



PROPOSED DOCKET

Ninth Meeting of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest

October 9, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Zoom Technology

Please note: The Presbytery proceedings today are being recorded.

9:00	Welcome, Call to Order and Opening Prayer	RE Jim Conners, Moderator
	Declaration of Quorum	RE Mark Eshoff, Stated Clerk
9:10	Stated Clerk's Report	Stated Clerk Eshoff
	Virtual Meeting Protocol	
	Presbytery Voting Guidelines	
	Absences without Excuse (May 15, 2020)	
	Approval of the Docket	
9:25	Worship and Prayer	
	Call to Worship	Moderator Conners
	Worship in Music	
	Moderator's Time of Prayer	
	Sermon	Ryan Suzuki
	The sermon this morning will be given by Ryan Suzuki, candidate for Associate Pastor of Assimilation at Community Presbyterian Church, Danville, CA. He will be preaching on Romans 8:28-30, a passage assigned to him by the Ministerial Committee.	
9:45	Ministerial Committee Report	TE David Abdo, Chair
	Examination of Ryan Suzuki	
	Ryan Suzuki has been called as Associate Pastor of Assimilation at Community Presbyterian Church, Danville, CA. Ryan has signed his Ministerial Obligation Form. His current Terms of Call have been reviewed and approved by the Ministerial Committee. He has been a Candidate Under Care in this Presbytery, completed the Discovery Workshop, and been examined by the members of the Ministerial Committee. He is recommended to the floor of the Presbytery for approval.	
	Ryan's examination began with a sermon on a passage assigned by the Ministerial Committee. The Presbytery is to examine him on his knowledge of theology and sacraments, his faith in Christ, his calling to the ministry and the nature of the office of a minister of the Word, polity, the Reformed tradition, the Bible, and his spiritual journey. Ryan has one exception to the Westminster Standards. (<i>Attachment 1 - pgs. A2-A22</i>)	

Examination of Ryan Suzuki (continued)

Two to three questions in each category in the following order:

- Theology, sacraments, English Bible
- Book of Order, history of the Church and the Reformed tradition
- Christian experience, progress in spiritual growth, and nature of the office of Teaching Elder
- Exceptions to the Westminster Standards (if applicable)

Representatives speaking on behalf of Ryan Suzuki

TE Cathy Burkholder
RE Geoff LaTendresse

MOTION: To approve the examination of Ryan Suzuki and receive him into full membership in the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest.

MOTION: To approve the Administrative Commission consisting RE Jim Conners from First Presbyterian Church, Bakersfield, CA, RE Dave Smith from Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, Moraga, CA, RE's Geoff LaTendresse and Paul Moon from Community Presbyterian Church, Danville, CA, and TE's Tyler Scott and Cathy Burkholder from Community Presbyterian Church, Danville, CA to ordain Ryan Suzuki and install him as Associate Pastor of Assimilation at Community Presbyterian Church on December 13, 2020 at 4:00 pm

10:35 Break

10:45 **Ministerial Committee Report (continued)**

Examination of Fred Tanizaki

Fred Tanizaki has been serving as Executive Pastor at Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, Santa Ana, CA. Fred is seeking to transfer his ordination from the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) to the EPC. Fred has signed his Ministerial Obligation Form. His current Terms of Call have been reviewed and approved by the Ministerial Committee. He has been examined by the members of the Ministerial Committee and is recommended to the floor of the Presbytery for approval.

Fred's examination begins with a sermon on a passage assigned by the Ministerial Committee. The Presbytery is to examine him on his views of theology and sacraments, his faith in Christ, his calling to the ministry and the nature of the office of a minister of the Word, polity, the Reformed tradition, the Bible, and his spiritual journey. Fred has no exceptions to the Westminster Standards. (*Attachment 2 – pgs. A23-A44*)

Sermon: Colossians 2:9-12

Examination

Two to three questions in each category in the following order:

- Theology, sacraments, English Bible
- Book of Order, history of the Church and the Reformed tradition
- Christian experience, progress in spiritual growth, and nature of the office of Teaching Elder

Representatives speaking on behalf of Fred Tanizaki

Paul Shiroma
Jim Tanizaki

MOTION: To approve the examination of Fred Tanizaki and receive him into full membership in the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest from the ECO Presbytery of Southern California.

11:35

Reception of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, Garden Grove, CA

The congregation of the Wintersburg Presbyterian Church in Santa Ana, CA voted to request dismissal from the Southern California Presbytery of the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) in March 2020 and to join the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest. The Session and the congregation have filed a Petition to be Received as a member of POPS at this meeting. The ECO Presbytery voted to dismiss the congregation upon being received by our Presbytery. The Ministerial Committee has examined the elders of the church and has found them to have adequate understanding of and commitment to EPC doctrine, polity and history.

MOTION: To receive Wintersburg Presbyterian Church of Garden Grove, CA, into membership in the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest effective October 9, 2020.

MOTION: To approve an Installation Commission consisting of TE's David Brogren (Active Retired) and David Abdo from Easton Presbyterian Church, Easton, CA and RE's (TBD) to install the Session and the congregation of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church of Santa Ana, CA into the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and install Fred Tanizaki as Associate Pastor on a date to be determined by the POPS Ministerial Committee.

Recognition of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church

Moderator Connors

11:50

Change in Call – TE Jonathan St. Clair

The congregation of Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley, CA has accepted the recommendation of their Pastor Search Committee to call TE Jonathan St. Clair as Pastor. Jonathan is currently the Associate Pastor for Spiritual Formation at this same church, with the approval to moderate Session given by the Ministerial Committee. Our polity requires that 75% of the Session of the church and 75% of the Ministerial Committee approve this change. The Session of Christ Church East Bay unanimously approved the consideration of Jonathan for this call and the Ministerial Committee unanimously approved the call as well. The Committee recommends the change in status of TE Jonathan St. Clair to the Presbytery for approval.

MOTION: To approve the Change in Status of TE Jonathan St. Clair from Associate Pastor for Spiritual Formation to Pastor of Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley, CA.

MOTION: To approve the Administrative Commission consisting of RE's Tommy Stinson, Stephen George and Tonia Roby from Christ Church East Bay, RE Chris Larsen from Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, Fair Oaks, CA, TE Tommy Branagh from Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, Moraga, CA and TE Bart Garrett to install TE Jonathan St. Clair as Pastor of Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley, CA on Sunday, November 1, 2020 at 10:30 am.

12:00

Break

12:20 **Session Minutes Review Committee** RE Janet Goodman, Chair
Chairman Goodman will report on the reviews from the May 2020 meeting and update the Presbytery on how Session Minutes Reviews will occur in light of the virtual meeting.

Scheduled Reviews for October:

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Orange, CA
Covenant Presbyterian Church, San Diego, CA
Easton Presbyterian Church, Fresno, CA
First Presbyterian Church, Bakersfield, CA
First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA

Heritage EPC, Santa Maria, CA
Kingman Presbyterian Church, Kingman, AZ
The Table, San Francisco, CA
Valley Community Church, San Jacinto, CA
Woodlake Presbyterian Church, Woodlake, CA

12:30 **Treasurer's Report** RE Connie Badgley, Treasurer

- 2020 Year-to Date Financials and Per Member Asking (*Attachments 3 & 4 – pgs. A45-A49*)
- Presentation of 2021 POPS Budget (*Attachment 5 – pgs. A50-A51*)

MOTION: To approve the 2021 POPS Budget as presented

12:45 **Mission Committee Report and Prayer** RE Carl Kuhn, Chair
World Outreach Appointees (names omitted), a representative from Frontier Fellowship and Rev. George Carey, Chair of the E2025 POPS Home Team will share updates.

1:05 **Changes to POPS Bylaws** Stated Clerk Eshoff
The POPS Mission Committee has recommended that the Committee be formally established as part of the POPS Bylaws. The Presbytery Council agreed and recommends the change. Other minor updates are also included in the proposed changes (*Attachment 6 – pgs. A52-A54*).

MOTION: To modify the language in the POPS Bylaws to add Section 6.06 to establish the Mission Committee as a Permanent Committee of the Presbytery and to make other updates as noted in the Attachment 6.

1:20 **General Assembly Report** RE Greg Flagg

1:35 **Care of Candidates Committee Report** TE Jay Hull, Chair
Note on examination of candidates to come under care of the Presbytery:
Candidates will briefly share their spiritual journey, their sense of call and why they have chosen the EPC. The Presbytery may then examine the Candidate on the following:

- Christian experience and growth
- The motive for seeking ordination
- The candidate's call to the Ministry.

Examination of Ryan Teramoto

Ryan is ready to come under the care of this Presbytery. He is currently under care of the Session of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, Santa Ana, CA. The Session has recommended him to the Presbytery as a Candidate Under Care.

Representative speaking on behalf of candidate

Fred Tanizaki

MOTION: To approve Ryan Teramoto to come under care of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and approve TE Scott Larson as advisor to Candidate Teramoto

Constitutional Questions to the Candidate

- As you understand God's working in your heart and life, do you continue to believe yourself called to the office of Teaching Elder?
- Do you now submit yourself to the care and supervision of this Presbytery as you prepare yourself for this office?
- Do you renew your commitment as a Christian, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, to live as becomes a follower of Jesus?

Prayer for the Candidate

Connor Kobayashi

Charge given to the Candidate

TE Scott Larson

2:15 Break

2:25 **Nominating Committee Report**

RE Bill Myers, Chair

Election of Moderator (2021)

TE Rob Perkins, Past Moderator

RE Jim Conners is eligible to serve as Moderator for a second term of one year in 2021.

MOTION: To elect RE Jim Conners as Moderator of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for the year 2021.

Election of Moderator-Elect (2021)

TE Julia Leeth, Pastor of Covenant Community Church, Vacaville, CA has been nominated to serve as Moderator-Elect for the year 2021 with the expectation that she will assume the role of Moderator in 2022. (*Attachment 7 – pg. A55*)

MOTION: To elect TE Julia Leeth as Moderator-Elect of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for the year 2021.

Election of Stated Clerk (2021-2023)

RE Mark Eshoff is eligible to serve as POPS Stated Clerk for continuing terms of 3 years each. His current term is slated to end at the end of 2020.

MOTION: To elect RE Mark Eshoff as Stated Clerk of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for a three-year term beginning in 2021.

Election of Treasurer (2021-2023)

RE Connie Badgley is eligible to serve as POPS Treasurer for continuing terms of 3 years each. Her current term is slated to end at the end of 2020.

MOTION: To elect RE Connie Badgley as Treasurer of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for a three-year term beginning in 2021.

Election of Ministerial Committee Chair

TE David Abdo is eligible to serve as Chair of the Ministerial Committee for a second term of 3 years. His current term is slated to end at the end of 2020.

MOTION: To elect TE David Abdo as Chair of the Ministerial Committee of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for a three-year term beginning in 2021.

Election of Care of Candidates Committee Chair

TE Jay Hull is eligible to serve as Chair of the Care of Candidates Committee for a second term of 3 years. His current term is slated to end at the end of 2020

MOTION: To elect TE Jay Hull as Chair of the Care of Candidates Committee of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for a three-year term beginning in 2021.

Election of Mission Committee Chair

RE Carl Kuhn is eligible to serve as Chair of the Mission Committee for a second term of 3 years. His current term is slated to end at the end of 2020.

MOTION: To elect RE Carl Kuhn as Chair of the Mission Committee of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and member of the Presbytery Council for a three-year term beginning in 2021.

Committee Nominations (Class of 2021 – Class of 2023)

Committee positions are still available on several Presbytery committees. Please let the Nominating Committee Chair or respective Committee Chair know of your willingness to serve or your recommendation of any elders from your church to be considered.

MOTION: To approve RE Chris Rhodes from Covenant Presbyterian Church, Reno, NV and RE Linda Marshall from New Life Community Church, Covelo, CA as members of the Care of Candidates Committee (Class of 2023)

MOTION: To approve TE Jonathan Dennis from Woodlake Presbyterian Church, Woodlake, CA to complete the term of TE Julia Leeth on the Care of Candidates Committee (Class of 2021).

MOTION: To approve TE Sam Knottnerus from Centerville Presbyterian Church, Fremont, CA, RE Touradi Etezadi, from First Presbyterian Church, Fresno, CA and RE Patti Hemsley from Covenant Presbyterian Church, Reno, NV as a members of Mission Committee (Class of 2023).

MOTION: To approve TE Jason Yum as a member of the Nominating Committee (Class of 2023)

Examination of Tim Hoins

Tim Hoins has been called as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA. Tim has signed his Ministerial Obligation Form. His current Terms of Call have been reviewed and approved by the Ministerial Committee. He has been a Candidate Under Care in the EPC Presbytery of the Great Plains, and has been examined by the members of the Ministerial Committee. He is recommended to the floor of the Presbytery for approval.

Tim's examination begins with a sermon on a passage assigned by the Ministerial Committee. The Presbytery is to examine him on his knowledge of theology and sacraments, his faith in Christ, his calling to the ministry and the nature of the office of a minister of the Word, polity, the Reformed tradition, the Bible, and his spiritual journey. Tim has no exceptions to the Westminster Standards. (*Attachment 8 – pgs. A56-A75*)

Examination

Sermon: 1 Peter 2:23-25

Two to three questions in each category in the following order:

- Theology, sacraments, English Bible
- Book of Order, history of the Church and the Reformed tradition
- Christian experience, progress in spiritual growth, and nature of the office of Teaching Elder

Representatives speaking on behalf of Tim Hoins

Jaime Cristoph
Annette Rajskup

MOTION: To approve the examination of Tim Hoins and receive him into full membership in the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest.

MOTION: To approve the Administrative Commission consisting of RE's Paul Dixon, Jeff Jones and Debra Revious from First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA, RE (TBD), TE Ron Owens (Associate-Retired) and TE Lana Roberts (Associate-Retired) to ordain Tim Hoins and install him as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA on December 6 at 10:00 am

Examination of Rev. Dave Miles

Dave Miles has been invited by the Session of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church as Interim Supply Pastor. He is currently participating in a renewal process at the church as a representative of Vital Church Ministries. The General Assembly office has recommended that the Presbytery examine him as part of the Presbytery's responsibility to the church, to assure that his knowledge of the doctrine and polity of the EPC is adequate, and to affirm its partnership in the ministry of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church. TE Dave Ricketts has been assigned by the Ministerial Committee to moderate the Session and TE's Dave Ricketts and Tommy Branagh will administer the sacraments. Dave has been examined by the Ministerial Committee and is recommended to the Presbytery for approval. (*Attachment 9 – pgs. A76-A78*)

Dave's examination begins with a short sermon on a passage assigned by the Ministerial Committee. Following his sermon, the Presbytery is to examine him on his views of theology and sacraments, his faith in Christ, his calling to the ministry and the nature of the office of a minister of the Word, polity, the Reformed tradition, the Bible, and his spiritual journey.

Examination

Sermon: John 1:1-5

Two to three questions in each category in the following order:

- Theology, sacraments, English Bible
- Book of Order, history of the Church and the Reformed tradition
- Christian experience, progress in spiritual growth, and nature of the office of Teaching Elder

Representatives speaking on behalf of Dave Miles

MOTION: Motion to approve the invitation for Rev. Dave Miles to serve as Interim Supply Pastor for Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church with authority to preach the Word retroactive to July 1, 2020.

4:30

Interim Supply for Fowler Presbyterian Church

TE Paul Irwin, currently a member of the EPC Presbytery of the East, has been invited by the Session of Fowler Presbyterian Church to serve as Interim Supply Pastor. He has been examined by the Ministerial Committee and is presented to the Presbytery for approval. (*Attachment 11 – pgs. A80-A98*)

MOTION: To approve the invitation for TE Paul Irwin to serve as Interim Supply Pastor for Fowler Presbyterian Church, Fowler, CA with authority to preach the Word, moderate the Session, and administer the sacraments retroactive to May 15, 2020.

Update on TE Members and Open Positions

4:40

Retirement of TE Greg Livingstone

With his wife, Sally, Greg has ministered among University students in Europe, Muslims in India, the Arab World, Malaysia, and Pakistanis in England since 1963. He has also served as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Aspen, Colorado and (1974-1977) and Director of North Africa Mission (1977-1982). He founded the mission organization, Frontiers, in 1982, which presently has 1,400 adult missionaries in 43 countries planting churches among Muslims. He was ordained in EPC in 1990 by the Presbytery of the West, designed and helped implement the primary emphasis of EPC's World Outreach ENGAGE 2025: to see every Presbytery of the EPC, sponsor and adopt a new church planting, long-term team, to pioneer a Muslim people in a city where no churches of Muslim background believers with their own elders exists. He is encouraged that nearly every EPC Presbytery has adopted that goal, including the most recent adoption by POPS of the Pashtuns of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

MOTION: To approve the change in status of TE Greg Livingstone from Active Member to Associate-Retired, with grateful appreciation for his service to the Presbytery, the EPC, and to the greater Body of Christ, effective June 30, 2020.

5:00

Retirement of TE Jerry Voss

Jerry has served what he describes as “twenty amazing years” at Millbrook Presbyterian Church in Fresno, CA. The church fought hard to advance a kingdom culture and it was satisfying for him to see Black and Hispanic elders and deacons being drawn together. He was excited that the Bread of Life and the Living Waters continued to be proclaimed. The church sought to make a “cross-cultural” impact through interactions with other churches, including many ethnic churches in Fresno. Jerry also cherishes some wonderful Presbytery encounters. In his words, “Changing to the EPC did not change the culture of the church.

People left, and we became a church plant within a church.” Jerry and his wife, Ingrid have a treasure of memories for a lifetime. Above all, they “praise the Lord for his faithfulness and providence, and like quoting Oral Roberts, ‘God is your source; you plant a seed, expect a miracle. If you plant and don’t expect a harvest, why plant?’”

MOTION: **To approve the change in status of TE Jerry Voss from Active Member to Associate–Retired, with grateful appreciation for his service to the Presbytery, the EPC, and to the greater Body of Christ, effective December 31, 2019.**

5:15 **Omnibus/Consent Motion**

1. That the Minutes of the Eighth Stated Meeting of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest, May 15, 2020 be approved as posted (these minutes are available on the website).
2. That the Administrative Commission to ordain and install Sam Knottnerus as Pastor of Centerville Presbyterian Church, Fremont, CA be dismissed with appreciation for their service to the Presbytery, to the pastor and to the congregation. The commission’s minutes are on file with the Stated Clerk.
3. That the Administrative Commission to ordain and install Joe Mazzela as at Sanger Community Church, Sanger, CA be dismissed with appreciation for their service to the Presbytery, to the pastor, and to the congregation. The commission’s minutes are on file with the Stated Clerk.
4. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to dissolve the pastoral relationship between TE Dennis Tarr as Transitional Pastor, and Centerville Presbyterian Church, Fremont, CA, effective August 9, 2020.
5. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Centerville Presbyterian Church, Fremont, CA, and TE Dennis Yim, effective July 27, 2020.
6. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Christ Church East Bay and TE Patrick Vaughn effective August 1, 2020.
7. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Christ Church East Bay and TE Quinn Vaughn effective August 1, 2020.
8. That the call of TE David Constance as Assistant Pastor for Families and Adult Discipleship for First Presbyterian Church, Bakersfield, CA be renewed for a term of 3 years.
9. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to appoint TE Dave Ricketts as Acting Moderator of Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, Moraga, CA.
10. Accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to invite Rev. Mark Nazarian to serve as Interim Supply Pastor for First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA with authority to preach the Word and administer the sacraments retroactive to July 1, 2020. (*Attachment 10 – pg. A79*)

MOTION: **To approve the Omnibus/Consent Motion.**

5:25

New Business

Moderator Conners

Important Upcoming Dates

January 22-23, 2021	Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest Meeting (#10) First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Fresno, CA
May 13-14, 2021	Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest Meeting (#11) Sierra Presbyterian Church, Nevada City, CA

Hosting Opportunities

Member churches are reminded that opportunity is available to host the Presbytery at its future meetings. Contact the Stated Clerk if you are interested in offering an invitation.

We are looking for churches to host **Discovery Workshops** in 2021. Contact the Stated Clerk if you are interested in offering an invitation.

5:30

Adjournment and Closing Prayer



Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
5770 Carlson Drive
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 452-7132

Presbytery Meeting Docket
October 9, 2020

ATTACHMENTS

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Part 2: Personal Information (please print or type)

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Preferred Address:

Alternate Address:

Preferred Phone: () _____ Home Work Cell

Alternate Phone: () _____ Home Work Cell

E-mail: _____

1. Work History:

Previous Ministry Positions

Dates

Present/Last Position (if you are currently not in a ministry position)

Dates

Name: _____

3. Ordination Status

Ordained by: _____ Date: _____

If not ordained:

Church Membership: _____ (include city & state)

Candidate under care of _____ (Presbytery)

_____ (denomination) since _____ (date)

4. Educational Background:

a. Name of Institution	Dates Attended	Degree Achieved
------------------------	----------------	-----------------

b. Continuing Education/Professional Development (please include dates):

c. Community and Civic Activities:

d. Presbytery and General Assembly Activities:

Name: _____

e. Ecumenical Activity:

f. Special Interests, Hobbies:

g. Languages you can speak (and level of proficiency):

h. Types of supervision/accountability you have found helpful in your ministry:

Part 3: Narrative

Name: _____

1. **Life Story:** In one page, describe your life's journey. Include key incidents that were significant in your formation as a person and your call to ministry. State your personal ideals and goals.

Name: _____

2. Please describe briefly (confine your answers to space allotted):

a. My leadership style: *(How you include others in decision-making, administrative style, ways you deal with conflict, etc.)*

b. My worship emphases: *(preaching style, preferred worship emphases and style, etc.)*

c. My call to ministry: *(What type of ministry role are you called to? What would effectiveness look like in that role?)*

Name: _____

3. Comment briefly on your views as relates to:

a. Spiritual giftedness

b. Charismatic expression in worship (*manifestation of spiritual gifts*)

c. Women in ordained office

d. Presbyterian connectional system

4. Are you in agreement with the system of government of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church? If no, please explain briefly: Yes No

5. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the **Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms** of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures? If no, please explain as part of your answer to #6 below. Yes No

Name: _____

6. Do you take any exceptions to the **Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms**? If yes, please identify the topic with the specific chapter and paragraph or the question number to which you take your exception. Yes No

(Note: you will need to submit a written statement of these exceptions to the Ministerial Committee and Presbytery during the examination process)

7. Do you willingly offer the sacrament of infant baptism to Christian parents? Yes No
If no, please explain briefly:

1. Bibliology

God has revealed Himself to humanity through the inspired Scripture. He has used human authors with different genres, emphases, and backgrounds and through the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, has brought us the Bible that we know today; it is inspired by God. In it, the regenerated believer learns all that God desires to reveal to us and what is required for godly living. The Scriptures are also without error and are true in everything that they assert. The Bible is authoritative, relevant, and is lacking in nothing. The Scriptures are also living and active as the Holy Spirit also works in the process of reading and interpreting the Scripture as He illuminates truth and applications to the believer to this day. Through the Bible we can know God and what He desires from His people.

Revelation. God has revealed Himself to humanity through both general revelation, to everyone at all times, and special revelation, to specific people at specific times. General revelation encompasses God revealing Himself externally, through nature (Psalm 8:1-5 & 19:1-6, Rom. 1:18-21), history (Acts 17:26) and God's providence (Matt. 5:44-55, Acts 14:15-17), and internally, through our humanity (Gen. 1:26-27), consciousness (Rom. 2:14-15 & 1:32), and our innate knowledge that something or someone greater is at work in this world (Acts 17:22-23, Rom. 1:21-25). We also have special revelation, which is the very words of God spoken to and through human authors, the Bible (Deut 31:9-13, 2 Tim 3:16), or other means such as visions (Isa. 1:1, Acts 9:3-16, Rev. 1:9-20), theophanies (Gen. 15, Ex. 3), angels (Dan. 10:10-21, Acts 10:30-33), etc. God has also revealed Himself, specially, through His son Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 1:18 & 14:9, Rom. 5:8). The Holy Spirit assists us in our interpreting and understanding of special revelation and helps us discern what is true (John 16:13, 1 Cor. 2:14).

Inspiration of Scripture. The Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, is inspired and breathed out by God Himself through the process known as the plenary

verbal inspiration of Scripture (Deut. 31:24-26, 2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:20-21). While the Scripture is indeed divinely inspired, God preserved and utilized the voice, views, and personalities of the human authors as well as the use of different genres and literary styles to communicate what He wanted readers to know about Himself and godly living. The Holy Spirit was directly involved through the authors as they revealed everything that God desired to reveal about Himself and concerning godly living (2 Tim. 3:16).

Infallibility of Scripture. The Bible is also completely infallible, in the original manuscripts, without contradiction if interpreted and expounded properly (John 17:17, Num. 23:19). Infallibility does not, however, pertain to grammatical anomalies, precise scientific measurements, or the use of figures of speech. It is infallible not only in its moral and social implications but also in its recording of historical events (2 Tim. 3:16, Prov. 30:5); it is true in all that it affirms.

Illumination of Scripture. The Bible is a living and active document, and regenerated believers have a different and special perspective through the illumination provided by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 4:12). While the Scriptures are clear and understandable to all, because of the Fall, the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scriptures in a special way for believers. Scripture is also clear so that all regenerated believers can read and understand the overall message of a passage with God's assistance through the Holy Spirit (Psalm 119:30, Rom. 15:4, Eph. 3:4, 2 Tim. 2:7). Some passages, however, may be more difficult to understand than others (2 Pet. 3:15-16).

Authority of Scripture. The Bible is also authoritative and the very word of God, and is shown to be by the authors of the Old Testament (Jer. 31:15, Ezek. 13:3, Hag. 1:7) the apostolic authors of the New Testament (Gal 1:11-12, 2 Pet. 3:2, Heb 1:1-2), Jesus (Mat. 5:17-18, Luke 16:17, John 10:35), and God the Father Himself (Mal 4:4). Because of this God-given authority, believers should always seek to correctly interpret and apply God's Word to their lives. It is the final word on godly living and sets the gold standard for the life of the believer.

2. Theology Proper

The Father. God the Father is coequal in deity, essence, and attributes with the Son and the Spirit. He is the creator of all things through the Son and by the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1). His role in the Godhead is one of ultimate judge and the one to whom all creation is accountable (Rev. 20:11-15). There is also a clear sense that the Father has a headship role in the Godhead as Jesus seeks to bring glory to Him (Phil. 2:5-11) and the Holy Spirit works to draw people close to the Father (John 6:44). This does not mean, however, that there is any sort of hierarchy that exists between the members of the Godhead. They exist in perfect, coequal, and loving relationship with one another.

3. Christology

The Son. Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, the divine Word, and God's Son. He is co-equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is fully divine and fully human and these dual natures are distinct and yet have complete unity in His person. His divinity is shown through the authority of His own words (Matt 5:18), His unique relationship with God the Father (Luke 2:49), His receiving of worship (Matt 14:33), and the claims He made about Himself that explicitly showed His divinity and difference from normal men (John 8:58-59). Jesus is shown to be human in the way that He was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), He had a human body (Luke 2:52), a human mind (Heb. 5:8-9), and He was tempted as we are (Heb. 4:15). Also, Jesus still is a man and will remain one for all of eternity (Acts 1:11). In this Christ is our model and example for He was truly a man and lived a life with the same struggles and temptations that we face. Christ also fulfills the three Messianic offices of prophet, priest, and king. He was a prophet in that He spoke with the words and authority of God the Father and called all people to turn from their sin and return to God (2 Cor. 5:20). He was a unique in His role as prophet because He was God speaking the very words of God. Jesus also acted as a Priest in His

atoning for our sins (John 10:11 & 17-18) and interceding before God on our behalf. Finally, Christ acts as king of nature, of the church, and of all people. As king, Christ rules, defends and shepherds the church and also will, at the end of the age, judge all people (Rev 5:9-10).

4. Pneumatology

The Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the breath of God, who sustains creation, is co-equal with the Father and the Son. Scripture shows us the personhood of the Spirit through passages that show that He thinks (Rom. 8:27), He feels (Eph. 4:30), He convicts (John 16:18), and many other attributes that leave no doubt that the Spirit is a person. Also, we find in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is a part of the divine Godhead and coequal with the Father and the Son. He is said to be omniscient (John 16:13-15), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10), and He is even called God (Acts 5:3-4). Believers are to be filled with the Spirit and He is the one who empowers and enables ministry (Eph. 5:18).

5. Anthropology

God created mankind in His own image in order to bring more glory to Himself. Man was created to have dominion and stewardship over the earth and live for an eternity with God. However, because of the Fall and individual sin and depravity, mankind has distorted the image of God and was rendered unable to have a relationship with God. As a result, mankind is destined for an eternity in Hell unless there is supernatural intervention from the Holy Spirit and the individual comes to a saving knowledge and relationship with Jesus Christ. If one receives the gift of grace and Jesus provides salvation from their sins and God's judgment, then this relationship with God is restored and one day their purpose and created design will be fully realized as they live for an eternity in perfect relationship with God.

Human Nature. Humans are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28) created so that we might glorify Him (Eph. 1:11-12) and have relationships with Him (Jer. 9:23-24). However, due to Fall through the inherited sin of Adam, and the individual sins that we commit and are held responsible for, we are inexorably separated from God (Rom. 6:23). As a result, the unregenerate believer is to be regarded as totally depraved, their lives completely and wholly infested and infected with sin and completely unable to do anything that is pleasing to God (Psa. 51:5).

6. Hamartiology

Sin is when we go against the standard that God has set for us. He is perfect, holy, and good. Anything that we do to violate the standard that He has set down is either a sin of commission or a sin of omission. Because of the Fall, we are born with a sin nature; we are totally depraved and our lives are infested with sinfulness. We are not victims of sin, rather we are perpetrators of sin and are guilty before God unless we receive the grace and forgiveness offered by Jesus.

Original Sin. Humanity was created originally in the image of God and in perfect relationship with Him. Unfortunately, Adam broke that perfect relationship with God through his sin in the Garden of Eden. As a result of Adam's transgression, sin has become a part of the human race affecting and infecting everyone who has been born since. We are all totally depraved because of the sin of our father Adam (Rom 5:12).

Sin Nature. That humanity is in bondage to sin (meaning we personally violate God's moral law) and fallen. The consequences of this fallenness are death and eternal separation from God (Rom. 6:23). Sin renders us unable to come to God on our own (Heb. 11:6). We are completely unable to respond to the message of the Gospel because we are unable to understand it (1 Cor. 2:14), believe in it (Rom. 14:23) or obey the Law, which God set down for us (Rom. 8:6-8). Furthermore, the Bible tells us that we are dead in our sin and as a result we are unable to even realize the wonderful gift of

salvation that is placed before us without divine intervention (Eph. 2:1-3). This inability to understand or believe is a result of our total depravity (John 6:65). It is only by His grace that we can even respond to the Gospel; it is not of our own doing (Eph. 2:8-9).

Effects of Sin. Because of the sin in our lives, humans are guilty before God and deserving of death, judgment, and eternal punishment (Rom. 3:23). Without the grace of God and the movement of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, there is nothing that a non-believer can do to be reconciled to God. There is no hope that somehow God will overlook their sins nor can someone hope to repay God the debt that they have accumulated because of their sinfulness. Everyone who does not have the grace of God will justly suffer eternal punishment for his or her sins (Rom. 6:23).

7. Soteriology

Salvation occurs when a person places their faith in the atoning power of Jesus Christ's death on the cross for the forgiveness of their sins. As a result of total depravity and spiritual deadness present within non-believers, the Holy Spirit must regenerate the non-believer and bring an awareness of God's grace before they are saved. Immediately after, the individual will repent of their sins and receive the gift of salvation. At this point, God has justified them, declaring them righteous and absolving the guilt brought by sin. The believer has put on the righteousness of Christ.

Plan. God's plan for mankind is to live in perfect and eternal relationship with Him. Unfortunately, due to the Fall and individual sin, we are separated from Him and the relationship He desires is effectively severed. However, God, in eternity past, planned for Jesus to come and offer a way for the forgiveness of sin and reconciling the relationship between God and man (Titus 3:5). We are saved by putting our faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ, being cleansed of sin, and having our relationship with the God restored (Eph. 2:4-5).

Process. The process of salvation begins with God's election of an individual (Rom. 8:29). The elect, however, begin to experience salvation personally when they hear the effective call of the Gospel. The "moment of salvation" occurs when the Holy Spirit regenerates their heart and the individual places their faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life (Eph. 2:4-5). At this point the believer is justified, adopted into the family of God, made coheir with Christ, and begins the life-long process of sanctification (1 Cor. 6:11). The believer will persevere in their faith until death, when they will be ultimately saved from sin and death, glorified, and given a glorified body (Rom. 8:28-30).

Election. God has predestined or elected those who would be saved from sin and death (Rom. 8:29). This election has nothing to do with individual's actions or personal merit; it is God's gracious decision to save the elect from eternal death (Eph. 2:1-10).

Atonement. Atonement is the work of Jesus Christ whose sinless life, lack of sin nature, and divinity made Him the ultimate Passover lamb (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Even though He was without sin, God judged Him for the sins of mankind (Rom. 3:25, Rom 5:10, 1 John 2:2). Jesus showed that He was truly righteous and had the power over death through the resurrection demonstrating His power over sin and death and that He truly could offer salvation to others (Rev. 5:9).

Regeneration. Because non-believers are completely dead in their trespasses, a desire for salvation can only come by the regeneration of the heart through the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-7, Rom. 3:11). When the Spirit regenerates an individuals' heart, they in turn repent of their sins and receive the gift of salvation from Jesus (Eph. 2:4-5).

Conversion. Conversion is the personal response to the message of the Gospel (1 John 1:9). As stated above, the individual cannot convert without the regeneration from the Holy Spirit (Rom. 3:11). However, once regeneration occurs, the believer responds and is converted. They go from death in to life; they are born again.

Justification. Justification is the act by which God declares the regenerated believer as righteous because of the atoning work of Christ for their sins (Psa. 32:1-2). When justified God imputes the righteousness of Christ upon his or her life (1 Pet. 2:24). Justification is a legal term and is not based on the merit of the believer. It is God declaring the elected, regenerated, and converted believer as eternally and unconditionally righteous (Titus 3:5-7).

Sanctification. Sanctification is the means by which we become more and more like Christ (2 Cor. 7:1). It is the work of Holy Spirit in our lives convicting us of our sins and causing us to grow spiritually (1 Pet. 1:2). We would use the term, “spiritual growth.” Sanctification might also be thought of as the continual transformational power of the Holy Spirit that is active in our lives (Gal. 3:2). Sanctification is accomplished by the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit by actively engaging in a relationship with God and coming to know and love Him more (Heb. 12:14).

Glorification. After the believer dies, he or she is glorified. This is the moment where death is decisively conquered and the believer is finally free from the effects of sin (Rev. 21:1-4, 22:3-5). Upon glorification, the believer receives a new body that is free from the effects of the Fall (2 Cor. 5:1). Glorification is the end point of the path of salvation and redemption (1 Pet. 1:3-4).

8. Satan

Satan is a fallen angel and the chief enemy in the Christian faith. He is a tempter (Matt. 4:1-11, 1 Cor. 7:5), deceiver (Acts 5:3), liar (John 8:44), and destroyer (John 10:10). He seeks to disrupt the work of God in the world throughout history. He will be finally defeated by Jesus and will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity (Rev. 20: 7-10).

9. Angels and Demons

Angels are created (Col. 1:16), immortal (Luke 20:36), heavenly beings who serve as God's messengers, heralds, instruments of His power, and exalters of His name (Ps. 103:20-21). Like humans, they are elect (1 Tim. 5:21) and those who are fallen, demons, will face judgment (1 Cor. 6:2-3).

10. Ecclesiology

Nature and Function. The church is the gathering of true believers in all places and at all times (Rev. 7:9). The church is both visible and invisible. The visible church is composed of all professing believers some of which are not true believers (1 John 2:19-20). And it is invisible because God is the only one who knows the heart and who is truly His (2 Tim 2:19). The church exists to worship God, teach and build up believers, and to proclaim the Gospel to non-believers (1 Pet. 2:4).

Government. The church is governed first and foremost by the chief shepherd, Jesus Christ. The church also appoints elders lead, teach, and shepherd the church. Elders act as under shepherds in submission to Jesus Christ (Titus 1:5-9). The elders are supported by deacons who are charged with various ministerial tasks to be carried out within the church community (1 Tim 3:8-13).

Leadership. The church is to be governed by the elders, who lead the church in submission to the head, who is Christ. The job of the elder is to lead the church, teach the church, protect the church from false teaching and teachers, and be an example of godliness for the church (Titus 1:5-9).

Sacraments. The church is commanded to practice two sacraments, baptism and communion. The sacrament of Baptism is an outward symbol of the believers' death to sin and new life in Christ (Rom. 6:3-7). Paul characterizes baptism as the new circumcision; it is an outward symbol representing the believers membership in the new covenant (Col. 2:11-12). Infants may also be baptized as believing parents put their hope and trust in the Lord that their child will one day choose to follow Jesus and take up their

own membership in the covenant community of believers. The sacrament of communion is a special remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus and the forgiveness of sin brought through His bodily death and the spilling of His blood (Matt. 26:26-28).

11. The Spiritual Life of the Believer

Sanctification is the means by which we become more and more like Christ (2 Cor. 7:1). It is the work of Holy Spirit in our lives convicting us of our sins and causing us to grow spiritually (1 Pet. 1:2). We would use the term, “spiritual growth.”

Sanctification might also be thought of as the continual transformational power of the Holy Spirit that is active in our lives (Gal. 3:2). Sanctification is accomplished by the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit by actively engaging in a relationship with God and coming to know and love Him more (Heb. 12:14).

12. Eschatology

Jesus will one day return bodily in the clouds for His bride, the church (Rom 8:23). He will judge all people; the believers will go on to eternal life, and the unregenerate to eternal death (Rev. 20:11-15). After the judgment, God will replace the heavens and the earth with a new heaven and a new earth, free from all corruption and sin, and He will rule and reign eternally (1 Cor. 15:28, 2 Pet. 3:12-13, Rev. 21:1-2). The people of God will live with Him for an eternity in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2-3). There will no longer be any more sin and suffering and our lives will be marked by perfect righteousness and relationship with each other and God, death will be swallowed up by life (Rev 21:4)

13. Evangelism

The church exists to evangelize to all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). In training its members in the ways of the Lord, the members of the church are encouraged to go out and spread the good news of the Gospel. In fact, the Great Commission is the marching orders for all who call on the name of Jesus. Even though we know that God elects some to salvation, believers are nevertheless called to be a part of the ministry of reconciliation of calling people to put their faith and trust in Jesus (2 Cor. 5:16-6:2). It is not for the believer to know who is called, it is their work to share the Gospel.

14. Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are the special empowerments for ministry imparted on a believer by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:5). Examples of such gifts might be administration, faith, wisdom, teaching, or serving (1 Cor. 12-14, Eph. 4:11). The purpose of these gifts is to minister to the members of the church as well as in some way be an evangelistic witness to non-believers by our use of these gifts (1 Cor. 14:24). We must remember that these are gifts from God and that we are never to abuse them or attempt to use them for the purpose of personal gain. We must also remember to glorify God for this work that He has prepared for the believer and how the Holy Spirit has empowered us to accomplish them.

Statement of Faith Part 2

Ryan Suzuki

1. State in your own words your view of the Scriptures and the place the Scriptures will have in your ministry.

The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God that is essential for the purpose of knowing God, the Gospel, and his expectations for us as we follow him. The Bible is the ultimate source for believers to know and understand God's perspective on any subject we need information on that it speaks to. It is the ultimate source for the believers life and practice. I will use it to inform my teaching, my ministry, my leadership, and my life.

2. What distinctions of the Reformed faith appeal to you?

The Reformed tradition appeals to my belief that we are completely and utterly without hope apart from God's gracious love and mercy on us. There is nothing that we can do, apart from God, that can earn us our salvation. The tenets of Reformed theology, in my view, are the most helpful model for understanding the narrative of the Bible and the Gospel. TULIP is an incredibly helpful and ultimately encouraging way to understand God's redemptive, salvific work in the lives of those whom he has called. Reformed theology has always informed my faith and as such, being a part of the EPC is a great fit for me.

3. What/Who is the Holy Spirit and how important is his ministry?

The Holy Spirit, the breath of God, who sustains creation, is co-equal with the Father and the Son. Ultimately, as believers, the Holy Spirit is God in and with me. He is my guide and I must and will follow him where he leads. The Holy Spirit empowers believers with spiritual gifts to accomplish ministry, enabling us to do the work that God has given us.

4. What is your position on women in leadership roles in the church?

Women can and are called and gifted for service in ordained ministry. As the church and the individual discern these calls, they should be free to serve and to minister in that capacity. There are several instances in Scripture where we see women in roles of spiritual leadership whether we go back to Deborah in Judges or Junia in Romans. Also, we see in 1 Corinthians 11:5-6, Paul is assuming that there are women who are praying and prophesying in the church. Ultimately, this is a non-essential and I am thankful to be part of denomination that sees it as such.

5. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the Presbyterian form of government?

The strengths are many in the Presbyterian form of government. There is great connection within the Session, the Presbytery, and the National General Assembly that fosters mutuality as well as accountability. The sense of order and the rules that govern the church are very helpful and foster a sense of community and oneness.

As far as I've seen, the weakness of this form of government is that it can be restrictive in matters that are more spontaneous or require fast action. The accountability and care is overall a benefit but it can hinder efforts at times.

6. Explain in your own words your philosophy of ministry.

I believe it is my calling to present the Gospel through word and deed in any way I can. My desire is that through the ministries that I am connected to, people will experience Jesus and come to know him, to have an opportunity to devote their lives to him with joy. I believe that we serve a God who is tremendously loving, merciful, and interesting. He is worthy to be known and it is my passion that others would experience this love to know who God is and what he has done for them.

7. Describe your approach personally and as a pastor in a local church to evangelism.

I am enthralled by who God has revealed himself to be. The Gospel is truly good news and I want all that I encounter to know it. I will proclaim the Gospel with my voice, I will show the love of the Gospel through my actions, and I will seek to show his love and beauty to others. As a pastor, it is of course my duty and privilege to proclaim the Gospel whenever and wherever appropriate. To remind the believers of the goodness of God and to hopefully be used by God to enlighten the hearts of those who do not believe. It's also my responsibility to equip those in my church to share and be witness of the Gospel of Jesus to all who would hear them.

8. As you reflect on your life, explain your sense of call to ministry.

As a high school student, I experienced a sudden, unexpected, and clear call into vocational ministry. I have devoted myself to following this call and have had it affirmed by God, by others, and by the church over and over again. It was a call that came on quite suddenly as a teenager but it has not wavered or faded. I believe that this is still God's call on my life.

9. Elaborate on your convictions about personal accountability in your life and in the lives of Christians to whom you might minister.

I have many people in my life who keep me accountable. I believe this is essential for my personal life, for my ministry, and for the integrity of the church in which I serve. Without accountability, I cannot see how I can continue to serve effectively without falling into temptation. It is important to me to have people in my life, friends and family, who will ask me about my life and love me enough to confront me when I am in error.

(please print or type)

Preferred Address:

Email: _____

Dates

Dates

Name: _____

3. Ordination Status

Ordained by (church/city/state): _____

Ordination Date: _____

If not ordained:

Church Membership (church, city, state): _____

Candidate Under Care of (denomination and presbytery): _____

_____ since (date): _____

4. Educational Background:

a. Name of Institution	Dates Attended	Degree Achieved
------------------------	----------------	-----------------

b. Continuing Education/Professional Development (please include dates):

c. Community and Civic Activities:

Name: _____

d. Presbytery and General Assembly Activities:

e. Ecumenical Activity:

f. Special Interests, Hobbies:

g. Languages you can speak (and level of proficiency):

h. Types of supervision/accountability you have found helpful in your ministry:

Name: _____

Part 3: Narrative

- 1. Life Story:** In one page, describe your life's journey. Include key incidents that were significant in your formation as a person and your call to ministry. State your personal ideals and goals.

Attachment to PIF Part 3 – Life Story

I was born in Japan. At the age of 7, my parents moved to the United States. My father was a United States citizen, and therefore, it was relatively simple for my younger brother and I to become naturalized United States citizens. Moving to a new country, learning a new language was a huge obstacle. In retrospect, the obstacle provided the opportunity for me to overcome new challenges throughout my life.

I had extremely little religious exposure to through the first 19 years of my life. In my second year of college, my younger brother shared with the family that he had become Christian. My agnostic parents and I did not think much of this, until my brother began to talk about the second coming of Christ and being raptured. It was then that my parents asked me to talk some sense into my brother. After about a year of many conversations, I turned to Christ in repentance and faith.

About 5 years after conversion, I sensed a call to go to seminary. I did not sense a call to vocational ministry. In obedience, I deferred my pursuit of an MBA and enrolled at Fuller Theological Seminary. There I met a woman who would become my wife. Tragically, after 18 months of marriage, my wife asked for a separation. Though I desperately sought reconciliation, my wife filed for a Summary Dissolution of Marriage.

My ex-wife called me after I was served with the papers. Her voice was surprisingly pleasant. She asked me to simply sign the document where marked and return it to her attorney. She told me that this was a quite simple process, and because we had no children or any assets to speak of, she said this was the best way to go. Filled with grief, I read through the document. One line caught my attention. The document I was being asked to sign said that both spouses mutually agree to end the marriage. I could not sign the document. I called her back to inform her that there was no way I could sign this document because I do not agree that the marriage should end. My wife became angry and told me she would simply file for a Regular Dissolution of Marriage that I cannot contest. She did just that and our marriage was officially dissolved 6 months later.

Though legally I was not married, I felt compelled to seek reconciliation. I remember going to the chapel at Fuller Seminary almost daily to pray that God would restore our marriage. For my part, I refused to even think about entering any relationships with another woman – i.e. I did not date at all. This went on for five years. I did write to her, and each time, my ex-wife rejected my offer to seek reconciliation. Her message to me was that I needed to move on. In fact, though I abstained from dating, my ex-wife was involved in many relationships with men (one while we were still legally married), and was engaged to be married twice, during the five year period when I sought reconciliation.

I finally accepted the fact that my marriage to my ex-wife was dead when my ex-wife wrote a letter that was quite different in tone. There was no anger in her words. She simply stated that she had moved on, and she asked me to do the same.

About 7 years after my first marriage ended in divorce, I met a woman at my church. She had just become a widow with three small children. Her husband had died of brain cancer. My pastor asked if I would consider entering a relationship with her. I was a bit surprised by the question. My pastor is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. He has very conservative views on marriage/divorce/remarriage. I asked if he think it would be proper for me to even consider remarriage. He told me that in my situation, he felt God would permit me to remarry.

We married in 1990. We have now been together 29 years and 9 months. All my girls are married, and I have 8 grandchildren. Our marriage has been a huge blessing. In fact, God used my wife Mary to open my heart to ministry. When Mary and I married, she asked me about my M. Div. degree. I explained that people who get this degree go into vocational ministry, such as becoming a pastor. I reassured her that I had no such intentions. I had become a licensed CPA in the state of California, in 1984. I saw no reason to leave this profession. One day, in the spring of 1995, the senior pastor of the church Mary and our family attended, asked if I would consider going into ministry. He said that he observed my gifting and felt God was calling me to ministry. I explained to him my background including my divorce and did not feel comfortable going into ministry. He asked me to pray about it. When he left, my wife Mary asked why he had come. I told him that one reason was to ask me if I would consider going into ministry. I reassured her that I would never do that. Mary surprised me and said that in her mind, I should consider doing just that – go into ministry. I was ordained as an associate pastor in 2000, after serving as a lay minister for four years.

My service at Wintersburg has been quite interesting. There have been many joyful moments. I led the team that resulted in our dismissal from the PCUSA with no payment. I have witnessed hundreds of people respond to the gospel in repentance and faith. God has used me to minister healing and reconciliation to marriages that were broken and on the verge of divorce. I have had the privilege of mentoring many men. There have been difficult moments in ministry. Some were so trying that I felt a lot of darkness. Each one of those moments have made me stronger, helped me grow in humility, and taught me the lesson of giving thanks in all things.

The theme verse for my life is Galatians 2:20.

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

To God be the glory!

Name: _____

2. Please describe briefly (confine your answers to space allotted):

a. My leadership style: *(How you include others in decision-making, administrative style, ways you deal with conflict, etc.?)*

b. My worship emphases: *(preaching style, preferred worship emphases and style, etc.)*

c. My call to ministry: *(What type of ministry role are you called to? What would effectiveness look like in that role?)*

Name: _____

3. Comment briefly on your views as relates to:

a. Spiritual giftedness

b. Charismatic expression in worship (manifestation of spiritual gifts)

c. Women in ordained office

d. Presbyterian connectional system

4. Do you agree with the system of government of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please explain briefly):

5. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms* of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please explain as part of your answer to #6 below)

Name: _____

6. Do you take any exceptions to the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms*?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify the topic with the specific chapter, paragraph, or question number with which you take your exception. (*Note: you will need to submit a written statement of these exceptions to the Ministerial Committee and presbytery during the examination process.*)

7. Do you willingly offer the sacrament of infant baptism to Christian parents?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please explain briefly):



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Candidates Statement of Faith (Part 1)

Provide a brief statement for each item in your own words of your own beliefs.

Candidate's Name _____ Date _____

1. The Bible (Bibliology)

2. God the Father (Theology proper)

3. Jesus Christ (Christology)



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4. The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

5. Mankind (Anthropology)

6. Sin (Hamartiology)

7. Salvation (Soteriology)

Attachment to Statement of Faith, part 1

7. Salvation (Soteriology)

I believe salvation is found in Jesus Christ, and Him alone (Acts 4:12). Through confession of Jesus as Lord and belief in Him as Savior, we are saved from sin's curse of eternal separation from God (Romans 10:9). This incomparable work of Christ is seen in these ways:

- a. Sacrifice: Humankind deserves the penalty of death because of our sinfulness. Christ died as a sacrifice on our behalf (Hebrews 9:26)
- b. Propitiation: In order to remove us from the wrath of God that we deserve, Christ's death is a propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:10)
- c. Reconciliation: In order to overcome humankind's separation from God that occurred in Genesis 3, Christ's work was needed to reconcile us to Holy God (2 Corin. 5:18-19)
- d. Redemption: Hopelessly enslaved to sin, humankind was redeemed from sin, bought with the price life of the Son of God (Mark 10:45; 1 Corin. 7:23)
- e. Justification: This is a legal declaration by God that our sins have been forgiven through faith in the work of Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:16)
- f. Imputed Righteousness: When God declares us to be justified, He imputes Christ's righteousness to us. This righteousness is not earned by our good deeds, but rather on the basis of Christ's perfect righteousness (Romans 3:21-22; 4:3; 5:19)
- g. Sanctification: While being pronounced justified is a point in time phenomenon, sanctification occurs throughout the life of the believer. In Sanctification, we are progressively becoming more and more like our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Corin. 3:18)



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8. Satan

9. Angels and Demons

10. The Church (Ecclesiology)

11. The Spiritual Life of the Believer



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12. Future Things (Eschatology)

13. Evangelism

14. Spiritual Gifts



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Candidates Statement of Faith (Part 2)

Provide a brief statement in your own words for each item. Return to the Chair of the Candidates or Ministerial Committee before you are scheduled for your oral ordination exam.

Candidate's Name _____ Date _____

1. State your view of the Scriptures and the place the Scriptures will have in your ministry.

2. What distinctions of the Reformed faith appeal to you?

Attachment to Statement of Faith, part 2

1. State your view of the Scriptures and the place the Scriptures will have in your ministry.

Biblical Authority has its foundation in Scripture. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul writes: *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate equipped for every good work.”* This passage clearly declares that the Scriptures, or the Bible is inspired (which literally means “God-breathed”) by Holy, Almighty, Sovereign, and Gracious God.

That the Bible is “God-breathed” gives it unique authority. The Scriptures, because they are “breathed” by God, stands uniquely supreme to all wisdom, utterance, and philosophical musings of humankind. As to the magnitude and significance of the authority of the Scriptures, Wayne Grudem in his book *Systematic Theology* writes: *“The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.”ⁱ*

Are God-breathed Scriptures still relevant thousands of years after they were given to humankind? Consider the following facts. God is unchanging (Malachi 3:6). Jesus declared in Matthew 24:35: *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”* Based on these passages, the answer to whether Scripture is relevant today is most definitely yes. Furthermore, because Scripture is “God-breathed” by Him who transcends time, Scripture is relevant today and forever more.

When one speaks of Biblical Authority, we recall the classic doctrine of the Christian faith, *Sola Scriptura*. This is a doctrine that distinguishes Protestants from those in the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Scripture by itself is not sufficient but must be supplemented by Church tradition and the teaching authority of the Church. As Protestants, we believe that Scripture alone is our authority, and that all matters concerning faith and practice are taught in the Bible with enough clarity that the ordinary believer can read and understand it.

Sola Scriptura was a slogan of the Reformation. Martin Luther, forever remembered as a key leader in the Reformation, is best remembered for his position on Justification. Luther believed and taught that salvation comes to an individual by God’s grace through faith, so that to be “declared righteous” or “justified” or “saved” is on the sole basis of one’s faith in Jesus Christ apart from any works of merit (Romans 1:17; 3:28; 5:1).ⁱⁱ Luther’s position ran against the traditions and teachings of the church. Luther was forced to defend his position on Justification.

In the year 1519, Luther met with Johannes von Eck at Leipzig, Germany. It was in this meeting that Luther put forth his position that the Bible is the only infallible authority in the church. Paul Althaus summarizes the train of Luther’s thought:

We may trust unconditionally only in the Word of God and not in the teaching of the fathers; for the teachers of the Church can err and have erred. Scripture never errs. Therefore, it alone has unconditional authority. The authority of the theologians of the Church is relative and conditional. Without the authority of the words of Scripture, no one can establish hard and fast statements in the Church.ⁱⁱⁱ

Simply put, the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* asserts that the church's authority is only the Holy Scriptures and not ecclesiastical traditions or human opinions.^{iv} The significance of this doctrine to our circumstance today is that Wintersetburg will look to Scripture first and ultimately, and not to amendments and overtures made at General Assembly meetings of the PC(USA).

In 1978, a group of conservative evangelicals published a document to clarify the infallible and inerrant nature of the Bible. The signees of this document, *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*, included men such as R.C. Sproul, James Montgomery Boice, and Carl Henry. Part of this document is called "A Short Statement."^v

1. God, who is Himself truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer, and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error fault in all its teachings, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the church.

I fully subscribe to these statements.

ⁱ Grudem, Wayne, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), p. 73

ⁱⁱ McKim, Donald K., *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: John Knox Press), p. 152

ⁱⁱⁱ Althaus, Paul, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress), pp. 6-7

^{iv} McKim, Donald K., *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: John Knox Press), p. 263

^v<http://www.reformed.org/documents/index.html?mainframe=http://www.reformed.org/documents/ibci.html>



EPC

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3. What/Who is the Holy Spirit and how important is His ministry?

4. What is your position on women in leadership roles in the church?



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5. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the Presbyterian form of government?

6. Explain your philosophy of ministry.



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7. Describe your approach to evangelism, both personally and as a pastor in a local church.

8. As you reflect on your life, explain your sense of call to ministry.

8. As you reflect on your life, explain your sense of call to ministry.

As I stated in my PIF, I went through a painful divorce at the age of 28. At the time, I was a student in seminary, seeking a Masters degree in Divinity. Coming from a very conservative evangelical background, I immediately concluded that pastoral ministry was out of the question. Therefore, I dropped out of seminary with 5 classes left to complete my degree. Because I saw no possibility of ever becoming a pastor, I saw no reason to finish my studies. I became a CPA (Certified Public Accountant).

Five years after I dropped out of seminary in 1985, I suddenly had an urge to complete my degree. My motivation was to simply finish what I had started. It was clearly not to seek to become a pastor or be engaged in any vocational ministry. By God's grace, I completed my studies at Fuller Seminary, while still working full time as a CPA.

In 1990, I remarried. In 1992, I followed my wife's request to attend a Presbyterian Church for the first time in my life. In 1995, the Senior Pastor of that church came to visit me. He told me that he had been praying earnestly for me and wondered if I would consider going into the ministry. He asked if I had completed my M. Div. When I answered in the affirmative, he asked me to apply for a newly created position as a lay minister, with the intentions of one day being ordained. I wanted to be up front with him. I told him that I had gone through a divorce. He surprised me and said that he knew about my past, and that he did not see my divorce as a hindrance to becoming a pastor. I told him that I would pray about it.

When he left, my wife asked what he wanted. I told her that he wanted to know if I wanted to go into ministry. I reassured her that I had no intentions of doing that, as I had promised her before we were married that I would never go into ministry. To my surprise, she told me that I should consider this. She explained that my countenance changes when I am preparing for a Bible study as opposed to doing income tax returns. She encouraged me to pursue this and see where it goes.

During the application process, my worst fears were realized. Some on the search committee did have an issue with my divorce. During the interview they questioned me vigorously. Facing such questions was one reason I had purposely avoided even thinking of going into ministry. I answered each question the best I could. I refused to put all blame on my ex-wife. Though I desperately wanted to avoid divorce, and tried extremely hard to seek reconciliation, I could never declare that I was sinless in my marriage that lasted about 18 months. I shared with them that my sense of call is grounded firmly in the grace of God. If I were chosen, it would be the result of God's favor upon my life that I certainly did not earn. I was selected.

It has been over 24 years since being called to vocational ministry. I have encountered countless joys as well as some exceedingly difficult times. Through it all, I have come to realize this one truth: I was chosen by God's grace to serve, and I will continue to serve by God's grace, all for God's glory.



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9. Elaborate on your convictions about personal accountability in your life and in the lives of Christians to whom you might minister.

EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Income and Expenses (as of August 31,2020)



	<u>Y-T-D Actual</u>	<u>August Activity</u>	<u>Total Y-T-D</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
INCOME					
POP Church Support	<u>\$72,784.06</u>	<u>\$7,286.83</u>	<u>\$80,070.89</u>	<u>\$146,000</u>	
Other Income -PPP Loan	<u>\$16,354.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$16,354.00</u>		
Total Income	\$89,138.06	\$7,286.83	\$96,424.89	\$146,000	
EXPENSES					
Care of Candidates Committee					
Chairman Salary	\$2,916.69	\$416.67	\$3,333.36	\$5,000	\$1,666.64
Travel-Chairman	\$983.52	\$0.00	\$983.52	\$1,200	\$216.48
Travel-Committee	<u>\$537.88</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$537.88</u>	<u>\$1,000</u>	<u>\$462.12</u>
Total Care of Candidates Expenses	\$4,438.09	\$416.67	\$4,854.76	\$7,200	\$2,345.24
Church Planting Network					
Focal Stipend	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000	\$1,000.00
Assessments	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$200</u>	<u>\$200.00</u>
Total Church Planting Network Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200	\$1,200.00
Church Revitalization					
Focal - Stipend	\$583.31	\$83.33	\$666.64	\$1,000	\$333.36
Travel	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$500</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total Church Revitalization Expenses	\$583.31	\$83.33	\$666.64	\$1,500	\$833.36

EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Income and Expenses (as of August 31,2020)

Ministerial Committee

Chairman Salary	\$17,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$20,000.00	\$30,000	\$10,000.00
Travel-Chairman	\$795.96	\$0.00	\$795.96	\$5,000	\$4,204.04
Travel-Committee	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$500</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>
Total Ministerial Committee Expenses	\$18,295.96	\$2,500.00	\$20,795.96	\$35,500	\$14,704.04

Moderator

Other Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300	\$300.00
Stipend	\$1,166.69	\$166.67	\$1,333.36	\$2,000	\$666.64
Travel	<u>\$1,190.11</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$1,190.11</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>	<u>\$4,809.89</u>
Total Moderator Expenses	\$2,356.80	\$166.67	\$2,523.47	\$8,300	\$5,776.53

Other Expenses

Leadership Training/Discovery Workshop	\$67.10	\$0.00	\$67.10	\$1,000	\$932.90
Mission Committee	\$3,325.00	\$0.00	\$3,325.00	\$7,000	\$3,675.00
Pastors' Retreat Subsidy	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
Total Other Expenses	\$3,392.10	\$0.00	\$3,392.10	\$10,000	\$6,607.90

Presbytery Expenses

Meals and Expense Subsidy	\$3,440.90	\$0.00	\$3,440.90	\$7,500	\$4,059.10
Resource/Teaching Honorariums	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$3,000.00</u>
Total Presbytery Meeting Expenses	\$3,440.90	\$0.00	\$3,440.90	\$10,500	\$7,059.10

Stated Clerk's Office Expenses

Administrator's Salary	\$5,833.31	\$833.33	\$6,666.64	\$10,000	\$3,333.36
Clerk's Salary	\$21,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$36,000	\$12,000.00
Communications	\$450.00	\$0.00	\$450.00	\$700	\$250.00
Conference Service	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Miscellaneous Supplies	\$779.12	(\$63.32)	\$715.80	\$1,500	\$784.20
TE Background Checks	\$199.00	\$0.00	\$199.00	\$300	\$101.00
Website and Computer Support	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200	\$200.00
Travel- Clerk and Assistant	\$1,460.94	\$0.00	\$1,460.94	\$9,500	\$8,039.06
Commissions/Other Travel	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$200.00</u>	<u>\$200.00</u>
Total Stated Clerk's Office	\$29,722.37	\$3,770.01	\$33,492.38	\$58,700	\$25,207.62

EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Income and Expenses (as of August 31,2020)

Treasurer's Expenses

Review of Financial Records	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500	\$0.00
Office Supplies	\$363.46	\$99.00	\$462.46	\$500	\$37.54
Officers and Directors Insurance	\$2,132.00	\$0.00	\$2,132.00	\$2,200	\$68.00
Professional Support	\$180.00	\$30.00	\$210.00	\$400	\$190.00
Stipend Salary	\$2,041.69	\$291.67	\$2,333.36	\$3,500	\$1,166.64
Travel	\$501.30	\$0.00	\$501.30	\$1,500	\$998.70
Payroll Expenses	<u>\$2,565.93</u>	<u>\$366.57</u>	<u>\$2,932.50</u>	<u>\$4,500</u>	<u>\$1,567.50</u>
Total Treasurer's Expenses	\$8,284.38	\$787.24	\$9,071.62	\$13,100	\$4,028.38
 Total All Expenses	 \$70,513.91	 \$7,723.92	 \$78,237.83	 \$146,000.00	 \$67,762.17

**EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Fund Summary (as of August 31, 2020)**



Funds	Prior Month Balance	Income/Transfers August	Expenses August	Balance as of 31-Aug-20
DESIGNATED FUNDS				
Chaplain's Travel Fund	\$1,910.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,910.01
Disaster Relief Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Educational Assistance Fund	\$1,930.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,930.00
New Church Development	\$1,155.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,155.00
Pastor's Care & Support	\$4,628.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,628.00
Pastor's Retreat	\$606.09	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$606.09
Women's Ministries	\$19.19	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$19.19
WO Engage 2025	<u>\$6,496.46</u>	<u>\$700.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$7,196.46</u>
Total Designated Funds	\$16,744.75	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$17,444.75
Other Operating Funds	\$75,894.13	\$9,006.25	\$10,209.73	\$74,690.65
Total Bank Balance	<u>\$92,638.88</u>	<u>\$9,706.25</u>	<u>\$10,209.73</u>	<u>\$92,135.40</u>

Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Per Member Askings (as of Sep 25, 2020)

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Church	Members	Requested	Actual	% of
2		<u>2018</u>	<u>PMA</u>	<u>Giving</u>	<u>Total</u>
3	Centerpoint	947	\$14,205	\$10,000	70%
4	Centerville	343	\$5,145	\$3,776	73%
5	Christ Church East Bay	207	\$3,105	\$3,420	110%
6	Clayton Community	148	\$2,220	\$2,700	122%
7	CPC Danville	1614	\$24,210	\$19,095	79%
8	Covenant Pres Orange	320	\$4,800	\$2,213	46%
9	Covenant Pres Reno	185	\$2,775	\$900	32%
10	Covenant Pres San Diego	112	\$1,680	\$1,015	60%
11	Covenant Community Vacaville	211	\$3,165		
12	Easton	197	\$2,955	\$3,000	102%
13	Fair Oaks Pres	984	\$14,760	\$7,635	52%
14	First Armenian	178	\$2,670	\$2,225	83%
15	First Pres Bakersfield	575	\$8,625	\$5,726	66%
16	First Pres Fresno	599	\$8,985	\$4,500	50%
17	First Pres Hanford	102	\$1,530	\$1,160	76%
18	Fowler	165	\$2,475		
19	**Fremont	939	\$14,085	\$9,000	64%
20	Heritage	36	\$540	\$327	61%
21	Hope	110	\$1,650		
22	Kingman	129	\$1,935	\$1,680	87%
23	Millbrook	31	\$465		
24	Moraga Valley	763	\$11,445	\$10,590	93%
25	New Life, Covelo	19	\$285		
26	San Ramon	212	\$3,180	\$2,805	88%
27	Sanger	94	\$1,410	\$1,200	85%
28	Sierra	300	\$4,500	\$4,349	97%
29	St. John's Assyrian	182	\$2,730		
30	The Table	40	\$600		
31	Valley Community	50	\$750	\$750	100%
32	<u>Woodlake</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>\$1,350</u>	<u>\$1,350</u>	<u>100%</u>
33	<u>Total</u>	9,882	\$148,230	\$99,415	67%
34					
35					
36	**Presbytery Office				

Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
2021 Proposed Budget



DESCRIPTION	2020 BUDGET		2020 ACTUAL ³	2020 %	2020 ESTIMATED	2021 PROPOSED
	TOTAL	YTD				
REVENUE	\$ 146,000	\$ 97,333	\$ 96,425	99%	144,638	\$ 147,500
EXPENSES						
Presbytery Office²						
Salary - Stated Clerk	36,000	24,000	24,000	100%	36,000	36,000
Salary - Presbytery Assistant	10,000	6,667	6,667	100%	10,000	10,000
Travel - Clerk and Assistant	9,500	6,333	1,461	23%	3,000	9,500
Travel - Other	200	133	0	0%	0	200
Conferencing	300	200	0	0%	100	300
Information Tech./Website	200	133	0	0%	0	200
Office Supplies/Postage/Copies	1,500	1,000	715	71%	900	1,000
Communications	700	467	450	96%	700	700
Background Checks	300	200	199	99%	300	300
Ministerial Committee						
Salary - Chair	30,000	20,000	20,000	100%	30,000	30,000
Travel - Chair	5,000	3,333	796	24%	1,000	5,000
Travel - Committee	500	333	0	0%	500	500
Resources/Supplies	0	-	0	0%	0	250
Care of Candidates Committee						
Salary - Chair	5,000	3,333	3,333	100%	4,999	5,000
Travel - Chair	1,200	800	984	123%	1,000	1,200
Committee/Candidate Travel	1,000	667	538	81%	0	1,000
Mission Committee	7,000	4,667	3,325	71%	7,000	7,000
Program						
Travel - Chair/Committee	0	-	0	0%	0	500
Session Minutes Review Committee						
Travel - Chair/Committee	0	-	0	0%	0	500
Nominating Committee						
Travel - Chair/Committee	0	-	0	0%	0	500
Moderator						
Stipend	2,000	1,333	1,333	100%	2,000	2,000
Travel	6,000	4,000	1,190	30%	3,000	6,000
Other Expenses	300	200	0	0%	0	300

Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
2021 Proposed Budget



DESCRIPTION	2020 BUDGET		2020 ACTUAL ³	2020 %	2020 ESTIMATED	2021 PROPOSED
	TOTAL	YTD				
Treasurer's Office						
Salary	3,500	2,333	2,333	100%	3,500	3,500
Travel	1,500	1,000	501	50%	600	1,500
Officer's & Director's Insurance	2,200	1,467	2,132	145%	2,132	2,200
Office Supplies	500	333	462	139%	500	500
Annual Financial Review	500	333	500	150%	500	500
Consulting Support	400	267	210	79%	400	400
Payroll Taxes	4,500	3,000	2,933	98%	4,399	4,500
Presbytery Meetings						
Meals and Expense Subsidy	7,500	5,000	3,441	69%	5,000	7,500
Resource/Teaching Honorariums	3,000	2,000	0	0%	0	3,000
Church Planting						
Stipend - Liaison	1,000	667	0	0%	0	1,000
Travel	0	-	0	0%	0	0
Assessments	200	133	0	0%	0	200
Church Revitalization						
Stipend - Liaison	1,000	667	667	100%	1,000	1,000
Travel	500	333	0	0%	0	500
Other	0	-	0	0%	0	0
Discovery Workshops	1,000	667	67	10%	67	1,000
Pastor's Retreat Subsidy	2,000	1,333	0	0%	0	2,250
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 146,000	\$ 97,333	\$ 78,237		\$ 118,598	\$ 147,500
NET INCOME/LOSS	\$ -	\$ (0)	\$ 18,188			\$ -

1. Per Member Asking Amount **\$ 15.00**

2. Office space provided by Fremont Presbyterian Church
in lieu of a portion of Per Member Asking

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws of EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest

Section 3.04 Membership; Term

The membership of the General Council shall consist of the Moderator, the Past Moderator, the Stated Clerk, the Treasurer, the Ministerial Committee Chairperson, the chairpersons of each of the other permanent committees of the Presbytery, and the Session Review Committee Chairperson.

~~Each Council Member at Large shall be elected by the Presbytery for a term not to exceed one year.~~

Section 6.02 Default Organizational Rules

The following default rules shall apply to Committees and Commissions, except to the extent these bylaws or the Book of Order provide otherwise (e.g., see Article Three with respect to the General Council; Section 6.04 with respect to the Ministerial Committee, Section 6.05 with respect to the Candidate Care Committee, Section 6.06 with respect to the Mission Committee, and Section 6.07 ~~Section 6.06~~ with respect to the Nominating Committee; Section 6.08 ~~Section 6.07~~ with respect to Session Review Committees; and G. 21-1C with respect to Administrative Commissions):

Section 6.06 Mission Committee

The Mission Committee is a Permanent Committee.

(a) Membership

The Mission Committee shall have at least eight members and be established and maintained in such a way as to ensure that there is a ratio of as near to two Ruling Elders to one Teaching Elder as possible. There shall be at least two members of the Mission Committee from each of the geographical regions within the Presbytery.

At its discretion, the Mission Committee may invite active members of Particular Churches with expertise or experience in foreign or domestic missions to assist the work of the Mission Committee (although no such invitee shall be a member of the Mission Committee unless duly elected as member of the Mission Committee pursuant to these Bylaws).

(b) Chairperson

The Mission Committee Chairperson shall be a Teaching Elder or a Ruling Elder elected by the Presbytery. Election shall be for a term of three years, commencing at the beginning of the calendar year after election. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the term of the initial Mission Committee Chairperson shall commence upon election and conclude at the end of the third calendar year after the calendar year in which the initial Mission Committee Chairperson is elected, or earlier, as the Presbytery determines.

A person who has served all or part of two consecutive terms as Mission Committee Chairperson shall be ineligible for reelection as Mission Committee Chairperson for three years.

If desired, an Assistant Mission Committee Chairperson may be elected, in the same manner as the Mission Committee Chairperson, to support or substitute for the Mission Committee Chairperson as needed.

For purposes of these bylaws, unless the context requires otherwise, references to the “*Mission Committee Chairperson*” shall mean the Mission Committee Chairperson of the Presbytery then in office and references to the “*Assistant Mission Committee Chairperson*” shall mean the Assistant Mission Committee Chairperson of the Presbytery then in office.

(c) Privileges and Duties

The Mission Committee shall support foreign and domestic mission work in the EPC, the Presbytery, and each of the Particular Churches, including by maintaining contact with global workers; promoting mission awareness and exchange of information of common mission interest among Particular Churches; encouraging prayer for supported global workers; and endorsing, encouraging, and supporting the work of the mission

sending agency of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (also known as “EPC World Outreach”).

~~Section 6.06~~Section 6.07 **Nominating Committee**

(b) Chairperson

The Nominating Committee Chairperson shall be a Teaching Elder or a Ruling Elder elected by the Presbytery. Election shall be for a term of three years, commencing at the beginning of the calendar year after election. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the term of the initial Nominating Committee Chairperson shall commence upon election and conclude at the end of the third calendar year after the calendar year in which the initial ~~Candidate~~ CareNominating Committee Chairperson is elected, or earlier, as the Presbytery determines.

~~Section 6.07~~Section 6.08 **Standing Committee of Session Review**

Section 8.05 Presbytery Officer Defined

For purposes of these bylaws, the term “*Presbytery Officer*” shall refer to any of the Moderator, the Past Moderator, the Stated Clerk, the Assistant Stated Clerk, the Ministerial Committee Chairperson, the Assistant Ministerial Committee Chairperson, the Mission Committee Chairperson, the Assistant Mission Committee Chairperson, the Candidate Care Committee Chairperson, the Assistant Candidate Care Committee Chairperson, the Nominating Committee Chairperson, the Assistant Nominating Committee Chairperson, the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, the Session Review Committee Chairperson, the Assistant Session Review Committee Chairperson, and the chairpersons of any permanent committees of the Presbytery.

Draft: ME

10/1/20

Julia Leeth

Moderator-Elect Nomination

Professional Service:

- Teaching Elder, Vacaville, CA, EPC, 5/17 to present
- Transitional Pastor, Vacaville, CA, PCUSA/EPC, 9/15 to 5/17
- Transitional Head of Staff, Merced, CA, ECO, 1/15 to 1/16
- Transitional Pastor, Merced, CA, ECO, 7/14 to 1/15
- Executive Presbyter, Stockton Presbytery, CA, PCUSA, 07/11 to 07/14
- Solo Pastor, Lompoc, CA, PCUSA, 12/05 to 07/11
- Associate Pastor, Lakewood, CO, PCUSA, 10/02 to 12/05
- Associate Pastor, Lakeside, CA, PCUSA, 11/00 to 10/02

Other Service:

- Triad Leadership Services, Coach and Consultant, 4/17 to present
- Flourish Coach for ECO, 4/16 to present
- Conflict Consultant for ECO, 3/15 to 4/16
- Ministry Coach for ECO, 1/15 to 1/16
- General Assembly Commissioner from Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2010
- Synod Commissioner from Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2009
- Committee on Ministry Chair, Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2/06 to 7/11
- Committee on Ministry member, Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2/6 to 7/11
- Permanent Judicial Committee, Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2/06 to 7/11
- Nominating Committee member, Santa Barbara Presbytery, 2/06 to 7/11

Education:

- Doctorate of Ministry in Leadership in Changing Church Context from Gordon Conwell
- Master of Divinity from Fuller Seminary, concentration in Youth and Family Ministry
- Completed coursework from Denver Seminary in the Doctorate of Ministry Program in Marriage and Family Counseling, ABD.
- B.A. from San Jose State University, English Literature

Things you may not know:

- Slightly above average cook but throws a great dinner party
- Travels extensively, and favorite is Italy
- Enthusiastic yet inconsistent golfer
- Beloved Auntie JuJu to the coolest niece and nephew around

(please print or type)

Preferred Address:

Alternate Address:

Email: tdhoins@gmail.com

Dates

None at this time

Dates
5/2015 - present

Manager Telecommunications Design Engineering - Intrado Corporation

Name: Timothy D Hoins

3. Ordination Status

Ordained by (church/city/state): _____

Ordination Date: _____

If not ordained:

Church Membership (church, city, state): Three Timbers Church

Candidate Under Care of (denomination and presbytery): _____

Presbytery of the Great Plains _____ since (date): April 2018

4. Educational Background:

a. Name of Institution	Dates Attended	Degree Achieved
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	8/86 - 5/91	Bachelor of Journalism
Sioux Falls Seminary	8/2011 - 5/2018	MDiv

b. Continuing Education/Professional Development (please include dates):

c. Community and Civic Activities:

Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts of America
Bennington Public School Sports Booster Club
Bennington Public Schools Fine Arts Booster Club

Name: Timothy D Hoins

d. Presbytery and General Assembly Activities:

None at this time

e. Ecumenical Activity:

Assist in monthly worship at Sunridge Village independent living apartment complex for 12 years

Pulpit supply for Three Timbers Church - Omaha NE, United Church of Avoca - Avoca IA,
Bluffs Trinity - Fremont NE, and Peace Lutheran - Fremont NE

Leading small group studies and Sunday School

f. Special Interests, Hobbies:

Reading, Golf, Camping, Shooting sports

g. Languages you can speak (and level of proficiency):

English

h. Types of supervision/accountability you have found helpful in your ministry:

Early in seminary, I had a supervising pastor with whom I met with every other week. We would discuss small group activities I was leading and review sermon prep. This was helpful in a mentoring way allowing me to get my feet wet with guidance from the shore.

I have also been part of accountability groups which I feel could have been more successful, but some members were not as serious as others.

Part 3: Narrative

1. Life Story: In one page, describe your life's journey. Include key incidents that were significant in your formation as a person and your call to ministry. State your personal ideals and goals.

My life's journey is not particularly interesting. I grew up in Fairfield, Nebraska, a town of less than 500 people in south central Nebraska. Church was a part of life for everyone I knew. I suppose that is where this specific part of my life journey really started. I was baptized as an infant in the Presbyterian church and was raised in faith, not just by my family, but by wonderful church members who loved on children and helped provide a wonderfully sound foundation of faith. I was raised with the understanding the church and service in the church was simply part of what life was about. It was not a chore, it was not really even a responsibility, it was part of life. Every time I am asked to talk about my youthful years in the church, I am reminded how truly blessed I was.

I grew up, went off to college, met the girl who would eventually become my wife, also a Presbyterian, helped with a high school group in a Presbyterian church I joined in college, got married in a Presbyterian church (notice the theme here) in Omaha, and settled into adult life. We were not the most active members early on. We did not attend every week, but we greeted or helped with coffee whenever we were asked. Once we had kids, took our turn helping in the nursery.

It is easy to look back now and see God moving through all the events of my early adult years, preparing both my wife and I for the times we would need to lean on him most. In 1997, our second child was stillborn. As we reeled from the shock of the event, we found the most natural place for us to turn for support in this terrible time, was not friends and family, but God. Certainly, the love of friends and family was important, but it was the love we had for each other which I unexpectedly found was based in my faith in Jesus Christ, that got us through. In reality, it was the catalyst for all change in our faith walk. From that moment on, we became more active in church. I began finding ways to serve at church more than just greeting and serving coffee.

I was called to be an elder at 30. I would have turned it down thinking I was too young had my wife not reminded me it was a call from God into leadership and I could not tell him no. All the while, my faith grew, I studied God's word which solidified my beliefs to be more than just what I had been taught, but things I accepted as my own. About 15 years ago, I first felt the call to seminary and my wife was not shocked when I broke the news to her. At the time however, our life did not allow us to make the move. So, God provided opportunities for me to serve him and grow in many other ways. When I was finally able to attend seminary on a part time basis and work full time, God blessed me with multiple opportunities to provide long term pulpit supply. Several churches helped offset the cost of seminary. All the while, our marriage and our faith in God were growing.

Throughout the past 15 years, God has strengthened my faith and understanding of my call to minister. I fully understand the call to lead his flock with sound biblically based teaching that un-waivers in the truth of the Gospel message, even when it is uncomfortable to do so. I was on the session of a church which left the PCUSA about two years before the major split started to happen. This church happily moved to the EPC based on the boldness with which they proclaim the essentials of their faith, the reformed tradition.

I am excited to make the move from the secular business world into full time ministry. I am anxious for the challenges both known and unknown as God blesses and trusts me with the call into the role of teaching elder. I hope I will be able to foster a congregation much like the one I was so lucky to grow up in, or the one which came alongside my marriage in one of life's hardest times, or those that helped support me reaching my goals of a Master of Divinity and full-time ministry.

2. Please describe briefly (confine your answers to space allotted):

- a. My leadership style: *(How you include others in decision-making, administrative style, ways you deal with conflict, etc.)*

I believe the best leaders are those who elevate others rather than being elevated themselves. They are willing to humble themselves to discipline and are willing to discipline others. In that same vein, a leader needs to be willing to admit and show weakness. I believe even more importantly than being the leader who is first to the top of the hill, or the old thinking, "I won't ask anyone to do something I'm not willing to do myself," is to allow people to see you try and fail, but keep moving forward. A person afraid of failure cannot lead, and a leader unwilling to admit to failure soon finds themselves leading no one at all. Knowing I cannot possibly have the answer to every situation, I try to take council of those with more experience and balance my decisions accordingly. Indecision by leadership creates a vacuum, which will cripple any organization.

A leader has to know how to balance what they can be involved in and how to balance responsibilities. My personal leadership style has always been one that tries to coach up leaders to take things forward, partners with leaders to get a project back on track, or simply to support from behind the scenes. The trick is to know which situation is which and to know when to say, "I can't do that."

One of the challenges of leadership is dealing with conflict. I have always been a person who does not fear conflict and understands it can even strengthen relationships. In times of conflict, either personal or as a mediator, I try to handle things by stating clearly what I see as the issue and then open myself to listening to what the other person has to say. The biblical model of bringing in a neutral party is something I have done several times and it does help keep open communication flowing.

- b. My worship emphases: *(preaching style, preferred worship emphases and style, etc.)*

I believe an impactful worship service will have a balance of prayer, praise, and preaching. I list prayer first because without prayer we cannot truly prepare ourselves to experience God in our worship services. It is through prayer that we invite the Holy Spirit into our worship, elevating it to the eyes and ears of God the Father. It also builds a protective boma around our worship helping to keep outside influences of our broken world at bay. Praise can take on many forms with prayer most certainly being one of them. It can include skits and dance but is most often associated with music. I am personally more comfortable in a more traditional hymn-based worship, but I certainly can appreciate more "modern" praise music enjoyed by many.

Preaching often takes center stage in worship but it certainly does not have to. My personal belief is that all preaching must be anchored in Holy Scripture even if you are preaching on a modern topic which may not be well covered in the Bible. My individual style is to preach a prepared sermon without using notes (although I do keep a copy at the pulpit to be safe). I am equally comfortable behind a pulpit or preaching without one. I see pros and cons for both. I am very conversational, and I preach a wide range of topics utilizing scripture and popular culture for illustrations. I enjoy writing sermons which can be experiential or resemble more of a detailed Bible study type lesson.

Name: Timothy D Hoins

- c. My call to ministry: *(What type of ministry role are you called to? What would effectiveness look like in that role?)*

I feel called into pulpit ministry, probably most likely to a single pastorate church. Effectiveness to me has two very distinctive looks. The first would be to see an increase in involvement of the current congregation into all internal aspects of the church. Certainly, I do not expect 100% participation, but a steady growth of current members in worship as well as volunteering in church programs is one measure of success. Another is an increase in community outreach which could, in theory, increase numbers within the church as well. While community outreach will mean different things to each church, in its simplest form, it will be an increase of members being the feet, hands, voice, and heart of Christ outside the walls of the church.

3. Comment briefly on your views as relates to:

a. Spiritual giftedness

Certainly, one can use the list of spiritual gifts like those found in Romans and 1 Corinthians, but in doing so, I believe we sometimes attempt to shoehorn people into traditional definitions which end up leaving some unfulfilled and frustrated when they just do not quite fit the mold. I like what Peter tells us in 1 Peter 4:10-11, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracle of God; whoever servers, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ." By not defining the gift, God has given people the freedom to continue exploring and growing in the person God made them to be. Our focus on Spiritual Gifts needs to be equally focused between helping people discover what that gift or gifts may be and helping or teaching people to use them for the Glory of God.

b. Charismatic expression in worship (manifestation of spiritual gifts)

The manifestation of a spiritual gift in worship can be moving and have lasting impact on many people. However, with some of the gifts of the spirit, such as speaking in tongues, there can also be great confusion if the gifts are not easily understood by the members of the congregation and/or visitors. This is why in 1 Corinthians 14 Paul reminds us if there is no one who can interpret tongues then the speaker should "keep quiet in church." I believe this warning fits across the board for the manifestation of all gifts, which makes this a difficult topic. We appear to be speaking out of both sides of our mouths saying we believe in the manifestation of gifts but only want them revealed in simple ways at convenient times. The answer lies in how we teach our congregation about all spiritual gifts and their uses specifically in worship. (However, it ties to other times as well.) Paul also teaches in chapter 14, "Let all things be done for building up." And, "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace." So, we need to teach the use of our gifts being ever mindful of those around us. We must use them in such a way that builds all up and fosters not confusion, but peace.

c. Women in ordained office

It is my belief God does not distinguish between male and female as he delivers giftedness. That, therefore, must include the gift of leadership in ordained office. However, I wholly embrace, "In non-essentials, Liberty," and would happily accept a call into a church which holds the tradition of not ordaining women into office if that is where God leads. While I would not hide my opinion on the subject and would be willing to lead the church in a study on the matter, I would not preach against a particular church's tradition or push for a change. My personal experience with churches that do not ordain women into leadership is that women in the congregation agree with that decision and find ways to serve and lead in a wide variety of ways outside of ordained positions. If they feel differently, they do not stay at the church long.

d. Presbyterian connectional system

If I did not see great value in the connectional system of Presbyterians, I would not seek ordination within the denomination. To many, it is easy to see our teaching and ruling elders as simply the preacher and the church board. But the picture has such greater depth if we look at it through the lens of 1 Peter 2:5-9 the priesthood of all believers (which includes nonordained members). We trust God has called each leader to be in their specific places at that specific time to lead, not just their church, but the regional and national body. The call of an elder at Cornerstone Church in Stapleton, Nebraska is as sacred as a call to Kirk of the Hills in Tulsa. While they serve two very different congregations in different presbyteries, they nonetheless serve equally as called leaders in the larger denomination. So that as individual members and as one connected body of Christ, we, "may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light."

Name: Timothy D Hoins

4. Do you agree with the system of government of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?

☒ Yes ☐ No (please explain briefly):

5. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms* of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?

☒ Yes ☐ No (please explain as part of your answer to #6 below)

Name: Timothy D Hoins

6. Do you take any exceptions to the *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms*?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please identify the topic with the specific chapter, paragraph, or question number with which you take your exception. *(Note: you will need to submit a written statement of these exceptions to the Ministerial Committee and presbytery during the examination process.)*

7. Do you willingly offer the sacrament of infant baptism to Christian parents?

☒ Yes ☐ No (please explain briefly):

CANDIDATE'S NAME: _____Tim Hoins_____ DATE: _____1-9-20_____

Please attach a brief, statement of your own beliefs in your own words about the following:

1. The Bible (Bibliology)

Without the acceptance of Biblical authority in Christian life, the building blocks of our faith begin to be torn down. Unfortunately, over the last fifty years there has been an active movement to tear down Holy Scripture from its place at the heart of the Christian Faith. This is a natural result of the fallen state of humanity which seeks to define God on its own terms. To combat this frightening trend, we must first be willing to accept, truly accept, the sixty-six books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments as the authoritative, infallible, word of God. It is self-attesting across the entirety and never in contradiction with itself. The Bible is the complete and final authority on subjects about which it speaks and is the perfect guide to finding answers to questions on which it does not speak. We must make every effort to remove from it the tainting of human tradition and cultural whims; it is not simply a “holy book” amongst other “holy books,” but the incontrovertible truth without parallel, without equal. Accepting biblical authority is not always easy, convenient, or comfortable, but it is necessary if we are to be witnesses of Christ within our own Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and all the world.

2. God the Father (theology proper)

When speaking of the Trinity, I find trying to define God the Father to be perhaps the most difficult. Difficult because as I attempt to put God in terms of the limited understanding of my mind, I find myself being asked, “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” (Job 38:2) Or, am I like Solomon, “chasing after the wind?” Yet, since human language is the only way we can discuss God, then there must be some value in the use of everyday words like Merciful, Just, Jealous, Good, Loving, Unchanging, Sovereign, and Holy. However, if I am forced to use one word, one attribute of God to define God and sum up all the rest, that word would be faithful.

God is perfectly faithful. That faithfulness extends out from his own “self,” into his creation and includes humanity. His faithfulness is seen throughout scripture as the story of redemption unfolds throughout the OT culminating in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the promised redeemer. It then continues on with the sending of the Holy Spirit which convicts us and calls us toward the one, never changing, always faithful father, God.

3. Jesus Christ (Christology)

Far too often we allow ourselves to be pulled into the debate of who Jesus really was without understanding, that for the Christian to open the door of debate on this subject, we have already lost the argument. In all of Jesus' "I am" statements, nowhere does he give the option to believe he is something less than what he claims to be. Either he is the, "Messiah," the "Son of God," or Christianity cannot exist. These are the only two choices we have. At the core of this Christian belief is the understanding that Christ himself was both fully human and fully divine. It is only this combination of divine and human that makes the unblemished sacrifice for sin possible. To open ourselves to any other possibilities introduces our faith to the false teachings of Universalism which renders the life, death, and resurrection of Christ unnecessary. There is no room for debate! Each Christian must understand Jesus of Nazareth is exactly who he said he was, "The way, the truth and the life." Therefore Christ is our only hope for redemption and salvation in our lives.

4. The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

No discussion of the person of the Holy Spirit (HS) can begin until a baseline is set recognizing the Spirit as the completely unique third person of the Holy Trinity. It is the Holy Spirit which applies the divine work of salvation, ordained by the Father and accomplished by the Son. After the ascension of Christ, the HS was sent to be our helper and guide. Although unique for each person, the HS provides the irresistible call from God to seek relationship with him through Jesus. The HS convicts us of our sins helping us understand our need for repentance and redemption. The HS holds the role of translator to humanity. The translation and understanding of the word and will of God would be impossible without the Spirit as a guide.

5. Mankind (Anthropology)

A look at humanity is like looking up from the bottom of a great canyon. Both sides of the canyon are parts of the same hole, and yet, they must by pure definition, be separated without the possibility of being brought back together. On one side, we see humanity made in the image of God. Beings created to be relational with creative imaginations. We have the ability to see beyond ourselves and to look to the future with hope. We were created to fellowship with each other, with creation, and with God himself. On the other side of the canyon, we see humanity made in the image of God yet, living in our fallen state. We are lost in utter despair, not because God wants us to be there, but we are trapped there by our own sinfulness. No matter what we do, or how hard we work the two sides of the canyon can never meet.

Our God looks down from his throne and does not see a canyon made up of two separated walls. Our God sees a canyon made of two walls and a canyon floor; something which can be crossed. And cross it he did in the person of Jesus Christ. In the sacrifice of his Son, God provided redemption. Allowing mankind to overcome sin, not on our own merit, but on Christ's willingness to cross the canyon making people whole in a relationship with God.

6. Sin (Hamartiology)

Romans 3:23

“... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

We quote Romans 3:23 almost as the great equalizer amongst Christians. It is almost used as a shrug of the shoulders, “oh well it happens.” What this verse tells us, and we sometimes fail to recognize, is the depth at which sin encompasses all people. Indeed, we all have sinned, and sin affects every part of our lives mind, body, and spirit. Sin permeates us past, present and future. Because all humans are born into this corrupted state, we are without hope, separated from God. We are, therefore, subject to his righteous judgement, wrath, and eternal suffering reserved for the unrepentant at the end of time. It is within this already hopeless state, humanity takes on a life of active transgression where we continually, “fall short of the glory of God.”

We are doomed to live in this state of active sin if not for the direct, divine intervention from the judge himself who justifies us as verse 24 tells us, “by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” As the Holy Spirit illuminates our need for repentance, verse 23 is indeed a great equalizer showing us we cannot live a sin free life but with his help we can attempt to live a life that brings glory to God.

7. Salvation (Soteriology)

No discussion of salvation can start without setting the baseline that salvation is not earned, it is granted. This baseline is most certainly measured from the cornerstone of Jesus Christ who made it clear many times in scripture, he alone holds the key to salvation. Perhaps, never more clearly stated than John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” On the path to salvation opened to us by Christ, is the irresistible call of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is not irresistible because it is obeyed immediately, but irresistible because ultimately it cannot be ignored. This call is different for each person and develops or grows at different rates in each heart. Ultimately, it is the regeneration of our heart by the Holy Spirit which brings us to faith. By faith we are justified and are able to receive the salvation which comes through his grace. As Christ takes us along this path and as we grow in God’s love, the Holy Spirit continues the process of sanctification in which we begin to be set apart as fellow workers in Christ. We remain in this world, working alongside the Holy Spirit, following the Great Commission, and teaching all that Christ taught. We do this in anticipation of our eternal salvation spent worshipping our God.

8. Satan

When dealing with the topic of Satan there are two misunderstandings with which we must contest. The first being a question, does he even exist? If so, how much influence does he really have over people? Secondly, is the misrepresentation of Satan as the equal and opposite of God.

It should seem crazy in the church we would entertain a conversation about the existence of Satan in our world. Certainly, that denial would be prevalent outside the structure of the church and perhaps even within those who live with a marginal relationship to the church. But, the idea of either a non-existent Satan, or at least a Satan who does not openly interact with and influence all humanity has become more overt than many realize. The Bible itself is clear that Satan is very real. Satan exists in both the Old and New Testaments as an adversary. That adversarial role is played out in a great number of ways, be it a tempter, an influencer, or as a puppet master when his demons possess human beings. It is also clear that Satan is not some sort of equal and opposite of God but simply a fallen angel. Certainly, Satan is a being with powers we can scarcely understand. But he is, nonetheless, powerless in the presence of the divine power of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Scripture, in fact, is clear that the very name of Jesus Christ holds power over him and his minions when used by the faithful and he holds sway over only those who allow it.

9. Angels and Demons

Question 16 of Westminster's Larger Catechism gives a clear description of angels; "God created all the angels as immortal spirits, holy, with superior knowledge and mighty power, to carry out his commands and praise his name; but they could also change." The role of an angel is varied throughout scripture. Everything from the flaming sword swinging angels who guard the way to the tree of life, to the multitude who sang the praises of God at the birth of Jesus. They are as unique in God's creation as humans. Still, they are just that, part of his creation and are allotted the same free will as we are.

It was in the use of this free will that one third of the angels joined Satan in his rebellion and were cast out of the presence of God. These are the creatures we know as demons. These demons whose powers are not diminished, attempt to hold sway over humankind by tempting, influencing, and even at times possessing human beings; all of which is attested to in scripture. Both of these spirit-creatures hold power which is difficult for us to understand. Yet, they are not divine, and in the case of the demon, not subject to the grace offered through faith in Christ. This gift is reserved for human beings alone. We are wise to avoid elevating either angels or demons into a higher position than they deserve. Angels because it can cause us to worship them; demons because it gives them more power than they actually hold over our lives.

10. The Church (Ecclesiology)

The Nicene Creed says the Church is, “Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.” While we love to spout traditional theological statements of belief, the Church is made up of broken people, who have over time, created various denominations and practices all of which would like to claim the best answer for what are the marks of the, “true Church.” As a Presbyterian, I am drawn towards the theology of Calvin and the teachings of Westminster. I see beauty in the polity of the denomination. Yet, in my heart, I must admit, that does not make me more “holy” than my brothers and sisters in Christ from other denominational backgrounds. I believe denominations exist not to separate us but to unite us into one family of Christ. Denominations open the hearts of people to worship God in the non-salvation nuances of our faith while uniting us in the belief that salvation comes through Christ alone. When we learn to unite as a single body of Christ allowing his grace to overcome our differences, it is then we become the true Church. That is when the world will see Jesus Christ as the Holy one of Israel who united all people in one faith, one hope, and one love of God the father.

11. The Spiritual Life of the Believer

There should be little argument the beginning and end goal of the spiritual life of the believer is to understand God as Redeemer, by grace offered through the Son. In order to get to the beginning, we must first see ourselves as needing to be redeemed. The world is full of lost people who are seeking something greater. Only through the call of the Holy Spirit which opens the heart to the special revelation that Christ is who he said he was can they find direction. The Holy Spirit’s witness of Christ comes in many forms; everything from, seeing Christ work in the lives of others, to studying God’s holy word, to full on miraculous conversions like Saul on the road to Damascus. Whatever it is, that first moment of receiving the grace of Christ is just the beginning of the spiritual life. As we bask in the eternal redemption of Christ, the Holy Spirit begins in us the work of sanctification, drawing us ever closer and making us moment by moment more Christlike. It is a process which is ongoing until the end of our lives. As we become more Sanctified in Christ, we are drawn deeper into a desire to seek Christ in everything we do. We in turn become the witness the Holy Spirit put in the lives of those he is calling; helping to guide other believers to the beginning of their own spiritual life.

12. Future Things (Eschatology)

It is my opinion; eighty percent of Christians in America have an unhealthy outlook and understanding of eschatology. I say it is unhealthy because I believe our current church culture likes to dumb down the discussion with, “You trust in Jesus so you will go to heaven when you die.” The question then is, is it necessary to have discussions on the intricacies of the intermediate state or debate on the categories of Millennialism? I do not believe a deep understanding of such things is important. Yet, that does not mean it is not worthy of deeper

study. Eschatology would not be such a rich part of Christian tradition if it had no value in helping us to better understand the character and nature of God. However, I will concede, in a time when society struggles just getting people to understand very basics of the Christian faith, perhaps we can be more productive teaching the end times in simpler terms.

I would encourage all who find themselves in this camp to take time to look at the Nicene Creed. The Creed speaks of Christ in the end times by saying, “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.” Of our involvement it says, “We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” Taken in its most basic form, these quotes fit well into how a trust in Jesus will determine a positive outcome for eternity. Yet, they also allow for growth of the Christian in their understanding of what our hope in Christ really means. By starting with basic teachings, we can encourage a search for deeper understanding of the real hope which comes from devoting study to Eschatology. The hope being our assurance of what happens in the end. Eternity spent in fellowship with and worship of God.

13. Evangelism

“Faith is catchable. I used to say contagious; then I wondered, if faith is contagious, why don’t more people have the disease? It is not automatically caught on contact. But it is catchable, and it is more likely to be caught if the transmitter is enthusiastic, filled with the Spirit of God.”

Richard Stoll Armstrong

Evangelism can be a difficult subject in any church, but even more so in a Presbyterian church. After all, if we are to trust in Irresistible Grace, one of the five pillars of Calvinism, then what need have we for evangelism? If we believe the pull of the Holy Spirit cannot be denied, then evangelism should not be necessary. God will bring into our church who God will bring into our church. Such an attitude is convenient for most believers because it justifies the natural fear of confrontation and rejection. In a Post-Modern, or dare we say, Post-Christian United States, the reaction of many people when a Christian shares his or her faith (even in the smallest ways) ranges from a polite, “I am a spiritual person,” or “organized religion just is not for me,” to ridicule or outright hostility. In our current societal climate, it can be easier to simply leave evangelism to the Holy Spirit. Being available if someone is interested, is much easier to do.

Because faith is “catchable” and not “contagious” is why Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” and it was not simply the eleven disciples he was commissioning to be the recruitment arm of his Church. Each and every Christian is commissioned, or should I say, has been infected with the only contagion that brings life. We have to learn to accept passing it on as our duty and also come to the realization it is most likely not going to be us who gets to see the fruit of our labor. We know the acceptance of Christ takes time to incubate. It is often a delayed reaction to the evangelism of others. More than likely we are simply going to be an evangelistic stopping point. However, each time we speak of Christ from our experiences with him, another sliver of faith is laid in that person’s heart. We have to understand we may never see the fever for Christ erupt in the heart of the person we evangelize, but that makes us no less

important to the process of helping another catch faith. It is what Christ calls us to do every day in our Christian walk.

14. Spiritual Gifts

(finding spiritual gifts is a path of self-discovery)

In my opinion, we would be better served if we taught about spiritual gifts using 1 Peter 4:7-11

⁷ The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. ⁸ Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Certainly, we all like to look at the lists given in Romans and 1 Corinthians. But what good are any of the Spiritual Gifts if we are not, “self-controlled and sober-minded,” in our use of them? How can we really claim to be using a gift from God if it is not done with love and without complaining? The reason I like teaching Spiritual Gifts from 1 Peter is that he reminds us, these gifts God gives us are not really ours at all, but gifts of his very nature that he has given us entrusting us to be good stewards with them. In accepting the great responsibility of using our Spiritual Gifts, we have the opportunity not simply to bless our fellow Christians, but to be a blessing to the world. Part of the faith walk of each person, and part of the responsibility of the church is to help people discover and hone their spiritual gifts. We should always keep 1 Peter in mind as we do this because he reminds us the list of gifts themselves is of little value if we are not using them to bring Glory to God.

EPC Form 2015

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF FAITH (PART 1)

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF FAITH (PART 2)

Integration

CANDIDATE'S NAME: Timothy Hoins

DATE: 1/11/20

Please attach your answers to these questions and return it to the Chari of the Candidates Care or Ministerial Committee before you are scheduled to meet with that committee for your oral ordination examinations:

1. State in your own words your view of the Scriptures and the place the Scriptures will have in your ministry.

Scriptures, all 66 books of the Old and New Testament, are the infallible word of God. They are the complete and final authority on all things about which they speak and serve as an outline helping to direct our conclusions on things about which it does not speak. Any ministry which does not have scripture at the foundation of its teaching is in grave danger of being ineffective at best and actively teaching heresy at its worst. As a pastor, one must make every effort to remove from the study and teaching of scriptures the tainting of human changing traditions and cultural whims. It is not simply a "holy book" amongst other "holy books," but the incontrovertible truth without parallel, without equal.

2. What distinctions of the Reformed faith appeal to you?

For me, two items of Reformed faith which have the greatest appeal are two distinctions I feel stand in the greatest contrast with society's teaching of the divine self. First would be, salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ. While Solomon teaches us there is nothing new under the sun, we may well be living in the most self-absorbed culture in the western self-obsessed world. If we worry about salvation at all, it most certainly does not include Jesus or any grace he has to offer. All we need is faith in ourselves and our ability to be good to others, at least when that is also good for us. Second, is the Bible alone is the authoritative Word of God. For the "self" worshiper, the word authoritative is offensive. What right does an old book from an ancient religion have to tell me a moral standard by which I should live my life? In fact, as far as the "self" is concerned, a person is better off moving away from looking for authoritative teaching and find teaching which meets the moral standard you want to have. In doing this, the Bible becomes nothing more than a book of fairytale teaching; with moral values equal to any other "holy" book you feel like blending into your beliefs.

Yet, it is also these two distinctions which become formidable tools in tearing down the self and through the transformation of the Holy Spirit conforming us to the image of Christ. In many ways, accepting readings and teachings of other faith practices is similar to the Catholic Church's insistence that church tradition holds an equally authoritative voice as the Word of God. A belief, reformers opposed. One would think in our modern instruction filled world people would understand you have to use the right instruction manual in the right way if you want the item you built to work correctly.

Solidifying the concept of salvation by grace alone is also fighting the tradition of other faith practices and the nonreligious. Modern traditions want to tear down the concept of grace alone because it insinuates humans can do no work well enough to please our creator into eternal life. Grace alone teaches

no amount of money or sacrifice or simply “right-living,” can help you gain acceptance and entry. Christ alone holds that key; a single and clear teaching from the one authoritative work of God.

3. What/Who is the Holy Spirit and how important is his ministry?

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. Completely unique, yet, in equality with both the Father and the Son and along with them is worshiped and glorified. Despite the salvation we find given by grace in our faith of Christ, if not for the ministry of the Holy Spirit, humans would remain lost. It is through the Spirit that the call to Christ is heard. It is the Spirit which convicts us of our sin and points us to repentance and redemption. As the Spirit indwells, the individual begins the process of transformation which is sanctification. Through this process our spiritual gifts are revealed and the spark to serve Christ and his people is ignited. Ultimately, the Spirit acts as our guide for understanding Scriptures and making our worship worthy of God.

4. What is your position on women in leadership roles in the church?

It is my belief God does not distinguish between male and female as he delivers giftedness. That, therefore, must include the gift of leadership in ordained office. However, I wholly embrace, “In non-essentials, Liberty” and would happily accept a call into a church which holds the tradition of not ordaining women into office if that is where God leads. While I would not hide my opinion on the subject and would be willing to lead the church in a study on the matter, I would not preach against a particular church’s tradition or push for a change. My personal experience with churches that do not ordain women into leadership is that women in the congregation agree with that decision and find ways to serve and lead in a wide variety of ways outside of ordained positions. If they feel differently, they do not stay at the church long.

5. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the Presbyterian form of government?

In my opinion, the greatest strength of the Presbyterian form of government is equality created in the representational leadership. In the EPC, that equality is shown in several ways. First, is the equality between clergy and laity by allowing for two ruling elders to one teaching elder representation from a church at both Presbytery and General Assembly levels. While on the surface a two to one ratio may not appear equal, what it does in reality is help balance the influence of clergy over the congregation. Also important is the number of elders invited for each teaching pastor on staff at the church. It does make sense a larger church would perhaps have a larger “voice” through greater numbers of representatives, yet the balance is maintained by the number of smaller churches in the denomination.

The greatest weakness in the Presbyterian form of government is also in this same equality, with the independence it creates and its inability to agree on and administer discipline. Equality tends to build an independent streak in people as we realize our voices can be heard and have an impact on the discussions. Independence has led more than one church to turn away from the connectedness of being Presbyterians and move down its own path, sometimes away from sound biblical teachings. This same independence then makes disciplining a given church or a given pastor difficult. The thought process has now become, don’t we as an independent church have the right to run our church as we see fit? There is no longer unity through connectedness which provides the backbone for discipline.

6. Explain in your own words your philosophy of ministry.

I think one of the best things a pastor can be told is, “Sometimes I forget you are a pastor.” I am not talking about a pastor who is fun, watches comic book movies, and has an alcoholic beverage now and then. Although, all of those are fine. My philosophy on ministry is a pastor who does what they can to stay in touch with the real world the members of the congregation live in. The world where the raise did not cover the increase in healthcare premiums. Where the travel sports team takes you away from church two Sundays a month (or more in season). Or, the world where sharing your Christian faith falls on a spectrum between silly and offensive. No matter how much we want to deny it, we no longer live in a Christian nation. A pastor must understand that is the world the congregation is sent into every Sunday with a blessing. If I am not prepared to meet the congregation at that level, there is no way I can help them prepare to go out and meet others where they are.

7. Describe your approach personally and as a pastor in a local church to evangelism.

It is my belief that evangelism is not the responsibility of the pastor, but rests squarely at the feet of the members of the church. Pastors come and go. Even those who stay for decades will eventually retire. But the church is a constant in the community and is only as open and welcoming as the members who attend regularly. It is, however, the responsibility of the pastor to work alongside the members in an evangelistic effort, and in the case of a church which has very little evangelistic background to lead by example. The congregation cannot be expected to knock on doors in the neighborhood, or visit shut-ins, or look for unique ways to show their faith if no one has ever helped them develop that skill. In that case, the pastor must take on the responsibility of evangelism; always working towards the goal of when he or she is not needed.

8. As you reflect on your life, explain your sense of call to ministry.

Looking back on my life, it is fairly easy to see how God worked to pull me towards life in ministry. I was raised in a church with families dedicated to providing a solid foundation of faith and understanding to children as they were sent out into the world. In college, I was drawn to a girl whose faith in Christ was different from my own. It was much simpler, less questioning, and it encouraged me to be more accepting of what I did not understand while still seeking to know more. In our married life, God has led us to different churches which fed specific spiritual needs at that point in life. But, more than any other time in life, God’s call was the loudest when our second child was stillborn. At the time, it may not have been obvious, but looking back at how God had prepared our marriage to endure the event and come out the other side stronger, not just as a married couple but as children of God, it is probably safe to say that life up to that point had been preparing me to listen. Even though it would still be several years until the call became strong enough for me to make the first move towards ministry and several more after that to get to this point, God has through it all, provided opportunities for me to serve him and continue to grow. From leadership positions at church that helped me understand I had to make my own theological choices, to opportunities for long term pulpit supply which helped me envision what life as a pulpit pastor could be, God has guided my path to get to this place at this time.

9. Elaborate on your convictions about personal accountability in your life and in the lives of Christians to whom you might minister.

The truth is, I do not think anyone likes to think about personal accountability much at all. It is no fun to address our own shortcomings and sin. Yet, personal accountability is one of the keys to our continued

growth and process of sanctification. If it is at all possible, a person should try to find a group of people (I would argue men for men and women for women) with whom you can share fears and areas of great temptations. This applies both to the pastor and the congregants. This group of people should consistently be lifting each other up in prayer and be willing to not just call you out when you are moving in the wrong direction, but also be willing to work with you to overcome and guide you through dark times.

David C. Miles

7 Endicott Dr., Huntington, NY 11743
917-554-5032 cell; www.vitalchurchministry.org

MINISTRY OBJECTIVE

Desire to use gifts of leadership and teaching for the development of healthy, gospel centered churches. Most effective in leadership development, organizational development, and problem solving. Have a history of effectively assisting churches in transition or crisis often through diagnostic assessment and intentional interim pastoring. Want to give God's people a chance to experience intimacy with Christ in the midst of genuine Christian community through worship, discipleship, service, and mission.

WORK EXPERIENCE

- VitalChurch Ministry Founding Partner/Interim Pastor – 2018 (Became its own 501c3)
- Church Resource Ministries (CRM), New York, NY and San Diego, CA
 - Founding Partner/Interim Pastor—VitalChurch Ministry – 2002 - 2018
 - NE Regional Director/reTurn Team director – Sept. 1995 - 2002
 - Field Staff – Nov. 1990 – August 1995 (Church planting, church growth, leadership development, small groups, church diagnostics, intentional interim, conflict resolution.)
- First Baptist Church of Flushing, Flushing, NY
 - Associate Pastor – Jan. 1985 - Dec. 1989 (Youth ministry, missions, pastoral ministry.)

SPECIAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Intentional Interim Pastor, Christ Community Church, Rochester, MN, November 2018-February 2020
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Moses Lake Alliance Church, Moses Lake, WA, August 2016-July 2017
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Cornerstone Church, Manchester, MA, April 2014-March 2016.
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Calvary Free Church, Trumbull, CT, October 2011-February 2013.
- Intentional Interim Pastor, Langley Alliance Church, Langley, WA, February 2010 – August 2011.
- Started VitalChurch Ministry, other interim assignments, train others for ministry in churches in transition or crisis, conflict resolution, governance, change management, leadership development, church diagnostic work, small group leader development.
- Team member, church plant; Hill Country Community Church, Lakeside, CA, 1990-1995.

EDUCATION

- D.Min., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1992-1999. Major: Church Growth.
- Th.M. Dallas Theological Seminary, 1980-1984. Major: New Testament.
- B.A. Taylor University, 1975-1979. Major: Christian Education.

PUBLICATIONS

- *reTurn Resource Kit*, ChurchSmart, 2005.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Marital Status: Married 1980; have three children.

References Are Available Upon Request

VitalChurch Ministry

Statement of Faith

1. **God** –There is one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

2. **The Bible** - God has spoken in the 66 books of the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

3. **The Human Condition** - God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.

4. **Jesus Christ** - Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus- Israel's promised Messiah- was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

5. **The Work of Christ** - Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

6. **The Holy Spirit** – The Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, fills, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

7. **The Church** - I believe that the church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances/sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances/sacraments confirm and nourish the believer.

8. **Christian Living** - I believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

9. **Christ's Return** - I believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

10. **Response and Eternal Destiny** - I believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace.

mark nazarian

12710 Elderberry Ave, Visalia, CA 93291

CELL (310)699-8869 • E-MAIL marknazarian@gmail.com

PROFILE

I am a Senior Pastor who enjoys caring for the church of Jesus Christ. I am currently enjoying being interim pastor to the wonderful congregation at First Presbyterian Church, Visalia, CA.

EDUCATION

California State University, Fresno, CA

Bachelor of Arts/Communication; 1975

Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA

Masters of Divinity/Theology; 1979

SKILLS

Preaching and teaching

Staff development and management

Pastoral care

Leadership coach

Transitional pastor

Community outreach

EXPERIENCE

First Presbyterian Church, Visalia, CA (2018-present)

Interim Senior Pastor

- Preaching & teaching
- Head of staff
- Pastoral care

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Redondo Beach, CA (1990 to 2018)

Senior Pastor

- Preaching & teaching
- Head of staff
- Pastoral care
- Chaplain for the Redondo Beach Police Department

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, Fair Oaks, CA (1980-1990)

Associate Pastor

- Youth & College Ministry
- Missions
- Executive Pastor (1985-1990)

Hanford Presbyterian Church, Hanford, CA (1978-1980)

Assistant Pastor

- Christian Education (children and adult)
- Youth Ministry

[References available on request](#)

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Part II: Personal Information (please print or type)

Name: Irwin (Last)	Paul (First)	Russell (Middle)
Preferred Address:	12 Canal St. Big Flats, NY 14814	
Alternate Address:		
Preferred Telephone: (607) 857-0177	Alternate Telephone: ()	
Fax: ()	E-mail: irwinpr@hotmail.com	Date: 4/2/2019

1. List factors that affect you or your family and will influence your relocation (e.g., dual career, or physical or mental disability that may require accommodation):

☐ Housing Allowance Preferred ☐ Manse Preferred ☒ No Preference

2. Work History:

Present/Last Position (include name of church/institution, city & state) Dates of Service:

Pastor - Twin Tiers Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Big Flats, NY. 65 members. 2014 - present

Previous Ministry Positions (include name of church/institution, city & state) Dates of Service:

Interim Senior Pastor - First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Fresno, CA. 400 members. 2013-2014

Pastor - Fowler Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Fowler, CA. 150 members. 2004 - 2013

Associate Pastor for Worship & Music – First Presbyterian Church, San Mateo, CA. 600 members, suburb of San Francisco, 1998 - 2004

Pastor – White Lake Presbyterian Church, White Lake, MI, 300 members. suburb of Detroit, 1989 - 1998

Associate Pastor – St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, Livonia, MI, 1400 members, suburb of Detroit, 1985 - 1989

2a. Ordination Status

Ordained by: EPC Ordination Date: 10/9/2009
PCUSA Ordination Date: 8/15/1985

Date:

If not ordained:

Church Membership (include city & state):

Candidate under care of _____ Presbytery

Denomination:

Date received as Candidate:

Personal Information – continued

Name: Paul Irwin

3. Educational Background:

a. Name of Institution	Dates Attended	Degree Achieved
Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA	1980-1984	Master of Divinity
School of Contemporary Music, Boston, MA	1979	Certificate
Davidson College, Davidson, NC. Major: Psychology	1972-1976	Bachelor of Arts

b. Continuing Education/Professional Development (please include dates):
October, 2018 - Study Trip to North Caucasus Bible Institute, Russia

2014-2018 - Personal Study Leaves - homiletics, Bible, prayer

May, 2012 – Festival of Homiletics – Atlanta, GA

May, 2011 – Purpose Driven Church Conference – Saddleback Ch., Lake Forest, CA

February & September, 2010 – Chaplaincy Training Courses – Fresno, CA

May, 2009 – Re-Jesus Missional Church Conference – Walnut Creek, CA

February, 2008 – Present Future Conference – Reggie McNeal – Roseville, CA

May, 2007 – Visiting Scholar Program – Columbia Seminary, Decatur, GA

May, 2006 – Preaching Conference – Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, CA

July, 2005 – International Worship Institute – Dallas, TX

2003-2006 - Dunamis Course - Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International - 6 week-long training conferences in Spirit-empowered ministry - San Mateo, CA

2003 - Study/Mission Trip to India

c. Community and Civic Activities:

Member of "First Men of Promise" - inter-racial praise team of Bringing Broken Neighborhoods Back to Life & Fresno Police Department - weekly neighborhood street fairs

Participated in "Serve Fowler" - neighborhood cleanup by civic and church groups - 2011 & 2012

d. Presbytery and General Assembly Activities:

Engage 2025 Committee - Presbytery of the East. 2017 - present

New Church Development Committee - EPC Presbytery of the East. 2014-2017

New Church Development Committee - EPC Presbytery of the West. 2009-2013

Regularly attend Presbytery and General Assembly meetings

e. Ecumenical Activity:

Leadership Team: Love Your City Summer Urban Mission Trip, Elmira, NY 2015 - present

Worship Team: Fusion Ministries at Lake Street Presbyterian Church, Elmira, NY 2017-present (Weekly Saturday service)

Leadership Team: Twin Tiers Ministerial Association: 2015-present

Worship Team Leader and Pastor: Central Valley Walk to Emmaus weekends. 2004-2012

Worship Leader: Celebrate Recovery, Fresno, CA: 2004 – 2010

Habitat for Humanity Steering Committee – Fresno CA: 2008 – 2012

Worship Leader & Pastor – PRMI Dunamis Fellowship: 2001 – 2016

Worship Team Member – Mid-Peninsula Hispanic Outreach, San Mateo, CA: 1998-2004

Chairperson - Fowler Ministerial Alliance: 2004 - 2013

f. Special Interests, Hobbies:

Producing worship CD's for various artists in my recording studio

Playing in worship bands

Collecting music CD's, instruments and electronic musical equipment

Hiking in the mountains and walking at the beach

Shortwave Radio

- g. Languages you can speak (and level of proficiency):

I have studied French, Greek & Hebrew but it's been a long time...

- h. Types of supervision/accountability you have found helpful in your ministry:

Monthly Pastoral activities reporting to Session

Annual performance review by Personnel Committee

Regular lunches / prayer / sharing with peers in ministry

Keeping up with Christian friends by Facebook, email, phone calls, visits

Part III: Narrative

Name: Paul Irwin

1. Life Story: In one page, describe your life's journey. Include key incidents that were significant in your formation as a person and your call to ministry. State your personal ideals and goals.

I am a fourth generation Presbyterian Minister on my mother's side. I believe I first experienced the call to ministry when I was eight years old, after a two-hour conversation with my uncle, who is a Pastor. Our family was active in our Presbyterian Church and I was President of the High School Youth Group. My friends and I formed a Christian band and performed at churches and youth retreats.

I arrived at Davidson College in 1972 with a Pre-Ministerial Scholarship. I led worship frequently in chapel and performed at local colleges and universities singing and playing the guitar. Ultimately, I enrolled at Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia and began to work toward ordination.

I was ordained in 1985 and served for four years as an Associate Pastor at a large Presbyterian Church in suburban Detroit. One night before I was to preach, about a year into my ministry, I came to the realization that all that I was doing was in my own strength, and I knew that I was coming up short. I lay down in the pulpit of that deserted sanctuary and confessed that my pride and sense of self sufficiency had led me astray. I asked the Lord to help me. Immediately, I believe the Holy Spirit came upon me with power and transformed my heart and my ministry from that moment on.

I went on to become a solo Pastor at a Presbyterian Church on the edge of metro Detroit. During my time there, we built a new building in a new location and our membership tripled. After nine years there, I was called to become an Associate Pastor specializing in worship and music at First Presbyterian Church, San Mateo, CA. Over the years, the Lord brought together an amazing team of worship musicians, dramatic writers and performers and those interested in sanctuary décor and design and He used us to create many innovative worship experiences for the church family and wider community.

For eight years, I have served in Fowler, CA as Senior Pastor. Then, I served one year as the Interim Senior Pastor at First Armenian Presbyterian Church in Fresno. For the past 5 years I have served a start up church here in western NY. We have almost tripled in membership and have completely renovated a 175 year old church building.

I love the discipline of preaching every week and I feel blessed that the Lord gives me a "Pastor's heart" for our people. I also lead the team in our "blended" worship music for our services. I love to participate in music and worship outside of our walls.

I believe the Lord is calling me to continue to call unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ, to equip believers to go deeper in their walk with Him, to lead worshipers into His real presence through preaching and music and to care for hurting people in His love. I am thrilled that the Lord has called me into ministry and has empowered me to serve Him over these past 33 years since ordination. I pray that He will continue to strengthen and equip me for at least another five to six years of full-time ministry.

I have been blessed to be married to Ann for 38 years now. We have a married daughter, Chelsea, who is 30 and a great son-in-law, Seth. They have two young daughters and live in Novato, CA

2. Please describe briefly (confine your answers to one page):

- a. My leadership style: (How you include others in decision-making, administrative style, ways you deal with conflict, etc.)

As a Pastor, I'm called to be at least aware of every aspect of the life of the church through personal contacts and attendance at many meetings. I moderate discussions, pray with leaders and offer suggestions, sometimes using the relative authority of my office when things seem to get bogged down. I believe that if we have the same Lord and if we're truly seeking His guidance and direction, we'll ultimately find our way together. I attempt to be a peacemaker and an energizer in the service of the church. I recognize that even though the Session has the ultimate responsibility for leading the congregation, in my role as Pastor, I have a certain amount of influence. I'm comfortable offering my perspectives as I believe I'm being led by the Spirit.

As Pastor, I realize I have the responsibility to cast a vision for the congregation from the pulpit and in interactions with leaders and members. I recognize that I have to walk closely with the Lord and seek His guidance for the church from week to week. However, humility is always in order. I've found that oftentimes other leaders hear reliably from the Spirit as well. So, my leadership style involves a lot of listening – to God, to each voice in the elected boards and also to the congregation. Sometimes the ultimate direction that the Session determines isn't pleasing to every person, so I'm comfortable with a certain level of ongoing debate at times, confident that God will bring unity eventually. I am there to be a resource, to offer an encouraging word, and to lend a hand when I'm able as the Session leads the church, guided by the Holy Spirit.

- b. My worship emphases: (preaching style, preferred worship emphases and style, etc.)

The 25 or so minutes of preaching on Sunday mornings are the high point of my week as a Preacher. I know that nothing I might have to say would be worth a congregation's time, but I'm confident that the Lord has a Word for His people every single week. It's up to me as the Proclaimer, to study the text, pray for guidance, look at commentaries and online resources and then come up with a way to help the people understand what God is saying to them today. I also have to help them imagine ways they can apply His Word to their day-to-day lives.

As Presbyterians, we call ourselves, "People of the Word." We are called to base our lives, our work as the Church and our witness to the world on the Word of God. In a service of worship, God calls us into His presence. We praise Him in song and in prayer. We reflect in quiet times, we present our offerings to his work in the world and we experience fellowship with other believers.

I believe that since we generally want to draw younger people into the church, we should use mostly contemporary worship songs and modern instruments these days. There are many great themes and melodies in the old hymns, which can be redeveloped in a more modern style. Of course, there is a great wave of new music coming out today and I love to blend it all together to draw people into God's presence. The church's music should represent the joy, enthusiasm, diversity and reverence of His people. I love to be a part of a community that is seeking the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit consistently in corporate worship. I think

that a church should also offer alternative opportunities for worship in addition to the conventional Sunday morning service.

c. My ministry gifts/skills/strengths:

I believe the Lord has given me a gift for clear communication - in writing, conversation and preaching. Believers need a steady diet of the Word of God in their lives and I'm awed by the responsibility to proclaim God's Word week by week as I study it and am challenged by it myself. I have always taken seriously my call to visit the sick and shut-in folks; to befriend, as much as possible, all those who attend services; to manage the staff, as a part of their team, and to be sure that all the "bases are covered" in the church's programs. I understand computer, projection and sound systems, and office equipment. I have worked with choirs, worship teams, mission trip groups, youth groups, children's ministries, seniors, building and grounds volunteers, Bible study and prayer groups and everything in between. I believe the Lord has given me a friendly personality to interact with all ages in the congregation.

I have a lot of experience in worship design and leadership, using music and Word. Of course, worship leadership grows out of a person's own heart for personal worship and devotion to the Lord Jesus. Obviously, we're never done growing in this. I have observed that all ministry grows from our prayer-life. As a Pastor, I must seek the Lord in prayer with my whole heart. Church staffs, boards, committees and ministry teams all need to start their work in prayer, day by day.

I appreciate the importance of working with other churches to accomplish Christ's wider aims for the entire community and have worked for years to reach out to fellow clergy. I also seek to involve the congregation in hands-on mission work outside of the church building, both locally and globally.

d. My vision for ministry:

Ministry is coming alongside other believers as they grow in their faith and in their ability to serve Christ. A Pastor models the life in Christ and hopes to inspire others to be His disciples - whatever that will come to mean for them personally. The Preacher attempts to open the Word of God to the congregation - to help them understand the implications of their faith and to live these out. A Pastor loves the people with the love of Christ, sharing their joys and their burdens. He or she is called to seek God's will and vision for the church, along with the elected leaders and then interpret these to the congregation. He or she represents the church to the wider community and seeks to develop connections that will allow the congregation to effectively serve in Christ's name.

The Pastor is called to help lead the people into God's presence in worship and to listen for and discern the Spirit's guidance as the service goes along. He or she helps people come to the point of making decisions to go deeper into their own calling to ministries, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Pastor helps people of all ages to proceed through the stages of their lives and to grow in faith and in a heart for service.

Of course, the Pastor can't accomplish all the ministry in the church alone. Ministry is "given away" to all the leaders, and really, all the members of the congregation. A healthy church is one in which every person has discovered his or her own giftings for ministry, and then is

empowered by the Holy Spirit and equipped through training and resourcing by the congregation to carry them out.

3. Comment briefly on your views as relates to: (Confine your answers to one page)

a. Spiritual giftedness

I believe that every person has multiple giftings from the Spirit of God. The church can help people discern what these giftings are by first, getting to know them and then placing them in a variety of ministry experiences. The leadership of the church has the responsibility to train volunteers to excel in the tasks they agree to take on. Then it can aid them in evaluating their effectiveness and deciding about future service. Some are called to high-profile roles and others to behind-the-scenes ministries. Of course, all are important in God's eyes. None of us can achieve anything of lasting value for the Kingdom in our power, but through the inspiration and infilling of the Holy Spirit, we can accomplish miraculous things, just as Jesus promised.

b. The charismatic movement

If the "charismatic movement" means believers seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit for ministry and sensing the power of the Spirit in worship, I'm all for it. Some criticize the "movement" - that it only values believers' "feelings" and momentary inspirations - and therefore, that it's not based on the bedrock of the unchanging Word of God. My sense of charismatic worship and practice is that it's extremely focused on the Word of God. I see much more of a respect for the authority of scripture in "charismatic" circles than in many others in the wider church. I want to see worship freed from convention and boredom and liberated by the real presence of the Holy Spirit who transforms us from the inside! If the Spirit's not in it, I don't want to be there! I do want to see lives changed as people encounter the Living God!

c. Women in ordained office

This issue is a challenging one for evangelical congregations. I believe there are reasonable biblical arguments in favor of the ordination of women. Certainly, there are strong female leaders in every church and denomination. Yet, if we say we base all our practices in ministry on scripture, it's difficult to get around Paul's admonitions to women. I believe God is calling us to listen closely to His Spirit in this matter.

I appreciate the fact that the EPC has called this a "non-essential" issue and makes allowances for congregations to come to their own conclusions about it. I have appreciated the opportunity to serve with female colleagues in ministry in the EPC. And, I must say, I value the anointed spiritual leadership of so many women with whom I have served in many churches.

d. Presbyterian connectional system

I appreciate the system because we can hold each other accountable to clear standards of Reformed theology. I would have a concern about being involved in a "non-denominational" church primarily because subtle theological biases or errors could creep in and there would be no authority to provide oversight or correction. I also believe that there are many benefits to partnering with other like-minded and related churches, large and small, in order to carry out projects or ministries that would be impossible for a single congregation. A church's demoninational affiliation makes a statement to the surrounding community regarding its

identity and beliefs. Also, I must say, I appreciate the connectional system because I enjoy the collegiality I experience at Presbytery and General Assembly meetings in the EPC.

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF FAITH – Part 1

Paul R. Irwin

January 19, 2014

1. The Bible is God's Word for humanity. The 66 books of the Old and New Testaments were written by human beings at various times and places but the Holy Spirit inspired these writers to convey God's redemptive love, His law, His interactions with His creation and the history of His people as well as passages that are intended to inspire and encourage us who seek to follow His way. The Word of God is infallible in matters of faith. While it is important to understand historical context and translation issues, biblical interpretation should seek the plainest meaning of the Word whenever possible. God worked through the process by which the church Fathers determined the Canon in order that we would have precisely the particular books we know as our Bible. All preaching and all church practice must be based on a clear understanding of God's Word. We must not seek to "interpret" the Word of God to the point of altering it to make it more palatable to our culture.

2. The Bible uses the term "Father" to describe God who is the Creator of the vast entire universe. It refers to Jesus as His Son and Jesus referred to God as His Father. God exists everywhere and outside of time - He never began and will never end. Our human minds can't fully conceive of who God is, yet He has chosen to reveal His love, His personality, His standards for our behavior and His eternal plan for our salvation all through His written Word. We call God the Father "sovereign" – He rules over the earth and over the entire universe. He sees the entire sweep of human history outside of time, yet He gives us free will to choose how we will act and whether or not we will believe in His Son.

3. Jesus Christ is one third of the Trinity. He was not created but existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit without a beginning or end. He rules eternally in heaven but was willing to be born on earth for the purpose of making salvation possible for those who place their faith in Him. While He was here, He was fully God yet fully human. He experienced the full range of human life and therefore can personally understand everything we go through. Jesus demonstrated the Father's love and compassion through His ministry of healing, deliverance, miracles and teaching. Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood as payment for our sin. He was bodily resurrected and then ascended into heaven. He is still a living presence in the hearts of those who believe. He is also actively present in our worship and sacraments in the Church. As believers, we can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ in our day to day life.

4. The Holy Spirit is also one third of the Trinity. He has existed for all time and was present at the creation of the universe. (The Holy Spirit did not come into being on Pentecost has some misunderstand, but has been active throughout history and certainly in Old Testament times.) The Holy Spirit was breathed into the Church on Pentecost and empowered the Apostles, who previously had been hiding in fear. They began to preach in the name of Jesus Christ which resulted in the explosive worldwide growth of the Church. The Holy Spirit always points to Jesus. It is only through the Spirit's power that we can accomplish anything for God. The Holy Spirit enlivens our worship, helps us in our prayers, opens our minds to understand the Scriptures and the ways of God and draws us together in the Church as the people of God. The Holy Spirit also gives us the gift of discernment – to perceive if something is "of God" or not.

5. God created the human race and gave us the ability to choose. Adam and Eve were blessed to live in paradise yet chose to sin, which resulted in their banishment – and ours. As their descendents, we are born in sin and live in a world where Satan still has the freedom to do great evil. God loves every person and yet only the elect – only those whom He has chosen – will ultimately find it possible to place their faith in the blood of Christ for their eternal salvation. As believers in Christ, living in the world of human beings, we are called to share our faith in Christ with all who will listen and to demonstrate by our lives our devotion to Him. We are to be “in the world but not of it.” In this fallen creation, we as human beings struggle with physical ailments, temptations, discouragements and sometimes broken relationships. We’re also blessed at times to experience profound worship, exultation and love in our families and in our church. Each of us is called to use our God-given talents to bring glory to Him and to serve others in His name as we look forward to an eternity in His heavenly kingdom.

6. Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, every human being is born into a state of sin, which is separation from God. We sin by any action, thought or attitude that is contrary to His Word. We can also sin by *failing* to do what God calls us to do. The penalty for sin is eternal death and all human beings are by nature sinners. However, God by His grace made it possible for us to be forgiven – not by anything we could do or say but only as a free gift when he places His Spirit in our minds which makes it possible for us to come to faith in Christ. As He shed His blood on the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sin once and for all. (We are no longer required to sacrifice animals in the Temple in order to receive *temporary* forgiveness through that shedding of blood.) Though we continue to sin in a variety of ways even as believers in Christ, we can repent at each step of the way with the full assurance that God will forgive us and empower us by His spirit to “go and sin no more.”

7. Eternal salvation is promised in God’s Word to those who believe: we receive justification for our sins through faith in Jesus Christ. Because of this assurance of our salvation, we’re filled with joy while we live here on earth. We understand that we did nothing to merit this salvation so we’re deeply thankful every day and we live to please God, obeying His law as an expression of our gratitude. Our salvation means that we will get to live in heaven for eternity when our life on earth is over and that we will be among the throng of worshipers around God’s eternal throne singing His praises. The Bible doesn’t give us very much information about heaven, but we’re assured that it is a place where there is no more sorrow, injustice, pain or death. Once we know that we’re saved, we long to share our faith with others so that they can be saved too.

8. Satan is a real spiritual being. The Bible tells us he once dwelt in heaven, yet led other angels to rebel against God so they were all banished. Scripture refers to Satan as the “prince of this world.” He has the power to blind human beings to spiritual realities, to tempt them to sin and to inspire mayhem, warfare, torture and murder here on earth. Satan will ultimately be defeated by the armies of heaven led by Jesus Christ. He will no longer be able to trouble believers in Christ once they’re safe in heaven.

9. The Scriptures refer frequently to spiritual beings known as angels and demons. In many cases angels serve as God’s messengers to people on earth. The shepherds witnessed angels singing praises to God at the time of Christ’s birth. The Bible speaks of armies of angels empowering human warriors and also battling demonic forces at the end of history. Demons, as I mentioned, are fallen angels banished from heaven with Satan for rebelling against God. Jesus cast out many demons who were living in the hearts of human beings, tormenting them. These demons had no power as they faced the Living Christ.

Many who minister in the Third World seem to encounter the same sorts of demons and are gifted by the Holy Spirit to cast them out as a step in leading people to Christ. In our culture with its scientific worldview, we apparently encounter this phenomenon more rarely. Yet, if we do, we're not to quake in fear at the demonic realm but by the power the Holy Spirit we can order evil spirits to leave in the name of Jesus.

10. The Bible refers to the Church as the Body of Christ. The creeds refer to the "holy Catholic Church," meaning the Church universal – the Church with a capital "C." All who truly place their faith in Christ are part of His worldwide Church. Only God knows who these elect people are. As Christians, we're called to be a part of a local church.

The Apostle Paul makes reference frequently to the church functioning as a "body." Each part of the body has a specific function. The Holy Spirit empowers the church to proclaim the Word of Christ, to serve the poor in His name, to be a place where hurting people can come to find comfort and where each member experiences fellowship and Christian love. The Church is meant to be a light in this dark world. Though the Devil tries to destroy Christ's Church, he ultimately lacks the power to do it.

11. When we place our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. When we're filled with the Spirit, we begin to display the "fruits of the Spirit" listed in Galatians 5. The Spirit empowers us to pray – to share our every thought and concern with Jesus. As we grow in Christ, the Father begins to make us more like Him each day. We look to the Gospels to see how Jesus acted and operated in this world. We see those who struggle and suffer with *His* eyes and reach out to serve them with His heart. The Spirit inspires us to study God's Word and His law and as we do this, every thought and action begins to be directed by Him. God is love and He fills us with His love daily by His Spirit within us. This love propels us into relationships into which we can bring God's healing, grace and reconciliation. When we walk in the Spirit, He enlivens our mind, our body, our heart and our soul. When Christ, by the Holy Spirit, lives in us our very life proclaims our faith perhaps even more than our words.

12. As I mentioned, God is not bound by time as we are. He sees the beginning middle and end of history all together. He has revealed some aspects of His plan for the future of the human race in His Word. Evidently, as human history draws to a close before the return of Christ, the Church will experience persecution and those outside of the Church will descend deeper and deeper into sin and debauchery. Great warfare will break out and will conclude with a decisive battle. Jesus Christ and His armies, along with those on earth who follow Him, will be victorious. These prophecies were apparently given so that those who will live in this tumultuous future will be strengthened and encouraged. Jesus said that we can observe the life of a tree and perceive the passing of seasons. Many today look at the news and perceive that the time of apocalypse may be drawing near. Until that time, whenever it may be, we're called to proclaim faith in Jesus Christ to a lost world.

13. Jesus' last command to His church before He ascended into heaven was to "Go into all the world and make disciples" for Him, baptizing them in His name. Because he gave us this Great Commission, we can assume that *evangelism* has got to be our primary task. Most Christians will agree with this in concept but find it hard to really carry it out. Today in our postmodern culture, it becomes increasingly difficult to convince people that they are sinners and that they need a Savior, yet the need for people to turn to Christ has perhaps never been greater. The Bible speaks of a great revival sweeping out over the world as history

draws to a close. The Church must expend whatever resources are necessary to train and equip its members to share their faith in Christ – to do the work of evangelism so that as many as possible can be drawn to faith in Jesus while it is still possible. This cannot be only the work of ordained ministers but must be seen as the work of every believer.

14. The New Testament makes many references to spiritual giftings within the body of Christ, His Church. Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 both speak of a variety of roles that individual members can fill based on their giftedness in the Spirit. A spiritual gift is more than just a natural talent. Sometimes the Lord, who has a sense of humor, will make a former stutterer a dynamic proclaimer of God's Word. Other times he might take a person who's the CEO of a big company and make him a kindergarten Sunday School Teacher.

Nowadays when we hear the term "spiritual gifts," there's an implied reference to Pentecostal worship with messages given in tongues and interpreted as prophetic words. In some church cultures, these particular gifts aren't frequently observed. But really, almost any task that a believer performs in the life of the church requires an anointing or gifting from the Holy Spirit to do it well. We don't want to be seen as taking credit for offering some good service to the church. We give the glory to God who empowers us by His Spirit to serve.

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT OF FAITH – (Part 2)

Paul R. Irwin

January 19, 2014

1. I believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are God's revealed Word to the world, to His church and to me as His Minister. In my ordination vows, I affirmed that I believe "*the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.*" In my preaching ministry, I'm called to study the Bible, to seek to understand its clear meaning and then to proclaim it to the congregation week by week. I rely on the Holy Spirit to illumine my mind so that I can comprehend the truths of Scripture not only for my preaching but in my own walk of faith. As a leader of the congregation, I seek to apply biblical principles to the management and ministry of the local church. In my pastoral as well as personal relationships I use the Scriptures as a guide as I speak and act. In the Scriptures, the triune God reveals His personality, His standards for behavior, His lordship over history and His love for His creation. As I live and work with the congregation, I seek the mind and heart of God as He guides me to the portions of Scripture that are pertinent to the church's life for that week. The Bible is God's living Word to His people.

2. I have come to increasingly appreciate the Reformed system of doctrine over the years. Against the prevalent postmodern, New Age viewpoint that human beings are basically good, my experience tells me that human beings are by nature sinful and desperately need a Savior. Against the Arminian system, I see that nothing that a human being can attempt in his own power can possibly *earn* salvation apart from the grace of God. Our culture views the Bible either as a "holy book" that isn't particularly relevant to their lives or as a book of ancient myths that some people use to impinge on others' "personal freedoms." Of course, I view the Bible as the Word of life and the only reliable source of information about our Creator and the possibility of eternal life. I like the Reformed churches' emphasis on proclamation of the Word as the backbone of worship. I appreciate the fact that Reformed churches seek to conduct their ministries "decently and in order."

3. As I've stated earlier, I understand the Holy Spirit to be one third of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit indwells the believer and empowers him or her for service and even authority in the face of error or evil. The Holy Spirit draws individual members of the church into fellowship and enlivens the church's worship. The Spirit gives us the ability to discern God's truth and can even give us the words to speak under pressure. In my preaching ministry, I frequently point out that we can get discouraged when we measure our own life against the standards of Scripture, but we must not despair because the Holy Spirit will give us the power to live as God commands. When conflict arises in the church, I remind people that we are called to seek the unity of the Spirit in all our dealings.

4. Of course I am aware of the instances in Paul's writings that tell women to keep silent in worship, to cover their heads and to avoid positions of leadership. Yet I also see that God anointed and empowered great female leaders in Scripture, in the first and second century church and in the modern church. I believe it's legitimate to see Paul's exhortation's in the historical context of the first century when women were considered property and not full participants in civic or commercial life. Just as I believe that slavery is wrong but that, in order to further the cause of the gospel at that time, the Apostles did not choose to

take on the cause of slavery, I believe they also did not perceive the need to make women's rights a part of their ministry at that time in history. My own Mother is an ordained Pastor and I have served with many gifted and anointed female leaders in ministry over the years. I would be embarrassed to say to them that their ministry was not legitimate or useful in the cause of the Kingdom because I believe this would be patently false. I appreciate the position of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church which makes allowances for those who do feel Paul's comments about women's ministries are normative for their congregations yet does not see this matter as an "essential." I have served churches that either avoided or explicitly prohibited women from serving in ordained ministry but my preference, as I believe I'm being guided by the Lord, is to allow for this and to celebrate it.

5. I believe there are more strengths than weaknesses in the Presbyterian style of government. I see the wisdom in our polity which places authority in the local church in a board of elected Elders rather than in a denominational hierarchy or in an individual Pastor. I've observed many churches veering off into error when their Pastor was considered a "sole authority" and personally fell into some theological confusion. In some of these non-denominational systems, I've seen it become a challenge to overcome unsound leadership if it goes wrong. I have seen the Lord guide individual congregations through the wisdom of a *group* of anointed leaders who, at first, disagreed but then experienced the unity of the Holy Spirit in the course of their deliberations.

I like the Presbyterian system which allows local congregations to select Pastoral candidates and Presbyteries to authorize and oversee their ministries. The idea of a Bishop moving pastors around like chess pieces doesn't appeal to me. A downside of the Presbyterian system as I've experienced it is that sometimes important initiatives get referred to committees who then study them to death but never expedite anything. Some churches have such inflated organizational charts with regard to the number of their members that it's hard to get things actually accomplished.

6. I believe the Lord has called me to guide unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ, to equip believers to go deeper in their walk with Him, to lead worshipers into His real presence through preaching and music and to care for hurting people in His love. In my ministerial role, I realize I have the responsibility to cast a vision for the congregation from the pulpit and in interactions with leaders and members. I recognize that in order to do this, I have to walk closely with the Lord and seek His guidance for the church from week to week. However, I've found that oftentimes other leaders hear reliably from the Spirit as well. So, my ministry involves *listening* – to Christ, to each voice in the elected boards and also to the congregation. Sometimes the ultimate direction the Session determines isn't pleasing to everyone, so I'm comfortable with a certain level of ongoing debate at times, confident that God will bring unity eventually. I am there to be a resource, to offer an encouraging word, and to lend a hand when I'm able as the Session leads the church, guided by the Holy Spirit.

7. Because Jesus' final word to His disciples was the Great Commission, I have always seen evangelism as the "main thing" the Church is to be about. As a believer in Christ, it needs to be the main thing that *I* am about. Yet, like many, I sometimes struggle to keep up with this task, balancing it with all the other responsibilities I have. Sometimes, I sense that bringing up the topic of eternal life or following Christ might not be particularly welcome in a conversation and I decide not to bring them up. Of course, there are times that the Spirit may guide us to hold back while we build a relationship. But other times, we're

called to be bold but we may fail to take advantage of an opportunity to lead someone to faith in Christ because we worry that they'll think we're fanatical.

So, when I preach or teach about evangelism, I share my own struggles with it. I have always taught courses on faith sharing in the churches I've served. I believe it's crucial not only for the Pastor to be an evangelist but, really, *every* member of the congregation. It isn't something I can preach about only once and then assume it will become a way of life for the congregation. Evangelism needs to be featured again and again in a preaching ministry. God expects us to work to make His kingdom grow and while some people are brought to faith through mass rallies, I believe many more come to faith as result of personal relationships with believers.

8. I am a fourth generation Presbyterian Minister on my Mother's side. I believe I first experienced the call to ministry when I was eight years old, after a two-hour conversation with my Uncle who was a Presbyterian Pastor. Our family was active in our Presbyterian Church and I was President of the High School Youth Group. My friends and I formed a Christian band and performed at churches and youth retreats.

I arrived at Davidson College in 1972 with a Pre-Ministerial Scholarship. I led worship frequently in chapel services and Bible study groups. After graduation, I moved back to Detroit and tried to establish a Christian music and drama ministry with some friends, but when that failed to get off the ground, I went out on the road with secular bands, including the Platters, and began a four-year period away from the Lord and the Church. Fortunately, the God's call on my life was more powerful than my rebellion.

I had a dramatic experience one morning at sunrise when Jesus spoke to my heart and told me that He still loved me and that He would allow me to return to faith and to His Church. He renewed my call to ministry at that moment. Ultimately, I enrolled at Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. I was ordained in the PCUSA in 1985 and have served five churches since that time, the last one as an Interim for a year. The Lord has renewed my call actually week by week and year by year as I've served these congregations. I'm excited about the opportunity to now serve a "church plant" for the EPC. I pray that my years of experience will be beneficial in this effort.

9. I'm very suspicious of anyone who claims to be a "solo Christian." I believe that when we make the decision to follow Christ, He places us in community. However, it's easy to attend worship services and get lost in the larger congregation – hearing God's Word proclaimed but struggling to live it out. The early church was established in individual homes with small groups of believers. These small groups then also gathered in the Temple to worship.

I have found that it's extremely important to share the joys and struggles of the Christian life with people who really know me and will hold me accountable. I know the Lord has used me in personal relationships to help others in this way as well. I have worked to establish small group ministries in the last two churches I've served and I've seen this effort bear great fruit. Even within the small groups, I have encouraged people to pair up with a friend of the same gender, to meet outside of the group to share personally and deeply. The Lord has always gifted me with one or two strong relationships with other Pastors or Worship Leaders where I don't always have to be "Pastor Paul." I know that many sitting in the congregation week by week would benefit from having an accountability partner and I will continue to encourage this in my ministry.