



# Geneva Welcomes Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Steele

“What excites me the most about working with Geneva is that it’s a congregation looking forward, not backward.”

The Geneva session is pleased to announce the hiring of the Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Steele as our new transitional pastor. Pastor Steele will begin serving our congregation February 1, 2024. Here’s a little bit more information about our new transitional pastor.

## Education

Rev. Steele earned both her masters and Doctor of Ministry Theological and Ministerial Studies degrees from the University of Chicago. She is also a Bruin, having received a B.S. in mathematics from the University of California, Los Angeles early in her educational career.

In addition to her formal education, Pastor Steele is a lifelong learner, which she defines as “individuals who use every experience in life as a potential tool for growth; one who pursues continuing education; and those who build on strengths and seek assistance to improve weaknesses.” She has demonstrated this belief in the many

continuing education classes she has completed, topics ranging from how to meet the needs of communities, healthy communications and how to set relationship boundaries.

## Experience

Pastor Steele was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) in 1980. She has served as an assistant and solo pastor, and has also held administrative positions within the presbytery. However, her true calling has been as a transitional pastor specialist having received her certification/training in 2004-5.

In her experience as a transitional pastor, Rev. Steele has guided congregations through social change, diversification, the death of beloved long time church leaders and retiring pastors. She has served predominantly African-American churches as well as congregations ethnically and economically mixed. Additionally, she has worked with congregations affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Most recently, Rev. Steele served the First Congregational Church of Bakersfield, a long established (over 100 years) congregation in a rapidly growing and changing community, where she led them through the Covid pandemic as well as guided them in redefining their future.

## On a personal note...

Rev. Steele is proud of her Welsh ancestry, her mother having grown up in a Welsh speaking town in Iowa, her grandmother fluent in the language. She was the pastor of the Welsh Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles before it closed its doors in December of 2012. Rev. Steele and husband David, who passed in 2015, have one daughter, Arianwen (a good Welsh name!). They were married just shy of forty years.

Pastor Steele sees herself as a change agent, defined in her words as “having the ability to lead the change process successfully; anchoring the change in the congregations’/organizations’ vision and mission.” We believe the Lord has sent us Pastor Steele to lead us through the next phase of our ministry and are truly excited to welcome her to our congregation.



“Churches are not dying,” says Pastor Steele, “God is just pruning them to grow again.”