



September 8, 2026

Dear Friends:

With the public announcement of the nominees who will stand for election to be the Twelfth Bishop of Tennessee, the Standing Committee also announces the opening of the process by which voting lay delegates and canonically resident clergy can petition to have additional candidates considered for inclusion on the ballot. This is commonly called a Petition Process.

The petition process is open from today, Tuesday, September 8 until Tuesday, September 15, 2026 at 6:00 PM Central Time (CDT). All materials, including the written answers from the nominee; petition signatures and information; and all other relevant documents must be submitted by this deadline. (See attached.)

Through the petition process a qualified person who was not part of the Search Committee's original application process may petition the Standing Committee to be added to the final slate of nominees for bishop. As per Resolution 1 passed unanimously by the 194th Convention of the Diocese of Tennessee, there will be no nominations from the floor at the Special Convention to elect the new bishop. The petition process replaces that practice.

Please note that Diocesan staff, Standing, Transition, and Search Committee members may not be nominators on these petitions.

Any further questions about the petition process should be emailed to the Rev'd Natalie B. Van Kirk, President of the Standing Committee, at standingcommittee@edtn.org.

After the petition process closes on September 15, at 6:00 PM CDT, no further petition nominees will be considered. The Standing Committee will review materials, conduct background checks, schedule interviews, and check references of those nominated by petition, applying the same criteria used by the Search Committee in its selection of the nominees. As with all nominees, the Standing Committee will discern and make the final determination on whether the candidate will be included on the final slate of nominees for bishop. The petition nominees, if any, will be announced once the due diligence has been completed. This could take several weeks once the petition period closes.

In Christ,
The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Tennessee

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



Petition Application Form

PETITION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

- No candidate shall be considered who was already part of the Diocese of Tennessee bishop application process led by the Search Committee, either because they withdrew themselves or were not advanced by the Search Committee.
- Each petition process candidate must have four (4) canonically resident clergy nominators AND four (4) lay nominators who are delegates to the special Convention to Elect the Twelfth Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese of Tennessee.
 - No nominator signing a petition shall be from the same parish/congregation/mission as another nominator signing the same petition. In other words, eight different parishes/congregations/missions must be represented on each petition.
 - Each nominator may only nominate one person. A nominator may not be on more than one petition.
- From the eight nominators, there must be one primary nominator who shall answer the following questions found on the Nomination Form.
 - How long, and in what capacity, have you known this nominee?
 - After your review of the diocesan profile, what gifts, talents, and skills does this candidate possess that qualifies them to serve as the Bishop of the Diocese of Tennessee?
 - What concerns or issues, if any, might inhibit this person's ability to faithfully serve as Bishop of the Diocese of Tennessee?

Each candidate's application packet must include:

1. A cover letter describing what it is about the Diocese of Tennessee that compels the candidate to enter into discernment with us now, including why the candidate did not apply during the regular search process.
2. Resume or Curriculum Vitae
3. Head shot of the candidate
4. Names and contact information for all bishops under whom the candidate has served
5. Names and contact information for the following references
 - Diocesan Transition Minister
 - 2 Active Clergy
 - 2 Colleagues in Church Governance
 - 2 Colleague in Ministry
6. Answers to eight essay prompts

Petition Application Form

Candidate Information

Full Name

Preferred Name (if different)

Current Ecclesial Role / Title:

Diocese / Jurisdiction:

Current Parish, Cathedral, or Ministry Setting:

Phone

Email

Address

Street Address

City, State/Province/Region, Postal Code

CV

Please attach a copy of your CV

Links

Please provide a link to a recorded service or homily you have delivered:

Please provide links to your social media accounts:

Ordination History

Deacon

Date (month/day/year)

Diocese

Priest

Date

Diocese

Bishop (if applicable)

Date

Diocese

Educational Background

Theological education (degrees, institutions)

Additional education or certifications relevant to episcopal ministry

Answers to the following eight prompts are required. The response to each prompt should be no more than 500 words.

- 1) **Brief Ministerial Biography** Please summarize your vocational journey, highlighting roles that have most shaped your leadership and pastoral identity.
- 2) **Describe your sense of call** to the episcopate. How do you understand the bishop's vocation as chief pastor of the Diocese of Tennessee? *(Required)*
- 3) **How do you nurture** your own spiritual life and how would it shape your public ministry as bishop? How do you practice wellness, spiritually, emotionally, and physically?
- 4) **What does faithfulness, vitality, and witness to the gospel look like** for congregations of different sizes, settings, and resources?
- 5) **Describe how you exercise authority and leadership in complex systems.** How do you make decisions and communicate them broadly and with transparency?
- 6) **How would you support clergy** across theological differences, vocational stress, and personal challenges?
- 7) **Describe your approach to conflict, reconciliation, and when necessary, discipline.** How would you help the diocese remain rooted in the Gospel?
- 8) **Discuss your experience and theology** of diocesan administration, fundraising, financial stewardship, and staff leadership.

Petition Nominator Form

From the eight nominators, there must be one primary nominator who shall answer the following four required questions.

- 1) Name of primary nominator.
- 2) How long, and in what capacity, have you known this nominee?
- 3) After your review of the diocesan profile, what gifts, talents, and skills does this candidate possess that qualifies them to serve as the Bishop of the Diocese of Tennessee?
- 4) What concerns or issues, if any, might inhibit this person's ability to faithfully serve as Bishop of the Diocese of Tennessee?

Full Name: _____	Full Name: _____
Parish/Mission/Congregation: _____	Parish/Mission/Congregation: _____
Home Address: _____	Home Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____	City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Email: _____	Email: _____
Signature: _____	Signature: _____

Full Name: _____ Parish/Mission/Congregation: _____ Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____ Signature: _____	Full Name: _____ Parish/Mission/Congregation: _____ Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____ Signature: _____
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CANONICALLY RESIDENT CLERGY

Full Name:	Full Name:
Parish/Mission/Congregation:	Parish/Mission/Congregation:
Home Address:	Home Address:
City, State, Zip:	City, State, Zip:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:
Signature:	Signature:
Full Name:	Full Name:
Parish/Mission/Congregation:	Parish/Mission/Congregation:

Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____ Signature: _____	Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____ Signature: _____
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