



Dear People of God:

2026 promises to be a banner year for the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee! Last weekend the Standing Committee, the Search Committee, and the Transition Committee met to begin the process of guiding us through the election of the Twelfth Bishop of Tennessee. In advance of the next calendar- and budget-year, the Transition Committee would like to share ways that every parish and communicant in the diocese can be involved in welcoming our new bishop and thanking Bishop John and Caroline for twenty years of faithful service to the Church.

1. Your 2026 Parish Visitation will be your last one with Bishop John and Caroline. This will be a great time for your congregation to celebrate their ministry among us in a smaller, more intimate setting. We encourage you to make the most of this time. It is perfectly appropriate to host receptions or luncheons after the Eucharist as you normally do, but perhaps you might share stories, pictures, and tributes thanking the Bauerschmidts for loving and serving us so well.
2. In addition to this individual time with the bishop, the Transition Committee is committed to providing opportunities for every communicant in every congregation to be involved in the episcopal transition in some way. We will keep you apprised of these opportunities as they arise, but in the meantime, feel free to let us know your ideas for celebrating, welcoming, serving, organizing, planning, etc.
3. We are beginning to plan the large, diocesan-wide events that will be the hallmarks of a faithful ministry concluded, and a new ministry begun. It is important for us to say “goodbye” well, so that we will be able to say “hello” well when the time comes. You will be hearing from us regarding the introduction of candidates, a grand farewell reception for the Bauerschmidts, a grand welcome reception for our new bishop, the ordination and consecration of the bishop, the seating in Christ Church Cathedral, and more. We welcome any and all help for these exciting events.
4. Many congregations and individuals will want to welcome the new bishop by presenting a gift of something that will be needed in his or her new ministry among us. The diocese has some funds designated for this, but any other gift or donation will be welcome. The new bishop will need clergy shirts, cassock, rochet and chimere, pectoral cross, mitres, crozier, ring, and more. Bishops always remember and cherish the personal connection to these signs of office.

There will be many other opportunities in the coming months. Please let us know when you have a bright idea. We will be sure to pass those along to the good people of Middle Tennessee. It is a great honor to work alongside our brilliant, diligent diocesan staff. Never hesitate to reach out to us.

Yours in Christ,

 

Dr. Beverly Mahan & the Rev'd Chad Jones
Transition Committee