



A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

CHURCH INFORMATION FORM

The Ministerial Vocation Committee and the Office of the Stated Clerk of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church are responsible for denominational vocational services. As part of the process of “matching” ministers and congregations, the Office of the Stated Clerk provides resources and advice to both pastors and congregational search committees. To that end, we ask congregations and ministers to complete information forms as an introduction to each other, and a first step in the process of calling a minister for a congregation. For both the pastor and the congregation, this is an opportunity for self-study and evaluation of current ministry and goals. This calls for honesty, effort, and open communication.

This Church Information Form (CIF) presents the local congregation’s history, challenges, and goals. It is our hope that this will help facilitate the search process by assisting both the church in focusing on future directions and applicants in gaining some sense of the nature and uniqueness of this congregation.

We encourage churches to list their vacancies on the Ministry Staff Opportunities webpage at www.epc.org/mso. For more information or to send your posting, email info@epc.org.

Guidance for church-based human resources questions such as background checks, personnel policy manuals, and more is available at the Office of the General Assembly by contacting Marti Ratcliff at marti.ratcliff@epc.org or 407-930-4263.

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Please return completed form to:

Evangelical Presbyterian Church
ATTN: OFFICE OF THE STATED CLERK
5850 T.G. Lee Blvd., Suite 510
Orlando, FL 32822

Phone: 407-930-4239
Fax: 407-930-4247
E-mail: info@epc.org





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Part 1: Church Information

1. Church Name First Presbyterian Church, Bakersfield, CA

Address 1705 17th Street

Bakersfield, CA 93301

Telephone (661) 325-9419 Fax (661) 325-5641

E-mail info@fpbchurch.com Website www.fpbchurch.com

2. Presbytery Presbytery of the Pacific Southwest

Presbytery Ministerial Committee Liaison Guy Boyer

3. Search Committee Chairman Tracie Monroe

Address c/o First Presbyterian Church

1705 17th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301

E-mail pastorsearch@fpbchurch.com

Telephone (661) 301-0597

4. List all paid staff positions (use additional sheet if necessary)

- Associate Pastor Full time Part time
- Director of Worship Arts Full time Part time
- Director of Student Ministries Full time Part time
- Director of Children's Ministries Full time Part time
- Director of Operations Full time Part time
- Administrative Assistant Full time Part time
- Marketing & Social Media Coordinator Full time Part time
- Maintenance Supervisor Full time Part time
- Administrative Assistant for Youth and Children Full time Part time
- See additional sheet for part time staff Full time Part time



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5. List all key volunteer positions

- Clerk of Session
- Discipleship Committee Chair
- Finance Committee Chair
- Membership & Fellowship Committee Chair
- Mission Committee Chair
- Personnel Committee Chair
- Property & Maintenance Committee Chair
- Worship Committee Chair
- Deacons Moderator
- Treasurer
- Director of Connect Group Ministries
- Foundation President
- Clipper Club President
- Schooners President

6. List all vacant positions

- Position Available Senior Pastor Date of Vacancy 7/1/2023
- Position Available Director of Missions Date of Vacancy 9/30/2021
- Position Available _____ Date of Vacancy _____

7. Membership (state approximate numbers and percentages)

	Five years ago	Currently
A. Number of church members	<u>592</u>	<u>386</u>
B. Number of family units	_____	<u>268</u>
C. Worship attendance	<u>388</u>	<u>350</u>

8. Community Growth Increasing Static Declining

9. Profile of church members

- A. Age:
- 0 % 0-11 0.5 % 12-18 0.5 % 19-24 4.3 % 25-34
- 12.8 % 35-49 26.6 % 50-64 55.3 % 65+



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B. Occupation:

_____ % Business _____ % Professional _____ % Trades
_____ % Agriculture _____ % Stay-at-Home Parent _____ % Retired
_____ % Other (Please Specify) We do not track this data.

C. Educational level of adults We do not track this data

_____ % some high school _____ % high school _____ % college _____ % graduate school

D. Percentage of members belonging to the congregation

Less than one year 2.6 %
5 years or less 14.3 %
6-10 years 21.0 %
10 years or more 62.1 %

10. Racial/Ethnic composition of:

A. Congregation

_____ % African-American _____ % Asian _____ % Caucasian _____ % Hispanic
_____ % Other (Specify) We do not track this data.

B. Community (within 5-mile radius of church)

11 % African-American 1 % Asian 55 % Caucasian 27 % Hispanic
6 % Other (Specify) These are from area zipcodes, not specifically 5 miles.

11. Community Setting (check as many as apply):

Location

Rural Small Town Metropolitan Suburban Inner City

Function

Industrial Agricultural Recreational Military College/University

Approximate population of community: 407,000



12. Worship

A. Worship Time	Average Worship Attendance	Worship Style
9:00 IP	111	Classic In Person
10:45 IP	121	Contemporary In Person
9:00 OL	70	Classic Online
10:45 OL	48	Contemporary Online
Wed. Night Classes	32 adults/40 children and youth	Class

B. Frequency of communion celebration: 12-15 (monthly + special services) per year

C. How are members involved in planning and participation in the liturgy/worship?

The worship committee works in collaboration with the pastors and worship arts director to plan the worship services. Lay leaders, elders, and deacons serve as greeters/ushers, read scripture, serve communion, and pray in the worship services.

D. Style of liturgy used in your worship (e.g., traditional, contemporary, variety)

First Pres uses both traditional and contemporary worship elements in our services, according to the designated worship style for that particular service. Very often, elements of style overlap.

E. Type of music used in worship (e.g., traditional, contemporary, variety)

The classic (traditional) service at 9am uses primarily hymns with the help of the Westminster Choir and organ. The contemporary service at 10:45 uses primarily praise music and a band (keyboard, 1-2 guitars/bass, drums, 2-3 singers).

13. Ministry Programs

A. Average attendance in Church School (under 18 years): 46

B. Average attendance in Adult Education (Sunday): 10

C. Average involvement in Small Groups: 145



14. Organizational Structure

List major boards, committees, and organizations that are part of your church and frequency of meetings (monthly, weekly, etc.)

Name	Purpose of Group	Number of members	Frequency of meetings	Leadership Role*
Session	Church Leadership	20	monthly	2
Deacons	Care for the members	24	monthly	2
Discipleship Committee	Oversee discipleship ministries	9	monthly	2
Finance Committee	Financial oversight, budgeting, policies	9	monthly	3
Membership & Fellowship Committee	Congregational care, new members, fellowship groups	11	monthly	3
Missions Committee	Promote and support mission partners	8	monthly	3
Personnel Committee	Provide direction and decision making for employee policies	7	monthly	2
Property & Maintenance Committee	Oversee maintenance and improvement of facilities and equipment	8	monthly	3
Worship Committee	Coordinate different aspects of the worship ministry	8	monthly	2
Trustees	Corporation business	4	annually	4
Foundation	Receive and invest donations and provide scholarships	5	quarterly	3

*Indicate leadership role expected by using the number below:

1. Pastor takes primary initiative and responsibility.
2. Pastor and laity share responsibility.
3. Laity takes primary initiative and responsibility.
4. A staff person takes primary initiative and responsibility.

Part 2: Financial/Church Campus Information

1. Current annual budget: \$ 1,692,820 Last year's annual budget: \$ 1,693,617
(Attach a copy of current budget)

2. Percentage of income received toward budget: 88 %



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3. Amount contributed for year (most recent complete reporting year)

- A. EPC Percentage of Income \$ 10,350
- B. EPC World Outreach Global Workers \$ 0
- C. EPC Special Projects \$ 0
- D. Presbytery Per Member Asking/Percentage of Income \$ 6,751
- E. Other Missions/Missionaries \$ \$97K budgeted + \$95K designated account

4. Property owned by church

A. Describe buildings and property (other than manse), including condition.

Sanctuary & Chapel, Fellowship Hall & Kitchen, Christian Education & Cafe, Administration, Activity Center & Youth Ministries, Truxtun Building.

Combined, the campus spans two city blocks. All are well-maintained.

- B. Are your buildings adequate for your present program? Yes No
If no, please explain:

- C. Is a building program or capital project projected? Yes No
If yes, describe what, when, and projected cost

Chancel renovation with existing designated funds of \$512,000. Expected completion is before Advent 2023.

- D. Does the church own a manse? Yes No

Condition: Good Fair Poor # of Bedrooms

Pastor's Office/Study: In Church In Manse Not Provided

Other _____



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5. Compensation:

A. The salary range we are prepared to offer:

Position: Senior Pastor \$ Range \$110,000-\$143,000

Position: _____ \$ (salary and housing)

Position: _____ \$ _____

B. The average annual increase over the past three years is:

Position: All Staff \$ _____ or 2.2 %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

Position: _____ \$ _____ or _____ %

C. Housing

- Housing Allowance
- Manse Only
- Either of the Above

D. Benefits and expenses

10% Retirement Plan (minimum 10% gross effective salary)

100% Medical insurance (EPC medical coverage required for full-time TEs)

100% Life insurance

_____ Social Security

100% Travel/mileage

100% Book allowance

2 weeks Study leave allowance (minimum 2 weeks)

4 weeks Annual vacation days (minimum 4 weeks)

_____ Number of worship services per year for which pastor is provided relief (in addition to vacation and study leave)

Every 7 years Sabbatical frequency and length _____

_____ Other (Specify: _____)

- E. The church participates in the EPC's medical benefits plan Yes No
- F. The church participates in the EPC's retirement plan Yes No



Part 3: Church Characteristics

Check the box that most closely describes the current characteristics of the congregation.

Our congregation...	Agree		Disagree	
1. Is spiritually vibrant	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. Demonstrates love for the pastor and his/her family	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. Readily shares their gifts with the rest of the congregation	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Places a high priority on sound biblical preaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Effectively integrates newcomers	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6. Is engaged in evangelism	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
7. Is often found living their faith in their communities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
8. Has a spirit of unity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
9. Cares about each other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
10. Is supportive of the Session and pastoral leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
11. Ministers well to members that are hurting	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
12. Uses members' gifts in worship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
13. Contains people willing and able to lead the congregation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
14. Is capable of change when and where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
15. Is connected to and prayerful about what God is doing in the global church	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

16. How are elders and deacons initially trained and equipped for ministry?

Two-hour orientation with reference to links to EPC training materials (<https://epc.org/downloads/>).



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17. What is the Session's current practice regarding the ongoing discipleship of elders and deacons?

Elders attend an annual one-day retreat. Elders and Deacons take time during monthly meetings for focused devotionals/book studies.

In addition, Elders rotate sharing about God's activity in his/her life during the monthly Session meetings.

18. In what ways does your church participate in ecumenical activities?

We have ongoing relationships with several local and regional ministries such as Kern County Youth for Christ, InterVarsity, The Mission at Kern County, the Bakersfield Pregnancy Center, and Gleanings for the Hungry. Our members are encouraged to help with their wallets, their hands and their hearts and many members volunteer on their own outside of organized church events.

Our relationship with our mission partners has been a priority of First Pres for decades. Annually we host a well-received Mission Sunday to highlight specific mission partners. We offer regional and international mission trips for adults and our youth groups which, in the last few years, included volunteering at Gleanings for the Hungry in Dinuba, CA, building homes in Mexico with Yugo Ministries, visiting Children to Love's ministry in Thailand and traveling to Haiti to serve at Mission of Grace. We have also launched many missionaries from our church who serve across the globe.

First Pres seeks to build bridges with churches in our community, as we believe that we are stronger in Christ when we are united and supportive. We have developed a special relationship with St. Peter Restoration Community Christian Ministries and have held joint events & worshipped together. We also seek to lift churches throughout Kern County and our regional Presbytery through our Sunday weekly prayers.

First Pres has opened our campus to Community Bible Study for more than 25 years, which has blessed hundreds of people across Bakersfield. We also offer our centrally located campus to many different community groups.

19. Describe the strengths of your congregation.

The congregation is open and welcoming, consisting of people from different areas around Bakersfield. The congregation does a good job of reaching out to the local community through annual outreach events like the Father-Daughter Dance, Harvest Festival, and Summer Bible Blast (VBS).

The church has strived to keep the facility and ministries available to as many people as possible, with broad-based ministries for a variety of people and a good bench strength of volunteers.

Other strengths:

1. The church carries no debt.
2. The church financially supports members in need via the Deacon's Ministry.
3. The church has a strong and diverse music program.



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20. List specific problems with which your congregation struggles.

We have two services: classic (traditional) and contemporary. This allows the church to have a variety of worship styles, but limits the two groups' fellowship on Sundays.

Even though we are a downtown church, our congregation does not resemble the diversity of Downtown Bakersfield. Downtown does not have a distinct neighborhood, so we are not a neighborhood church. Unfortunately, the draw of downtown is not bringing a diverse population to the church. There is little diversity in race, age, and socio-economic status. The church is reaching out with the help of new ministries, for example the Food Pantry, to draw in people from all backgrounds.

We are an aging church that is not replenishing our numbers with the 20-30 age demographic of young individuals and families.

It has been recognized in the past that church leadership has not communicated to the congregation in an effective way. While steps have been taken to address this problem, there is still room for improvement through developing more channels and education.

21. List major goals that the congregation has set for itself.

Our church seeks to embody Christ's call to spread the good news by continuing our support for mission partners locally, nationally, and abroad. Our church also has a continued vision to raise up missionaries from within our church to carry out our mission of blessing the world.

Our congregation seeks to fervently continue our established outreaches which not only show the love of God to those in our community, but also encourage our congregation to grow in diversity and love.

We aim to be a church that intentionally attracts young families and youths through a variety of means. While recognizing that church attendance is on the decline, we desire to grow our attendance and participation.

Our church has tangible goals set for increasing small group participation as a way of providing opportunities for each member to more fully experience the Kingdom of God through meaningful and intentional relationships.

Our leadership is prayerfully seeking ways for our congregation to have increased community involvement, where members feel able and willing to live out their gifts through service and participation within and outside the church.

22. Has there ever been disciplinary action taken against a pastor of your congregation?

Yes No

23. Has there ever been any disciplinary action against an elder or deacon of your congregation?

Yes No



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If you answered “Yes” to either 22 or 23, please explain.

An elder was dismissed approximately 30 years ago for an extramarital affair.
June 1991- Associate Pastor Christian Education, allegations of inappropriate touching of a teen, resigned and subsequently dismissed.
November 2006- Associate Pastor, divorced but in a relationship with a married member of the congregation, resigned.
December 2011- Associate Pastor, Chinese Christian Church of Bakersfield (outreach of First Pres), charges brought for contempt of the established order of the church, resigned.

24. Have you completed a mission statement, vision statement, and/or a strategic plan for your congregation?

Yes No

If yes, Date completed August 2013, expanded May 2019

If yes, enter each statement or strategic plan (or attach copies if space below is limited).

Mission Statement: Inviting people into meaningful life through knowing Christ, loving one another, and blessing the world.

Values:

1. Scripture- because God communicates his heart, character and will through the Bible, we seek to obey it. Biblical value is demonstrated by our decisions, attitudes and actions being increasingly shaped by Scripture (Psalm 119:105).
2. People – because people matter to God (Romans 5:8), they matter to us. Our concern for people is demonstrated by spending our money, leveraging our time and designing our programs to invite people into a deeper relationship with and awareness of the Lord.
3. Generosity – because God is generous with humanity (John 3:16), we seek to be generous, too. Generosity is demonstrated by sacrificially giving of our time, talent and treasures to build God’s kingdom in Kern County and around the world.
4. Intentionality- because God has been intentional in reaching out to humanity to offer life (John 6:38), so do we. Our intentionality is demonstrated by investing in people and programs that invite and equip the people of God to meaningful life in and through Christ.



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Part 4: Leadership Expectations

1. What are some key character strengths a person should bring to this position?

We seek a pastor who recognizes the value of listening well and who takes time to do so. Such a pastor would be approachable to our members and would possess traits of compassion, empathy and humility which would be present in his or her interactions with those who come through our doors – members and guests alike.

We are a church with an aging congregation that seeks to reach younger members of our community who are searching for a church or are simply curious. An ability and willingness to relate well and communicate effectively with all different ages is essential both for our current members and attendees as well as those people we have yet to meet.

Finally, we seek a pastor willing to dream about the future and share that vision with others. We know that the church experience has evolved and will continue to do so and we want to remain vibrant and relevant to our church community and our community at large.

2. What are five key gifts/skills/abilities a person should bring to this position?

It is essential to possess a deep understanding of the Scriptures and a passion for them, which should be reflected in biblically-based preaching and a lifestyle of integrity that mirrors Christ's love.

Our church seeks a pastor equipped to lead and direct using a collaborative approach that recognizes and utilizes the strengths and skills of our congregants. We believe many of our members have untapped spiritual gifts which, with encouragement and support from a senior pastor, can be used to strengthen and empower our church inwardly and outwardly.

We desire a visionary leader able to engage and care for members of the congregation of different ages, genders, socioeconomic status, and race, meeting each with respect, curiosity, humility and compassion with an awareness of communal needs locally, nationally and globally.

We would like a change agent to help guide our church towards embracing and accepting change that will keep our church vibrant and relevant to seekers and members as we seek to fulfill our church's mission.

A pastor should have organizational skills that appreciate the business side of our church and will provide support and encourage the staff to ensure the operations of the church are kept in alignment with the needs of the church.

3. What are the primary pastoral duties for the position? (Attach a position description)

See attached.



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Part 5: Church History

1. What do you consider to be the three most important events in the history of your church?

In 1906 First Presbyterian Church was formed by the merger of Westminster Presbyterian Church and Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

First Presbyterian Church is committed to remain in Downtown Bakersfield. This began with the rebuilding of our sanctuary in 1952 after a major earthquake, continued by remaining in Downtown as other downtown churches moved to the suburbs in the 1980s, and was reinforced with a multi-million dollar expansion of our church campus completed in 2003.

In 2010 our Session and congregation made the decision to change from the PCUSA to the EPC.

2. What do you consider to be the most interesting and challenging event in the life of your church in the last three years?

The challenge of Covid: First Pres navigated the challenge well from a leadership standpoint. Session set aside individual personal biases and unanimously supported following health agency guidelines while showing love, empathy and grace within our community. We pivoted quickly to keep people engaged in worship through changing the worship venue as necessary and as health guidelines allowed (pre-recorded online worship, Zoom Bible studies, outdoor services, extra cleaning and distancing during indoor services while wearing masks, and eventually, live online worship). We also initiated creative support ministries to provide assistance and outreach to the community at large.

Our challenge, which remains, is to re-engage our congregation, especially young families, as health restrictions were removed gradually and then completely. Toward this engagement, we held an all-church retreat in March, 2022 at Hartland Christian Camp. Our goal is to make this a regular event, with the most recent retreat in late September 2023.



Part 6: Other Information

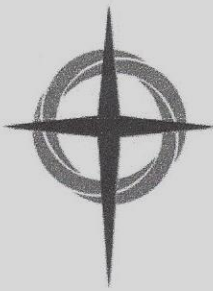
1. List the last three individuals who held this position

Name	Dates of Service	
Rev. Dr. Jeff Chandler	6/2006	to 6/2023
Rev. Dr. Bill Stephens	10/1996	to 8/2005
Rev. Dr. Don Buteyn	3/1986	to 6/1995

2. Describe any significant factors about the church not covered in previous questions.

Over the years First Pres has provided food boxes to those in need through donations from our members. For several months during the pandemic we offered drive-through food boxes on a weekly basis, and we saw our numbers grow. In 2021 a member of our church and our Mission Director approached Session with the concept of a "choice food pantry" where guests could select what they wanted & needed each week and receive prayer and support in locating other community services. Session enthusiastically approved the idea and for the last two years the First Pres Choice Pantry has grown dramatically. Today, the pantry is open once a week and guests receive prayer and optional Bible studies from "allies" who consist of both First Pres and community members. Some of the guests now come to Wednesday night church dinners and classes and/or Sunday morning services. The ministry is supported through donations from our congregation and beyond, as well as through the Missions budget.

The church has remained on good terms with former staff members who have left their positions. These former employees are attenders, members, and participants in the ministry of First Pres. First Pres will always be a home for our former employees. We know that new job opportunities arise, and God's calling takes people in different directions. The First Pres congregation does not hold hard feelings but welcomes back former staff to participate and even engage in ministry with the church. First Pres is a welcoming environment for everyone, especially those who have already given so much to the ministry as staff members.



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Statement of Acknowledgment

The EPC believes that honesty and a commitment to open communication are critical to building the body of Christ. In that spirit, please confirm your agreement to the following statements by your signatures below.

1. We attest that the information contained in this Church Information Form is true and complete to the best of our knowledge.
2. We authorize applicants for the position(s) listed herein to make inquiries regarding all statements contained in this Church Information Form.
3. We authorize the Office of the Stated Clerk to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share this Church Information Form with potential candidates for the position(s) listed herein.
4. We acknowledge the Medical Plan and Retirement Plan services offered by the EPC's Benefit Resources, Inc., exist to serve EPC churches and their staff members. We also acknowledge the EPC's Book of Order requirement that EPC churches provide medical insurance to ordained staff members through BRI as mandated by the following Acts of the General Assembly:
 - 81-04 Terms of call for any minister of member churches shall provide for participation in the denominational hospitalization and disabilities programs. *(Minutes of the 1st General Assembly, 1-32)*
 - 81-06 The denominational group insurance plan providing health, disability, and life coverage shall be mandatory for all ministers within member churches. *(Minutes of the 1st General Assembly, 1-36)*
 - 88-08 Assembly amends participatory requirements for group health insurance plan by requiring participation of all ministers on the rolls of presbyteries with the exception of:
 1. Missionaries laboring in cooperative agreements with mission agencies;
 2. Ministers laboring in institutional agencies providing their own group insurance plan;
 3. Ministers afforded group insurance coverage as part of retirement benefits from a previous employer;
 4. Ministers without call, and ministers laboring less than 20 hours in a place of ministry. *(Minutes of the 8th General Assembly, 8-24)*

For information about EPC benefits through BRI, see www.epc.org/benefits, email benefits@epc.org, or call 407-930-4267.

Clerk of Session *Jim Courser* Date 10-24-23
 Search Committee Chair *Frank D. Moore* Date 10-24-23