

Highlights of the 162nd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee

November 8, 2025

Below are the highlights of the reports received and actions taken at the 162nd Stated Meeting.

The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee met in person on Saturday, November 8, 2025, at NaCoMe Camp. Over 102 commissioners and 15 visitors were /greeted by beautiful scenery and a warm and inviting meeting space in the Rosebud Building. 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. The minutes of the August 7, 2025 Stated Meeting were approved. Worship, planned and coordinated by TE Erin Howton Angel, featured Rev. John Smith as worship leader, Rev. Angel as the liturgist for the necrology service, and visitor Rev. Chris Warren of the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination providing musical selections. RE Spencer Truett of First Dickson presented the offering which was collected for the Centsability fund. Patrick Woolsey, candidate for ordination, preached the sermon on our connectional faith over time and place. Rev. Herring re-convened the meeting after worship and welcomed first time commissioners. RE Chris Williams was appointed Parliamentarian. Among the actions taken and the reports received were:

- Candidate for Ordination Patrick Woolsey was examined and approved for ordination; he has accepted a call as an installed pastor at First, McMinnville.
- Candidate called as an installed co-pastor at Trinity, Joy Warren, an ordained minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination, was examined at length and approved under the Book of Order exemption G-2.0505(a)(2). His membership will be transferred from the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination.
- The Rev. Courtney Veazey, recently installed as pastor and head of staff at Second, Nashville was introduced.
- The Rev. Evelyn Graham, treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee, presented the financial report. While pledges are down and the budget is currently not being met, the Finance Committee is optimistic that pledges and income will come in and obligations will be met. She also discussed the amount of funds in restricted and designated funds as well as the operating expenses of the Presbytery. Newly designated funds for Centsability honoring the ministry of dissolved congregation St. John and for sabbatical assistance were approved. The 2026 budget was approved. She announced that the offering to Centsability would be matched by the Presbytery per Finance vote.
- CRE Leonard Jordan, chair of the Nominating Task Force, presented the slate of officers for 2026-2028 and nominated Rev. Jane Herring to fill a vacancy on the EP Search Team. All nominations were approved.
- RE Lavona Russell of the Personnel Task Force presented newly hired Temporary Stated Clerk RE Erin Bell and Transitional Executive Presbyter TE Sherard Edington. She also invited TE Erin Howton Angel and RE Chris Williams to present appreciation to TE Terry Newland, who will end his tenure as Bridge EP on November 15th, and RE Mary Catherine Sevier, whose term as Stated Clerk will end December 31.
- RE Chris Williams of the Administration Committee presented the committee's report. The Crisis Communication Policy and updated Appendix were approved, as was formal thanks extended to the Leadership Visioning Team. A motion to refer further deliberation on the criteria used to nominate commissioners to the General Assembly to a special committee was approved.

- Concerns, celebrations, and prayers of the people as well as a thanks to God for the upcoming lunch was led by Terry Newland and Sherard Edington.
- A delicious lunch was hosted by the gracious NaCoMe staff and two delicious cakes were provided by the personnel committee to celebrate the outgoing Bridge EP and Stated Clerk.
- After lunch, Chairman Williams introduced RE Barbara Halverstadt and Hannah Cruse who presented the report from the Leadership Visioning Team. The bold report proposes a restructuring of both the PMT staff and its committees, and these proposals are the result of numerous conversations with the body of the Presbytery. A full time EP, a part time SC, and a full time Administrative Assistant are proposed as well as four part time Shepherds who are charged with maintaining and strengthening the connectional ties across the congregations and four Deans, who are charged with providing expert leadership in particular specialized areas. The Administrative Committee is proposed to be disbanded and replaced by a Coordinating Council made up of committee chairs. Questions and discussion followed, and ultimately a motion to form an implementation team and to accept the Administrative Committee's proposal to have a time of intentional education an discussion about the report was approved. The body will vote on the report no later than August 2026.
- The Rev. John Hilley presented a brief account of the committee's work, and introduced Rev. Michael McLaughlin and RE Cade Arnold of First Cookeville to speak about a grant request of \$150,000 over five years to increase that congregation's mission work within the community. With the concurrence of the Finance Committee per policy, the motion was put to the body and approved, with the funding coming from the Upper Cumberland fund. Rev. Hilley also introduced representatives of Southminster PC who introduced an initiative to use property of the congregation for housing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Legal Task Force is in process and analyzing the proposed 99 year lease and other documents.
- The Stated Clerk reported and also reminded clerks of sessions that overtures to the 227th General Assembly must be received by January 5, 2026 to be reviewed by the PJC and presented for approval in February.
- The Bridge Executive Presbyter reported and thanked the body for working with him during his 16 month tenure.
- Following announcements including that the 163rd Stated Meeting will be held February 7, 2026 at Nashville Korean, Moderator Herring prayed and asked for a motion to adjournment, which was made, seconded, and approved.

-- Mary Catherine Sevier, Stated Clerk