



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 individual pastor and the congregation, this is an opportunity for self-study and for evaluation of current ministry and goals. This calls for honesty, effort, and commitment to open communication.

The Church Information Form presents the local congregation’s history, challenges, and goals. It is our hope that this will be of help in facilitating the search process, assisting the church in focusing on future directions and pastors in gaining some sense of the nature and uniqueness of this congregation.

### *Contents*

Part 1: Church Information

Part 4: Leadership Expectations

Part 2: Financial/Church Campus Information

Part 5: Church History

Part 3: Church Characteristics

Part 6: Other Information

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](mailto:info@epc.org)





**EPC**

*A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches*

**Part 1: Church Information**

1. Church Name City of Refuge Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Address 3150 Yellowstone Blvd, Houston, TX 77054

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( 713 ) 664-5033 Fax ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail info@cityofrefuge.org Website www.cityofrefuge.org

2. Presbytery: Presbytery of the Gulf South

Presbytery Ministerial Committee Liaison Bob Vincent

3. Search Committee Chairman Nathan Kim

Address 3150 Yellowstone Blvd Houston, TX 77054

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail search@cityofrefuge.org

Telephone ( 713 ) 664-5033

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

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <u>Alejandra Pizana, Worship Director</u> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| <u>Brandon Fremion, Equipping Pastor</u>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| <u>Lee Morgan, Facilities Director</u>    | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part time |
| <u>Le'Tricia White, Bookkeeper</u>        | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part time |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |
| _____                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Full time            | <input type="checkbox"/> Part time            |



5. List all vacant positions

Position Available Senior Pastor Date of Vacancy Jan 2020

Position Available \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Vacancy \_\_\_\_\_

Position Available \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Vacancy \_\_\_\_\_

6. Membership (state approximate numbers and percentages)

	Five years ago	Currently
A. Number of church members	<u>185</u>	<u>150</u>
B. Number of family units	<u>132</u>	<u>95</u>
C. Worship attendance	<u>210</u>	<u>~90 family units</u>

7. Community Growth  Increasing  Static  Declining

8. Profile of church members

A. Age:

17 % 0-11 7 % 12-18 7 % 19-24 33 % 25-34  
25 % 35-49 6 % 50-64 5 % 65+

B. Occupation:

11 % Business 51 % Professional 0 % Trades  
0 % Agriculture 6 % Stay-at-Home Parent 5 % Retired  
27 % Other (Please Specify) student (18%), ministry (6%), disabled (3%)

C. Educational level of adults

0 % some high school <1 % high school 47 % college 53 % graduate school

D. Percentage of members belonging to the congregation

Less than one year 7 %  
5 years or less 55 %  
6-10 years 23 %  
10 years or more 15 %



**EPC**

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

9. Racial/Ethnic composition of:

**A. Congregation**

11 % African-American 31 % Asian 41 % Caucasian 8 % Hispanic  
9 % Other (Specify) bi-racial/multiracial

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

40.1 % African-American 23.3 % Asian 23.7 % Caucasian 9.2 % Hispanic  
3.7 % Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. 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 6.3 million

11. Church Programming—Worship

A. Worship Time

Average Worship Attendance

11:00am  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(virtual) 90 family units  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Frequency of communion celebration: 12 times per year

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

communion team (15 members), greeter team (20 members), media team (7 members), presiders (8 members), worship team (18 members)



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

mostly contemporary, some traditional

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

traditional, contemporary, international (multilingual)

**12. Church Programming—Sunday School**

A. Average attendance in Church School (under 18 years) (pre-covid) 45 | (current) 50

B. Average attendance in Adult Education (Sunday) (pre-covid) 23 | (current) 30

**13. Church Programming—Organizations/Committees**

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*
Women's Ministry	Encouragement, edification and fellowship of the women of CoR	20	quarterly	3
Men's Ministry	Encouragement, edification and fellowship of the men of CoR	25	quarterly	2
Local Missions Committee	Service and evangelism within local community	5	monthly	3
Global Missions Committee	Service and evangelism to the nations	5	monthly	3
Worship & Prayer Ministry	Help facilitate components of Sunday worship & Prayer for church, community, nation and world	28	weekly	3
Adult Christian Education	Supplemental learning on Sunday mornings	30	weekly	2
Children's & Youth Ministry	Sunday morning learning & discipleship for children 1mo - 18yrs	50	weekly	3
Deacons	Hands and feet of Jesus to the Body and community at large	8	monthly	2
Session Meetings	Governance of the church and shepherding of its congregants	8	monthly	1

\*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.



**Part 2: Financial/Church Campus Information**

1. Current annual budget: \$ 760k Last year's annual budget: \$ 768k  
(Attach a copy of current budget)

2. Percentage of income received toward budget: 73% %

3. Amount contributed for year \$4,000 (most recent complete reporting year)

A. EPC Per Member Asking \$ \_\_\_\_\_

B. EPC World Outreach Global Workers \$ \_\_\_\_\_

C. EPC Special Projects \$ \_\_\_\_\_

D. Presbytery Per Member Asking \$ \_\_\_\_\_

E. Other Missions/Missionaries \$ \_\_\_\_\_

4. Property owned by church

A. Describe buildings and property (other than manse).

City of Refuge Church is a bi-level 15,600 square foot building located on the busy corners of Yellowstone & Ardmore streets. The upstairs sanctuary doubles as a gym during the week for a local faith-based non-profit. Downstairs hosts eight classrooms utilized for the Children & Youth Ministries and Adult Christian Education classes on Sunday mornings, in addition to a small kitchen. A small playground/lawn area and parking lot surround the outside of the venue. Additional parking is leased at an adjacent lot.

B. Are your buildings adequate for your present program?

If no, please explain:

Yes  No

C. Is a building program projected?

If yes, describe what, when, and projected cost

Yes  No

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 \_\_\_\_\_



**EPC**

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

6. Compensation:

A. The salary range we are prepared to offer:

Position: Senior Pastor \$ \$70k - \$80K

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Position: Senior Pastor \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or 2 - 5 %

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ %

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ %

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ %

C. Housing

Housing Allowance

Manse Only

Either of the Above

D. Benefits and expenses

X (10%) Pension (minimum 10% gross effective salary)

X Medical insurance

\_\_\_\_\_ Life insurance

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Security

\_\_\_\_\_ Travel/mileage

\_\_\_\_\_ Book allowance

\_\_\_\_\_ Study leave allowance (minimum 2 weeks)

80hrs vacation +

16 paid holidays Annual vacation days (minimum 4 weeks) [ 6-10yrs: 120hrs | 10+yrs: 160hrs ]

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Specify: vision & dental insurance, educational reimbursement, cellular allowance),  
30-day paid Sabbatical after 5 -7 yrs service



**Part 3: Church Characteristics**

*Check the box that most closely describes the current congregation characteristics and future goals*

Our congregation...	Currently				Goal			
	Agree		Disagree		Agree		Disagree	
1. Supports the pastor.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. Readily shares their gifts with the rest of the congregation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Gladly welcomes visitors and new members.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Is involved in local evangelistic ministries.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6. 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
7. Has a spirit of unity.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
8. Cares about each other.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
9. Looks to its Session for leadership.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
10. Ministers well to members who are hurting.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
11. Uses members' gifts in its worship.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
12. Contains people willing and able to lead the congregation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
13. 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
14. Is spiritually alive.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4





**EPC**

*A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches*

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

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

Since 2017, City of Refuge has labored in fellowship and partnership with Ethiopian churches who are members of the **Kaleheywot** denomination. The relationship has yielded mutual encouragement and edification in the lives of CoR congregants as well as lay leaders at these sister churches.

City of Refuge also maintains close partnerships with several faith-based organizations that serve the local community, including the Forge for Families, Agape Development, Young Life- South Central Houston and Star of Hope ministries. In addition to corporate partnership, several of our members are employees, volunteers or Board members at these faith-based organizations.

**16. Describe the strengths of your congregation.**

The city of Houston is one of the most racially, ethnically and culturally diverse cities in America and City of Refuge is quite representative of the same diversity reflected across Houston.

There is no lack of servant-mindedness amongst CoR congregants as well. Among 150 active attendees, at least 100 attendees are actively involved in various aspects of service and ministry within their local Body.

City of Refuge members are also overwhelmingly active within non-profits and faith-based ministries within their local communities. Many members are employed at these organizations while others volunteer or serve on Advisory Committee or as Board members. We are a congregation that is passionate about making Christ known, in our city and across the world.

**17. List specific problems with which your congregation struggles.**

City of Refuge has regrettably suffered much over the years due to a history of deficient communication. This deficiency included a lack of transparency between church leadership and staff as well as church leadership and laity. Additionally an absence of leadership in conflict management among church leadership and staff has also contributed to discord and dysfunction over time.

In recent months, the church Session has begun to work tirelessly to reverse this culture, beginning with admission of wrongdoing, repenting and asking forgiveness of the congregants they serve. Several measures have also been put into practice that contribute to more transparency within church governance as well as Biblically-based conflict resolution strategies.

**18. List major goals that the congregation has set for itself.**

We are a church of many diverse people with one divine purpose: To equip a diverse community of Christ-followers to make Him known. We believe that the equipped Christ-follower:

- Seeks God, Discerns His direction, and obeys his leading
- Serves with Joy in their place of calling
- Promotes Unity & Love in the church in the midst of diversity and
- Proclaims the Gospel through a Spirit Filled life of wholeness and love

It is our strong desire that every member of City of Refuge Church seek to fully embody each of these characteristics.



**EPC**

*A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches*

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

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

Yes     No

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

Yes     No

If you answered "Yes" to either 19 or 20, please explain.

In 2013, a former Elder who also served as our Worship Director was found to have embezzled over \$200,000 from March 2011 to January 2013. When the indiscretion was uncovered, the church Session sought restoration, provided there was demonstrated evidence of true repentance coupled with a desire for restitution. When it became clear there was no desire for either on his part, as well as a history of the same dishonesty at a number of other area churches, the Session turned the matter over to the Houston District Attorney who indicted the former Elder in March 2014.

In 2014, a former Elder was brought under church discipline for marital indiscretions. This individual chose to immediately resign his position as Elder as well as his membership at City of Refuge.

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

Yes     No

If yes, Date completed February 2018

If yes, attach copies of each statement or strategic plan the church has completed.



**EPC**

*A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches*

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

## **Part 4: Leadership Expectations**

1. What five key characteristics, gifts, and/or skills should a person bring to the position?

### **1. An effective preacher and teacher**

City of Refuge is a vibrant community of believers who earnestly crave and are grounded in strong Biblical teaching. We desire a Pastor who is a gifted teacher of God's Word, who approaches the scriptures with reverence and sincerely desires to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" (2 Tim 2:15). We are seeking God for a Pastor who will faithfully and competently preach and teach God's Word, so that our church will continue grow to maturity in Christ (2 Tim 4: 1-4; Titus 1:9). In light of our call as an 'equipping church', we also desire a Pastor who is eager and able to teach, encourage and develop congregants who display spiritual giftings in the area of preaching/teaching.

### **2. An individual with a clear sense of ministry direction and the desire + ability to encourage and equip others to grow in ministerial leadership**

City of Refuge desires a Senior Pastor with the ability to, collaboratively with the governing Session, discern the will of God in His purposes and direction for our church and to execute that vision with organized, intentional leadership. The Senior Pastor should be passionate about discovering and developing the spiritual gifts of church members so that they are equipped to lead within the ministries God calls them to.

### **3. Possess a strong desire to help congregants develop a spiritual life that is inextricably linked to how their daily lives are lived**

City of Refuge is a spiritually active church that desires to continually grow in spiritual maturity. We yearn to live more fully into our call to be lights in a dark world and a city on a hill (Matt 5:14).

### **4. Ability to effectively shepherd people of differing backgrounds, cultures and traditions**

As a diverse community of believers, City of Refuge seeks to embrace the adage, "Unity in essentials, liberty in non-essentials, and charity in all things." We seek a Pastor with a kindred heart in this regard. The Senior Pastor should possess effective cross-cultural communication skills, both written and verbal; this includes effectively communicating the Scriptures to a cross-cultural, intergenerational, and economically diverse congregation. We seek a Pastor who will actively and intentionally foster a culture of Christ-centered diversity at City of Refuge, on earth as it is in Heaven.

### **5. A person who continually cultivates a close, devotional relationship with Jesus Christ**

We understand that none of the above characteristics would be possible from an individual who does not continually pursue a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ. So most importantly, we seek a Senior Pastor who acknowledges Christ as his first love (Rev 2:4) and daily picks up his cross to follow after Him (Matt 16:24).



**EPC**

*A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches*

**CHURCH INFORMATION FORM**

## **Part 5: Church History**

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

In 1997, City of Refuge transitioned from leadership under its founding Pastor, Dr. Dick Druary, to the leadership of Pastor Rufus Smith. Pastor Rufus brought a heart that was particularly soft for those who are “weak, wounded and without” as well as a passion for multicultural ministry. At his inception, the congregation was majority Caucasian, however, over the next decade, with sacrifice and intentionality under his direction and leadership, the demographics of City of Refuge shifted to about 45% Caucasian, 45% African-American and 10% Asian and Hispanic.

In 2003, City of Refuge transitioned from its location within the Star of Hope Transitional Living Facility to its now current location, just across the street. This location bridges a critical gap between the historically under-resourced Third Ward neighborhood, the sprawling Texas Medical Center and three major universities. The layout of the church allows for it to be used in service to the community outside of Sunday mornings. The classrooms on the first level served as the home for Yellowstone Academy, a Christian school for low-income students, for a number of years. The upstairs sanctuary continues to serve as a gymnasium and meeting center during the week for Christian non-profits that serve Third Ward youth.

In August 2017 Hurricane Harvey struck the Gulf Coast with devastating effects. City of Refuge was honored to play a part in how the Body of Christ showed up physically, financially and spiritually for the Houston and surrounding communities. For several months after the hurricane, City of Refuge members worked to rehab homes and properties of church and community members, donated food, supplies and furniture and gave financially to fund a Harvey-specific benevolence pool.

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

Over the past several years, City of Refuge has struggled to retain full time staff members due in large part to ineffective conflict management.

Within the past year, the current Session has enacted changes that have contributed significantly to a shift in church culture; one that embraces humility, repentance, reconciliation, transparency in communication and more effective conflict management modeled by leadership.

As He so often chooses to work, we have found that the Lord has used this difficult season to call us to greater humility and love, to refine spiritual gifts within our Body, and to draw us closer to one another and to Him.



**EPC**

A Global Movement of Evangelical Presbyterian Churches

**Part 6: Other Information**

1. List the last three individuals who held the position of Senior Pastor

Name	Dates of Service	
Ikki Soma	May 2012	to Jan 2020
Rufus Smith	1997	to Sept 2010
Dick Druary	June 1996	to 1997

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

**Not applicable**

Clerk of Session Mark Stehouwer Date 10/25/2020

Search Committee Chair Nathan Kim Date 10/25/2020

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