

2026 Hamilton County Democrat Primary Election

Voter Guide

501(c)(3) - compliant
and nonpartisan

County Commission Dist. 8

County Primary Election | 5/5/2026



www.VoteChattanooga.org

**YOUR VOTE
MATTERS**

5/5/2026

Online Voter Registration/Record Updating available until 4/6/2026 at: <https://sos.tn.gov/elections>

Contact Church Voter Guides at: Info@VoteChattanooga.org | Updated 4/6/2026

For other Voter Guides and more information, please go to our website: www.VoteChattanooga.org

Church Voter Guides does not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

The Voter Guide Information contained in this document is provided for informational purposes only. It was obtained directly from candidates and other sources, and we have done our best to convey it to you accurately, but nothing herein has been "fact checked". Utilize this Voter Guide at your own discretion. We take no responsibility for the factual nature of the content, or for publishing errors, etc. To the best of our knowledge, this Voter Guide is 501(c) (3) – and officially nonpartisan, and thereby it does not support or oppose any candidate.

Hamilton County 2026 Democrat Primary Election Voter Guide for County Commission Dist. 8

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the Voter Guide	2
County Commission	4
County Commission Dist. 8	6
Joshua Wichman	7
Voter Guide Sponsors & Partners	11

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Introduction to the Voter Guide

Church Voter Guides is an independent 501(c)(3) faith-based nonprofit organization. We serve the public by providing objective research and education on matters specifically of interest to Christians, primarily through the production and distribution of 501 (c)(3)-compliant, nonpartisan voter guides.

Church Voter Guides does not endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

Church Voter Guides, a Chattanooga nonprofit, initially started in Colorado Springs in April of 2021. This new Voter Guide for the 2026 Democrat Primary is being distributed electronically only, both through our interactive website and by downloadable and printable PDF files. We have produced one Voter Guide for each seat that is: (1) conducting an election this year, and (2) for which at least one candidate in that election answered our Questionnaire. Our Voter Guides are being promoted through a wide-ranging network of area churches, faith-based non-profit organizations, mainstream and social media, and other means.

The purpose of our Voter Guides is to educate and inform voters of each candidate's positions on a variety of policy issues that they are likely to address if elected. As a Voter Guide designed to be distributed through Churches, we ask the candidates questions on topics that are of utmost interest to the Christian voter

How to Get the Most Benefit from this Voter Guide

The core information in this Voter Guide comes directly from the County Primary Elections candidates themselves. We asked them questions, they answered (with a 120 word limit), and we have published their responses here. In order to understand and utilize this information to the fullest, so that you may vote in the most informed way, we suggest the following:

1. Pray and ask the Almighty for discernment. The Kingdom of God is all about truth, while politics is a system fraught with compromise. Make sure you consider the candidates' answers with a Heavenly mindset.
2. Ask yourself, "Did the candidate actually answer the question, or rather side-step it, or give a fluff, wishy-washy, and/or 'political' type answer that leaves you not really knowing where he/she truly stands on the issue?"
3. Learn more about the candidates running for County Commission Dist. 8 including their positions on issues we did not cover in our questionnaire, by visiting their official campaign websites (if they have one.) The website URL for each candidate is listed in the Voter Guide.
4. Educate yourself more about the Christian/Biblical perspective regarding many of the subjects covered in our Voter Guide by reading topical articles on our website: www.VoteChattanooga.org
5. Use search engines to find additional information about each candidate, including written articles and videos, other voter guides, and even voting records for those who have served in public office before. You may even want to watch online recordings of the local County Commission Dist. 8 meetings to see how incumbents conduct themselves and vote.
6. Reach out to the candidates themselves through the provided email addresses and other means, in order to ask them questions of personal importance to you. Please make sure to show great respect toward each candidate and his/her time, especially to those with whom you disagree. Running for office is hard, stressful, time consuming work, and these are your fellow citizens who have lives, families, jobs...and feelings (just like you!)

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What makes a Voter Guide 501 (c)(3) - Compliant and Nonpartisan?

Federal tax law permits nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations to develop and distribute materials about political candidates' positions on issues, in order to educate voters impartially and on a nonpartisan basis; meaning that it is free from party affiliation, bias, or designation. The IRS states that 501 (c)(3) organizations may conduct any range of activities to promote voter participation and educate voters so long as it is nonpartisan. But, 501(c)(3) organizations are explicitly prohibited from supporting or opposing candidates for public office.

Some of the activities 501(c)(3) nonprofits *MAY* perform: Conduct or promote voter registration; educate voters on the voting process; distribute nonpartisan sample ballots, candidate questionnaires, and **voter guides**; organize "get-out-the-vote" activities; encourage and help people to vote; educate the candidates on issues important to their organization; and continue to do issue advocacy during an election.

So, first and foremost: **Church Voter Guides** does **NOT** endorse or oppose any candidates for public office or any political party.

Second, all of our staff and volunteers are required to act in a nonpartisan manner when working for or representing the organization and the creation of the Voter Guide.

Third, we do not edit, revise, or editorialize candidate responses to our Questionnaire. We do not even correct typos. **Candidate answers are published verbatim**, ensuring that their responses accurately represent their positions and perspectives on these issues. We then simply share this information through the Voter Guide, and you decide whom you believe to be the best candidate.

To be fair and impartial, we reached out by email, text, and phone when determined necessary, to all registered candidates running for County Commission Dist. 8 throughout Hamilton County for their 2026 elections, inviting them to answer our questionnaire. Candidate information is presented in alphabetical order by **last name**. If a Candidate did not respond at all, or did not choose to participate, or did not choose to respond to certain answers in the questionnaire, then it is noted where applicable. If there were not enough candidates running, then we did not produce a Voter Guide for that seat.

Join Our Growing Grassroots Coalition of Citizens, Churches/Nonprofit Organizations, and Media Partners Committed to Promoting the Voter Guide throughout Our Region

Let's get the word out!

It's simple. Just share our website URL all around the Hamilton County region:

www.VoteChattanooga.org

Tell your friends and neighbors, post on social media, and ask your Pastors to promote it to your congregation (we'll even provide you /them with the announcement info and the slide deck.)

Please contact us for any reason, we'd love to collaborate with you: Info@VoteChattanooga.org

The "Small Print": The information contained in this document is being provided for informational purposes only. It was obtained directly from candidates and other sources, and we have done our best to convey it to you accurately, but nothing herein has been "fact checked". Utilize this Voter Guide at your own discretion. We take no responsibility for the factual nature of the content, or for publishing errors, etc. To the best of our knowledge, this Voter Guide is 501(c)(3)-compliant and officially nonpartisan, and thereby it does not support or oppose any candidate

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**Hamilton County
2026 Democrat Primary Election
Voter Guide
for County Commission Dist. 8**

**County
Commission**

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County Commission | Survey Questions Index

- 1) **Purpose:** What do you view as the purpose and role of the County Commission?
- 2) **Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives:** What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as County Commissioner?
- 3) **Budget:** What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?
- 4) **Constitutional Liberties:** As County Commissioner, what measures will you champion to protect the individual Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents, such as freedom of speech, peaceable assembly and exercise of religion?
- 5) **Protecting Life:** What legal means, if any, would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our county, including the lives of the unborn, the trafficked, the poor and homeless, and the elderly?
- 6) **Moral Values:** Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why, or why not?
- 7) **Speed cameras:** How would you address the use of automated speed cameras within the county (including those in school zones)? What oversight and transparency measures should be required to maintain public trust? Do speed cameras contradict constitutional protections within drivers' rights such as due process and the right to confront one's accuser?
- 8) **Zoning/Planning:** What policies would you support to prevent and disclose potential conflicts of interest between developers and members of Hamilton County's zoning and planning committees, and how would you ensure that land-use decisions are made transparently, ethically, and in the best interest of residents rather than private interests?
- 9) **Managing County Growth and Infrastructure:** What strategies and/or resources does the county currently have to better pace growth in Hamilton County so infrastructure, roads and emergency services can keep up with development? How would you use these tools to address this issue?
- 10) **Planning for Unincorporated Areas:** Do you support having a separate planning commission for the unincorporated areas? Please explain your reasoning, and if applicable, what steps you would take.

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County Commission Dist. 8

(In alphabetical order)



Joshua Wichman

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Joshua Wichman

Candidate Information

Email Address:	electwichman@gmail.com
Occupation/Vocation:	Self Employed
Years as resident of:	Have lived in several places but have been in Chattanooga for roughly 25 years throughout my life.
Campaign Website:	electwichman.com

1) Purpose: What do you view as the purpose and role of the County Commission?

County Commissioners represent their district. The decisions they make should reflect the interests of their constituents, not their own. The Commission should operate with honesty and transparency, keeping the public informed about the process and items on the agenda. Ultimately, the Commission exists to set responsible budgets and enact legislation that grows Hamilton County in a way that benefits all residents.

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2) Candidate's Focus/Expertise/Initiatives: What are your areas of special focus and/or expertise and what initiatives would you undertake as County Commissioner?

On the Commission, I would focus on two things, supporting our schools and managing growth wisely. We need to boost teacher retention and provide resources so that every school can succeed. The Commission can play an important role in supporting that. On development, I believe growth should serve residents by providing the necessary infrastructure to support projects, bringing quality jobs that pay a living wage and creating real opportunity for young people to build a life here in Hamilton County, rather than having to leave it. Our development should work for us not the other way around.

3) Budget: What would be your top three spending, savings, and economic development priorities?

My top spending priorities would be affordable and workforce housing, community infrastructure that serves all residents and resources to support our schools and teachers. These investments directly impact quality of life and are fundamental for sustainable growth. On savings, I will inherit a budget I had no hand in approving, so my priority will be to closely examine and responsibly audit it to ensure the next budget fully encompasses the needs of my constituents. For economic development, I envision development that is planned responsibly so growth pays for itself rather than burdening existing taxpayers, attracting quality jobs that pay a living wage, and emerging industries that strengthen our economy while preserving the Hamilton County we all love.

4) Constitutional Liberties: As County Commissioner, what measures will you champion to protect the individual Constitutional liberties of all Hamilton County residents, such as freedom of speech, peaceable assembly and exercise of religion?

While these protections are not direct responsibilities of the county commission, it is within our power to uphold these ideals with honest and transparent government. This means being accessible to all residents and conducting the business of government in an open forum that welcomes participation from all who wish to engage.

5) Protecting Life: What legal means, if any, would you support to protect the most vulnerable in our county, including the lives of the unborn, the trafficked, the poor and homeless, and the elderly?

Protecting the vulnerable should be a top priority for commissioners, it is why I chose to serve. For those affected by human trafficking, I will advocate for strong county partnerships with local organizations and community led programs already doing this critical work. For our poorest residents, those experiencing homelessness, and our elderly neighbors, I will champion affordable housing, accessible services, and community led programs that allow everyone to live with dignity in Hamilton County. Strong families are the foundation of a strong community, and every decision I make on the Commission will reflect that.

6) Moral Values: Should government laws, ordinances, regulations, etc. follow the moral principles of the Ten Commandments? Why, or why not?

The values at the core of the Ten Commandments, honesty, respect for others, and care for our neighbors are values I hold deeply and that I believe should guide good governance. These are also values shared across many faiths and by people of good character everywhere. Government serves all residents regardless of their background, and laws work best when they reflect our shared moral commitments to each other.

7) Speed cameras: How would you address the use of automated speed cameras within the county (including those in school zones)? What oversight and transparency measures should be required to maintain public trust? Do speed cameras contradict constitutional protections within drivers' rights such as due process and the right to confront one's accuser?

Automated speed cameras, particularly in school zones, are an effective tool for deterring dangerous driving and protecting public safety. I support their use where they serve that purpose. However, strong oversight is essential, data collected should be used solely for enforcement and never to surveil or track individuals. On the constitutional question, every driver should have a clear path to contest a citation. When used responsibly, speed cameras can save lives while respecting the rights and privacy of all residents.

8) Zoning/Planning: What policies would you support to prevent and disclose potential conflicts of interest between developers and members of Hamilton County's zoning and planning committees, and how would you ensure that land-use decisions are made transparently, ethically, and in the best interest of residents rather than private interests?

Land-use decisions shape the future of our communities and must be made with full transparency and in the best interest of residents. All zoning and planning meetings should be open to the public and provide genuine opportunity for community input. Where developers have influence on planning boards and committees, residents must have equal representation, decisions that affect neighborhoods should reflect the people who live in them, not just those who profit from them. Accountability in land-use decisions is not optional and is part of a government that works for everyone.

9) Managing County Growth and Infrastructure: What strategies and/or resources does the county currently have to better pace growth in Hamilton County so infrastructure, roads and emergency services can keep up with development? How would you use these tools to address this issue?

The current approach is not keeping pace, residents are experiencing the consequences of development that has outrun our roads, emergency services, and community infrastructure. I will push for rigorous accountability in our planning processes and a thorough audit of the tools and resources we currently have to ensure they are being applied effectively. Hamilton County growth should strengthen our communities not strain them.

10) Planning for Unincorporated Areas: Do you support having a separate planning commission for the unincorporated areas? Please explain your reasoning, and if applicable, what steps you would take.

The Regional Planning Agency already serves unincorporated areas and I do not believe creating a separate commission is the answer. If residents in unincorporated areas do not feel adequately represented, we should fix that within the existing system instead of creating additional bureaucracy. Duplicating planning infrastructure wastes time, resources and risks creating further gaps in the regional coordination we need. The solution is better representation and accountability within the structure we have.

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An advertisement for a training program. It features a blue checkmark icon with a red and white striped banner above it. The text reads: "HOW TO RUN FOR OFFICE AS A CHRISTIAN CONSERVATIVE". Below this, it says "Comprehensive Campaign Training with a Biblical Worldview" and lists the target audience: "For Current and Prospective Candidates, Campaign Consultants and Managers, Candidate Families, Pastors, Campaign Volunteers, and All Citizens who Wish to Serve Our Nation by Glorifying God through Government". A photo of Pastor and Former U.S. Congressman Bill Redmond is shown with the text "Instructed by Pastor and Former U.S. Congressman Bill Redmond". The slogan "Winning Back America ... One Candidate at a Time!" is written in a script font. At the bottom, the website "www.RunForOffice.training" is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font.

An advertisement for the "choices" organization. It features the logo "choices" with a heart icon inside a speech bubble. Below the logo, it says "Saving and transforming lives since 1985". There are three bullet points: "VISIT TEAM.CHOICESCHATTANOOGA.ORG", "FOLLOW TEAM.CHOICESCHATT" with Facebook and Instagram icons, and "GET INVOLVED!". A photo of two young children sitting back-to-back is shown at the bottom.

An advertisement for "july 2 life .com". It features the website name in a colorful, cursive font. To the right is a small American flag icon. Below the name, it says "3 million letters to end abortion" over a background image of the U.S. Capitol building.

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