

Off the top of my head, here's a basic outline for principles relating to medical ethics, etc. for Christian midwives. I'm not sure that anybody has put anything like this together. Open for any other ideas. . .

Principles for Christian Midwifery

1. Do no harm.

Christians are pro-life (Exodus 21:22-23). Early Christian writings from the Didache onwards have opposed intentional abortion.

Christian midwives will not assist in an intentional abortion nor will they recommend one.

Should the mother's life be threatened, efforts will be taken to preserve the mother's life and the baby's life. In whatever course of action is taken, no Christian midwife will assist in the willful destruction of a human life. Always, the intention is to save both lives.

In the case of triage (the sorting by urgency), the midwife may prioritize one life over another, but never shall she determine, desire, or cause the death of any.

For the Christian midwife, the first, fundamental, and final course of action is always prayer. We believe in the sovereign power of God and the infinite capacity of the divine hand to heal.

Thou shalt not slay the child by procuring abortion; nor, again, shalt thou destroy it after it is born" (*Letter of Barnabas* 19 [A.D. 74]).

Didache (110 AD)

"Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not corrupt boys, thou shalt not commit fornication, {thou shalt not steal,} thou shalt not deal in magic, thou shalt do no sorcery, thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill them when born, {thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods, thou shalt not perjure thyself, thou shalt not bear false witness,} thou shalt not speak evil, thou shalt not cherish a grudge, thou shalt not be double-minded nor double-tongued."

Tertullian (200 AD)

In our case, murder being once for all forbidden, we may not destroy even the foetus in the womb, while as yet the human being derives blood from other parts of the body for its sustenance. To hinder a birth is merely a speedier man - killing; nor does it matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. That is a man which is going to be one; you have the fruit already in the seed.

Hippolytus

"Women who were reputed to be believers began to take drugs to render themselves sterile, and to bind themselves tightly so as to expel what was being conceived, since they would not, on account of relatives and excess wealth, want to have a child by a slave or by any insignificant person. See, then, into what great impiety that lawless one has proceeded, by teaching adultery and murder at the same time!" (*Refutation of All Heresies* [A.D. 228]).

Athanegoras (170 AD)

How, then, when we do not even look on, lest we should contract guilt and pollution, can we put people to death? And when we say that those women who use drugs to bring on abortion commit murder, and will have to give an account to God's for the abortion, on what principle should we commit murder? For it does not belong to the same person to regard the very foetus in the womb as a created being, and therefore an object of God's care, and when it has passed into life, to kill it; and not to expose an infant, because those who expose them are chargeable with child-murder, and on the other hand, when it has been reared to destroy it. But we are in all things always alike and the same, submitting ourselves to reason, and not ruling over it.

Ambrose (360 AD)

the poor get rid of their small children by exposure and denying them when they are discovered. But the rich also, so that their wealth will not be more divided, deny their children [when they are] in the womb and with all the force of parricide, they kill the beings of their wombs [while they are] in the same fruitful womb. In this way life is taken away from them before it has been given.

Council of Ancyra (314)

Canon 21: Women who prostitute themselves, and who kill the child thus begotten, or who try to destroy them when in their wombs, are by ancient law excommunicated to the end of their lives. We, however, have softened their punishment and condemned them to the various appointed degrees of penance for ten years.

2. An appreciation for the blessing of children.

Christian midwives always view children as a blessing from the Lord. "The fruit of the womb is His reward. Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them."

While respecting the bounds of Christian liberty (Section 3), Christian midwives will not recommend birth control pills bearing abortifacient qualities.

When asked concerning birth control, it is safest to appeal directly to Scripture (1 Cor. 7:5), where a natural method of abstinence is permitted by the Apostle for "prayer and fasting."

3. A respect for family jurisdiction (and Christian liberty).

The Christian midwife respects family jurisdictions. She graciously allows for differing perspectives concerning the use of midwifery, the use of her own services, the use of hospital services, the use of herbs vs. processed medicines, and diet.

The Christian midwife understands the importance of humility in all scientific and medical work.

The Christian midwife must be humble to acknowledge that though a method or diet supplement or medicinal aid may be helpful for one or some persons, it may not be helpful for another.

The Christian midwife must be humble to acknowledge that though a method or diet supplement or medicinal aid may be helpful for most persons, it may be helpful for all.

The Christian midwife must be humble to acknowledge her own lack of knowledge concerning anything.

The Christian midwife must be humble to acknowledge when there is limited data to support the helpfulness of some method or diet supplement or medicinal aid. (In God we trust, all else bring data.)

The Christian midwife must be humble to acknowledge when she is acting on limited information, hearsay, or mere isolated, anecdotal testimony concerning some method or diet supplement or medicinal aid.

The Christian midwife may make recommendations concerning certain methods, diet supplements, or medicinal aid, but graciously allows for the final decision to rest with the family jurisdiction.

The Christian midwife must be careful not to recommend something that might stumble the weaker brother or sister (Rom. 14:13)

The Christian midwife must remember that there is Christian liberty in the area of diet (Rom. 14:1-4).

The Christian midwife understands all physical, material things to be lawful, but not all things expedient or helpful (1 Cor. 6:12).

4. Other broad principles.

Let all be done in prayer.

Let all be done in faith. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23).

Let all be done in fear of God and not in fear of man that only brings a snare (Exod. 1:17, Prov. 29:25)

Let all be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

Let all seek the kingdom first, trusting that God will provide for the material and health needs (Matt. 6:33).

Let all be done in humility.

Let all be done with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance against such there is no law (Gal. 5:22-26).

5. Worldview and New Age Philosophies

The Christian midwife understands that knowledge is universally accessible in a Christian worldview (Rom. 10:6-8, 1 Tim. 1:4, Acts 26:26). There is no secret or gnostic knowledge only available to a privileged few.

The Christian midwife rejects spells and formulaic prayers or incantations that are intended to achieve some set purpose or objective. God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is the source of all power, all healing, and all cause and effect in this universe. God is in sovereign control of all of reality (Dan. 4:35, Rom. 11:36). Nature is not sovereign, and the angelic and demonic world is not sovereign, and man and scientists are not sovereign.

The Christian midwife rejects the idea that there is a single energy source in the universe apart from God.

The Christian midwife believes in the Creator - creature distinction.

The Christian midwife considers witchcraft, necromancy, divination, and all forms of occultism to be abominable sins against God (Deut. 18:10-12).

The Christian midwife understands the dangers or risks of food offered to idols (pagan practices and associations), and the relationship of Christian liberty to these things (as Paul outlines it in 1 Cor. 8:1ff, 1 Cor. 10:23-29).

6. Miscarriage

The Christian midwife understands something of the pain of miscarriage, and endeavors to show compassion to those who suffer this loss.

The Christian midwife must encourage hope in the resurrection of Christ and the grace of God working in the Christian covenant family. She will point to the several available biblical references concerning the children of Christian parents referred to as "godly seed" and "holy or special". (Mal. 3, 1 Cor. 7:21). She will point to David's faith that he was confident he would go to be with his child lost in childbirth (2 Sam. 12:23).

7. The Civil Magistrate

The Christian midwife understands that the civil magistrate is the ordinance of God, as the powers that be are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1). She ought therefore to render honour to whom honour is due (Rom. 13:7).

Nevertheless, the Hebrew midwives are commended for their fear of God as they disobeyed the King's order, and the Apostles insisted that they were to obey God rather than men (when the command of the civil magistrate contradicted God's commands). (Exod. 1:17, Acts 5:29.)

The Christian midwife understands the safety in counselors, when making difficult decisions (to include their own husbands, fathers, elders, pastors in the church, etc.) (Prov. 11:14).

The Christian midwife accepts Jesus teaching that it is better to pay a tax than to offend, and that one ought to agree with his adversary quickly while he is in the way with him (Matt. 17:27, Matt. 5:25).