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Co-Executive Presbyters Report

When we began serving as your Co-Executive Presbyters three years ago, we entered with a goal of visiting all 85 churches. This was a Robin and Ray goal, not one that was projected upon us by anyone else in the presbytery. By the end of February 2020, we had visited over half – 46 to be exact – and then the world changed. Tornadoes. COVID. Administrative Commissions were appointed to close four of our churches. The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee now has 80 churches. On Palm Sunday, April 10, when we worshipped with the saints at First Presbyterian Church, McMinnville, we reached our goal of visiting, in one way or another, all of our congregations. As we recently reported to the Administrative Committee, throughout Middle Tennessee, we have discovered committed, energetic members, hard-working pastors, and welcoming worship services. We have been warmly received by every church and have been gratified to hear that so many people keep up with what's happening in the presbytery through the eNews. We are thankful for the level of honesty and trust we've experienced in our churches and it feels good to be able tell others about the unique gifts and remarkable folks we now know when someone asks us about any of our 80 churches. We look forward to our next round of visits!

During the last week of April, we took a week of our continuing education time to attend Transitional Ministry Training at Calvin Center, outside of Atlanta. Our hopes were to receive a refresher course in leading a congregation or presbytery through change, gain additional tools and resources to equip the Committee on Ministry for its important work with churches in transition, and do some networking with trained transitional pastors who might be open to such a call in Middle Tennessee. We enjoyed the gorgeous, relaxing setting, excellent training and resources, and engaged, compassionate community of learners. We look forward to sharing what we've learned and received around the presbytery.

Since the last time that the presbytery met in person, in Tullahoma on February 1, 2020, we have welcomed twelve new minister members who have never had the opportunity to be welcomed in person at a presbytery meeting. At this meeting, we will be devoting our time on the agenda to introducing these new members of our presbytery community. We look forward to this time of worship, business and fellowship together with you!

Robin and Ray Thomas