



June 22, 2026

To The People of The Diocese of Tennessee:

We are writing today with an update on the progress of our Bishop Search. Since September of 2025, the members of the Search Committee—ably co-chaired by Fr. Jacob Bottom and Monica Fawknotson—have worked diligently writing a Diocesan Profile, accepting names and evaluating candidates, and from June 11 through 12, conducting a retreat weekend with the final candidates. It had been our plan to announce the nominees for the Twelfth Bishop of Tennessee today. However, following the retreat and in consultation with the Search Committee, the Standing Committee has concluded it is necessary to extend our search for candidates to be our new Bishop.

Last fall, the Search Committee was charged by the Standing Committee with proposing a slate of no less than three or no more than four nominees for the Standing Committee's approval. We have been confident of their commitment to careful discernment and the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the process. While the Search Committee certainly received sufficient applications for a robust process, due to unanticipated events at the end of the search, it became clear we would need to extend our period of application and discernment.

We know that many of you have been praying for the Search Committee and eagerly anticipating the results of their hard work. Please join those of us on the Standing Committee in thanking them for their time and commitment to the Diocese, and continue praying for them as they move into this new phase of the search. The new application period will begin on July 6 and close at 6:00pm on July 27. The work of the Search Committee will continue through August and conclude with a shortened retreat with new finalists on August 27.

As a result of this extension, we have moved the timeline for our Electing Convention and the ordination of the Twelfth Bishop of Tennessee. We anticipate that Bishop Bauerschmidt will call for the electing convention on November 14, and pending sufficient consents, our new bishop will be consecrated on April 10, 2027. Bishop Bauerschmidt has graciously delayed his retirement until next April in order that the Diocese will not be without episcopal leadership prior to the new bishop's consecration. Please continue to pray for him in the midst of this unanticipated turn of events.

More details about the extended search will be made available on the Bishop Search hub at edtn.org in the coming days.

Almighty God, giver of every good and perfect gift: Look graciously on your Church and on the Diocese of Tennessee, and so guide the hearts and minds of those who will search for a new bishop to lead the Diocese, that we may receive a faithful shepherd, and a visionary leader who will care for your people and lead them in the mission you have placed before your Church in this Diocese. All this we ask in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



In Christ,
The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Tennessee

Catherine Beemer, St. George's, Nashville
The Rev'd Brad Johnson, St. James the Less, Madison
The Rev'd Caroline Osborne, St. Philip's, Nashville
L. Jarod Pearson, St. Agnes', Cowan
The Rev'd Justin Taliaferro, Messiah, Pulaski
The Rev'd Cn. Natalie Van Kirk, Good Shepherd, Brentwood, President
John Whitaker, Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville