

**PRESBYTERY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE  
MINUTES OF ONE HUNDRED THIRTIETH STATED MEETING  
JULY 22, 2017**

The 130th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee was held Saturday, July 22, 2017, at East Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Brentwood. Executive Presbyter Warner Durnell and Stated Clerk Therese Howell led an orientation and time of prayer for first time commissioners. Stuart Gordon, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**WORSHIP**

Worship was led by The Rev. John Hilley, pastor of the host church, and The Rev. Jane Herring, pastor, Normandy Presbyterian Church. Special music was provided by Dr. Laura Kreiselmaier, piano, and Mr. Joe Ennis, percussion. The offering was collected for the Guatemala Partnership's Basico Scholarship Program. The Lord's Supper was celebrated.

**DECLARATION OF QUORUM / WELCOME BY HOST / STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES / FIRST TIME  
COMMISSIONERS / CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**

The meeting reconvened after worship, and the Moderator declared a quorum was present. Rev. Hilley welcomed commissioners to East Brentwood Presbyterian Church, and spoke briefly about the church. The Moderator reviewed procedures for the meeting, and first time commissioners to presbytery were recognized and welcomed.

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

**ROLL**

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

**AGENDA**

The Moderator stated that the agenda for the meeting had been provided in advance to commissioners. The motion was made and seconded to set aside the standing rules to receive an additional report from the Committee on Ministry. There were no questions or objections, and this was approved by a three-fourths vote. The following agenda was then approved upon motion duly made and seconded:

- |          |     |  |
|----------|-----|--|
| 8:00 am  | 1.  | Registration (Order of the Day in CAPS)  |
| 8:30 am  |     | Orientation for First Time Commissioners and Prayer for Presbytery – Warner Durnell and Therese Howell (20 minutes)  |
| 9:00 am  | 2.  | WORSHIP  |
| 10:00 am | 3.  | Break  |
| 10:15 am | 4.  | Call to Order / Establishment of Quorum / Statement of Procedures / Welcome by Host / Recognition of First Time Presbyters / Seating of Corresponding Members / Adoption of Agenda   |
| 10:35 am | 5.  | Stated Clerk’s Report – Therese Howell (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of May 2017 Meeting Minutes</li> </ul>  |
| 10:40 am | 6.  | Administrative Committee – Ed Lancaster (5 min)  |
| 10:45 pm | 7.  | Finance Committee – Mike Ingram (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2016 Audit</li> </ul>   |
| 10:50 am | 8.  | Committee on Mutual Support – Steve Thomas (5 min)   |
| 10:55 am | 9.  | Executive Presbyter’s Report – Warner Durnell (5 min)  |
| 11:00 am | 10. | Committee on Ministry – Theresa Denton (1.75 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ordination</li> <li>○ Transfer to PCUSA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Commissioning of Lay Pastors</li> <li>• Recognition of Recent Honorably Retired Pastors</li> </ul> |
| 12:45 pm | 10. | Concerns, Celebrations, Announcements – Warner Durnell (10 min)  |
| 12:50 pm | 11. | Unfinished Business  |
|          |     | <b>131st Stated Meeting – Thursday, October 19, 2017, NaCoMe Camp and Conference Center, Pleasantville, TN</b>   |
| 12:55 pm | 12. | Closing Prayer / Adjourn   |

**STATED CLERK’S REPORT**

Ruling Elder Therese Howell, Stated Clerk, presented the clerk’s report, and called attention to the report of the Hunger Action Advocate included in the Presbytery packet.

Beth Smith McCaw / Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The Stated Clerk received the minutes of the commission of June 11, 2017 to ordain and install Beth Smith McCaw as Pastor of the new worshipping community at Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville. *[Minutes to be included in permanent record]*

Josh Rodriguez / First Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The Stated Clerk received the minutes of the commission of June 18, 2017 to ordain and install Josh Rodriguez as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Nashville. *[Minutes to be included in permanent record]*

Leslie Traylor / Hermitage Presbyterian Church

The Stated Clerk received the minutes of the commission of June 25, 2017 to install The Rev. Leslie Traylor as Pastor of Hermitage Presbyterian Church. *[Minutes to be included in permanent record]*

May 6, 2017 Minutes

The minutes of the 129th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee (May 6, 2017) were presented for approval. After corrections, the minutes were approved as amended.

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ruling Elder Ed Lancaster, Administrative Committee chair, presented the committee’s report.

Woodland Presbyterian Church

The Administrative Committee received a report from the Committee on Church Transformations related to the work of Ministry Architects at Woodland Presbyterian Church. The Administrative

Committee, in consultation with the Finance Committee, approved the continued work of Ministry Architects with Woodland Presbyterian Church from July 1-December 31 at a rate of \$2,000/month (a total of \$12,000). The effectiveness of this relationship will be reviewed by the Administrative Committee before the end of 2017 to determine appropriate next steps for 2018.

Woodland and Eastminster / Shared Personnel

The Administrative Committee, in consultation with the Finance Committee, subsidized the hiring of a +/- 5-hour-a-week, youth and children's worker to be shared by Woodland and Eastminster by providing a grant of \$400/month for July - December 2017 (a total of \$2,400). Upon approval by all parties, Ministry Architects would locate, train, and manage the appropriate candidate for this position and that each church would contribute approximately \$50/month to this position.

2016 Audit

The Administrative Committee received a report from the presbytery's Treasurer on the 2016 audit, which will be presented at the July presbytery meeting.

Hispanic New Church Development

The Administrative Committee received an update and analysis of the financial position of the Hispanic New Church Development.

Personnel Task Force Report

Ruling Elder Elinor Foster, chair of the Personnel Task Force, presented the following report.

*2016 Performance Evaluations*

The Personnel Task Force finalized its 2017 performance evaluations for members of the Presbytery Staff, which include Warner Durnell (Executive Presbyter), Therese Howell (Stated Clerk), Linda Griffis (Administrative Assistant), and Barbara Howell (Hunger Action Advocate).

The Task Force submits that all staff members are meeting or exceeding job performance expectations.

Twelve month goals have been established in consultation with each staff member for each staff member, to be reviewed periodically by Warner Durnell as head of staff, and by the Task Force as a part of next year's annual staff performance evaluation.

The Task Force recommended to the Finance Committee that the Presbytery Budget continue to meet the Benefits Plan costs of the Board of Pensions for health insurance as negotiated with each staff member.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ruling Elder Mike Ingram, Treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee, presented the committee's report.

Financials

Financials as of May 31, 2017, as well as an analysis of the Financials by the Treasurer, were presented for review. Mr. Ingram praised Mrs. Pat Webb, presbytery's accountant, for her work with the financials and reports.

Woodland Presbyterian Church

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#### 2016 Audit

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#### Hispanic New Church Development

The Finance Committee received an update and analysis of the financial position of the Hispanic New Church Development.

#### Investment Task Force

The Finance Committee received a report from the Investment Task Force. The task force transferred some investment funds to checking, and two additional transfers are anticipated, one at the end of summer, and one in December.

#### Presbytery Office Relocation

The Finance Committee reviewed the Facility use Agreement with Westminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville, for the presbytery office relocation. The three-year agreement should reduce annual office occupancy expenses for the presbytery by approximately one-half of the current costs. Build-out costs will be included over the three years of the lease.

#### 2016 Audit

The Finance Committee recommended the presbytery receive the 2016 audit. Mr. Ingram called attention to specific parts of the audit, and reported the Finance Committee had reviewed the audit. There were no questions or discussion and the recommendation to receive the 2016 audit was approved.

### **COMMITTEE ON MUTUAL SUPPORT**

The Rev. Steve Thomas, chair, Committee on Mutual Support, presented the committee's report.

#### Guatemala Partnership

Barb Hall (East Brentwood) spoke of the presbytery's partnership with the Presbytery of Peten, and Erin Rein (East Brentwood) spoke of his recent mission trip to Guatemala. David Carlson (Second) updated the presbytery on the progress of the Basico program.

NaCoMe

Ryan Moore, director of NaCoMe, spoke briefly about the camp, and invited presbyters to come to NaCoMe the day before the October Presbytery meeting to enjoy all the camp has to offer.

### **EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER'S REPORT**

Executive Presbyter Warner Durnell yielded his time on the agenda.

### **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

Ruling Elder Theresa Denton, chair, Committee on Ministry, presented the committee's report.

#### First Presbyterian Church, Gallatin / Ministry Information Form

The COM approved a revised Ministry Information Form for First Presbyterian Church, Gallatin.

#### First Presbyterian Church, Franklin / Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

The COM received the following names of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee at First Presbyterian Church, Franklin: Jennifer Godwin, Steve Lewis (chair), Jessica Queen, Bruce Tarkington (secretary), Fred Williams.

#### First Presbyterian Church, Cookeville / Pastor Nominating Committee

The COM received the following names of the Pastor Nominating Committee at First Presbyterian Church, Cookeville: Chelsea Holland, Mike Medley, Jay Robyn, Grace Anna Sine, Mark Thurman.

#### L. Kofi Adzaku

The Committee on Ministry examined The Rev. L. Kofi Adzaku, a member of the Presbytery of Grace, who has accepted a call as chaplain and CPE supervisor at St. Thomas Hospital. A copy of Rev. Adzaku's statement of faith and autobiographical statement was included with the COM's report. The

COM sustained Rev. Adzaku's examination, and approved his reception as a minister member of the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, effective June 13, 2017.

Jane Herring / Belfast Presbyterian Church

The Committee on Ministry approved the contract for part time temporary supply (15 hours/week) between The Rev. Jane Herring and Belfast Presbyterian Church, effective July 1, 2017. Rev. Herring will continue to serve as pastor of Normandy Presbyterian Church. The COM approved the following contract terms: salary, \$28,800; cell phone (owned by and paid for by church) \$1,000, travel mileage reimbursement (estimated) \$5,000, total \$36,800; vacation, 4 weeks annually; and study leave, 2 weeks annually. Temporary housing will also be arranged on nights when service to the church and community concludes late enough to delay travel home to Nashville until the next day.

Joe Evans / First Presbyterian Church, Columbia

The Committee on Ministry approved the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between The Rev. Joe Evans and First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, effective June 30, 2017. Rev. Evans was dismissed to the Presbytery of Cherokee to accept a call.

Bo Burgener / First Presbyterian Church, Springfield

The COM approved the renewal of the interim contract between The Rev. Bo Burgener and First Presbyterian Church, Springfield.

Linda Bray

The Committee on Ministry approved the status of Honorably Retired for The Rev. Linda Bray, effective May 5, 2017.

Amelia Canon

The Committee on Ministry approved the status of Honorably Retired for The Rev. Amelia Canon, effective July 1, 2017.

Tom Patton

The Committee on Ministry approved the status of Honorably Retired for The Rev. Tom Patton, effective July 1, 2017.

James Hudnut-Beumler / Vanderbilt Divinity School

The COM renewed the validation of ministry for The Rev. Dr. James Hudnut-Beumler, Vanderbilt Divinity School.

Leonard Jordan / St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The Committee on Ministry renewed the commission for Ruling Elder Leonard Jordan and St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Nashville for three years.

Ed Keith / Bethany Presbyterian Church, Ardmore, and First Presbyterian Church, Petersburg

The Committee on Ministry renewed the commission for Ruling Elder Ed Keith and Bethany Presbyterian Church, Ardmore, and First Presbyterian Church, Petersburg for one year.

Carol Tate / First Presbyterian Church, Huntsville

The COM approved the request of The Rev. Dr. Carol Tate to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery to serve as interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, pending permission to labor inside the bounds of the Presbytery of North Alabama.

Harold Dawkins / First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville

The Committee on Ministry approved Ruling Elder Harold Dawkins to serve as part time temporary supply (27 hours/week) for First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville for the period June 17 – August 20, 2017. The COM approved contract terms of \$6,750 for the period (\$2,250 / month).

### Non-PCUSA Pastors / COM Policy on Moderating and Sacraments

The COM discussed the issue of non-PCUSA pastors serving PCUSA churches being allowed to moderate session meetings and administer the sacraments. The COM will consider these functions separately, and address requests to celebrate the sacraments on a case-by-case basis.

#### Pat Handlson / Care Team

The Committee on Ministry appointed a new care team for Pat Handlson (Michael Davis, Ann Roberts, Stephen Yates). The COM voted to invite Mr. Handlson to its October meeting, pending successful reports and completion of the minimum twelve months of counseling.

#### Jeannie Hunter / First Presbyterian Church, Dickson, and Ellis Grove Presbyterian Church, Waverly

The COM approved the part time (10 hours / week) interim contract between The Rev. Jeannie Hunter and First Presbyterian Church, Dickson and Ellis Grove Presbyterian Church, Waverly, for the period July 1 – December 31, 2017, and approved Rev. Hunter as moderator of the sessions. The COM approved the following terms: Salary \$12.50/hour for an estimated 10 hours/week; housing \$12.50/hour for an estimated 10 hours/week; business mileage at the current 2017 IRS rate; preach one or two times / month with preaching stipend (\$250 First Dickson, \$125 Ellis Grove).

#### Evelyn Graham / Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The Committee on Ministry examined Evelyn Graham, a candidate under care of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, who has accepted a call as part time designated pastor, for two years, for Southminster Presbyterian Church, Nashville. A copy of her statement of faith and autobiographical statement was provided with the COM's report. The COM recommended that Ms. Graham be examined for ordination and installation. The COM approved the following terms of call: Salary \$13,488; Housing \$8,992; Social Security \$1,686; Board of Pensions \$8,205; professional expenses \$1,250; total \$33,621.

Ms. Graham preached, and the Moderator offered a prayer. Ms. Graham spoke of her faith journey, responded to questions from The Rev. Dr. Guy Griffith, chair of the COM Examinations Task Force, and responded to questions from commissioners. Dr. Griffith escorted Ms. Graham out of the sanctuary.

Ms. Denton moved that Ms. Graham's sermon be sustained, and the motion was seconded and approved. Ms. Denton moved that Ms. Graham's examination be sustained, and that she be approved for ordination and installation as part time designated pastor at Southminster Presbyterian Church. There were questions for clarification regarding the two pastoral positions at Southminster. Rev. Durnell explained these were two separate calls – Rev. McCaw is called to be the organizing pastor of a new worshipping community under the guidance of the session of Southminster, and this is a full time call. He explained that Ms. Graham will be pastor of the Southminster congregation, and head of staff. After questions, the motion was approved.

Dr. Griffith and Ms. Graham were welcomed back into the sanctuary, and the Moderator reported on the vote.

The following commission to ordain and install was approved as presented: Saturday, August 19, 2017, 3pm; Teaching Elders - Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell (Honorably Retired), chair; Rev. Jane Herring (Normandy); Rev. Heidi Hudnut-Beumler (Westminster Nashville); Ruling Elders - Mike Brown (Second); Jannette Chambers, Southminster; Thomas Graham (Westminster Nashville); Guests – Rev. Anne H.K. Apple (Presbytery of Mid-South); Lesa Blackwell (Second Nashville); Rev. Raye Nell Dyer (Alliance of Baptists); Rev. Cathy Hoop (Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley); Heidi Knellinger (Knox Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, OH). Persons present in support of Ms. Graham were recognized while she signed the *Book of Ministerial Obligations*.

The Rev. Dr. Cindy Schwartz / Priest Lake Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The COM examined The Rev. Dr. Cindy Schwartz, a minister member of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, who has accepted a call as pastor of Priest Lake Presbyterian Church, Nashville. A copy of Dr. Schwartz's statement of faith and autobiographical statement was included with the COM's report. The COM recommended that Dr. Schwartz's examination be sustained, and that her transfer back into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) be approved. The COM approved Dr. Schwartz moving onto the field July 1, 2017, and approved the following terms of call: Effective Salary \$54,000; automobile expenses \$2,000; professional expenses \$2,000 (continuing education, books, personal business expenses); four weeks vacation annually; two weeks continuing education annually.

Dr. Schwartz spoke of her call to ministry, her candidacy through the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), her call to a church that chose to leave the PCUSA, and her subsequent journey back. Dr. Schwartz responded to questions from Dr. Griffith, and from commissioners. Dr. Griffith and Dr. Schwartz were escorted from the sanctuary.

Ms. Denton moved the examination be sustained, and that Dr. Schwartz be transferred and received back into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The motion was seconded and approved.

Dr. Schwartz was escorted back into the sanctuary, and the Moderator reported on the vote. Persons present in support of Dr. Schwartz were recognized while she signed the *Book of Ministerial Obligations*.

The motion was made, seconded, and approved to allow the Committee on Ministry to approve the commission to install.

Amy Harkness / Glencliff Presbyterian Church, Nashville

The COM sustained the examination of Ruling Elder Amy Harkness, a member of The Downtown Presbyterian Church, Nashville, and recommended she be commissioned to pastoral service at Glencliff Presbyterian Church, Nashville, for the period July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, to moderate the session, celebrate the sacraments, and have a voice and vote at presbytery. A copy of her statement of faith and biographical information was provided with the COM's report. The COM approved the terms as follows: salary \$1200/month (\$14,400/year); automobile expenses reimbursed by voucher at current IRS rate; 40 Sundays during 12 month contract, one Sunday off per month (total of 12 Sundays off).

Ms. Harkness spoke of her faith journey and responded to questions from commissioners. Dr. Griffith and Ms. Harkness left the sanctuary. Ms. Denton moved that Ms. Harkness be commissioned to Glencliff, and the motion was approved. Dr. Griffith and Ms. Harkness were invited back into the sanctuary and the Moderator reported on the vote.

Andrew Smith / First United Presbyterian Church, Sparta and Blue Spring Presbyterian Church, Sparta

The Committee on Ministry sustained the examination of Ruling Elder Andrew Smith, a member of First Presbyterian Church, Cookeville, and recommended he be commissioned to pastoral service at First United Presbyterian Church and Blue Spring Presbyterian Church, Sparta, for the period August 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018, to moderate the session, celebrate the sacraments, and have a voice and vote at presbytery. A copy of his statement of faith and biographical information was provided with the COM report. The COM approved the terms as follows: salary \$250/week (\$13,000 annually); two weeks vacation; one week study leave; mileage at current IRS rate to visit sick in Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga; Additional \$100 / services conducted on Christian holidays beyond regular worship (i.e., Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Easter Sunrise).

Mr. Smith spoke of his faith journey and responded to questions from commissioners. Dr. Griffith and Mr. Smith left the sanctuary. Ms. Denton moved that Mr. Smith be commissioned to First United and Blue Spring, and the motion was approved. Dr. Griffith and Mr. Smith were invited back into the sanctuary and the Moderator reported on the vote.

Will Radford / The Village Church

The Committee on Ministry sustained the examination of Ruling Elder Will Radford, a member of The Village Church, Nashville, and recommended he be commissioned to pastoral service at The Village Church, for the period August 1, 2017 – July 30, 2018, to moderate the session, celebrate the sacraments, perform a service of Christian marriage, and have a voice and vote at presbytery. A copy of his statement of faith and biographical information was provided with the COM's report. The COM recommended approval of the following terms: salary \$400/month (\$4,800 annually).

Mr. Radford spoke of his faith journey and responded to questions from commissioners. Dr. Griffith and Mr. Radford left the sanctuary. Ms. Denton moved that Mr. Radford be commissioned to The Village Church, for the terms stated, and the motion was approved. Dr. Griffith and Mr. Radford were invited back into the sanctuary and the Moderator reported on the vote.

The Moderator propounded the constitutional questions to Ms. Harkness, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Radford, and all were answered in the affirmative. There was applause for all three commissioned ruling elders, and persons present in support of each were recognized and welcomed.

The Moderator asked for a ten minute recess.

The meeting was called back to order by the Moderator.

Recognition of Retirements

The Moderator called on Rev. Durnell to recognize the retirements of teaching elders recently retired. Six teaching elders have been granted the status of Honorably Retired, and three were present at the meeting. Rev. Durnell moved that the resolutions for The Rev. Linda Bray, The Rev. Amelia Canon, and The Rev. Megan Knox Ritchie be spread upon the minutes, and this was seconded and approved without objection.

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY**

**THE REVEREND LINDA BRAY**

WHEREAS, The Reverend Linda Bray, a native of Cleveland, Tennessee, was surrounded by the love and security of a large family, and the church, Big Springs Baptist Church, was central to her life for many years even though she always had questions about God; and

WHEREAS, Linda Bray left the church for about ten years following her college years, but never abandoned her search for a deeper understanding of her faith; and

WHEREAS, Linda married and moved to Louisville, Kentucky, on the heels of what she describes as "a deeply moving spiritual experience," she and her husband joined the Strathmoor Presbyterian Church, where she fell in love with Jesus Christ all over again; and

WHEREAS, Linda began to see possibilities as a woman in service to Christ and the church, as she taught Sunday School, lead Bible Studies, was elected and ordained a ruling elder, and felt "called" to serve God in a different way; and

WHEREAS, Linda enrolled in Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, with an ever increasing sense of "call," but not having the slightest idea what that call would materialize into; and

WHEREAS, Linda discovered her calling to Chaplaincy ministry during a Clinical Pastoral Education practicum in a mental health unit ward caring for a patient diagnosed schizophrenic paranoid with dementia, it was then and there that she knew that the "call" on her life was to serve the spiritually/physically/mentally challenged who were often deprived of church community and the church's Sacraments, but as children of God needed such in their lives; and

WHEREAS, Linda and her family moved to Nashville, Tennessee, in 1995 where she finished her final seminary semester at Vanderbilt Divinity School and graduated from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in May of 1996, she became a resident chaplain at the V.A. Medical Center in Nashville and was ordained a Minister of the Word and Sacrament by the Presbytery of Louisville in April of 1997 and was received by the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee; and



WHEREAS, Linda and her family moved to Memphis (Mid-South Presbytery) in March of 1998 where she began to serve as Chaplain of Crossroads Hospice, providing care for the dying and their families; and

WHEREAS, Linda and her husband moved back to Nashville nine years later to be closer to their families, and in May of 2007 she became a Chaplain with Alive Hospice where she continued to address the needs of God's people, attending Priest Lake Presbyterian Church where she has been morally and spiritually supported in her ministry; and

WHEREAS, Linda Bray's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective May 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for The Reverend Linda Bray and offer thanks to God for her committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 PMT Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND AMELIA B. CANON**

WHEREAS, The Reverend Amelia B. Canon, daughter of Sledge and Charlotte Canon of Florence, Alabama, was baptized as an infant at the First Presbyterian Church of Florence; and

WHEREAS, Amelia and her family were part of a new church development in Florence under the banner of Westminster Presbyterian Church where The Reverend Robert "Bob" Crumby was its pastor and forever family friend; and

WHEREAS, Amelia, as a young person, was an active member of the Westminster Sunday School, youth group, and Presbytery Youth Council, when The Reverend Jim Thompson was her pastor; and

WHEREAS, Amelia, a graduate of the University of Alabama with a degree in French, spent six years in the restaurant business in Nashville, Tennessee, and Manhattan Beach, California, returning to Florence to work in retail as she helped to help care for her father who died after a short bout with cancer; and

WHEREAS, Amelia earned a teaching degree from the University of North Alabama and went on to teach Spanish in the Morgan County Schools; and

WHEREAS, Amelia was inspired by a book from her late father's library, Williston Walker's A History of the Christian Church, sparking in her a sense of call to serve the church, following in the footsteps of her father, mother, grandmother and sister, all of whom were/are ruling elders; and

WHEREAS, Amelia was encouraged by her Pastor, The Reverend Michael Stanfield, to enter seminary after twelve years of teaching, in 1996 she enrolled in Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, (now Union Presbyterian Seminary) which she describes as "the most incredibly enriching time of my whole life;" and

WHEREAS, Amelia interned at the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church in Mechanicsville, Virginia, before being called to serve as Pastor for the Southminster Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Tennessee, in 2001; and

WHEREAS, Southminster is a lively church of funny, smart, aware people, and with the help of Jo Ann Hansel, Clerk of Session, the church enjoyed many successes, in 2007 Amelia left to return to the classroom as an ESL Instructor in order to reach 20 years in public education that would provide the best plan for her retirement; and

WHEREAS, Amelia retired from teaching in 2016, she remains as a public school instructor part-time in Hartselle, Alabama, where she presently resides, surrounded by family, good friends, colleagues who once were former students, and three cats; and

WHEREAS, Amelia has served the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee as a member of the Outreach Committee and the Committee on Ministry, and was an active participant in the Nashville area lectionary study group; and

WHEREAS, Amelia B. Canon's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective July 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for The Reverend Amelia B. Canon and offer thanks to God for her committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND MEGAN KNOX RITCHIE**

WHEREAS, The Reverend Megan Knox Ritchie, daughter of John Wilson Knox and Evelyn Haines Knox of Huntersville, North Carolina, was baptized and confirmed in the Bethel Presbyterian Church of Cornelius, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Megan and her family were active members of the Bethel Presbyterian Church where as a youngster she attended Sunday School, youth group, and was involved in Mecklenburg Presbytery (now the Presbytery of Charlotte); and

WHEREAS, Megan, attended Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, North Carolina, where a sense of call to serve as a volunteer in mission began to grow in her, such that after graduating from Pfeiffer in 1974, she went on to teach English as a second language at the Kijon Women's Junior College and Hanil Seminary in Chonju, South Korea; and

WHEREAS, Megan and Jeff Ritchie (who met in 1971 when he was a student at Davidson College in NC) were married on January 1, 1976 and later became the parents of Katherine Gail Ritchie and Andrew Jefferson Ritchie; and

WHEREAS, Megan served as Director of Christian Education at the First Presbyterian Church of Caldwell, New Jersey from 1977 – 1980; and

WHEREAS, Megan and Jeff returned to the mission field in South Korea from 1980 – 1989, but upon reentry back into the United States, she enrolled in Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, earning an M.Div. Degree in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Megan was ordained a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in 1992 by Louisville Presbytery (now the Presbytery of Mid-Kentucky) upon receiving the call to be a Trauma Chaplain for the University of Louisville Hospital, serving in that position from 1992-1995; and

WHEREAS, Megan was called to serve as Pastor for the Buechel Presbyterian Church of Louisville, Kentucky, from 1995-2000; and

WHEREAS, Megan joined her husband Jeff in relocating to Middle Tennessee, upon his acceptance of a call to serve The Outreach Foundation, and she accepted a call to serve as Interim Pastor for First Presbyterian Church of Lebanon, Tennessee, from 2000 – 2001; and

WHEREAS, Megan was called to serve as Interim Pastor for First Presbyterian Church of Smyrna, Tennessee, from 2001-2002, she went on to serve the Smyrna congregation for another ten years as Stated Supply Pastor from 2002-2012; and

WHEREAS, Megan relocated to Atlantic Beach, Florida, where she and Jeff presently reside sharing in the care of their two grandchildren, Alex and Matthew; and

WHEREAS, Megan has served the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee as a member of the Coordinating Council, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee; and

WHEREAS, Megan K. Ritchie's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective January 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for The Reverend Megan K. Ritchie and offer thanks to God for her committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

Samuel M. Cooper, IV

Rev. Durnell invited The Rev. Dr. Samuel M. Cooper, IV, to come forward, and he presented a resolution in honor of Dr. Cooper's ministry. The following resolution was read and approved:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND DR. SAMUEL MORGAN COOPER, IV**

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Samuel Morgan Cooper, IV, was born to Deputy Sheriff Samuel Morgan Cooper, III and Vernice Yates Cooper on January 22, 1951 in the town of Ninety Six, South Carolina, surrounded by four generations of extended family; and

WHEREAS, the Cooper family moved to Greenwood, South Carolina, when Sam was a young boy, where his mother and then his father became involved in the organizing of a Southern Baptist Church in a little country store; and

WHEREAS, Sam Cooper made a profession of faith at the age of 9 and was baptized at another Baptist church, along with his best friend at the time, admitting that there wasn't anything particularly religious about the experience, it just seemed the thing to do; and

WHEREAS, the church became a second home for young Sam, doing most everything there was to do around the church, including cutting the grass on its two acres of property, but he did not miss out on his share of mischief in middle and high school, which was ironic because his father had become the local jailer; and

WHEREAS, Sam, after high school, went to Erskine College, a school of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, in Due West, South Carolina, where he majored in history and served as secretary and then president of the student body; and

WHEREAS, Sam's career aspiration initially was to become a lawyer, but the summer of his senior year at Erskine he decided to go to seminary, having been persuaded by Don Stevenson, a part-time philosophy professor who was also a local Baptist Church pastor to give it a try; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Erskine in 1972, Sam headed to Princeton Theological Seminary, became a Presbyterian, although still undecided as to whether Christian ministry was "the call" upon his life or not;

WHEREAS, after dropping out of seminary for a year in order to discern whether or not ministry was for him, Sam returned to Princeton Seminary, graduated, completed preparation for ministry in Pee Dee Presbytery, and was called to serve as Pastor for a pair of yoked churches, Carolina and Clio, in rural Marlboro and Dillon counties in northeastern, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, inside a month of his ordination, Sam married Lily Patterson, a daughter of the manse, who he had been wooing for four years, and her father, the late Palmer Patterson, became a mentor for Sam in his early years of ordained ministry; and

WHEREAS, Sam left the pastorate to become Chaplain (and to coach soccer) at Presbyterian College in the fall of 1979 and moved to Clinton, South Carolina along with their first born child, Samuel Morgan Cooper, V; and

WHEREAS, while at Presbyterian College, Sam had the privilege of serving two small rural congregations and his family grew by two – Palmer Patterson Cooper and Vernon Robinson Cooper were born; and

WHEREAS, Sam left Presbyterian College to accept a call to the Bethel Presbyterian Church in Walterboro, South Carolina, where he and a friend built a house from scratch and tended a large garden along with raising cattle and chickens, and still finding time to complete a Doctor of Ministry Degree at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, while serving the Bethel congregation and community, Sam was organizer and first board chair of the Colleton Habitat for Humanity, served the Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic on the Committee on Ministry, chaired the Congregational Development Ministry Unit, and Committee on Preparation for Ministry, was a Commissioner to the General Assembly, and Moderator of Presbytery; and

WHEREAS, in late 1994, Sam was called to serve as a presbytery leader for a presbytery newly formed by the merger of former Pee Dee Presbytery and Harmony Presbytery, half of the former Atlantic Presbytery and a small portion of the former Fairfield-McClelland Presbytery, with one-fourth of the churches in this new presbytery being predominately African-American; and

WHEREAS, Sam served as Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of New Harmony but after several years was called to return to his first love, parish ministry, serving as Pastor for the First Presbyterian Church of Moncks Corner, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, from Moncks Corner, Sam was called to First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, as the Executive Pastor, where he found himself reunited in ministry with former colleagues and old friends, Stuart Gordon and Todd Jones; and

WHEREAS, a sampling of Sam's service to the mid-councils of his membership has already been cited, service to the wider church and community is exhaustive but includes board member of the Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, board member (and Vice-Chair) of Thornwell Home for Children, board member of the Marlboro County Mental Health Association, Organizer and first President of Clio Community Clinic, Scoutmaster, actor in community theatre and yoga instructor; and

WHEREAS, Sam has served the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee with distinction as a member of the Committee on Ministry and its chair in 2012 and 2013; and

WHEREAS, Samuel Morgan Cooper, IV's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective June 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22nd day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for the Dr. Rev. Samuel Morgan Cooper, IV, and offer thanks to God for his committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

The Rev. Tom Patton

Rev. Durnell invited The Rev. Tom Patton to come forward, and he presented a resolution in honor of Rev. Patton's ministry. The following resolution was read and approved:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND THOMAS ("TOM") PATTON**

WHEREAS, The Reverend Thomas ("Tom") Patton was born into a loving Irish Catholic couple as the youngest child and was baptized as an infant in Our Lady of Sorrows Church of Memphis, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Tom Patton enrolled as a freshman at Auburn University in 1965 in order to study art and play football; and

WHEREAS, football injuries sustained at Auburn University afforded him time to question life in every area, such that after graduation, when many of his classmates returned home hippies, Tom returned Presbyterian; and

WHEREAS, while it was the emphasis on God's initiative and grace that attracted Tom to Reformed faith and practice, it was the call to follow Jesus, to embrace the values of Christ, and to share God's love in community, that led Tom to consider how he might live out a life of Christian vocation; and

WHEREAS, for ten years, from 1970 until 1980, Tom taught art and coached football in the city schools of Memphis (TN), Auburn (AL), and Huntsville (AL); and

WHEREAS, in 1981, encouraged by his pastor and several members of Central Presbyterian Church of Huntsville, Tom enrolled in the Memphis Theological Seminary where he graduated magna cum laude in 1983, having worn many “hats” – as a construction worker, a bouncer, an artist and a writer – while pursuing the M.Div. Degree; and

WHEREAS, Tom was ordained in November of 1983 in answering the call to be Pastor for the First Presbyterian Church of Milan, Tennessee, and also taking a position in campus ministry in 1985 as a chaplain at Westminster House on the campus of the University of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, from Memphis, Tom was called to serve as Pastor of Greene Street Presbyterian Church in downtown Augusta, Georgia, where he also served as Director for the greater Augusta Ministries – opening soup kitchens, shelters and health ministries to the economically poor; and

WHEREAS, from Augusta he was called to serve as Pastor of Old First Church of Newark, New Jersey, an International Church with members from Europe, Africa, China and the Caribbean Islands, allowing a southern boy from Memphis to serve them 18 years; and

WHEREAS, Tom and his wife Cindy Baugus Patton of Trenton, New Jersey, have been married 30 years, and she has enjoyed a profession of her own, in management of Ciba-Geigy, Novartis Pharmaceuticals (now Cumberland Pharmaceuticals in Nashville), and to their union were given three daughters ...Elizabeth, Claire and Sally, and six grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Tom (and family) moved back to Tennessee in the summer of 2009 to help care for his mother-in-law, Ms. Frankie Baugus, filling pulpits for colleagues and congregations here in the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee since his return; and

WHEREAS, Tom has rescued horses of all sizes and dogs of all kinds, cats too, while also being present for granddaughter Lydia and daughter Liz as they fought and prevailed over Leukemia and Hodgkin’s Lymphoma respectively; and

WHEREAS, Tom believes it is time to retire, and retire he will, but it comes at a time when, in his own words, *“I am just discovering what ministry is about, for no matter what the piece of paper says, I have never mastered Divinity; God is waiting for me to settle for servanthood...waiting for me to love God with all my heart, mind, & spirit...waiting for me to love my neighbor as myself;”* and

WHEREAS, Thomas (“Tom”) Patton’s faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective July 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for The Reverend Thomas (“Tom”) Patton, and offer thanks to God for his committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

**The Rev. Charles Stephens Thomas, III**

Rev. Durnell invited The Rev. Charles Stephens Thomas, III, to come forward, and he presented a resolution in honor of Rev. Thomas’ ministry. The following resolution was read and approved:

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY  
THE REVEREND CHARLES STEPHENS (STEVE) THOMAS, III**

WHEREAS, the Reverend Charles S. (Steve) Thomas, III, is the son of Mr. Charles S. Thomas, Jr., and Nancy Bishop Thomas, and was baptized as an infant at the First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Charles Thomas, Jr., was a native of Maury County, Tennessee, and a longtime employee of Monsanto Company, and his wife Nancy Bishop Thomas was the first Christian Educator in the former Columbia Presbytery, serving on the staff of First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Steve spent countless hours as a child in and around First Presbyterian Church of Columbia – folding bulletins, collecting Communion glasses, attending Sunday School and Youth Group activities; and

WHEREAS, as a teenager, Steve was a leader in Presbytery youth activities, spending many of his summers at Camp NaCoMe, Montreat Conference Center, and Boxwell Boy Scout Camp, earning the Eagle Scout award; and

WHEREAS, Steve graduated from Columbia Central High in 1970, whereupon he went on to earn a B.A. in Political Science from Southwestern at Memphis (now Rhodes College), and then afterwards, a M.A. in Public Administration from Southern Methodist University, embarking on a career with the Dallas County Government; and

WHEREAS, Steve met and married Paula Hollingsworth in 1979 and moved to her hometown of Kaufman, Texas, and to their union were born Charles and Elyse; and

WHEREAS, Steve and Paula became members of First Presbyterian Church of Kaufmann, and Steve was elected a ruling elder, then Clerk of Session not long thereafter; and

WHEREAS, Steve, following what he understood to be the call of God upon his life, moved back to Tennessee, and enrolled at Vanderbilt Divinity School in 1997, graduating in 2000 with an M.Div., winning two awards for preaching, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee ; and

WHEREAS, Steve's first call was as Interim Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, and from there he went to Camp NaCoMe, where he served as Executive Director for five years; and

WHEREAS, Steve, upon relocating to Lewisburg, became Stated Supply for Belfast Presbyterian Church from 2003 until his retirement, and continues to serve in Marshall County on the Lewisburg City Council and the Lewisburg Power Board; and

WHEREAS, Steve has served the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee with distinction as a member of the Youth Task Force, Christian Education Committee, Communications Committee, Coordinating Council, chair of Congregational Development Committee, chair of the Committee for Mutual Support, , and Presbytery Moderator in 2015; and

WHEREAS, Charles (Steve) Thomas, III's faithful service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has manifested itself in Honorable Retirement, effective May 1, 2017;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee, on this, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of July, in the year of our Lord, 2017, offer praise to God for the Rev. Charles (Steve) Thomas, III, and offer thanks to God for his committed service to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Therese P. Howell, Stated Clerk  
Stuart Gordon, 2017 Moderator

Warner R. Durnell, Executive Presbyter  
Theresa H. Denton, 2017 COM Chair

There was applause after each resolution, and the Moderator offered a prayer at the conclusion of the resolutions.

### **CONCERNS, CELEBRATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Durnell lead the presbytery in sharing concerns, celebrations, and announcements. Rev. Durnell then offered a prayer.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There being no further business, the Moderator announced the 131<sup>st</sup> Stated Meeting would be held Thursday, October 19 at NaCoMe. The motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved with a closing prayer by the Moderator at 12:54pm.

Therese P. Howell  
Stated Clerk