

IN THE CHANCERY COURT FOR SUMNER COUNTY, TENNESSEE
AT GALLATIN

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
HENDERSONVILLE,
Petitioner,

v.

UNKNOWN HEIRS AND NEXT OF KIN OF
UNKNOWN DECEDENT,
Respondents.

)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)

NO. 2026-CV-92

NOTICE OF FILING

COMES NOW Petitioner, **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
HENDERSONVILLE**, by and through Counsel and gives Notice to this Honorable Court of
Filing of the statement by Tennessee Division of Archaeology, Benjamin C. Nance.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason B. Elliott # 024409
113 East Main Street
Gallatin, TN 37066
(615) 362-5680

July 7, 2026

Mr. Jason B. Elliott, Atty.

Dear Mr. Elliott,

On February 18, 2026, I responded to a call from the Hendersonville Police Department regarding the accidental discovery of human remains behind the First Presbyterian Church at 172 West Main Street in Hendersonville. When I arrived at the site, I found that the County Medical Examiner had already assessed the situation and concluded that this was not a forensic case. I spoke to Jason Steffy with the Hendersonville PD.

The remains were located behind the church where construction was taking place. This appeared to be the lower portion of a grave, and the exposed remains consisted of leg bones, part of a pelvis, and at least one vertebra. Small wood fragments were present as well as a piece of metal that may or may not have been associated with the grave. The grave was oriented east-west, and it was located near the existing cemetery.

I suggested to church officials who were on site that the grave should be covered until they could contact either an archaeological consultant or a licensed funeral director to discuss moving the grave. I also informed them that a court order from chancery court would be required, and they could discuss that with whomever they hired. I advised them that work in the immediate vicinity should be halted until the remains were removed. I provided a list of consulting archaeologists working in Tennessee.

Sincerely,

Benjamin C. Nance
Cultural Resource Consultant Manager
Tennessee Division of Archaeology