



Great Lakes Christian College

Senior Accountant Candidate Profile

This profile is offered as a companion to the formal position description. It describes, in human terms, the kind of person we believe will thrive in this role. It is not a checklist of credentials; it is a portrait.

Who We Are Looking For

We are looking for an experienced accountant whose career has prepared them to lead our finance function, and whose life has prepared them to want to.

This is a role for someone in the second act of their professional life, or thoughtfully approaching it, who is ready to invest hard-won expertise into work with eternal weight. They are technically sharp and operationally capable, but what makes them right for Great Lakes Christian College is not on their résumé. It is in their motivations.

This role could also be filled by someone who has labored away for 5 or more years in a cubicle farm and is ready for a promotion but refuses to engage in the office politics that can result in less qualified individuals being promoted instead. They are ready to break through to a new level professionally and help the College grow a business office from the ground up.

Likely Career Background

This person could come from several paths. A few we can imagine:

- **A senior accountant, accounting manager, or assistant controller in a corporate environment**—competent, respected, but increasingly aware that the next promotion would not actually make their life better.
- **An accountant at a mid-sized for-profit company** who has done the job well for years and is ready to do similar work in a setting where the mission matches their values.
- **A public accountant**—perhaps a longtime audit manager or senior manager—who has spent a career around not-for-profits and has quietly thought, more than once, that they would rather be on the other side of the table.
- **A finance leader from a corporate or commercial background** who has been involved in church leadership, ministry, or Christian community service in a volunteer capacity and is ready to bring those two halves of life together.

In each of these scenarios, the common thread is the same: they have the skills, and they are looking for somewhere those skills can mean more.

Motivations and Mindset

They are motivated by:

- A desire to do meaningful work in a values-aligned environment.
- A sense of calling to use professional skill in service of the Church and Christian higher education.
- A wish to be part of a small, close community where their work is visible and matters.
- A preference for being known as a person, not as a function.

They are not motivated primarily by:

- Title or hierarchy.
- Maximum financial compensation
- The prestige of a larger institution.
- Building a large team or empire.

They are realistic about trade-offs. They have done the math on what they can accept, and they have decided that purpose, calling, and community are worth the personal investment.

Personal and Professional Values

This person is likely to value:

- **Faith integration**—not as a checkbox, but as a way of living and working.
- **Stewardship**—because every dollar at a small college represents real sacrifice from real people.
- **Integrity**—the kind that holds up to scrutiny precisely because it does not have to.
- **Service over status**—servant leadership is the norm.
- **Quiet excellence**—doing the work well because the work deserves it, not because anyone is watching.

What They Are Likely Leaving Behind

The person who thrives here is probably leaving behind some version of:

- A corporate environment that pays well but feels disconnected from anything they care about.
- Layers of bureaucracy, internal politics, or quarterly pressure that no longer feels purposeful.
- A workplace where their faith and their work must live in different rooms.
- A career trajectory measured in titles and compensation rather than impact.

They will not pretend they do not notice the difference in compensation. But they have made peace with it because they know they can be compensated in other meaningful ways.

What They Are Seeking

- **Purpose:** work that connects to something larger than the next quarter.
- **Impact:** a role where their decisions are felt directly, not absorbed into a bureaucracy.
- **Community:** colleagues who know their name and care about their family.
- **Faith integration:** the freedom to bring their whole self, including their faith, to work.
- **Pace and proportion:** a job that demands their best but allows for a life.

Lifestyle Considerations

We want to be honest about the practical realities of this role, because we believe candor up front serves everyone.

- **Compensation is below corporate market.** The right candidate is at a place in life where this is workable, often because they have built a financial foundation over the course of their career, simplified their lifestyle, or otherwise positioned themselves to choose meaning over maximum income.
- **The college does not offer employer-sponsored health insurance.** Candidates should consider how they will address health coverage, whether through a family member's plan, retiree benefits, the ACA marketplace, a healthcare-sharing ministry, or another arrangement. We cannot advise on this; we simply want candidates to enter the conversation with eyes open.
- **This is a hands-on role.** There is no large team to delegate to. The Senior Accountant will both set strategy and post journal entries; both meet with the Board and reconcile bank accounts.

These realities are not deterrents for the right person. They are filters. They help us find someone whose call to this work is real.

Strengths We Expect to See

- Deep accounting expertise—mastery of the close, the audit, and the books.
- Calm under pressure, especially during audit season and year-end.
- Clear, plain-language communication with non-financial colleagues.
- Discretion and trustworthiness with sensitive information.
- A servant's heart paired with professional backbone—the ability to say "no" in the most “yes-y way” possible.
- Genuine warmth and presence in a small community.

Potential Growth Areas

Candidates coming from corporate or commercial backgrounds may need time to grow into:

- The specific contours of not-for-profit and fund accounting, if not already familiar.
- The regulatory environment of higher education, including Title IV financial aid accounting.
- The slower pace of decision-making and the more relational style of leadership common in small faith-based institutions.
- The expectation to be present in community life, not only in the business office.

We are willing to invest in the right person to help them grow into these areas. We are not willing to compromise on character, mission alignment, or accounting fundamentals.

As the College grows, there will likely be opportunities for advancement. The right person may find the opportunity to advance to Controller and/or Chief Finance Officer.

A Final Word

The right person for this role will likely feel, when they read these documents, something like recognition. They will see a description of work they have been quietly preparing for without knowing it had a name.

If that is you, we would be glad to talk.