Highlights of the 160th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee

May 3, 2025

Below are the highlights of the reports received and actions taken at the 160th Stated Meeting.

The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee met in person on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at First Presbyterian, Pulaski. Over 90 attendees were greeted warmly by gracious host congregation members. Stated Clerk Mary Catherine Sevier provided a brief welcome and orientation for first time commissioners. Moderator Rev. Jane Herring, Emmanuel, called the meeting to order and announced that a quorum was in place; corresponding members were seated, and the agenda and the consent agenda were approved. Rev. Amy Stoker, First Pulaski, presided over worship with the Rev. Erin Howton-Angel, First, Allardt, serving as liturgist. Worship included lovely organ pieces from First Pulaski organist Charlotte Hughes. Rev. Stoker preached the thoughtful homily on our ability to embrace the true change that the Easter resurrection brings us. Rev. Herring re-convened the meeting after worship and welcomed first time commissioners. The Rev. Sherard Edington, First, Lebanon was appointed Assistant Parliamentarian. Among the actions taken and the reports received were:

* + Keenan Rodgers, Church Consultant from the Board of Pensions, brought greetings and information on important programs available to congregations such as the Shared Ministry program and ten assistance grant programs. $9.5 million was awarded to 2700 different individuals last year.
  + Rev. Scott Huie, member of the Nominating Task Force presented seven individuals to serve on the Executive Presbyter Search Committee who were all elected unanimously. They are: Sherard Edington, TE, First, Lebanon; Beth McCaw, TE, Southminster; Lavona Russell, RE, East Brentwood; Amy Stoker, TE, First, Pulaski; Il Sun Kim, TE, Nashville Korean; Spencer Truett, RE, First, Dickson; David Wood, RE, First, Nashville.
  + Rev. Evelyn Graham, treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee, presented the Finance report which included the results of the 2023 audit as mandated by the Book of Order.
  + RE Mickey Stueck presented several items from the COM. RE Harold Dawkins was recommissioned to service at First Fayetteville for twelve months, and retiring TE Tom Bagley and CRE Rick Robinson were recognized and thanked for their service through their pastoral careers. The Presbytery approved trainings to be held for ruling elders who wish to be certified to administer communion.
  + Refreshment and fellowship were greatly enjoyed during a break, after which the Leadership Visioning team led the group in the last of the listening sessions in its charge to set the vision for the Presbytery as the body seeks its next installed Executive Presbyter.
  + Candidate Gage Arnold of First, Nashville was certified ready to be examined for ordination pending a call. Cara Moyers of First, Franklin was presented and approved to be an Inquirer. CPM chair Rev. Lisa Hermann presented a motion out of committee to charge the CPM with the authority to receive Inquirers after receipt of required paperwork and robust examination. The motion was approved.
  + Administrative Chair RE Chris Williams of First, Pulaski presented the committee’s report. The committee moved that three new policies be approved. The first establishes guidelines for what items will be accepted for publication via the PMT website. The next requires that any report made on the floor of presbytery be accompanied by a written report in the packet, and the last limits to five minutes the remarks of those who participate in discussion of business on the floor of Presbytery. All three policies were approved and are in effect.
  + The Stated Clerk presented a motion that the Presbytery approve a youth rally at Bellevue PC to which all youth across the Presbytery have been invited. The motion was seconded and approved.
  + The congregation of St. John was dissolved due to the unanimous vote and subsequent self-transfer of its members to the congregation of Christ the King, a newly formed congregation in the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.
  + The Manual of Operation and Missions was amended by a 2/3 majority as required to now include a description of the Permanent Administrative Commission for Congregational Change and to clarify the description of the Committee on the Preparation for Ministry to reflect what authority the committee has regarding inquirers and candidates.
  + Bridge Executive Presbyter Rev. Terry Newland reminded the body that the Visioning Leadership Team was nearing the end of its important work, and he urged us all to keep them in our constant prayers. He also gave thanks for the connectional spirit illustrated in the conduct of the presbyters. He noted tears of joy, laughter, and respectful discussion as the body made hard decisions.
  + The Committee on Mutual Support reported via the consent agenda that two hunger grants were made during the last quarter.
  + The Rev. Herring made announcements, asked for joys and concerns, offered a closing prayer, and asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made, seconded and approved to do so.
  + The next Stated Meeting will be August 7th, 2025, at Priest Lake Presbyterian.

-- Mary Catherine Sevier, Stated Clerk