

WESLEY MEMORIAL

A UNITED METHODIST CONGREGATION

WESLEYMEMORIAL.ORG



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April 12, 2023

Dear Members of Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church,

The Wesley Memorial Administrative Team invites you to an all-church poll. This vote is open to professing members who call Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church home. You must be listed as a professing member to vote. Please contact Tish Schulteiss (tschulteiss@wesleymemorial.org) if you have any questions about your membership status.

You are encouraged to consider anything that God has laid on your heart through our informational meetings and conversations about this important decision. The choices posed in this poll will be:

I support Our Church remaining (staying) affiliated with The United Methodist Church Denomination.

or

I support Our Church pursuing a path toward disaffiliation from (leaving) The United Methodist Church Denomination.

There will be question and answer sessions on April 16 at 3:00 pm and April 23 at 6:00 pm in the fellowship hall, if you want to have your questions answered.

This vote will NOT be authorized by our Conference Leadership for the purpose of the Annual Conference. However, this vote is our own initiative to give you an opportunity to share your voice and to provide direction for Church leadership

Enclosed (or attached for email) you will find documents providing various thoughts and opinions about these decisions. We invite you to review this information and bring your questions to the sessions prior to the vote. In addition, our original letter requesting a vote on this topic sent in December is included to provide the specific definition of disaffiliation under paragraph 2553 of the Annual Conference.

The Administrative Leadership needs to hear from you to help us plan your Church's future. Your voice is important. Please take time to come and vote on one of the polling dates. We also invite you to continue to pray for our Church, our Clergy, our Leadership, and our entire Church family as we journey through this important decision.

In grace and peace,

*Administrative Leadership Team
Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church*

Schedule:

- **Sunday, April 16 at 3:00 pm and Sunday, April 23 at 6:00 pm**
 - **Question and Answer Sessions about the Poll**
- **In-Person Polling**
 - **Thursday, April 27 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Dining Hall,**
 - **Sunday, April 30 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Asbury Room**
 - **Tuesday, May 2 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Dining Hall**

* Voting is anonymous. If you have any questions, contact Lore Fariss (lore.fariss@gmail.com) or Dan Smoak, (drsmoak54@gmail.com) Co Lay-Leaders

Dear Rev. Beverly Copley-

October 25, 2022

We the Administrative Team of Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church have a majority of members (9 out of 12 present) who would like to meet with you to discuss a discernment process to consider the question of disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church.

Our reason for disaffiliation would be under ¶2553, “for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow.”

The action of the WNCC “related to the change in the requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference” that we disagree with or have concerns with is:

The June 20-23, 2019 WNCC passed Petition 22 (564 to 328 votes) which stated in item 3. “We **reject** the Traditional Plan approved at General Conference 2019 as inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ and will **resist** its implementation.” We feel that the regulations of the Book of Discipline should not be rejected and their implementation should not be resisted by any UMC annual conference.

We request that you visit our church and give a presentation to help us understand the process, plus provide us with the checklist and pension liability as well as any other disaffiliation fees or requirements. Our pastor, Reverend Jeff Patterson is aware of our request to have you come and speak to us. You may contact the Chairman of Trustees, Jim Holcomb or co-Lay Leader, Mary Sansing so that we may set this up together as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Jim Holcomb, Chair of Trustees
614-989-0138, jhol20@aol.com

Dan Smoak, co-Lay Leader
336-905-0980, drsmoak54@gmail.com

Mary Sansing, co-Lay Leader
336-689-6172, msansing55@gmail.com

(Second copy remailed 11/08/22)

What is disaffiliation in The UMC?

United Methodists throughout the world are bound together in a connectional covenant in which we support and hold each other accountable for faithful discipleship and the mission of Jesus Christ. UMC congregations are not in an independent church. Each local church congregation and property is connected for the benefit of the denomination, each church, and the ministry and mission of all at home and throughout the world. Disaffiliation means separating from the WNC Annual Conference (WNCC) and the entire UMC.

The 2019 Special Session of the General Conference of the UMC adopted paragraph ¶2553 in *the Book of Discipline* – Disaffiliation of a Local Church Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality. Because of the current deep conflict within the UMC around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow.

<https://www.wnccumc.org/disaffiliation-process-and-information>

Two Views – Staying A United Methodist Church or Disaffiliating

Human Sexuality

Staying UMC – Staying UMC allows us to “agree to disagree” and welcome those who have differing views of human sexuality equally in our congregation. To disaffiliate under Paragraph 2553 is to distinctly communicate that interpreting Scripture in a more inclusive way is incorrect and unfaithful to God. Staying UMC is "agreeing to disagree" and allowing for people who hold both traditional and more inclusive interpretations of the Scriptures related to homosexuality. Neither viewpoint will be made to feel less than another.

Disaffiliation -- As it has always been, people with same-sex attractions will be welcomed as members of our church. We will continue the current Book of Discipline standards that prohibit same-sex weddings or the ordination of practicing homosexuals.

Value of UMC connection

Staying UMC --- The UMC is a global connection of churches, who share common commitments to core doctrines, but who minister within their own local contexts. The denomination provides a network of resources, financially and otherwise, that have founded hospitals and universities, retreat centers and camps, and create a world-wide impact for the sake of God’s kingdom through our shared ministry. In the UMC, clergy will continue to be itinerant. Our senior leadership will be appointed by the Western NC conference, always in consultation with our church leaders, to provide us with consistent, quality leaders who can serve the present and future needs of our congregation. As needed, other ministry staff will continue to be hired by our church.

Disaffiliation --- When we disaffiliate, we will have control over our pastoral appointments, finances, and property. We can disaffiliate with our property until December 31, 2023, after paying an additional year of apportionments and any unfunded pension liability.

Two Views – Staying A United Methodist Church or Disaffiliating

Church name

Staying UMC--- church name remains “Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church”

Disaffiliation --- church name becomes “Wesley Memorial Methodist Church”

If staying UMC vote is successful what then?

If disaffiliation vote is successful what then?

Staying UMC --- The UMC is, and will continue to be, a home for people who have varying views of the world, politically and otherwise. There are numerous statements from the bishops and other denominational leaders ensuring that the future of the UMC will be inclusive of many viewpoints, including clergy, churches, and church members who may consider themselves conservative, progressive, moderate or any other label that may describe our various views of the world.

Disaffiliation --- We will discern whether we will remain independent or unite with another group in the Methodist tradition. We will continue to be the Wesley Memorial Church our community has grown to admire and love. We remain committed to the historical interpretation of the Bible and bringing people to know Jesus Christ.