

1 **DRAFT**
2 **PRESBYTERY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE**
3 **MINUTES OF ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-FOURTH STATED MEETING**
4 **JULY 28, 2018**
5

6 The 134th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee was held Saturday, July 28,
7 2018, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee. Executive Presbyter Warner Durnell
8 and Stated Clerk Therese Howell led an orientation and time of prayer for first time commissioners.
9 Moderator Ed Lancaster called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

10 **WORSHIP**

11 Worship was led by The Rev. Donovan Drake, pastor, and The Rev. Rachel Pence, associate pastor
12 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville. Rev. Drake welcomed commissioners to the meeting.
13 The Rev. J. Herbert Nelson, II, preached the sermon. Polly Brecht, organist, Westminster Presbyterian
14 Church, Nashville, and the Westminster Choir ensemble, under the direction of Shreyas Patel, provided
15 special music. Hallie Petrie served as cantor. An offering was collected for the Committee on Ministry's
16 Pastor to Pastor Fund.

17 **DECLARATION OF QUORUM / STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES / FIRST TIME COMMISSIONERS /**
18 **CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

19 The meeting reconvened after worship; Moderator Lancaster declared a quorum was present
20 and reviewed procedures for the meeting. First time commissioners to presbytery were recognized and
21 welcomed.

22 The Presbytery's Mission and Operations Manual and the *Book of Order* provide for the seating
23 of corresponding members and teaching and ruling elders with voice and those with voice and vote. Any
24 ruling elder serving as presbytery's Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Moderator-in-Nomination, chairs of
25 committees, members of the Administrative Committee, members of the Finance Committee, and the
26 Moderator of Presbyterian Women, are enrolled as members of presbytery and shall have voice and
27 vote. Ruling elders commissioned to particular pastoral service, and ruling elders who have previously
28 served as presbytery moderator, within five years of completion of his/her term of service, are enrolled
29 as members of presbytery with voice and vote. Any ruling elder serving as a committee representative
30 to a particular meeting of presbytery in the absence of the chair shall have the privilege of voice and
31 vote for that particular meeting of the presbytery. Persons certified in church service who are ruling
32 elders shall have the privilege of voice and vote at all meetings of the presbytery, during their term of
33 service in ministry in the presbytery of Middle Tennessee. Persons certified in church service, who are
34 members of congregations in the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, shall have the privilege of voice at all
35 meetings of the presbytery during their term of service in a congregation or other ministry validated by
36 the presbytery. Should a question arise concerning the enrollment of any person, the presbytery may
37 resolve the matter upon the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission. Corresponding
38 members were seated without objection, and are listed with the roll.

39 **ROLL**

40 The roll of commissioners, corresponding members, and visitors attending the presbytery
41 meeting is attached (Attachment A).

42 **AGENDA**

43 The Moderator stated that the agenda for the meeting had been provided in advance to
44 commissioners. The motion was made and seconded to set aside the standing rules to receive additional

1 reports requiring action. There were no questions or objections, and this was approved by a three-
2 fourths vote. The following agenda was then approved without objection:

- 3 8:00 am 1. Registration (Order of the Day in CAPS)
4 8:30 am Orientation for First Time Commissioners and Prayer for Presbytery – Warner Durnell
5 and Therese Howell (20 minutes)
6 9:00 am 2. CALL TO ORDER / WORSHIP (Offering: COM Pastor to Pastor Fund)
7 10:00 am 3. Break
8 10:15 am 4. Reconvene / Establishment of Quorum / Statement of Procedures / Welcome by Host /
9 Recognition of First Time Presbyters / Seating of Corresponding Members / Adoption of
10 Agenda
11 10:35 am 5. Stated Clerk’s Report – Therese Howell (5 minutes)
12 • Approval of May 3, 2018 Minutes
13 • Approval of June 26, 2018 Minutes
14 10:40 am 6. Administrative Committee – Mary Louise McCullough (10 min)
15 10:50 am 7. General Assembly Report – J. Herbert Nelson II (50 min)
16 • Report and Q & A
17 11:40 am 8. Committee on Preparation for Ministry – Mike Wilson (20 min)
18 • Inquirer to Candidate
19 Noon Lunch – Prayer of Thanksgiving
20 1:00 pm Reconvene
21 9. Committee on Church Transformation – Phil Martin (20 min)
22 • Request to Charter New Creation NCD
23 1:20 pm 10. Committee on Ministry – Stephen Yates (15 min)
24 1:35 pm 11. Concerns, Celebrations, and Announcements (15 min)
25 Unfinished Business
26 **135th Stated Meeting – Thursday, October 18, 2018 – NaCoMe Camp and Conference**
27 **Center, Pleasantville**

REPORT OF THE STATED CLERK

Heidi Hudnut-Beumler / Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville

30 The stated clerk has received the minutes of the commission to install Heidi Hudnut-Beumler as
31 associate designated pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville. *[minutes included in*
32 *permanent record]*

Joel Kelly / Calvary Presbyterian Church of Big Lick, Crossville

34 The stated clerk has received the minutes of the commission to install Joel Kelly as pastor of
35 Calvary Presbyterian Church of Big Lick, Crossville. *[minutes included in permanent record]*

Jule M. Nyhuis / Hillwood Presbyterian Church, Nashville

37 The stated clerk has received the minutes of the commission to install Jule M. Nyhuis as
38 designated pastor of Hillwood Presbyterian Church, Nashville. *[minutes included in permanent record]*

Remedial Complaint – Handlson v. Presbytery of Middle Tennessee

40 The Stated Clerk has been informed by the clerk of the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission
41 that a pretrial hearing will be scheduled in August for the remedial complaint, Handlson v. Presbytery of
42 Middle Tennessee.

Investigating Committee

44 As reported to the February 3, 2018 Presbytery meeting, an investigating committee was
45 appointed upon receipt of an allegation of an offense. The investigating committee has concluded its
46 work and charges will not be filed.

1 Investigating Committee

2 As reported to the May 3, 2018 Presbytery meeting, the Stated Clerk received an allegation of an
3 offense, and appointed an investigating committee. The investigating committee has concluded their
4 work and charges will not be filed.

5 Roll - 132nd Stated Meeting (February 3, 2018)

6 The roll of the 132nd stated meeting (February 3, 2018) of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee
7 was inadvertently left out of the May Presbytery meeting packet. The motion was made and seconded
8 to approve the minutes. After corrections, the minutes were approved without objection.

9 Minutes of the 133rd Stated Meeting (May 3, 2018)

10 The minutes and roll of the 133rd stated meeting (May 3, 2018) of the Presbytery of Middle
11 Tennessee were presented for approval. The motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and
12 approved without objection.

13 Minutes of Special Called Meeting (June 26, 2018)

14 The minutes and roll of the special called meeting (June 26, 2018) of the Presbytery of Middle
15 Tennessee were presented for approval. The motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes;
16 after corrections, the minutes were approved without objection.

17 **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

18 Dr. Mary Louise McCullough, a member of the Administrative Committee, presented the
19 committee's report.

20 EP Search Committee

21 The Administrative Committee received regular report from the EP Search Committee. The
22 Administrative Committee contacted committee chairs to discern the essential needs of EP support
23 during this interim time.

24 Personnel Task Force Report

25 The committee received the following report from the Personnel Task Force.

- 26 1. The Personnel Task Force finalized its 2018 performance evaluations for members of the Presbytery Staff,
27 which include Therese Howell – Stated Clerk, Linda Griffis – Administrative Assistant and Hunger Action
28 Advocate. Due to the pending retirement of our Executive Presbyter Warner Durnell, the task force
29 deemed in unnecessary for a performance evaluation.
- 30 2. The Task Force submits that all staff members are meeting or exceeding job performance expectations.
- 31 3. Twelve month goals have been established in consultation with each staff member to be reviewed
32 periodically by head of staff and by the Task Force as a part of next year's annual performance evaluation.
- 33 4. The Task Force recommends to the Finance Committee that the Presbytery Budget continue to meet the
34 Benefits Plan costs of the Board of Pensions for health insurance as negotiated with each staff member.

35 Isaiah Team / Village Church

36 The Administrative Committee received an update on the Isaiah Team working with The Village
37 Church.

38 Latino Summit

39 The Administrative Committee received an update on the Latino Summit held on June 1 and 2 at
40 Woodland Presbyterian Church, Nashville.

41 Egyptian Presbyterian Arabic Worshipping Communities

42 The Administrative Committee received an update on the Egyptian Presbyterian Arabic
43 worshipping community meeting at First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, and the Egyptian worshipping
44 community meeting at Priest Lake Presbyterian Church, Nashville.

1 New Creation New Church Development

2 The committee received a report on the request to charter the New Creation new church
3 development in Hendersonville, Tennessee.

4 July 28 Presbytery Meeting

5 The Administrative Committee approved a draft agenda for the July 28 Presbytery meeting.
6 The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will preach, and speak
7 about the General Assembly. The offering will go to the Committee on Ministry’s Pastor to Pastor
8 program.

9 Financials

10 The Administrative Committee receives monthly financial reports from Mike Ingram,
11 Treasurer.

12 2019 Presbytery Meeting Dates

13 The Administrative Committee recommended the presbytery set aside its standing rules to
14 change the February 2019 meeting from Saturday, February 2, to Thursday, February 14. Dr. Ted
15 Wardlaw has been invited to preach (and perhaps to offer a workshop), and February 14 is the only day
16 he can attend. There were no questions or discussion, and the motion was approved by ¾ vote of the
17 Presbytery.

18 Warner Durnell

19 The Administrative Committee is grateful for the leadership of Executive Presbyter Warner
20 Durnell, and wishes him well in his retirement!

21 Carol A. Tate / Interim Executive Presbyter

22 The Administrative Committee has made an offer to a potential interim executive presbyter.
23 Dr. McCullough reported that the committee hired The Rev. Dr. Carol Tate, a minister member-at-large
24 of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, effective August 6, for one year, and pending examination by the
25 Committee on Ministry and COM approval of the interim contract. Dr. McCullough spoke about the
26 Administrative Committee’s process, and the Presbytery welcomed Dr. Tate.

27 **223RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2018) REPORT**

28 The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, li, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), spoke about the 223rd
29 General Assembly (2018), held June 16 – 23, 2018, in St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Nelson spoke of the
30 challenge to the Church – to welcome all people, and reported on the bail bond project. He reported on
31 actions of the General Assembly. Dr. Nelson spoke of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and
32 reminded the Presbytery that “the Church is no longer the Church we used to be, but look at that not
33 with fear but with excitement.” He encouraged the Presbytery to be open to a broader spirit and deeper
34 faith, for “our God will not forsake us or fail us, and never lets us walk alone.”

35 **COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

36 The Rev. Mike Wilson, a member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, presented the
37 committee’s report.

38 Certified Ready for Call

39 The Committee on Preparation for Ministry approved candidates T. Wesley Moore and Ashley
40 McFaul-Erwin as certified ready for call.

41 Lee Catoe

42 The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommended that Lee Catoe, an inquirer under care
43 of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, be approved for candidacy. Mr. Catoe spoke of his call to ministry
44 and Christian service undertaken. Mr. Catoe was escorted out of the sanctuary, and the Moderator
45 called for discussion. The motion to move Mr. Catoe to candidacy was approved, and he was called back

1 into the sanctuary; the Moderator reported the affirmative vote. The Moderator led commissioners in
2 a liturgy for the newly-enrolled candidate.

3 The Rev. Nolan Huizenga offered a charge and prayer for Mr. Catoe. Persons present in support
4 of the candidate were recognized.

5 **EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER REPORT / CONCERNS, CELEBRATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

6 Warner Durnell, Executive Presbyter, led the Presbytery in sharing concerns, celebrations, and
7 announcements. After a time of sharing, Rev. Durnell offered a prayer, and commissioners recessed for
8 lunch.

9 The Moderator called the meeting back to order after lunch and offered a prayer.

10 **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

11 The Rev. Stephen Yates, a member of the Committee on Ministry, presented the COM's report.

12 Ministry Information Forms

13 The COM's Transitions Task Force approved the Ministry Information Forms for First Presbyterian
14 Church, Columbia, and Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church.

15 Mark McDaniel / Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church

16 The COM approved the renewal of the interim contract between Mark McDaniel and Historic
17 Franklin Presbyterian.

18 Randal Bruce McVey / First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville

19 The COM sustained the examination of Randal Bruce McVey, a candidate under care of the
20 Presbytery of Tampa Bay, and approved Mr. McVey's call and terms of call to First Presbyterian Church,
21 Fayetteville. The COM recommended Mr. McVey for ordination, pending a successful examination on
22 the floor of presbytery. The COM also approved a motion to call a special meeting of presbytery, prior
23 to July 1, for the purpose of examining Mr. McVey and allowing him to move onto the field July 1. Mr.
24 McVey, and persons in support of him, were welcomed to the meeting.

25 Craig Pope / Harpeth Presbyterian Church, Brentwood

26 The COM approved the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between Harpeth Presbyterian
27 and Craig Pope, effective May 31, 2018. The COM also approved a severance package with compensation
28 and health coverage through July 31, 2018.

29 Janet and Carson Salyer / Harpeth Presbyterian Church, Brentwood

30 The COM approved the co-interim contract between Harpeth Presbyterian Church, Brentwood,
31 and The Revs. Janet and Carson Salyer.

32 Pastoral Care Team

33 The COM received a report from the Pastoral Care Team.

34 Sexual Misconduct / Boundary Training Event

35 The COM received a report and evaluation of the Sexual Misconduct / Boundary Training event.

36 Board of Pensions

37 The COM received a report from The Rev. Dr. Edward J. Thompson, Presbytery's Field
38 Representative from the Board of Pensions.

39 Guidelines and Checklist for Churches in Transition

40 The COM approved changes to the Guidelines and Checklist for Churches in Transition. A copy
41 of the revised document was provided with the presbytery packet.

42 Remedial Complaint

43 The COM received an update on the pending remedial case, Handlson v. Presbytery of Middle
44 Tennessee.

45 Patrick Handlson

46 The COM received and reviewed a six-month report from Pat Handlson.

1 Robert Nicholson / First Presbyterian Church, Dickson and Ellis Grove Presbyterian Church, Waverly

2 The COM approved The Rev. Robert Nicholson, a minister member of the Presbytery of Seattle,
3 as pulpit supply for the month of June for First Presbyterian Church, Dickson, and Ellis Grove Presbyterian
4 Church, Waverly.

5 Interim Executive Presbyter

6 The COM will ask the Administrative Committee to reconsider its decision not to hire an interim
7 Executive Presbyter. COM regularly insists on the desirability of an interim pastor for congregations and
8 has the responsibility to do so with the Presbytery's search for an Executive Presbyter.

9 Andrew Smith / Blue Springs Presbyterian Church, Sparta

10 The COM approved the renewal of the commissioned pastor relationship between Andrew Smith
11 and Blue Springs Presbyterian Church, Sparta, effective August 1, and approved the following terms:
12 annual salary \$9,800.00, three weeks paid leave, mileage reimbursement for church duties, and \$200.00
13 for each Christian holiday.

14 Ashely McFaul-Erwin

15 The COM sustained the examination of Ashley McFaul-Erwin, a candidate under care of the
16 Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, and validated Ms. McFaul-Erwin's call to the CPE Residency program at
17 St. Thomas West Hospital, Nashville, with placement at The Open Door. The COM recommended Ms.
18 McFaul-Erwin for ordination, pending a successful examination on the floor of presbytery. The COM
19 approved adding Ms. McFaul-Erwin to the agenda of the special called meeting of presbytery. Ms.
20 McFaul-Erwin and persons in support of her were welcomed to the meeting.

21 Candace Klein / First Presbyterian Church, Gallatin

22 The COM sustained the examination of Candace Lynn Klein, a minister member of the Presbytery
23 of North Alabama, and approved her transfer to the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, and call as pastor
24 of First Presbyterian Church, Gallatin, effective August 1, 2018 (dependent upon the sale of her house in
25 Huntsville). A copy of Rev. Klein's statement of faith and biographical statement were provided with the
26 COM report. The COM approved the following terms of call: Annual Salary \$22,000; Housing \$33,000;
27 Social Security \$1,683; full Board of Pensions; Professional Expenses \$5,000; Moving Costs up to \$10,000;
28 four weeks vacation; two weeks study leave; three month sabbatical after six years of continuous full
29 time service. Rev. Yates moved approval of the following commission to install: Sunday, September 16,
30 4:00pm, First Gallatin; teaching elders – Justin Gung; Tom Tyndall; Carrie Fraser; ruling elders Ed
31 Lancaster (First Columbia), chair; Diane Cothran (First Gallatin). The motion was seconded and approved
32 without objection. Persons present in support of Rev. Klein were welcomed.

33 Michael McLaughlin / First Presbyterian Church, Cookeville

34 The COM sustained the examination of Michael McLaughlin, a minister member of the
35 Presbytery of St. Andrew, and approved his transfer to the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, and call as
36 pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Cookeville, effective August 1, 2018. A copy of Rev. McLaughlin's
37 statement of faith and biographical statement were provided with the COM's report. The COM approved
38 the following terms of call: Annual Salary \$26,600; Housing \$40,000; Social Security \$6,980; Board of
39 Pensions \$24,642; Professional Expenses \$5,000; Relocation Costs \$5,000; four weeks paid vacation; two
40 weeks paid continuing education; three month sabbatical after six years of continuous full time service,
41 thereafter every five years. The motion to approve the following commission to install was made,
42 seconded, and approved without objection: Sunday, August 19, 3:00 pm, First Cookeville; teaching
43 elders – Guy Griffith; Steve Thomas; ruling elders – Judy Schomber (Trinity), chair; Amy Nichols (First

1 Manchester); Grace Anna Sine (First Cookeville); Guest of the Commission – Dr. John Cole (Presbytery of
2 Chicago). Persons present in support of Rev. McLaughlin were welcomed.

3 Robert Montgomery / First Presbyterian Church, Lewisburg

4 Rev. Yates presented the commission to install The Rev. Robert Montgomery as pastor of First
5 Presbyterian Church, Lewisburg. The motion was made, seconded, and approved without objection to
6 approve the following commission: Sunday, September 9, 3:00pm, First Presbyterian Church, Lewisburg;
7 teaching elders – Carol Tate; Sally Hughes (chair); Steve Thomas; Ruling Elders – Therese Howell (Stated
8 Clerk); Pat Smith (First Columbia); J. B. Smith (First Pulaski); Elinor Foster (First Lewisburg).

9 The Moderator stated the Committee on Ministry’s report would be arrested to take up the
10 report of the Committee on Church Transformation.

11 **COMMITTEE ON CHURCH TRANSFORMATION**

12 Phil Martin, chair, Committee on Church Transformation, presented the committee’s report. The
13 committee provided updates on the Woodland Presbyterian Church, the Hispanic Summit, and the two
14 Egyptian Arabic worshipping communities.

15 New Creation New Church Development

16 Mr. Martin spoke of the timeline for the New Creation new church development. The Rev. Keith
17 Gunter, organizing pastor, and Ruling Elder Bob LaGrone (First Nashville), were introduced. Mr. LaGrone
18 spoke of the work and support of the committee of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, in visioning and
19 support of the New Creation NCD. Rev. Gunter spoke of the support of First Nashville – “grow and let
20 go” – and stated he was grateful to: First Nashville for their vision and support; his wife and family; and
21 thankful for the opportunity to bear witness and be a part of such a great group of people. Rev. Gunter
22 presented a charter from the adults, seeking to organize as a church, as well as a charter signed by all
23 the children, who promised to continue to attend all chicken and waffle breakfasts, and to continue to
24 play with Legos in worship.

25 The Committee on Church Transformation recommended that New Creation Presbyterian
26 Church in Hendersonville, TN be formally chartered with all the rights and responsibilities of a church in
27 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee. The congregation currently
28 consists of 88 adult chartering members and over 40 children and youth.

29 The Session of New Creation shall consist of seven persons and a pastor when formally called.
30 The following individuals have been identified by the congregation to serve as the initial session: Jane
31 Price; Russell Moore; Jennifer Ihrig; Paul Bryant; Becky Adair Beloney; Shannon Perez; Randall Linn.
32 There were no questions or discussion, and the recommendations were approved.

33 The following administrative commission was recommended to charter the church, ordain and
34 install the session, and install The Rev. Keith Gunter as pastor of the New Creation Presbyterian Church:
35 Sunday, August 12, 4pm, New Creation: Todd Jones (teaching elder, First Nashville); Michael Davis, chair
36 (teaching elder, First Hendersonville); Bob LaGrone (ruling elder, First Nashville); Therese Howell (ruling
37 elder, stated clerk). The recommendation was seconded and approved by voice vote.

38 Persons present from New Creation were recognized and welcomed. Rev. Gunter thanked the
39 Presbytery, and thanked his wife, Amy, and his family and the community. The Rev. Dr. Stuart Gordon
40 (First Nashville) offered a prayer.

41 **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (continued)**

42 The Presbytery continued with the report of the Committee on Ministry.

David Sawyer

The COM recommended the Presbytery celebrate the retirement of The Rev. David Sawyer, effective September 1, 2018. Rev. Warner Durnell read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, David Sawyer, a preacher's kid from birth, his dad was a Baptist who saw the light, left Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, and enrolled in Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, David's dad, always peripatetic, became a Navy chaplain, resulting in David moving 25 times during his childhood, having lived in 19 different towns; and

WHEREAS, after four colleges and four majors, David exited with a degree in Philosophy, which meant having to continue in school; he scratched the itch of ministry by attending Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary himself, known by friends and faculty as Julio; and

WHEREAS, David, being a Navy brat and completely unaware of the requirements of candidacy, joined Highland Presbyterian Church in Louisville and came under care of Louisville Presbytery in his *senior* year of seminary; and

WHEREAS, David graduated from LPTS in 1979, firmly in the middle of his class—with a couple more grade points might have graduated with honors, but was honored by some of the faculty who upon hearing David Sawyer's name called during commencement beat their breasts and cried to heaven, "*Lawdy, how come!*" (which is close to "*cum laude*" isn't it; and

WHEREAS, David was fortunate enough to meet Harriett Holderfield towards the end of his first year at LPTS, and the two were married in June 1978, and no matter what came of his education, 40 years of marriage is proof that God is good and Harriett is gracious; and

WHEREAS, following a fruitful intern year serving the Harvey Browne Presbyterian Church in Louisville, David went into the battery business and moved in 1981 to Evansville, Indiana, where daughter Beth was born in 1984, and David bored a few congregations as a non-ordained pulpit supply; and

WHEREAS, the Sawyers moved to Nashville in 1988 and eventually settled in Franklin, Tennessee, with David still in the battery business, he mentioned his considering the call to ministry to the Rev. Dr. Thomas D. Walker, better known as "the hound of heaven," and he began the pursuit; and

WHEREAS, son Wilson was born in 1989, David's candidacy soon followed with a temporary gig at the First Presbyterian Church of Spring Hill, TN; David preached and the Rev. James Krahenbill served as interim, doing all the ordained stuff; and

WHEREAS, in 1992 David became the first Designated Pastor in the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, remaining at First Presbyterian Church of Spring Hill, paving the path for Rev. Warner Durnell becoming the second Designated Pastor in the Presbytery; and

WHEREAS, after three years as a Designated Pastor, in 1995 the call became permanent when David was called as the Installed Pastor for First Presbyterian Church in Spring Hill, making it a total of 26 years of service to the Spring Hill Church and community; and

WHEREAS, David has served in the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee on the Church Revitalization Ministry Unit, the Nominating Committee, the Committee on Ministry, as a Commissioner to Synod, as Moderator of Synod, and a member of the Administrative Committee; and

WHEREAS, David is the proud grandfather of the two most beautiful girls born to the human race (and he is willing to Indian leg-wrestle any who disagree) – Louisa Claire (Lucy) and Audrey Annelise Allen, the children of Beth and Matt Allen; and

WHEREAS, David Sawyer's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective September 1, 2018;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 28th of July, in the year of our Lord, 2018, offer praise to God for the Reverend David Sawyer, and offer thanks to him for his committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Durnell asked that this resolution be spread upon the minutes, and this was approved without objection. Rev. Sawyer spoke briefly about his ministry, and introduced his family to applause from the Presbytery.

Warner Durnell

Donovan Drake, Leonard Jordan, Ed Lancaster, Geeta McMillan, Carol Tate, and Stephen Yates read the following resolution honoring The Rev. Warner Durnell’s retirement:

WHEREAS, Warner Robert Durnell is the second born and first male child of Mr. Warner Albert Durnell and Mrs. Evelyn Ruth Simms Durnell of West Chester, Pennsylvania, reared in a household consisting of dad and mom, six sisters, one brother, two girl cousins, and his paternal grandmother; and

WHEREAS, Warner was baptized as an infant in the St. Luke’s Union American Methodist Episcopal Church of his hometown where he spent countless hours, acquiring the disdained nickname - “Church Mouse;” and

WHEREAS, Warner attended Henderson High School of West Chester, where as a senior, his District Winning Debate Team included his future wife, Cassandra Ann Walters . . . she was on the affirmative side of the proposition, he was on the negative side (little has changed); and

WHEREAS, Warner graduated from The Lincoln University of Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, Class of 1973, as a political science major, and from there matriculating at I.T.C. (the Interdenominational Theological Center) of the Atlanta University System; and

WHEREAS, Warner and his bride “Sandy” became members of the Westhills Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, Georgia, where he was elected a Ruling Elder and endorsed by the session to come under the care of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Atlanta Presbytery; and

WHEREAS, Warner transferred to Columbia Theological Seminary of Decatur, Georgia, completing his M.Div. Degree in 1978 before accepting a call to become the Pastor for the Dellabrook Presbyterian Church of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in the former Concord Presbytery, and engaging in campus ministry at Wake Forest University; and

WHEREAS, the lone African American Episcopal priest in Winston-Salem arrived just days ahead of Warner to start his first call, they became known as “The Dynamic Duo of Community Activism,” that priest now the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, the Right Reverend Michael B. Curry who preached the Royal Wedding recently; and

WHEREAS, Warner was later called to serve as Pastor for the Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; College Chaplain and Instructor of Bible for Stillman College of Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Associate Executive for the Synod of Living Waters; Stated Supply for the Madison Presbyterian Church, and part-time Designated Pastor, then Pastor for the St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Warner has served at every council level of the Church, serving a General Assembly Teaching Elder Commissioner from the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee in 2002, and Moderator of the Presbytery in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Warner then was called to serve as the Executive Presbyter for North Alabama Presbytery from 2003 to 2012, before being called back to the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee in 2012 to serve as its Presbytery Executive until his retirement in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Warner counts as the crowning contribution of his life, that of being husband to Sandy and dad to Clarisse, Jonathan, and Erica; and

WHEREAS, Warner Robert Durnell’s faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective August 1, 2018;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 28th of July, in the year of our Lord, 2018, offer praise to God for the Reverend Warner Robert Durnell, and offer thanks to him for his committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Presbytery applauded and offered a standing ovation. The motion was made, seconded and approved without objection to spread the resolution upon the minutes

Warner spoke briefly about his ministry, and his work in and with the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee. He thanked his family for their support. Flowers were presented to Warner’s wife, Sandy.

The Presbytery Moderator presented Warner with a gift from the presbytery – a weekend in Atlanta, including tickets to an Atlanta Braves game.

1 The Presbytery staff presented Warner with a hat, t-shirts, and socks so he would have
2 appropriate retirement attire. The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church
3 (U.S.A.), and The Rev. Terry Newland, executive, Synod of Living Waters, spoke of Warner’s work at all
4 levels of the PC(USA). Many presbyters spoke of Warner’s support and caring throughout his ministry in
5 Middle Tennessee.

6
7 There was no unfinished business; the Moderator stated the 135th Stated Meeting would be held
8 on Thursday, October 18, 2018, at NaCoMe Camp and Conference Center. The meeting adjourned to
9 the parlor for a reception honoring the Durnells after a closing prayer.

10
11 Therese P. Howell
12 Stated Clerk
13