



PROPOSED DOCKET

Tenth Meeting of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest

January 22, 2021

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 (October 9, 2020)
- Approval of the Docket**
- 9:25 **Worship and Prayer**
- Call to Worship** Moderator Conners
- Worship in Music**
- Moderator's Time of Prayer**
- Sermon** Erik Buhl
- The sermon this morning will be given by Erik Buhl, candidate for Pastor at Fowler Presbyterian Church, Fowler, CA. He will be preaching on 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, a passage assigned to him by the Ministerial Committee.
- 10:00 **Ministerial Committee Report** TE David Abdo, Chair
- Examination of Erik Buhl**
- Erik Buhl has been called as Pastor at Fowler Presbyterian Church, Fowler, CA. He is transferring from the Inland Northwest Presbytery of the PCUSA. Erik has signed his Ministerial Obligation Form and Ethical Affirmation Form. His current Terms of Call have been reviewed and approved by the Ministerial Committee. He will participate in the next Discovery Workshop, and has been examined by the members of the Ministerial Committee. He is recommended to the floor of the Presbytery for approval.
- Erik's examination began with a sermon on a passage assigned by the Ministerial Committee. The Presbytery is to examine him on his views on 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. Erik has no exceptions to the Westminster Standards. (*Attachment 1 - pgs. A2-A22*)

Examination of Erik Buhl (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 Erik Buhl

TE Bill Heming (EPC POPNW)
Rev. David Webster (PCUSA)

MOTION: To approve the examination of Erik Buhl and receive him into full membership in the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest from the PCUSA Presbytery of the Inland Northwest.

MOTION: To approve the Administrative Commission consisting RE's Ron Monis, Beth Feaver, and Bob Martin from Fowler Presbyterian Church, RE (TBD) and, TE Paul Irwin from Fowler Presbyterian Church and TE (TBD) to install Erik Buhl as Pastor of Fowler Presbyterian Church on (TBD).

10:40 Break

10:50 **Treasurer's Report**

RE Connie Badgley, Treasurer

- 2020 Year-end POPS YTD Financials (*Attachment 2 - pgs. A23-A25*)
- 2020 Year-end POPS Askings Report (*Attachment 3 - pg. A26*)

Pacific Women's Link Report

RE Connie Badgley

11:10 **GA Nominating Committee Report**

TE Dave Ricketts

TE Ricketts will give an update on available positions on General Assembly committees (*Attachment 4 – pg. A27 and Attachment 5 – pgs. A28-A30*)

11:20 **Session Minutes Review Committee**

RE Janet Goodman, Chair

Chairman Goodman will report on the reviews from the October 2020 meeting and update the Presbytery on how Session Minutes Reviews will occur in light of the virtual meeting.

Scheduled Reviews for January:

Centerpoint Community Church
Centerville Presbyterian Church
Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley
Covenant Community Church, Vacaville
Covenant Presbyterian Church, Reno

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church
Fremont Presbyterian Church
Hope Presbyterian Church, Folsom
Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church
Sierra Presbyterian Church

11:35 **POPS Nominating Committee Report**

RE Bill Myers, Chair

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 of your recommendation of any elders from your church to be considered.

MOTION: To approve the nomination of RE Stephen Morris from Covenant Presbyterian Church, Orange, CA as member of the POPS Mission Committee (Class of 2022).

Transfer of TE Dennis Yim to Pacific Northwest

TE Dennis Yim has accepted an Out of Bounds call to a church in the Seattle area. The EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest has requested that we approve his transfer to that Presbytery.

MOTION: To approve the dismissal of TE Dennis Yim to the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest.

Extension of Call – TE Cliff Graves

The Session of Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, Fair Oaks, Ca has requested that the call of TE Cliff Graves, who has reached age 70, be renewed for one year.

MOTION: To approve the extension of the call of TE Cliff Graves as Associate Pastor at Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, Fair Oaks, CA for one year through October 25, 2021.

Extension of Call as Commissioned Pastor – RE Jim Brown

RE Jim Brown has been serving as Commissioned Pastor at Heritage EPC in Santa Maria, CA. Though the church will begin the search for a permanent pastor, the Session has requested that Jim's call be extended for another year.

MOTION: To approve the extension of the call of RE Jim Brown as Commissioned Pastor at Heritage EPC, Santa Maria, CA.

Update on TE Members and Open Positions

11:55 **Update from Moderator-Elect**
(See Attachment 6 – pg. A31)

TE Julia Leeth

12:00 **Community of Churches**

TE Greg Haroutunian

TE Greg Haroutunian will give us an update on the ministry of First Armenian Presbyterian Church in Fresno, CA

12:15 Break

12:30 **Mission Committee Report and Prayer**

RE Carl Kuhn, Chair

Approval of TE Samuel Kim as a World Outreach Missionary

TE Samuel Kim has felt called to serve as a church planting intern in a church in Japan. The POPS Mission Committee has examined him on behalf of World Outreach and recommends him to the Presbytery for approval. Sam's background and call to this particular ministry is attached. (Attachment 7 – pg. A32)

MOTION: To accept the examination conducted by the POPS Mission Committee and endorse TE Samuel Kim and present him to the World Outreach Committee as worthy and fit to be examined to be a candidate for missionary service.

MOTION: To change the status of TE Samuel Kim from Without Call to Missionary.

- 12:55 **Community of Churches** TE Jose Figueroa
TE Jose Figueroa, Evangelist, will give us an update on the status of San Pablo Church (Tiny Church) in the East Bay area, a church plant sponsored by our Presbytery.
- 1:10 **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 in the EPC
 - The candidate's call to the Ministry.
- Examination of Garrett Brown**
Garrett is ready to come under the care of this Presbytery. He is currently under care of the Session of Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, Fair Oaks, CA. The Session has recommended him to the Presbytery as a Candidate Under Care.
- Representative speaking on behalf of candidate**
- MOTION:** To approve Garrett Brown to come under care of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest and approve TE Brian Yeo from Centerpoint Community Church, Roseville, CA as advisor to Candidate Brown.
- 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**
- Charge given to the Candidate**
- 1:50 **Proposed Revision to the Book of Government of the EPC** Stated Clerk Eshoff
The following overture was approved by the General Assembly in June 2020 to be sent to the EPC presbyteries for their approval. The wording of the overture is attached (*Attachment 8 - pgs. 33-36*). You are reminded that, while we may debate the substance of a Descending Overtures, we may not amend the Overtures in any way, but may only vote for or against their adoption. Under the requirements of our Constitution these overtures must be voted on individually and the vote must be counted and recorded.
- Descending Overture 20-A**
To make clarifying amendments to the *Book of Government* G-13, which addresses the ordination and/or installation of officers.
- MOTION:** To approve Descending Overture 20-A.

2:00

Omnibus/Consent Motion

1. That the Minutes of the Ninth Stated Meeting of the EPC Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest, October 9, 2020 be approved as posted (these minutes are available on the website).
2. That the Administrative Commission to install Wintersburg Presbyterian Church and Associate Pastor, Fred Tanizaki, into the Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest 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 Tim Hoins as Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Hanford, 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. That the Administrative Commission to install Jonathan St. Clair as Pastor of Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley, 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.
5. That the Administrative Commission to ordain and install Ryan Suzuki as Associate Pastor of Assimilation at Community Presbyterian Church, Danville, 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.
6. To accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to appoint TE Fred Tanizaki as Moderator of the Session of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church beginning October 9, 2020 until a Transitional Pastor is identified.
7. To accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to approve the call of TE Dennis Tarr as Transitional Pastor of Wintersburg Presbyterian Church beginning on November 9, 2021.
8. To accept the report of the Ministerial Committee to dismiss TE Chris Popadich to the EPC Presbytery of the East.

MOTION: To approve the Omnibus/Consent Motion.

1:55

New Business

Moderator Conners

Important Upcoming Dates

May 13-14, 2021	Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest Meeting (#11) Sierra Presbyterian Church, Nevada City, CA
June 22-25, 2021	EPC General Assembly Second Presbyterian Church, Memphis, CA
October 5-7, 2021	POPS Pastors Retreat Mt. Hermon Conference Center
October 8-9, 2021	Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest Meeting (#12) Christ Church East Bay, Berkeley, 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.

2:00

Adjournment and Closing Prayer



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

Presbytery Meeting Docket
January 22, 2021

ATTACHMENTS

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Part 2: Personal Information

(please print or type)

1. Name: Buhl Erik Edward
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Preferred Address:

PO Box 43 Oakesdale, WA 99158

Alternate Address:

Preferred Phone: (509) 496-2951 ☒ Cell ☐ Work ☐ Home

Alternate Phone: (509) 285-5250 ☐ Cell ☐ Work ☒ Home

Email: buhlerik@gmail.com

2. Work History:

Previous Ministry Positions	Dates
High School Youth Pastor Birchwood Presbyterian	1998-2000
Church Intern Birchwood Presbyterian	2002-2004
400 Meadowbrook Court Bellingham, WA 98226	

Middle School Youth Pastor Dungeness Community Church	2005-2007
45 Eberle Lane Sequim, WA 98382	

Present/Last Position (if you are currently not in a ministry position)	Dates
Teaching Elder Community Presbyterian Church of Oakesdale (PCUSA)	2007-Present

Name: _____

3. Ordination StatusOrdained by (church/city/state): Inland Northwest Presbytery / Spokane, WAOrdination Date: June 2007

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
Sequim High School	Graduated 1994	
BA History Western Washington University	1995-1998	
Masters of Divinity Regent College	2001-2005	

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

c. Community and Civic Activities:

Coaching youth baseball, substitute teaching at the local school, and providing pastoral care and counseling to those outside of the church.

Name: _____

d. Presbytery and General Assembly Activities:

Member of Committee on Ministry

Chair of the Committee for Commissioned Ruling Elders

e. Ecumenical Activity:

I started Ally Coaching three years ago. I provide leadership coaching for fellow pastors. I have worked with pastors from many different denominations. My business website is allycoaching.org

f. Special Interests, Hobbies:

Golfing, fishing, playing basketball, woodworking, and playing with my kids

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

English

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

I meet with other pastors monthly for fellowship and prayer. Twice a year we get away together for a weekend. I have a leadership coach and I coach others.

Name: Rev. Erik Buhl

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.

I was not raised in a Christian home. I became a Christian at the age of 18 through a Bible Study at a friend's house. I became a Christ follower in a non-denominational church, and although I love the Reformed tradition, being a Christian has always been more important to me than being a Presbyterian. I took my conversion seriously and I was a high school youth pastor by the age of 21.

It was while I was a youth pastor that I began to sense that God was calling me into full-time vocational ministry. Every time I held a Bible in my hand and taught our high school students I came alive! I went to Seminary at the age of 25 and I have been an ordained pastor since the age of 30.

My seminary, Regent College, did an outstanding job of teaching me how to be a good reader of the Bible. The words that describe me theologically are "conservative", "Reformed", and "evangelical".

I have been in my current call for 13 years and it has been a wonderful experience. We have a healthy church with attenders who care about each other. Our church is kind to me and my family. However, my wife and I sense that God is calling us into something new and we are excited for where the Lord is going to take us next! My wife was raised in the church and she is gifted in ministry. Her help to me is invaluable.

I place a high value on integrity. As a Christian man, this means putting my wife and kids ahead of my job. It means doing my job well. And it means being a servant-leader, treating others with respect rather than seeing them as a means to an end.

As a pastor I am a firm believer in discipleship, and I believe that discipleship happens best within community. Church attenders need opportunities to grow throughout the week, and people grow best when they are connected to one another.

Currently my passion in ministry is helping Christians to focus on eternal things. 2020 has been a difficult year. We have dealt with COVID, protests, rioting, political unrest, and an upcoming election that will be divisive. In the midst of these problems it is important for Christians to remember that what is eternal is far more important than what is temporary. The future of the church feels uncertain, but as Believers we know that the Bride of Christ still rests in God's hands and that God still has good plans for his people. I am excited to see the good things that the Lord brings out of our current struggles, both in the church and in society. Scripture tells us that in our current problems Christians are gaining an eternal glory that far outweighs our temporary trials.

Name: Eric Smith

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.)*

My philosophy of leadership is that before a church can harness the gifts of the congregation, the elders, deacons, staff, and key members have to be on the same page with the basic questions, "What are we trying to do, and how are we going to do it?" Furthermore, a pastor needs to have a God-given vision for the church that he can call others into. A good pastor is both confident and humble; confident enough to share this vision, and humble enough to receive input from others. Pastors without a vision lead stagnant churches, while pastors who cannot receive input become controlling. When pastors go into hiding, either because of a fear of conflict, a lack of confidence, or unconfessed sin, the entire church is destabilized. Pastors have to be in consistent contact with church leaders so that the congregation remains focused on its mission.

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

I prefer a blended worship style that combines both traditional and contemporary worship. It would be a mistake to ignore the hymns of the past, and it would be a mistake to ignore the great contemporary worship music that is out there. My preaching style is both exegetical and relevant. I explain the passage, and then I apply it to modern life. I use pictures, movie clips, and stories to illustrate God's Word. My sermons are about 30 minutes long. I read Greek and Hebrew and I make my own translation of the text while preparing my sermons, and then I use a common translation for preaching on Sunday morning (usually the NIV). When preaching I usually try to show parishioners how a specific passage of Scripture ties into the overall Biblical story. I would describe the way I lead worship as informal and personal.

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

I am called first and foremost to be a preacher and teacher. The church needs excellent preaching and teaching so that people can grow in their relationship with Christ and so that people can be excited about their church. Good preaching unleashes confidence and generosity within the congregation. Good preaching also creates a church where people are eager to invite their family and friends. Effectiveness as a preacher means that the Holy Spirit is conforming those who hear the sermon into the image of Christ. A good sermon challenges those who are confident in their own righteousness, while comforting those who feel overwhelmed by their sin. A good preacher teaches from the entire Bible and a congregation with good preaching becomes more Biblically literate over time. I am also called to be a leader. As we move further into a post-Christian world, churches are going to need strong leadership to thrive. I provide leadership coaching for pastors. For a more detailed look at my leadership principles you can go to allycoaching.org. On the website you can also read testimonials from pastors I have worked with.

Name: Erik Buhl

3. Comment briefly on your views as relates to:

a. Spiritual giftedness

Every Christian is gifted by the Holy Spirit for ministry in the Church and to the world (1 Corinthians 12:7) Churches typically idolize the visible gifts (leading worship, preaching, etc.) but every gift is God-given and necessary so that the Body of Christ can grow and be healthy. As Reformed Christians we affirm that Spiritual gifts are discerned within the context of community. We become aware of our Spiritual gifts as we love and serve others, and as we are loved and served by them.

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

I have attended charismatic worship services and I have seen charismatic expressions of spiritual gifts. I am not a cessationist; I believe that the Holy Spirit is still doing the same work He was doing in the early church, although it can be difficult for us to separate genuine manifestations of the Spirit from false ones. I do not speak in tongues or prophecy, but I believe the Holy Spirit still gives these gifts to certain Christians for their own edification and for the building up of the Church.

c. Women in ordained office

I believe that each congregation should be able to decide for itself whether or not to call women into ordained office. It is an issue that I have studied closely for a number of years and I believe there is Biblical warrant for both positions. This discussion should be driven by Scripture, not the culture. I had seminary professors at Regent College who were egalitarians, and I had seminary professors who were complementarians. They were all solid Christians who loved the Lord and loved God's Word.

d. Presbyterian connectional system

I do not hesitate to affirm that we have the best system of church government of any church tradition. Our Reformed approach to polity empowers the laity while maintaining accountability. However, my experience in the PC(USA) has shown me that the right polity is not enough. Unless people affirm the authority of God's Word, any system of church governance will falter, no matter how good the structure is.

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: Erik Buhl

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):

1. THE BIBLE

In The Institutes of the Christian Religion John Calvin writes, *God bestows the actual knowledge of himself only in the Scriptures*. Creation proclaims God's eternal power and divine nature, but only the Bible teaches us infallibly about God's character and his purposes for humanity so that we can live for his glory. This means that for Christians the Bible is our rule for faith and life. In the Scriptures, God tells us what we need to believe in order to be saved and how to live a life that is pleasing to God. As Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16, all Scripture is God-breathed, but we can only be assured that God wrote the Bible by the inward working of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to confess that the Bible is inerrant and a completely trustworthy guide for Christian faith and practice. The Holy Spirit speaking in the Bible is the supreme authority for the Church, and the Holy Spirit can never reveal any truth to us that is contrary to Scripture, for then God would be contradicting himself. When the authority of the Bible is called into question, the local church unravels. God will not be mocked.

2. GOD THE FATHER

God the Father is the first person of the Trinity and most closely associated with God's acts of creation and providence. The Father is not generated and does not come from any source. The Father generates both the Son and the Spirit. Christians have the unique privilege of calling on God as our *Father*. This means that Christians are able to relate to God in the most personal way imaginable. As Christ followers, we have a loving Father who puts his arms around us every day, protects us, guides us, disciplines us, and invites us to share our hearts with him. In the economy of salvation, the Father is the initiator. The Father sent the Son to secure salvation for the elect. After Christ has returned to earth and destroyed all dominion, power, and authority, the Son will hand over the kingdom to God the Father, so that God "may be all in all". As God, the Father is eternal, almighty, completely wise, completely holy, and completely free.

3. JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the eternally begotten Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, eternally proceeding from the Father. When Jesus Christ became a human being he submitted himself to the Father in order to earn our salvation for us and to teach us how to live in obedience to our heavenly Abba. However, in his being, in his essence, the Son is equal with the Father, “God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.” This means that Jesus is Lord as well as Son. Jesus is the Word of God made flesh and the one true Mediator between God and man. Because Jesus is God, He is worthy of all glory, honor, and praise. Christ continues to be God and man in two wholly distinct natures and one person, forever. As our Redeemer, Christ carries out the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. Christ was humiliated for our salvation and he now sits enthroned on the right hand of the Father far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that can be named. God the Father has ordained a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. Those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel of Jesus will be thrown into eternal torment while those who belong to Jesus will enter into everlasting life.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit hovered over the waters when God created the world. The Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the glue that unites us to Christ. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot believe that the Spirit authored the Bible, we cannot confess that Jesus is Lord, we cannot be assured that we have eternal life, and we cannot obey God. It is by the Spirit that God pours his love into our hearts, and it is by the Spirit that we call God, “Abba, Father.” The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit enables us to believe that God wrote the Bible. The Holy Spirit, through the Word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, convicts us of sin, sanctifies us, mortifies our sins, and empowers us for holy living. The Holy Spirit’s power was at work in the ministry of Jesus in his incarnation, his resurrection, and everything in between. Jesus lived according to the Spirit as an example for us to imitate. The Holy Spirit conveys grace and power to the Church through the Word of God, the sacraments, church discipline, prayer, and our loving fellowship with one another.

MANKIND

Both men and women are made in the image of God. Because we are made in God's image, we are the pinnacle of creation. The Lord created mankind to rule over the other creatures that God had made. Adam and Eve were also created to shape, rule over, and serve all of creation so that God's good world could reach its full potential. God created Adam and Eve morally perfect. Adam and Eve, while under the covenant of works, freely chose to disobey God's one command to not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The forbidden tree probably symbolizes moral autonomy. By eating from the tree Adam and Eve were signaling to God that they would henceforth decide good and evil, not God. As a consequence of their transgression, God sentenced them to death and ejected them from the Garden of Eden. Because Adam and Eve are the root of humanity, their guilt for this sin has been imputed to all mankind. In addition, since Adam and Eve, every person born has inherited a sinful nature. This sinful nature leads to all sinful acts. Our sin nature and sinful choices make us deserving only of God's wrath. This corruption in our nature also makes us wholly unwilling and unable to respond to God's offer of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is only when the Holy Spirit regenerates the hearts of the elect that they are able to come to a saving faith in Jesus. Even in the elect a corrupt nature remains and Christians will not be perfected in holiness until this life is over.

SIN

To sin is to "miss the mark". In sin we turn away from God and exalt ourselves as god. For humanity sin is both a condition and an action. Human beings are born with a sinful nature. The doctrine of total depravity teaches us that sin infects every single part of our humanity. Sin is also an action. Springing from our sinful nature is the impulse to actively rebel against God and disobey his revealed will. This rebellious impulse arising from our sin nature, *and* the choice to obey this impulse, are both properly called sin. Because human beings are born into a state of sin, we are completely opposed to the work of the Holy Spirit and we are

dead in sin until God converts us and brings us into a state of grace. Christ became sin for us and died on the cross so that we would be free of the power of sin, and so that we would be freed from the wages of sin, which is death. The sanctification of the elect works in the whole person, but not completely or perfectly in this life. There are times when sin seems to have the upper hand in a Christian's life, but the continuing strengthening of the Holy Spirit empowers the regenerate nature in each believer to overcome. When this life is over Christians will be free of sin and perfect in holiness.

SALVATION

Salvation is the free gift of God whereby he ordains that the elect shall be saved. The elect were chosen before the foundation of the world to receive salvation through faith in Christ. As fallen human beings there is nothing in us that deserves salvation. Rather, because of our sinful nature and our evil choices, we are naturally deserving only of God's wrath. Furthermore, there is nothing we can do to be saved. Not even faith in Christ can be counted as a "work" meriting our salvation. Only the elect can be saved through God's unconditional election. When we are in Christ through a saving faith in the Gospel, God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us so that we are judged on the basis of Christ's perfect righteousness, not our own imperfect righteousness. In addition, the Christian is saved *for obedience to Christ*. This means that a saving faith is always accompanied by the fruit of genuine faith, which is good works. It is only through the work of the Holy Spirit that anyone can come freely and willingly to a saving faith in Jesus. The perseverance of the Saints means that those God has chosen for salvation cannot lose their salvation. Rather, the grace of God in their lives always achieves its aims, which are salvation and sanctification.

SATAN

Satan is a fallen angel who rebelled against God but remains under God's sovereign control. Satan is a created being, which means that God is infinitely more powerful than Satan. Satan does not have God's incommunicable attributes such as aseity, omniscience, or omnipotence. Satan was the original tempter of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan is the father of lies. His name means "accuser", and he accuses and prosecutes humanity, especially God's elect. Satan is wholly evil. Satan's nature is completely corrupt and without anything good. Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, but Jesus withstood his assault. God defeated Satan's evil plans for God's creation through Christ's death and resurrection. Satan can attack the elect and cause them misery but he cannot overcome them. By the power of God the elect persevere in saving faith until this life is over in spite of Satan's work against them. Satan will meet his final end in the lake of fire when Christ returns. This final battle will not be a fair fight; Satan's power is limited and finite while God's power is unlimited and infinite.

ANGELS AND DEMONS

Angels and demons are spiritual beings created by God. Demons are fallen angels. God created all the angels good. Those who remained in God's service and who are obedient to God we call angels. Those who rebelled against God and who are wholly disobedient to God's will we call demons. There is no trace of evil in an angel and there is no trace of good in a demon. Angels carry out the will of God in power, serving as messengers as well as warriors. Angels are also servants of God who minister to the elect. Demons can be responsible for physical illness and mental illness, and they can prompt personal spiritual rebellion. Demons attack Christians, but when we pray in the name of Jesus demons flee from us. Demonic activity is probably responsible for more human suffering and worldly evil than we realize. Angels will gather in the elect from the four corners of the earth when Christ returns. In contrast, when Jesus returns, demons will be thrown into eternal torment along with Satan.

THE CHURCH

The Church is made up of believers and their children. The Church is found in two forms, the invisible church and the visible church. The invisible church consists of “all the elect who have been, are, or ever will be gathered into one under Christ, the head.” The visible church consists of all those who profess that Jesus is their Savior and gather for corporate worship, although not everyone in the visible church is among the elect. In every local congregation there are sheep and goats, and it is not our job to infallibly sort them out. Only God knows those who are ultimately his, and the final separation of the wheat from the tares will not happen until Christ returns. The Church is engaged in a battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the Church will triumph over all her enemies because Christ has already secured the Church’s final victory. The marks of the true Church are the Word of God rightly preached, the Sacraments rightly administered, Church discipline rightly attended to, and the loving fellowship of believers rightly shared. In the true Church these marks are done “rightly”, not perfectly, since every Christian retains a sinful nature until this life is over. When Christians neglect to participate regularly in their local church they do not have access to the grace of God available in preaching and the sacraments. Therefore, their Christian faith suffers because of their disobedience.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

The Spiritual life of the believer is always a “capital-S-Spirituality”. In other words, there is no Christian “spirituality” apart from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit unites us to Christ, and it is as we are filled by the Spirit that we are filled with the life of Christ and empowered to love God and to love others. In addition, the Spiritual life of the Christian is wholly dependent upon the Word of God. In our natural state, we are totally lost. Therefore, apart from the Word, we cannot make any Spiritual progress. The Bible tells us what we need to believe in order to be saved, and the Bible tells us how to live in order to please God. It is only as we submit to the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can claim to have any kind of authentic Spirituality. Our Spirituality does not arise from our own wisdom or “inner light”; our Spirituality does not arise from our observations

about the natural world; and our Spirituality is not a natural byproduct of our fallen humanity. Rather, our Spirituality is entirely dependent upon being regenerated by the Holy Spirit so that we can confess that Christ is Lord, so that we can receive the love of God, and so that we can walk in the fruit of the Spirit. Furthermore, our level of “Spirituality” does not reveal itself by how good we feel about ourselves. Rather, our level of Spirituality is revealed by our willingness to pick up our cross and follow Jesus, even at the cost of our own lives.

FUTURE THINGS

There are two levels to eschatology. There is *individual eschatology* and *general eschatology*. *Individual eschatology* arises from the truth that every human being is under the curse of death inherited from Adam and Eve. This means that every person born must one day pass from this life. And when we pass from this life, we will have to give an account to a holy God for how we lived. Only those who are covered by the blood of Jesus, only those whose names are written in the Book of Life, will inherit eternal life. The reprobate will inherit eternal death and suffer eternal conscious torment. In the Reformed tradition there is an “intermediate state” that the elect enter into after they die but before Christ returns. In *general eschatology*, Scripture tells us that Christ will return bodily to earth. The exact time of Christ’s return is not known to anybody. The Bible says that certain events must take place before the return of Jesus. These include the calling of the Gentiles, the turning of the Jews, the Great Apostasy, and the coming of the Antichrist. When Christ returns he will be visible to the whole world and his return will be sudden. When Jesus returns, the dead will rise and there will be a last judgment where we will all be judged based on our response to Christ. While our assignment to heaven or hell is based on our response to the Gospel, the levels of reward in heaven and the levels of punishment in hell will not be equal. Our placement in heaven or hell is entirely dependent on our response to Jesus, but our experience of heaven or hell will be at least partially dependent upon our works in this life. After the last judgment, there will be a new heavens and a new earth, a Paradise where believers will dwell with our Triune God and with each other for eternity.

EVANGELISM

Evangelism is the primary mission of the Church. Evangelism is sharing the Good News about Jesus Christ. At the end of the Book of Matthew Jesus gave us the Great Commission, in which we are commanded to go out into all the world and make disciples of Jesus. In the Church, the *primacy* of evangelism should never be subverted for the fruit of evangelism, which is good works. In other words, the Church exists *primarily* to make disciples of Jesus. It only *secondarily* exists to do and to promote acts of mercy. When the call to do good works is divorced from the call to evangelize, and when good works take precedence over evangelism, the Church degenerates into a political society that is indistinguishable from other worldly institutions that promote social change. The Gospel is the power of God for the salvation of the world, and the true Gospel must always be the Church's primary message. Satan would be happy for the Church to work to make the world a better place but neglect the message that empowers people to receive eternal life. Those who have been saved by the grace of Christ have an obligation to make this grace known to others. Not every Christian has the specific spiritual gift of evangelism, but every Christian is called to make Christ known in word as well as in deed. God's sovereignty and irresistible grace are not excuses to be lax in evangelism. Rather, they give us assurance that our evangelistic efforts will be met with success as God uses our proclamation of the Gospel to bring the elect into the Kingdom of Heaven.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

As with our Spiritual life generally, there can only be "Spirit-with-a-capital-S" gifts within the Church. Our Spiritual gifts are Spirit-gifts, specific gifts given to the elect by the Holy Spirit so that the world can be evangelized and so that the Church can be built up. Some Spiritual gifts are more visible than others, but all Spirit-gifts are required for the full flourishing of our Christian life with one another. Sadly, many believers do not exercise their Spiritual gifts, which decreases our loving fellowship with each another and disempowers the Church's mission to the world. Part of a pastor's role is to identify Spiritual gifts in others and to encourage their use. This is part of a pastor's call to equip the laity for ministry. I be-

lieve that the full range of Spiritual gifts described in the New Testament is available to the contemporary church, with the exception of the Spirit-gift of being an Apostle. Apostles are no longer needed since the canon is closed. I do not personally have any of the more charismatic gifts (speaking in tongues, healing, etc) but I have seen them put to godly use and I have personally benefited from their use.

Name: Erik Buhl

Date: December 30, 2020

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

The 66 books of the Bible are God's Word. The Westminster Confession rightly begins with Holy Scripture because only a correct understanding of Scripture can empower an authentic Christian ministry. The Bible is the final authority on all issues related to Christian faith and practice, and nothing should either be taken away from or added to the Word of God. Furthermore, the infallible standard for the interpretation of the Bible is the Bible itself. The importance of this point cannot be overstated. Many of my colleagues in the PCUSA have said, "God is love." Which is true. But then they will make the hermeneutical move of importing a worldly definition of love to subvert biblical ethics. The correct, God-honoring approach would be to affirm that "God is love," and then look to how the Bible itself defines love. Only then would we be equipped to teach others how to live in a loving way that pleases our Lord. I believe that my primary "Spirit-gifts" are preaching and teaching. Unpacking the Bible and applying it to the daily life of my congregation is my calling's greatest joy. The Bible comforts, assures, encourages, disciplines, rebukes, and directs us as Believers. Without God's Word I would have no ministry to offer.

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

God's sovereignty means more and more to me as life goes on. Life and ministry are often experienced as chaotic by all of us, which is why I find myself daily turning to God's sovereignty for assurance and comfort. I could not live out my Christian life under a system of theology in which it was up to me to advance the Kingdom of God, because I know the limits of my own strength and I know the sin that is still in my heart. I could also not live out my Christian life under a system of theology in which evil could attack me without God's permission. This would be too terrifying! In addition to God's providence, the five Solas are pillars of my Christian faith and rightly upheld by the Reformed tradition. For me, Scripture Alone, Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone, and to the Glory of God Alone are

not merely five points of doctrine; they are my daily lived experience of being a believer. The Five Solas are a constant reminder that my salvation was initiated by God and my eternal life has already been secured by God. The Five Solas allow me to relax into my salvation and grow in my intimacy with my heavenly Abba who has elected me for adoption into his family. The Five Solas remind me that that I am not orphaned by God every time I sin. And the Five Solas empower me to love God more as I receive more of his unconditional love for me. Importantly, the less I feel like I have to earn God's love, the more I am unleashed to trust in God and live for his glory. As J.I. Packer has said, the one word to describe New Testament theology is "grace" and the one word to describe New Testament ethics is "gratitude". For me, the Reformed Tradition anchors my wandering heart to grace and gratitude so that I can live with confidence and joy.

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

The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force; the Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit was active in God's creation, and the Holy Spirit upholds all of God's creation along with God the Son. If the Holy Spirit was to totally depart from any creature then that creature would cease to exist. The Holy Spirit filled Jesus at his baptism and the Holy Spirit empowered the ministry of Jesus. The Holy Spirit regenerates the elect and empowers them to believe the Gospel. The Holy Spirit enables us to believe that God wrote the Bible, it is by the Holy Spirit that we call God our Father, and the Holy Spirit empowers us for holy living. The Holy Spirit also gives Spiritual gifts to God's people for evangelism to the world and for building up the Body of Christ. There is literally nothing that can happen in the Church apart from the Holy Spirit. This points to the importance of prayer as a foundation for any godly ministry, since God the Holy Spirit must be at work for the Kingdom of God to advance. In my own ministry I am learning to make prayer a more central priority and in my walk with Christ I am learning how to walk by the Spirit with more consistency so that I can experience more of the Fruit of the Spirit. This means cultivating a humble dependence on God and confessing that if left to my own strength my Christian life would be totally ineffective.

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

I have an interesting personal history with this issue. I became a Christian in a non-denominational church where only men can be pastors and elders. Then I was a youth pastor at a conservative PCUSA church where there were godly women on our elder board. Then I went to seminary at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada, where some of my professors were in favor of ordaining women to leadership roles in the church and some were not. Many of the “old guard”, such as J.I. Packer and Bruce Waltke, were complementarians. Most of the “new guard” promoted egalitarianism. When I arrived on campus in 2001 there was increasing pressure to confess egalitarianism, which I eventually did, after careful study, upon becoming a candidate in the PCUSA. I think this is an issue on which godly people can disagree. As the EPC believes, the understanding of the role of women in the life of the church varies widely. Equally sincere, Bible-believing Christians differ on this issue. In the EPC, the decision to elect women as pastors, ruling elders, and deacons is left to the discretion of the presbytery and congregation, respectively. I personally affirm the right of women to be ordained in leadership roles in the church, but I do not try to argue complementarians out of their position and I think the EPC has a great approach to this non-essential of our faith.

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

The strengths of the Presbyterian form of government are that it requires involvement from the laity, it takes the pressure off the pastor to “run the show” on the local level, and it provides a needed check to pastoral power. It also makes resources available to local churches when they encounter situations that are too big to handle on their own. On the negative side, just as it is possible for individuals to error in judgment, it is also possible for groups working together to error in judgment. My own experience in the PCUSA has shown me that a Presbyterian form of government alone is not sufficient to prevent false teaching. And with a Presbyterian form of government, change tends to happen slowly, which can be both a blessing and a hindrance to ministry.

6. Explain in your own words your philosophy of ministry

I agree with Ephesians 4:10 that pastors should equip the laity. However, I also believe that there are specific tasks that pastors are trained and equipped to do better than the laity. This usually includes preaching the Word, administering the Sacraments, providing pastor care in emergency situations, and moderating Session meetings. Pastors are constantly thinking about our churches in a way that most elders are not, which means that we are usually in the best position to see the big picture. We are the connecting point for various parts of the church and we can therefore naturally lead the Session in a way that other ruling elders cannot. This means that there is a balancing act of leading the Session without dominating the Session. In my philosophy of ministry, I would also rather pastor a small church of committed Believers than a large church of lukewarm Christians. As we move further into being a post-Christian society, Christians with one foot in the Kingdom and one foot in the world are going to fall away from the faith unless they repent of their casual approach to their faith. I would rather build upon a small, solid core of Christ followers than pastor a church that has a Spiritual reach “a mile wide and an inch deep.” That being said, this is not to judge large churches unfairly. Many large churches have faithful Christians and great pastors!

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

I pray for God to lead me into specific conversations with those who need the Gospel. Often in providing pastor care it becomes obvious that a congregant's grasp of the Gospel is insufficient, which provides me an opportunity to personally evangelize a church member. When it comes to evangelizing the larger community, my belief is that most effective evangelism takes place within an experience of authentic Christian community. My conversations with adult converts has led me to believe that most people are converted to Christ at a Bible study, church service, church camp, or some other setting where Christian teaching is combined with an experience of God within a shared Christian experience. Therefore, I see all ministries of the church as an opportunity for evangelism, as we unite the Good News of the Gospel with the experience that people have of being welcomed and into a church family and loved unconditionally. God's irresistible grace is the assurance that our evangelistic efforts will not be in vain.

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

My call to ministry was first cemented as a High School Youth pastor when I was 21 years old. I was probably too young and immature to hold this position, but as I held the Bible and talked with the youth I came alive! I knew that teaching the Bible was my calling, even if I wasn't yet very good at it! My primary calling is as a preacher and teacher, and my secondary calling is as a leader. I enjoy working with elders to implement God's vision for the church and I enjoy talking with other pastors about what is working and what is not as we all seek to be faithful to the Great Commission.

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

I am lucky in that I have three very close friends. One is a doctor, one is a small business coach, and one is a Christian counselor. All three provide me with good accountability and timely advice as I am open with them about my Christian life. In addition, I do not have any unmonitored access to the internet. I do not give myself the opportunity to pollute my soul with the garbage available to all of us with the click of a mouse. I also coach pastors and in that role I provide accountability for other ministers. Finally, I have a good and healthy marriage. It is not perfect, but it is good. I don't think a wife should shoulder the burden of being her husband's "accountability partner", but our growth together in our common Christian life is a great encouragement to me.

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



	<u>Y-T-D Actual</u>	<u>December Activity</u>	<u>Total Y-T-D</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>
INCOME					
POP Church Support	\$117,198.63	\$11,487.08	\$128,685.71	\$146,000.00	(\$17,314.29)
Other Income -PPP Loan	16,354.00	0.00	16,354.00	0.00	16,354.00
Total Income	\$133,552.63	\$11,487.08	\$145,039.71	\$146,000.00	(\$960.29)
EXPENSES					
Care of Candidates Committee					
Chairman Salary	\$4,583.37	\$416.63	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Travel-Chairman	983.52	0.00	983.52	1,200.00	216.48
Travel-Committee	537.88	0.00	537.88	1,000.00	462.12
Total Care of Candidates Expenses	6,104.77	416.63	6,521.40	7,200.00	678.60
Church Planting Network					
Focal Stipend	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Assessments	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Total Church Planting Network Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Church Revitalization					
Focal - Stipend	916.63	83.37	1,000.00	1,000.00	(0.00)
Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00
Total Church Revitalization Expenses	916.63	83.37	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00

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

Ministerial Committee

Chairman Salary	27,500.00	2,500.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00
Travel-Chairman	1,774.00	0.00	1,774.00	5,000.00	3,226.00
Travel-Committee	0.00	360.92	360.92	500.00	139.08
Total Ministerial Committee Expenses	29,274.00	2,860.92	32,134.92	35,500.00	3,365.08

Moderator

Other Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00
Stipend	1,833.37	166.63	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Travel	1,595.46	0.00	1,595.46	6,000.00	4,404.54
Total Moderator Expenses	3,428.83	166.63	3,595.46	8,300.00	4,704.54

Other Expenses

Leadership Training/Discovery Workshop	67.10	0.00	67.10	1,000.00	932.90
Mission Committee	4,637.50	1,312.50	5,950.00	7,000.00	1,050.00
Pastors' Retreat Subsidy	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total Other Expenses	4,704.60	1,312.50	6,017.10	10,000.00	3,982.90

Presbytery Expenses

Meals and Expense Subsidy	3,440.90	0.00	3,440.90	7,500.00	4,059.10
Resource/Teaching Honorariums	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Total Presbytery Meeting Expenses	3,440.90	0.00	3,440.90	10,500.00	7,059.10

Stated Clerk's Office Expenses

Administrator's Salary	9,166.63	833.37	10,000.00	10,000.00	(0.00)
Clerk's Salary	33,000.00	3,000.00	36,000.00	36,000.00	0.00
Communications	675.00	225.00	900.00	700.00	(200.00)
Conference Service	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00
Miscellaneous Supplies	1,051.77	157.11	1,208.88	1,500.00	291.12
TE Background Checks	199.00	0.00	199.00	300.00	101.00
Website and Computer Support	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Travel- Clerk and Assistant	2,208.31	476.22	2,684.53	9,500.00	6,815.47
Commissions/Other Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Total Stated Clerk's Office	46,300.71	4,691.70	50,992.41	58,700.00	7,707.59

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

Treasurer's Expenses

Review of Financial Records	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00
Office Supplies	471.13	194.52	665.65	500.00	(165.65)
Officers and Directors Insurance	2,132.00	0.00	2,132.00	2,200.00	68.00
Professional Support	300.00	60.00	360.00	400.00	40.00
Stipend Salary	3,208.37	291.63	3,500.00	3,500.00	(0.00)
Travel	501.30	0.00	501.30	1,500.00	998.70
Payroll Expenses	4,032.19	366.56	4,398.75	4,500.00	101.25
Total Treasurer's Expenses	11,144.99	912.71	12,057.70	13,100.00	1,042.30

Total All Expenses	\$105,315.43	\$10,444.46	\$115,759.89	146,000.00	\$30,240.11
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Net Income	\$28,237.20	\$1,042.62	\$29,279.82	0.00	\$29,279.82
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**Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest
Per Member Askings 2020**

Church	Members 2018	Requested PMA	Actual Giving	% of Total
Centerpoint	947	\$14,205	\$10,000	70%
Centerville	343	5,145	5,675	110%
Christ Church East Bay	207	3,105	5,907	190%
Clayton Community	148	2,220	3,600	162%
CPC Danville	1614	24,210	25,338	105%
Covenant Pres Orange	320	4,800	3,226	67%
Covenant Pres Reno	185	2,775	1,500	54%
Covenant Pres San Diego	112	1,680	1,354	81%
Covenant Community Vacaville	211	3,165	2,010	64%
Easton	197	2,955	3,000	102%
Fair Oaks Pres	984	14,760	9,510	64%
First Armenian	178	2,670	2,670	100%
First Pres Bakersfield	575	8,625	7,634	89%
First Pres Fresno	599	8,985	8,685	97%
First Pres Hanford	102	1,530	1,547	101%
Fowler	165	2,475	0	0%
Fremont*	939	11,685	12,000	103%
Heritage	36	540	436	81%
Hope	110	1,650	0	0%
Kingman	129	1,935	2,100	109%
Millbrook	31	465	0	0%
Moraga Valley	763	11,445	10,590	93%
New Life, Covelo	19	285	0	0%
San Ramon	212	3,180	2,805	88%
Sanger	94	1,410	1,200	85%
Sierra	300	4,500	5,798	129%
St. John's Assyrian	182	2,730	0	0%
The Table	40	600	0	0%
Valley Community	50	750	750	100%
Wintersburg**				
Woodlake	90	1,350	1,350	100%
Total	9,882	\$145,830	\$128,684	87%

* Credit given for Presbytery Office space

** New Church

EPC NATIONAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE OPENINGS FOR 2021

Please take a few moments to read through the descriptions of the committees that are in need of new members at the national level. If you, or someone in your church is interested in being nominated for a committee, please contact Rev. Dave Ricketts at dricketts@mvpctoday.org and complete the Nomination Endorsement Form and return it to him ASAP.

FRATERNAL RELATIONS

Description: Are you a “Connector” with strong relationships with other denominations? This committee assists general assembly in developing and maintaining relationships with other bodies of Christians including denominations in the reformed tradition, ecumenical agencies (evangelical or reformed in character) and other groups working to advance the kingdom of god through evangelism, nurture and service. Ordinarily meets in the spring (March or April) prior to general assembly. Six standing members with two members elected annually.

MINISTERIAL VOCATION

Description: Does your heart beat for Pastors and making sure they are cared for? This committee resources the Ministerial and Candidates committees of the presbyteries. Oversees the ordination testing process and the candidates’ educational equivalency program and handles cases of “extraordinary” nature for ordination. Is concerned with the pastoral care of ministers and their families. Ordinarily meets in September and late February. Six standing members with two members elected annually. EPC is looking for wise, seasoned people that come from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

PRESBYTERY REVIEW

Description: Do you really believe that “Minutes Matter”? This committee is responsible to review the minutes of the presbyteries prior to each general assembly as to accuracy, constitutional conformity and inclusion of all required information. At least one member is a former stated clerk to provide experience and expertise. Ordinarily meets in May. Four standing members with one member elected annually.

PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Description: studies questions of interpretation in the *book of order* referred by the stated clerk. Reviews overtures, recommendations, and resolutions for changing the constitution prior to their presentation to the assembly. In cases referred to the assembly, the commission makes a preliminary judgment, binding on the parties involved until the assembly has sustained or rejected its recommendations. Has responsibility to make recommendations to the assembly concerning wording, changes, amendments, additions or other matters relating to the constitution of the church (g.16-27b). Ordinarily meets in May and sits as a commission during general assembly. Nine standing members with three members elected annually. Whenever possible, members will be from different presbyteries.



A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

Endorsement for Nomination 2020-2021

Please suggest only the names of persons with whom you have consulted
and who are willing to serve if nominated and elected.
(Please read all pages carefully before completing and submitting this form
to the Nominating Committee, in care of the Office of the General Assembly.)

Name: _____

Endorsed for: _____
Name of Committee/Board

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Teaching Elder ☐ Ruling Elder ☐ Non-ordained

Occupation: _____

Phone: _____ ☐ Cell ☐ Work ☐ Home

Preferred Email: _____

Home Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Congregation: _____

City, State: _____

Presbytery: _____

Form Updated July 2019



A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

Church Experience:

Describe this individual's Congregation, Presbytery, General Assembly, and/or Interdenominational experience.

In the case of a minister, please give length of service in current position.

Interests and Special Skills:

Be specific about interests and skills that are applicable to this individual's nominated area of service.



EPC

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

Brief Biographical Sketch:

Endorsed By: _____, Clerk

Representing: _____
Name of Presbytery or Session

Date of Presbytery/Session meeting in which endorsement was given: _____

Form Updated July 2019

January 2021

Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you well and blessed and seeing God's mercy. I am praying for you and your ministries, and know that God is faithful. I am writing to respectfully resign my position as Moderator Elect. I am so sorry to create an extra transition, but I have had a change in circumstances. When I agreed to serve, my intention was to do just that. I have enjoyed serving alongside so many faithful, godly, loving people in the Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest. Thank you for your kindness, support and confidence in me. I have been blessed to serve the dear ones at Covenant in Vacaville. It has been my great honor and privilege to know and love them. They are a wonderful church family. However, a few weeks ago, both of my mentors independently spoke to me about a unique opportunity to serve a church in transition. I have prayed and my prayer warriors have prayed relentlessly, and I see God's hand so clearly in this season. The timing is not what I would have chosen but I am stepping out in faith, trusting that His timing is perfect. I would covet your prayers as I leave my family and people whom I love. I would covet your prayers for my dear ones here at Covenant. I know God has the right leadership for the presbytery and for them.

May God bless and keep you.

In His Grip,

Rev. Dr. Julia Leeth

Call to Mission

I came to the States from Seoul, South Korea, with my whole family when I was about thirteen. Perhaps it is because I have Korean background that I naturally had interest in Japan since Korea is very closely located to Japan geographically and was occupied by Japanese for many decades until the U.S. dropped two atomic bombs in Japan in 1945.

And because of the historical background, I grew up disliking the Japanese for my ancestors were mistreated under their occupation. Any international sporting events against Japanese teams, even if it were friendly matches, were must-win games for Korean national teams. That is a kind of national sentiment Koreans have about Japanese even to this day and that is a kind of environment where I was brought up in.

At the same time, there was part of me that like the aspects of Japanese culture and their advanced electronic products while growing up in South Korea in 80's and early 90's. And my interest in Japan continued even after I crossed the Pacific Ocean to live in Torrance, CA. Interestingly, the city of Torrance happened to be one of the most densely populated by Japanese within the States. I also made many Japanese friends in high school where I attended and my affection towards Japanese people grew over the year. When many of my friends chose Spanish as their choice of foreign language because it made sense for them to learn Spanish in Southern California where the language is very widely spoken, I chose Japanese as my foreign language of study, not just in high school years but also during my college years as well (I have B.A. in East Asians Studies, (Japanese Concentration)).

I was not a believer until I was nineteen and I was not thinking about going to Japan as a missionary when I chose to learn Japanese in high school and majored in East Asian Studies (Japanese concentration) in college, learning their history, politics, economy, etc, but I think God providentially led my life as such and prepared and equipped me in order to reach one of the most populous unreached people groups on the earth where less than 1% of its more than 120 million people are Christians.

I am an evangelist. I have been sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ ever since the Lord Jesus revealed Himself to me in 1999. My Korean background did not and will not prevent me from sharing the gospel to Japanese people because I no longer see them through the lenses of Korean, but I see them through God's eyes.

I once was an enemy of God and Jesus Christ reconciled me to God through His blood that was shed on the cross. I am called to be an agent of reconciliation through the gospel of Jesus Christ. I want Japanese to know who Jesus is and believe in Him and be saved. Jesus loves Japanese and I, too, love them.

Descending Overture from the 40th General Assembly Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Descending Overture 20-A

To amend *Book of Government* G-13, “The Ordination and/or Installation of Officers.”

Current Book of Government (2018-19):	Proposed: PJC Amendment; Additions shown in <i>bold italics</i> ; deletion striketrough
<p>Administration of vows and questions Ordination vows The person presiding shall administer the following ordination vows for those being ordained and for those coming into the Evangelical Presbyterian Church from some other denomination: Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior? Do you 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? Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?</p>	<p>Administration of vows and questions Ordination vows The person presiding shall administer the following ordination vows for those being ordained and for those coming into the Evangelical Presbyterian Church from some other denomination: Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior? Do you 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? Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?</p>
<p>Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?</p> <p>Do you affirm and adopt the “Essentials of Our Faith” without exception?</p> <p>Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?</p>	<p>Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery <i>(or to your Session in the case of Ruling Elders and Deacons)</i> the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?</p> <p>Do you affirm and adopt the “Essentials of Our Faith” without exception?</p> <p>Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?</p>

Do you promise subjection to your fellow Presbyters in the Lord?¹

Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy Ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son? Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

Installation vows:

The person presiding shall administer the following installation vows for those being installed to office in an EPC congregation: Will you seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon, whether personal, or interpersonal, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the congregation of which God is making you overseer?

Are you now willing to accept the call of this church as Pastor/Associate Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon, and, relying upon God for strength, promise to discharge to it the duties required of that office?²

Questions to the congregation

When the person being ordained has responded affirmatively to these vows, the person presiding shall address the following questions to the congregation:

Are you, the members of this congregation ready to receive _____ as your *(name of office to which the person is being ordained/installed)*?

Do you promise to submit to _____ in matters of spiritual discipline, and to

Do you promise subjection to your fellow Presbyters in the Lord?¹⁰⁹

Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy Ministry ***(or the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon)*** from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son?

Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

Installation vows:

The person presiding shall administer the following installation vows for those being installed to office in an EPC congregation:

Will you seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon, whether personal, or interpersonal, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the congregation of which God is making you overseer?

Are you now willing to accept the call of this church as Pastor/Associate Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon, and, relying upon God for strength, promise to discharge to it the duties required of that office?¹¹⁰

Questions to the congregation

When the person being ordained has responded affirmatively to these vows, the person presiding shall address the following questions to the congregation:

Are you, the members of this congregation ready to receive _____ as your *(name of office to which the person is being ordained/installed)*?

Do you promise to submit to _____ ***(Teaching/Ruling Elders only)*** in matters of

¹ For Deacons, the vow is “Do you promise subjection to your fellow Church Officers in the Lord?” (G.13-7B)

² In the case of an Assistant Pastor, the phrase “Are you now willing to accept the call of the Session as Assistant Pastor...” is appropriate.

<p>receive with humility and love the word of truth?</p> <p>Do you promise to support _____ (<i>name</i>) with your prayers, to give encouragement and assistance in every way as _____ (<i>name</i>) seeks to instruct you in the things of the Lord and to lead you in the building of the Kingdom of God in this place?</p> <p>Do you commit yourselves to fulfill the terms of the call you have extended and to make provision for _____ (<i>name</i>) needs that the name of Christ might be glorified?</p>	<p>spiritual discipline, and to receive with humility and love the word of truth?</p> <p>Do you promise to support _____ (<i>name</i>) with your prayers, to give encouragement and assistance in every way as _____ (<i>name</i>) seeks to instruct you in the things of the Lord and to lead you in the building of the Kingdom of God in this place?</p> <p>Do you commit yourselves to fulfill the terms of the call you have extended and to make provision for (Teaching Elder only) _____ (<i>name</i>) needs that the name of Christ might be glorified?</p>
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<p>13-3 The Act of Ordination</p> <p>Following the congregation's affirmation, those being ordained shall kneel and members of the ordaining court or Commission shall lay hands on the Ordinand(s).</p> <p>An appropriate prayer shall be offered and the Ordinand(s) shall thereby be set apart to the office of Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon.</p> <p>The presiding person shall state: "By the authority of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of _____, I declare that _____ has been ordained to the office of (Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon), and that he/she has been duly and properly installed as (Pastor/Associate Pastor/Assistant Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon) of this congregation, in accord with the Word of God and the laws of this Church. As such _____ (name) is entitled to be given support, encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."</p>	<p>The Act of Ordination</p> <p>Following the congregation's affirmation, those being ordained shall kneel and members of the ordaining court or Commission shall lay hands on the Ordinand(s).</p> <p>An appropriate prayer shall be offered and the Ordinand(s) shall thereby be set apart to the office of Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon. The presiding person shall state: "By the authority of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of _____, I declare that _____ has been ordained to the office of (Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon), and that he/she has been duly and properly installed as (Pastor/Associate Pastor/Assistant Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon) of this congregation, in accord with the Word of God and the laws of this Church. As such _____ (name) is entitled to be given support, encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."</p>
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<p>It is appropriate that a charge be given to the Ordinand(s) and to the congregation suitable for the occasion. Following the installation, it is appropriate that the members of the congregation or the Officers and their representatives demonstrate their reception of and commitment to the Ordinand(s) by coming forward and giving an appropriate greeting.</p> <p>The event shall be recorded in the minutes of the Commission (if appointed) and the ordaining/installing Court.</p>	<p>It is appropriate that a charge be given to the Ordinand(s) and to the congregation suitable for the occasion. Following the installation, it is appropriate that the members of the congregation or the Officers and their representatives demonstrate their reception of and commitment to the Ordinand(s) by coming forward and giving an appropriate greeting.</p> <p>The event shall be recorded in the minutes of the Commission (if appointed) and the ordaining/installing Court.</p>
<p>The ordination and installation of Ruling Elders and Deacons</p> <p>The person presiding shall administer the vows prescribed in G.13-2A for the affirmation of those being ordained and installed and for those who have been ordained previously in some other denomination and are being installed.</p> <p>For Deacons, the seventh vow of ordination (G.13-2A) shall be:</p> <p>“Do you promise subjection to your fellow Church Officers in the Lord?”</p> <p>The person presiding shall then proceed with the vows of installation, the questions to the congregation, and the act of ordination prescribed in G.13-2B, G.13-2C, and G.13-3.</p>	<p>The ordination and installation of Ruling Elders and Deacons</p> <p>The person presiding shall administer the vows prescribed in G.13-2A for the affirmation of those being ordained and installed and for those who have been ordained previously in some other denomination and are being installed.</p> <p>For Deacons, the seventh vow of ordination (G.13-2A) shall be:</p> <p>“Do you promise subjection to your fellow Church Officers in the Lord?”</p> <p>The person presiding shall then proceed with the vows of installation, the questions to the congregation, and the act of ordination prescribed in G.13-2B, G.13-2C, and G.13-3.</p>
<p>The installation of previously ordained Ruling Elders and Deacons</p> <p>The procedure for installing a Ruling Elder or Deacon who has been previously ordained will be the same as that for ordination except that the following question shall be substituted for vows 1 through 9 (G.13-2A):</p> <p>“Do you now reaffirm the vows you took upon your ordination and do you recommit yourself to them in the discharge of your obligations?”</p> <p>The person presiding shall then administer the vows of installation as prescribed in G.13-2B. The laying on of hands for ordination shall be omitted.</p> <p>D. The person presiding shall ask the questions to the congregation as prescribed in G.13-1C.</p>	<p>The installation of previously ordained Ruling Elders and Deacons</p> <p>The procedure for installing a Ruling Elder or Deacon who has been previously ordained will be the same as that for ordination except that the following question shall be substituted for vows 1 through 9 (G.13-2A):</p> <p>“Do you now reaffirm the vows you took upon your ordination and do you recommit yourself to them in the discharge of your obligations?”</p> <p>The person presiding shall then administer the vows of installation as prescribed in G.13-2B. The laying on of hands for ordination shall be omitted.</p> <p>D. The person presiding shall ask the questions to the congregation as prescribed in G.13-1C.</p>