Kids, supervised visitation for the foster care system, prison ministry, and many more. We are also part of the bigger picture beyond our county and country borders by partnering with dozens of churches, organizations, and missionaries around the world.

### **Senior Pastor Profile (Qualifications)**

#### ***Character***

The senior pastor shall meet all the personal and spiritual qualifications required of church elders found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. He will be an individual in serious personal pursuit of Christ-likeness, exhibited by things like high moral integrity, commitment to spiritual disciplines, embracing accountability, a reputation of unwavering character, and a solid family life.

#### ***Skills and Experience***

The senior pastor will have primary gifts in the area of leadership, with significant abilities in preaching/teaching and pastoral care.

The senior pastor will have good relational and training skills as stated in Ephesians 4:12. In addition, he should demonstrate the pastoral leadership necessary to recruit and train people to help lead in this ministry, and to oversee its ongoing successful functioning.

Because of our stated purpose, it is expected that the senior pastor will have a strong heart for outreach both across the street and around the world. Missions experience is a strength, and a commitment to reaching the non-Christian, unchurched population a priority.

He will have some mid-sized to large church experience, have preferably completed a graduate degree in a ministry-related field, and have several years of experience teaching, pastoring, and leading others in a church context.

## **Proposed Senior Pastor Transition Process**

The new Senior Pastor will be given full responsibilities of Senior Pastor as summarized in the Employment Opportunity Profile, as well as in a Ministry Description developed by the Elders in collaboration with the Senior Pastor in accordance with the priorities established in the Sierra Bible Church By-Laws.

Because our present Senior Pastor has a long history at Sierra Bible Church and a desire to continue in active ministry in a lay role in some capacity within a local church, we are considering the possibility of his continuing ministry at Sierra Bible Church. The ultimate decision in this regard would be made by the Elders in response to the desire of the new Senior Pastor. One option that has been considered is our present Senior Pastor continuing to minister at Sierra Bible Church in the role of Founding Pastor. This is not imagined as being a staff pastoral role, but rather one of support and encouragement to the pastoral staff, and particularly to the new Senior Pastor. If this arrangement seems wise and appropriate with the new Senior Pastor, we would shape a transition year with the new Senior Pastor in a way that would maximize the support and help that the Founding Pastor could provide for him. The current Senior Pastor has particular interests in several critical Sierra Bible Church ministry areas including small groups, missions, discipleship partnerships, and general pastoral ministries.

## **The Role of the Senior Pastor (Ministry Description)**

The role of the senior pastor is unique to each church and their needs but always consistent with the teaching of God's Word regarding those who are in leadership of God's people. The following verses are central in defining the role of the Senior Pastor at SBC:

*"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."*  
*Ephesians 4:11-13*

*"Now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?"*  
*I Kings 3:7-9*

These verses establish the following priorities for the SBC Senior Pastor:

1. Carry out leadership duties with elder and pastoral teams (Leader)
2. Communicate God's Truth (Preacher/Teacher)
3. Care For God's People (Pastor)

These responsibilities are accomplished by serving in the following ways:

1. Serve on the Elder Board as specified in SBC By-Laws, overseeing the purpose, vision, priorities, and values of SBC. (For a more complete explanation of the Elder/Senior Pastor/Pastoral Staff relationships see the SBC By-Laws and the Ministry Organizational Chart that provides an overview of present responsibilities and is consistently revised based upon ministry needs and the availability of people to meet those needs.)

The senior pastor's ultimate focus is to preach, model, and lead in a manner that empowers everyone else in the church – whether custodian, elder, secretary, pastoral staff, or church family member – to use their gifts in accomplishing the purpose of the church.

The senior pastor must be someone who, in partnership with the elders and staff, can discern where God is leading SBC. This person must be able to communicate that vision and keep it before the people in creative, compelling ways that inspire buy-in, hope, and commitment. While honoring and building upon the church's strong legacy, he should have a keen interest in taking the church to the "next level," as God leads. To that end, the senior pastor's aim should be to help SBC concentrate on accomplishing its purpose. The expectation is that SBC will remain outward focused in fulfilling its mission to our community and the world.

2. Oversee, equip, and support the pastoral staff leading the ministries of SBC. In the SBC pastor-led/elder-governed structure, the leadership of the pastoral staff is critical for the accomplishing of the SBC Ministry Priorities.

The next senior pastor must be able to lead a team of exceptionally talented staff comprised of experienced men and women leaders. They are a strong staff that is dedicated to working toward unity in the church family and in support of our senior pastor and Elder Board. They are looking for overall direction, empowerment, and coordination from their team leader, not micro-management. The senior pastor is expected to recognize and make good use of their strengths, while offering them new opportunities and challenges. At the same time, he needs to pastor the staff, lead them away from over-commitment and burnout, and provide a source of encouragement, discipline, authority, and accountability.

SBC has enjoyed a lengthy period of numerical growth. But in order to step up to the "next level," the church needs to build an organization capable of supporting its existing numbers, as well as being ready to take on the new challenges of the future. The next senior pastor needs to be an organizational-builder to make the church effective in carrying out its mission. This means inspiring its laypeople to lead and to discover and use their giftedness. The idea is to raise up and strategically deploy a well-equipped and well-organized force of God's people who are prepared to live out the gospel of Christ in Tuolumne County and beyond.

3. Provide consistent Bible teaching with practical application for the spiritual growth of the church family.

SBC has always been known for its strong, solid Bible teaching, and the church fully expects its next senior pastor to continue that legacy. This person will need to have noteworthy communication skills as a dynamic speaker who can wrap biblical truth in

humor and grace, make it very understandable and applicable to people's daily experience, and cause people to come back week after week for more of God's Word. The pulpit ministry must be "grace-filled," coming from a pastor's heart, providing a safe venue for exploring and growing in faith. It also must be culturally relevant, able to address any topic, even touchy or controversial ones, from Scripture with credibility and sincerity.

4. Oversee the Pastoral Care needs of the church family.

Because of the number of pastoral needs of the church family, and acknowledgement that the Body is frequently best gifted and called to this shared ministry, it is not anticipated that the senior pastor personally participates in all pastoral care but rather oversees the achievement of this ministry by the church family. One of the primary ways this is accomplished at SBC is through the involvement of people in growing, supportive relationships with each other in small ("LIFE") groups. LIFE Groups are an integral part of the overall ministry and strategy of SBC to fulfill its purpose. It is expected that the senior pastor will be personally involved and actively supportive of LIFE groups as a means of outreach to the community, understanding and application of God's Word to daily life, fellowship among fellow believers, and active service to others.

5. Lead by example in fulfilling the purpose of SBC by actively reaching out to those who are not yet Christians and discipling new believers to maturity in Christ.

The senior pastor is the crucial model for the church family of a Christian lifestyle, setting the tone for the church and each church family member.

SBC seeks to develop a greater depth in its spiritual maturity—who they are in Christ, and how to become faithful Christ-followers. With a firm conviction that SBC is about more than the person who preaches, the church desires a senior pastor who understands how to raise up disciples and equip them for fruitful service. We especially seek someone who will partner with our parents and equip them to develop Christ-centered families.

SBC seeks a senior pastor who is "one of us" by being thoroughly involved in our community. He is expected to bridge the gap between veteran Christians and tentative seekers. We want an accessible pastor who understands our world, is able to relate to people one-on-one, has personal relationships with people throughout our community, is a good listener to a wide range of voices, and is able to discern from those conversations what our church and region need to hear from God's Word.

We recognize that the position of senior pastor is demanding. In that regard, we uphold the importance of one's personal health, growth, rest, and time with family through weekly days off and annual vacations (as outlined in the employment handbook). We fully support the sanctity of time for one's family, marriage, and personal spiritual growth.

We appreciate your interest in the senior pastor position here at SBC. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or clarifications as you prayerfully consider God's direction in your life.

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