

WHAT WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

From Arkansans Staying United

About The United Methodist Church

- We love the United Methodist Church and the people in our church family. We were raised in the church or found a home in it. We have been saved and transformed by Jesus Christ in the UMC.
- We are staying on mission: “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” That is our call from God and why we exist.
- We are already a global church. The UMC works around the world in missions, disaster relief, education, and many other efforts. A new denomination will take years to reach anything close to that impact and reputation.
- The UMC is dedicated to the inclusion of all people. Though by no means perfect, we nevertheless strive to be a church of “open hearts, minds, and doors.” We affirm the gifts of our LGBTQ+ siblings, the leadership of young people, and the contributions of all racial and ethnic communities. We believe that diversity within the Body of Christ is a strength and helps us give witness to the Kingdom of God in our midst.
- We have a Wesleyan theology of prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace. We center not on judgment, but on the God who reaches out, forgives our sins, and welcomes us into community.
- We believe in the authority and primacy of Holy Scripture, interpreted through the lenses of tradition, reason and experience. We believe that the core of Scripture is love, what Wesley called the “royal law” and Jesus called the sum of all the law and prophets.
- The current stance of The United Methodist Church on human sexuality has not changed. Whatever changes are made in the future, we want to continue to be a “big tent” church where people of various convictions can live together under the core doctrines of Wesleyan Methodism. Pastors will continue to have discretion over whom to marry, and annual conferences will continue to have authority over whom to ordain. We ask, with John Wesley, “Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? . . . Without all doubt, we may.”

Resources:

[Council of Bishops, A Narrative for the Continuing United Methodist Church](#)

[What happens when a New Denomination Launches?](#)

[What should United Methodist congregations know about disaffiliation?](#)

About the Global Methodist Church

- In the current proposal, the GMC is making radical changes.
 - Bishops are elected for a term not life.
 - Retired pastors lose their vote at annual conference.
 - Churches are not guaranteed a pastor.
 - Pastors are not guaranteed an appointment.
 - Ordination will be altered, and deacons will be the first step toward elder’s ordination.
 - It is unclear what will happen with licensed local pastors.
 - The educational requirements for ordained pastors are much lower than the UMC.
- The GMC is launched, but not formed. After declaring themselves to be open on May 1, 2022, the GMC does not have many of the necessary requirements for a denomination in the Wesleyan

tradition: no settled and approved Book of Discipline, but one that changes every few months; no General Conference; no bishops elected; no annual conferences constituted; no agreement with Wespath for handling pensions (though talks are underway); and there are questions about the 501(c)(3) non-profit designation for churches who disaffiliate.

- The GMC won't have a widespread network of local churches for many years, if ever.
- The GMC was formed around the exclusion of a class of people from the covenant of marriage and the calling of ordination. In the proposed GMC, there will be no covenants of marriage celebrated for LGBTQ+ persons or ordination of LGBTQ+ deacons or elders anywhere ever.
- Churches and members in the GMC will have to strictly adhere to the doctrines and practices of the church. The processes to expel a member or a congregation are remarkably easy and one-sided. And a bishop who is unhappy with a pastor can simply choose not to appoint him or her.
- The GMC, until their first constituting General Conference, will continue to be led by a 17-member Transitional Leadership Council with broad powers over most denominational decisions. By contrast, the United Methodist General Conference consists of more than 800 delegates from around the world, elected from every annual conference.
- Disaffiliation at present is costly for churches wishing to separate, and there is no support from the GMC to help churches pay the costs. Only the General Conference can pass legislation to provide money for the separating denomination, and it won't meet until 2024.

Resources:

[Buyer Beware: What the GMC Book of Doctrines and Discipline Really Says](#)

[What Do We Really Know about the "Global Methodist Church"](#)

[What are the Big Concerns about the GMC?](#)

What the GMC is saying about the UMC

- *"They don't believe in the authority of Scripture."* Not true. We affirm that "The Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation," and we receive the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God.
- *"Their doctrine of Christ is inadequate, and their theology is not orthodox."* Not true. We, like the GMC, stand by the historical creeds (Apostles and Nicene), the Articles of Religion, the Confession of Faith, the General Rules, and Wesley's Sermons and Notes on the New Testament.
- *"Pastors will be forced to perform gay marriages."* The current Book of Discipline continues to prohibit gay marriage by our pastors. If this is changed in the future, pastors will continue to have discretion about when to officiate at weddings.
- *"Churches will be forced to accept gay pastors."* The current Book of Discipline continues to prohibit the ordination of openly gay people who are not celibate. If that changes, Annual Conferences will remain in control of who gets ordained, and churches will be consulted about the appointment of pastors.
- *"There are outliers and weird-o's in the UMC."* There have always been outliers and weird-o's in the UMC and every other church. Do we agree with them? Not necessarily. Will we be in a church with them? Absolutely! Diversity of perspective keeps us humble and moving towards perfection in Christ.