





## Introduction and Overview

- General Conference 2016
- General Conference 2019
- Protocol Legislation
- Annual Conferences 2019
- Postponed General Conference
- Global Methodist Church launches
- General Conference 2024




## Foundations of United Methodism

## American Methodist History Overview

- 1703 John Wesley is born
- 1760 Methodist colonists arrive in America
- 1783 The Methodist Episcopal Church in America forms
- 1800 The Church of the United Brethren in Christ forms
- 1803 The Evangelical Association forms
- 1816 The African Methodist Episcopal Church forms
- 1821 AME Zion Church forms
- 1830 The Methodist Protestant Church forms
- 1843 The Wesleyan Methodist Church forms
- 1844 The MEC, South splits
- 1860 The Free Methodist Church forms
- 1870 The Colored/Christian Methodist Church Forms
- 1891 The United Evangelical Church leaves the EA
- 1922 The Evangelical Church is formed by merger
- 1939 The Methodist Church is formed by merger
- 1946 The Evangelical United Brethren Church is formed by merger
- 1968 The United Methodist Church is formed by merger


## Our Sources of Strength

- Our God is faithful.
- Jesus is with us.
- Reading the Bible together.
- Worship.
- Other spiritual disciplines.
- God's call on our lives as disciples of Jesus.
- Our strong and vital connection.




Remaining  
United  
Methodist

The theological core  
of Methodism has  
not changed.



Our Common  
Core as  
Methodists

- Articles of Religion/Confession of Faith
  - The General Rules
  - The Wesley Hymns
  - Disciplined Engagement with Scripture
  - Works of Piety, Mercy and Justice
  - Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion
  - Small Group Accountability and Support
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## Theology

Our doctrinal standards are clear and have not changed:

- The Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- The Lordship of Christ
- The virgin birth
- The bodily resurrection
- Scripture “contains all things necessary to salvation...”

**One  
Body of Christ  
with  
Many Parts**





- Response to the 2019 GC and adoption of the Traditional Plan
- Made public January 2020
- 3 Central Conference bishops, 3 US bishops, 5 traditionalists, 5 centrists, 5 progressives (laity and clergy)
- Initiated by Bishop John Yamabsu, Sierra Leone Episcopal Area
- Kenneth Feinberg, Esquire – professional mediator at no cost
- Three 2-day meetings
- Legislation submitted to the 2020 General Conference
- Affirmed by the Michigan and Sierra Leone Annual Conferences

## The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation



## Goals of the Negotiated Protocol

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Bishop Carter has stated that one goal of the negotiated protocol was to try and give something of value to those who have real differences.

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For some on the mediation team, this meant ensuring the continuation of The United Methodist Church that could focus on the mission of the church and avoid trials.

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For others on the mediation team, this meant ensuring the ability for local churches to separate from The United Methodist Church while retaining property and caring for clergy pensions.

## Essentials of the Protocol

- Pathway for separation
- Annual Conferences can vote to leave the denomination
- Churches don't have to vote; Clergy choose – specifically to be GMC
  - 2/3 for central conferences; 57% for annual conference; simple majority or 2/3 by church, determined by council
- Church retains assets and liabilities, apportionments paid in full, loans
- \$39 million allocated by GCFA to communities historically marginalized by the sin of racism (\$26m from post-separation UMC)
- \$25 million to new traditional denomination(s); \$2 million progressive
- Complaints will be held in abeyance

## What's Next for the Protocol

- Legislation for General Conference 2024
- Withdrawn support from 5 mediation team members and 8 endorsing organizations (centrist and progressive)
  - "The once-promising Protocol Agreement no longer offers a viable path forward."
  - Growing opposition within the constituencies we represent
  - Serious reservations of Central Conference leaders
  - Dwindling support among General Conference delegates

Commitment to finding constructive path forward, role of Methodist movement in systematic racial violence, exploitation and discrimination, continued abeyance

## The United Methodist Church if the Protocol Legislation passes:

- No Annual Conference must vote
- No local church must vote
- You are a United Methodist Church and you remain a United Methodist Church unless your local church (or annual conference) chooses to separate from The United Methodist Church.

## Revised Timeline for Proposed Conferences

November 2-4, 2022

Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference

May 2024

General Conference



# Disaffiliation

What is  
disaffiliation  
and why are we  
talking about it?

- This should be done in relationship. Talk with your District Superintendent first. Disaffiliation is not a conversation or process to rush into.
- WNC will treat churches fairly and with dignity and honor the *Discipline* process.
- WNC had 7 churches disaffiliate in 2020 and 16 in 2021 and approved 19 at Annual Conference this year. Many of these have chosen to become independent.

## *Discipline* ¶2553 Process for Disaffiliation

¶2553 is the current process for churches to disaffiliate from the Western NC Conference as recommended by the Council of Bishops and supported by the Judicial Council's recent rulings.

¶2553 was passed at Special Session of General Conference in 2019.

Other ¶s in the Discipline (¶ 2549 – closure and ¶ 2548.2 – withdrawal) have not been commonly used as a process for disaffiliation.

## *Discipline* ¶2553 Process for Disaffiliation

The rationale for disaffiliation under ¶2553 is related to the current impasse regarding human sexuality (see ¶2553 .1).

Requires approval by 2/3 majority vote at a church conference.

Requires the approval of the annual conference session.

## Financial Requirements of ¶2553

- The apportionment amount (2 years...current year plus the previous 12 months)
- Church retains property
- The pro rata share of any aggregate unfunded pension obligations
- Other liabilities – debts, loans, etc.
- The church also pays legal fees involved.

- A current member of the WCA Council moved the substitute motion (which was approved and became ¶2553) at the 2019 GC indicating, "I believe that developing a gracious exit is very important to our witness as Christians."
- The WCA published a list of conferences who are not expanding requirements to disaffiliate and WNC is among them.
- 31 churches in WNC have filed a lawsuit against the conference
- Encouraging laity to have their church withhold apportionments in conferences where additions have been made to ¶2553. (not WNCC) (8/12/22)
- No longer affirms an abeyance on complaints (8/19/22)

## A couple notes about the Global Methodist Church



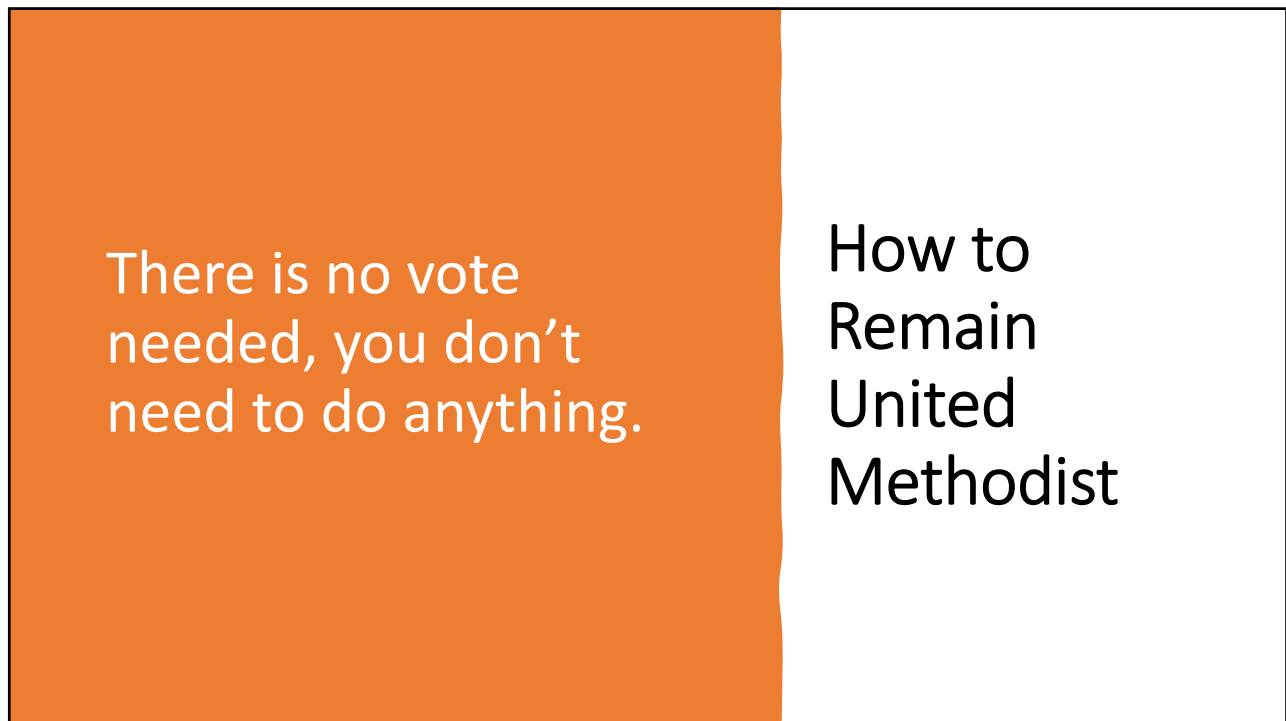
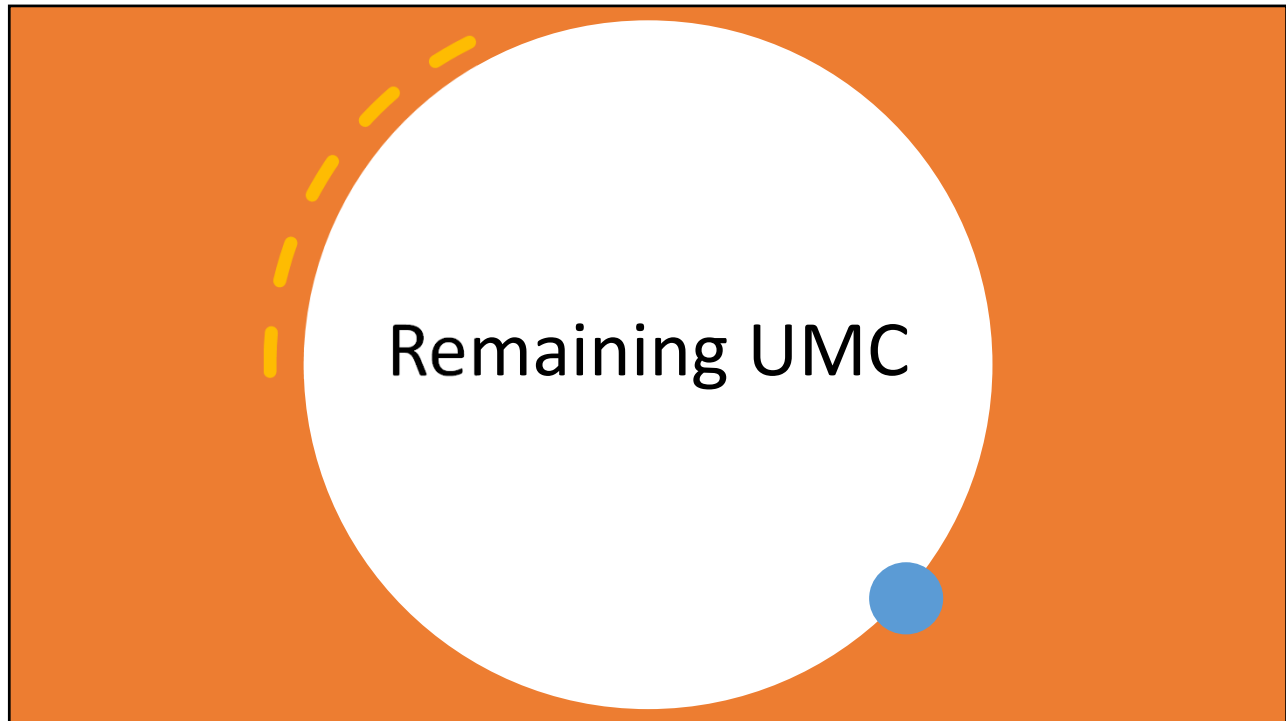
## Expanded Profile

Bishop Carter and the WNC Cabinet have created an “Expanded Profile” to use with churches who may want to state clearly matters of conscience around weddings and clergy.

- Clergy do not have to do LGBTQ weddings
- Churches determine building use policies

This is fully based on the *Discipline’s* foundational principles of clergy choosing what weddings they perform, churches setting their building use policies, and consultation taking place before appointments.

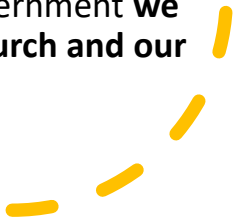
## Expanded Profile To Be Used in WNC



The United Methodist Church

In all scenarios of what the future holds for the church, one essential is that there will be a Continuing United Methodist Church. There are local churches who will choose to leave the UMC and become independent or join with another denomination.

The United Methodist Church will continue and it seems imperative that during this season of waiting, prayer and discernment **we reflect on the strengths of our church and our hopes for the future.**

A yellow dashed line graphic consisting of several short, curved segments.Western North Carolina Conference  
A blue circle graphic located at the bottom right of the white circle.



# Connect Imagine Engage

## Foci in WNCC

- Vital, Sustainable, Innovative Local Churches and Fresh Expressions of Church
- Anti-Racism as Discipleship and Sanctification
- Resilience and Health of Clergy and Spiritual Leaders
- The Continuing United Methodist Church as a source of Unity and Connection for the purpose of making disciplines of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## Assets and Offerings of the WNCC

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Anti-Racism training

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Flood Relief in Haywood County

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Transformation Journey

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Both/And Cohorts

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The Resource Center

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Lay Servant Training

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Leadership Development Resources & Training

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Racial Healing and Reconciliation Teams

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Creation Care Ministries

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United Women in Faith (UMW)

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Youth Leader Cohorts

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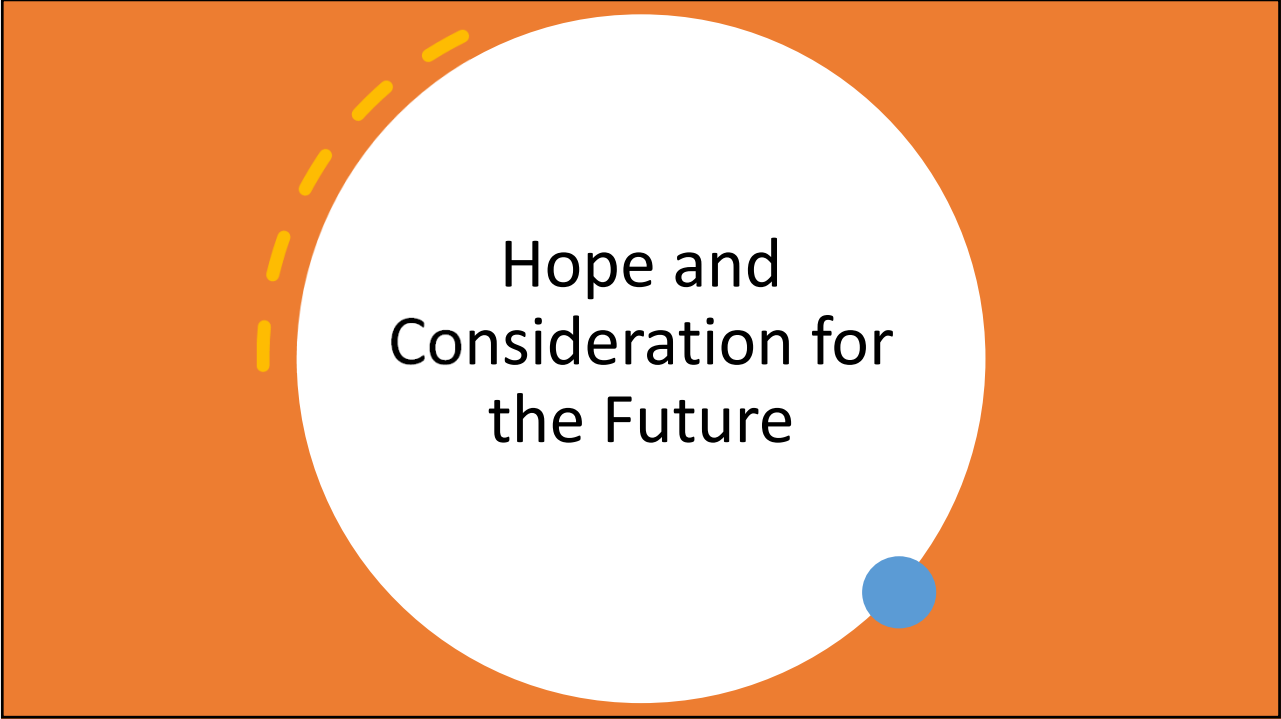
Missional Collective

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Mission Partnerships

## Foundational Values of UMC

- We are confident of what God has done in Christ Jesus for all humankind.
- We are committed to personal salvation and transformation that leads to the transformation of our communities and the world.
- Driven by the values of Unity and Mission - We are all United Methodists.
- We value remaining connected in mission.
- Allow for contextualization. Enable people with convicted humility to reach new people.
- We wish to honor differences in practices and non-essentials for the sake of contextual mission.



Hope and  
Consideration for  
the Future



**Mutual Recognition  
and Respect**

## The Western North Carolina Conference's hope for churches during this time:

Enter into this season of tension, challenge, and opportunity with:

- Patience
- A spirit of humility about what God might do
- An embrace of individual responsibility and discernment

## How to help prepare your church:

- Stay focused on the mission of the church: Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World
- Continue to highlight the important ministries of your local church.
- Build relationships across differences.
- Give simple, accurate information and ask others for resources.
- Listen. Allow for multiple perspectives to be shared in an open and transparent process.
- Go slow. Have multiple conversations. Be intentional.
- There is no rush. General Conference 2024 is at a distance and there is work for us to do now.

## Things for churches to consider

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Pace yourself. You have time to wait and see how things develop.

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No one is asking you now or in the proposed Protocol legislation to force a change to your local church's practice around weddings or to accept clergy without consultation.

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You may submit an expanded profile to the Bishop and Cabinet around weddings and clergy appointments.

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Consider the connectional reality of being a United Methodist (UMCOR, Camps, Campus Ministry, Missions).

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Consider the unintended consequences of any future decision around clergy appointments, financial impact, insurance/legal matters, and the possible missional impact of division within a local church.

## The Western North Carolina commitment...

- We will walk with you.
- We will respond appropriately and timely to your questions and concerns.
- We will continue to guard the unity of the church by allowing for a contextual approach to ministry.
- We understand that some may depart. We will treat any persons or churches who choose to depart with respect and dignity and follow the *Discipline* process.
- We will continue to highlight ways to be in ministry together by creating pathways to the post-COVID church.

## To learn more:

- [www.wnccumc.org](http://www.wnccumc.org)
- Go to [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org), [www.resourceumc.org](http://www.resourceumc.org) or [www.umnews.org](http://www.umnews.org) for latest updates.
- #BeUMC @ [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)
- Wespith, [www.wespath.org](http://www.wespath.org)
- Read legislation, original protocol, and FAQ at: [www.gracethroughseparation.com](http://www.gracethroughseparation.com)
- Send additional questions to the district office.



## Questions and Answers

