I am writing to apply for an accommodation from the required COVID-19 vaccination. I am making this request based on my sincerely held religious views and practices.

I appreciate that, as a citizen of the United States of America, I possess natural rights that are endowed by the Creator and secured by the foundational documents of this great Nation. Because of the rich history of religious freedom encoded in our documents, I can both express my sincerely held religious views and expect accommodation for them. With gratitude, I point out below the legal foundation for the exemption request I make in this document:

2. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
3. Additional anti-discrimination laws, including Americans with Disabilities and Rehabilitation Act and Equal Employment Opportunity laws
4. NY Public Health Law 2165
5. Title 10, section 66-2.2 of NY Codes, Rules, and Regulations (offers vaccine exemption for those who demonstrate serological evidence of antibodies from previous infection)
6. Article 1 of the New York State Constitution
7. The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States
8. The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States

I am a practicing Christian. It is important that I point out that the religious accommodation I am requesting is ultimately based upon my sincerely held beliefs. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 defines “religion” very broadly and includes both organized traditional religions (of which I am part) and new, uncommon religious views. I share this distinction because the statutes require you consider my sincerely held beliefs, not the sincerely held beliefs of any particular denomination. Differences that may exist within denominations do not indicate that an individual’s sincerely held religious beliefs are any less sincere or any less subject to accommodation if the sincerity can be established.

Below I will describe and establish my sincerely held religious views. I will provide Biblical support for them. I will explain how personally receiving the COVID-19 vaccination conflicts with my sincerely held religious views.

I practice my faith and worship my God both with my local church family and in the day-to-day details of each day of my life. My faith in Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior and my faith in Him as the Creator Redeemer God are not isolated to Sundays. I worship the Lord Jesus Christ every day. In Him, I live and move and have my being (Acts 17:28).

Scripture states: “For by Him (Christ) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:16-17). I sincerely believe that Christ is the creator of all things in heaven and earth. I sincerely believe that He is eternal and that He holds all things together (“in Him all things consist”). In Psalm 139, Scripture states: “You formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. How precious to me are
your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand.”
In other words, I am “fearfully and wonderfully made.” I was “knit together in the womb.” My frame was not hidden from the Lord. He saw me in the womb and knew me and my days even before I was born. I sincerely believe this. And believing this is consequential. When I consider these words from Scripture, I stand in awe of my God who created my physical body – including my amazing immune system. My sincerely held views of God embrace the concept that He – a Transcendent and Creative Being – designed me with an immune system I can trust. To ask me to inject my body with the COVID-19 vaccination is to ask me to declare that I do not trust my God, the very God who knit me together and who knows all my days.

I sincerely believe that the Christian God is the Creator and the Author of life. And this God is my Redeemer. The word “redeemer” means “one who buys back.” I sincerely believe that I have been “bought back” from the grip and eternal consequences of sin and brought into the family of God. Scripture speaks of those who have been redeemed (“bought back”): “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (I Corinthians 6:19-20). Thus, I – my physical body – is a “temple of the Holy Spirit.” I am not my own. I belong to God, for He bought me with a price. I sincerely believe this. Based on my sincerely held belief, I am called to be wise and cautious about what I put into my body because my body is not mine – but belongs to God and my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (a place where the Spirit of God dwells). Injecting my body with the COVID-19 vaccination is incompatible with my sincerely held religious beliefs. It is injecting my body with genetic information (mRNA in the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccinations and adenovirus in the Johnson and Johnson vaccination). Messenger RNA is encoded genetic information. The adenovirus of the J and J vaccination carries genetic information (the spike gene) like a “Trojan horse.” Using a cold virus, the spike gene is introduced to biological cells. In either case, these vaccinations (unlike traditional vaccinations) introduce genetic materials and the instructions they carry into the cells of the body. I sincerely believe that God – who knit me together and in whom all things consist – has provided the cells of my body (a temple of the Holy Spirit) with all the necessary genetic information necessary. Genetic information that direct the individual cells of my body is God’s domain, not man’s. Thus, injecting the COVID-19 vaccination into my body violates my sincerely held religious beliefs.

I sincerely believe that “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (II Timothy 1:7). I am called by God to make decisions using the sound mind He has given me, and as I use this sound mind, I am to reject making decisions with a “spirit of fear.” Fear is not of God. I am not to be led by a spirit of fear. I sincerely believe that a “spirit of fear” is being used as a coercive tool by policy makers regarding vaccination mandates. Because I sincerely believe that God has knit me together with a sound mind, I cannot – in good conscience – inject the COVID-19 vaccination into my body because it makes me an accomplice to the “spirit of fear” propelling mankind away from rationality (away from the “sound mind” given us by God).

I sincerely believe that God expects me to make wise decisions, including decisions regarding risk analysis. In making such decisions, Scripture tells me:

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)

“For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”
Philippians 2:13

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)

I sincerely believe that the Scriptures above command me that I must make decisions with God’s wisdom, not man’s. I sincerely believe that I must make decisions – including evaluating risk – based on God’s leading. I sincerely believe that an indicator of a wise and godly decision is “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.” At this point, if I were to accept the COVID-19 vaccination, it would lack that necessary peace that I sincerely believe indicates God’s will. If I were to decide to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, it would be a decision based on fear – the fear of losing my position as a nursing student or the fear of what others think of me. Thus, it would not be a decision that aligns with my sincerely held religious beliefs.

Scripture – specifically words of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of Matthew – state: “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” (Matthew 7:13, 14). I sincerely hold the religious view that much of humanity is following a flawed broad path, a path that leads to destruction. As I contemplate the forceful push for universal vaccination regardless of disease risk, I sincerely believe we are traveling a broad path that leads to destruction. I cannot be complicit in widening the broad path by joining it. My conscience would be grieved.

I have firm and sincerely held religious beliefs that would be violated if I agreed to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. I have explained and documented these sincerely held beliefs in this paper, and in accordance with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Ohio Immunization Laws, and the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Based on my sincerely held religious beliefs, I request a religious exemption from the mandated COVID-19 vaccination.

With appreciation, I express gratitude in advance for what I am certain will be an affirmative and respectful response to this reasonable and Constitutionally protected request.

Respectfully submitted,