

Our Mission:

To educate the congregation on the issues facing the United Methodist Church as they relate to LUMC, and to facilitate a fair and open discourse so that members are informed of any recommendations from the discernment team.

Slide 1: Mission

This team's mission was to be a "fact finding task force". Our job was to consolidate and verify information regarding the current status of the United Methodist Church and disseminate it to you, the Leesville UMC congregation.

We will then listen to your questions, comments, and concerns and make a recommendation to Church Council as to a next step for the church. Church Council will then make the final decision on that appropriate path for Leesville UMC. To be clear ... Church Council is the only group with the ability to make decisions for a church vote.



Mike Edwards,
Church Council Chair
David Giesen,
LUMC Lay Member
Tim Jones,
Worship Committee Chair
Debra Fowler,
LUMC Treasurer
Amy Bedenbaugh,
CC Recording Secretary
Wendy Zwart,
Communications Chair

Slide 2: Team Members

These are the team members. These members were nominated by members of Church Council and approved by Church Council on (February 2023)



Action Items:

Step 1: Gathering Information
February 2023-June 2023
Step 2: Share All Findings
July-September 2023
Step 3: Town Hall Meetings for
Q&A from the Congregation
September-December 2023
Step 4: Make a
Recommendation to
Church Council

Slide 3: Action Items

The team was finalized and began meeting in February. We have gathered information from local churches and churches around the state, the district office, the UMCSC website, and a report from JoAnn Kneece, our lay representative to the South Carolina Annual Conference. We have completed STEP 1 and we now enter STEP 2. Today we are sharing those findings with you. After this meeting, we will begin STEP 3. We will begin to take your comment and concerns and compile them. Finally, we plan to make a recommendation to Church Council at the January 2024 meeting.



- Methodism started back in the mid-18th century when John Wesley became the chaplain to the Georgia Colony
- For 250+ years, Methodism has existed in some form or another.
- In 1968, the Methodist Church and the United Brethren Church joined to form the United Methodist Church that we are a part of today.
- When Leesville Church united with the UMC, our property was deeded over into a trust. The UMC holds the deed to our property.

Slide 4: History & Structure

In order to properly understand where the UMC is today, we need to look at where we have come from. This may be old information for some ... but it is important.

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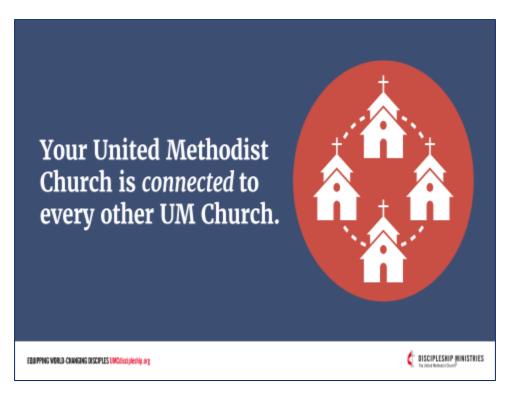
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Slides 5: What is the Structure of the UMC?

The United Methodist Church is an episcopate system. This means that there is a hierarchy involving levels of leadership. No one person or entity has total control of the denomination.



Slide 6: Connectional Church LUMC is connected to every other UM Church



Slide: 7 At the local level, we have a church or charge conference. We report to the Greenwood District. The District Superintendent is Dr. Stephen Love. Dr. Love's role is to manage and guide churches and charge conferences within the district.



Slide 8: Leesville UMC, as a charge conference, is part of the Annual Conference. Dr. Love oversees and bridges our charge conference and the annual conference.



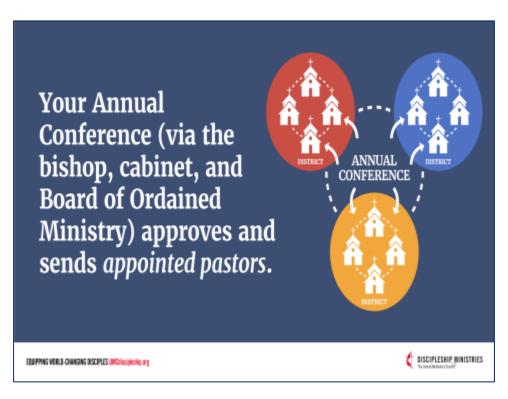
Slide 9: Annual Conference is the basic body of the church. There are twelve districts that make up the South Carolina Annual Conference. It is called an Annual Conference because they meet annually. The bishop is Jonathan Holston, who plans to retire in 2024.



Slide 10: Our church sends representatives to Annual Conference each year. This year, Dr. Armstrong and JoAnn Kneece, Alternate Lay Member attended the conference held in Florence, SC this June.



Slide 11: Each year, our church sends apportionments (a portion of our church's givings to the annual conference). Leesville UMC pays 100% of our apportionments each year and have paid 100% for over twenty years.



Slide 12: The annual conference approves and appoints our pastor each year.



Slide 13: Annual conference sends a portion of the apportioned dollars for missions of local churches.



Slide 14: The South Carolina conference is part of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference.



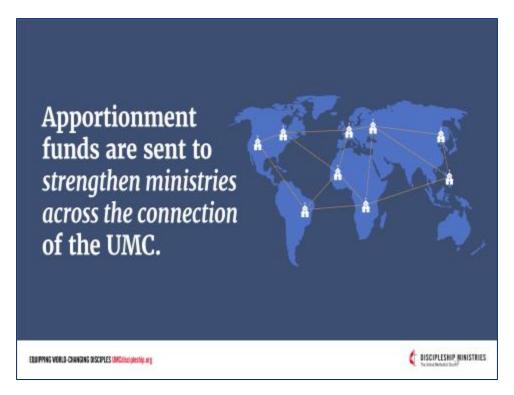
Slide 15: Regional Map...This is a visual look at the 5 US Jurisdictions. Ours, the Southeast Jurisdiction, is basically east of the Mississippi River and south of the Mason Dixon line and is made up of Fourteen Annual conferences. The green represents the Northeast Jurisdiction. The purple is the South-Central Jurisdiction. The red is the North-Central jurisdiction. And, the Blue represents the Western Jurisdiction.



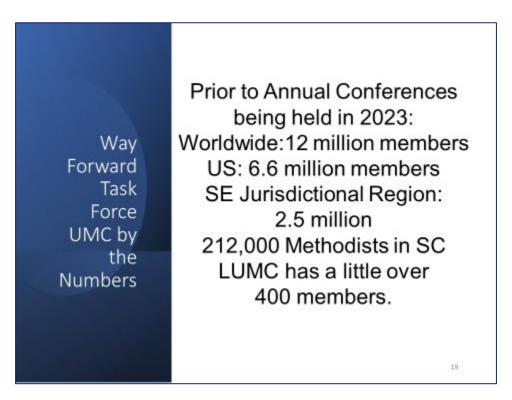
Slide 16: The 5 US Jurisdictions, along with the 7 Central Conferences (international churches) make up the General Conference. The General Conference, along with the Judicial Council and Council of Bishops, make up the ruling body of the United Methodist Church.



Slide 17: General Conference is made up of an equal number of lay people and clergy. It meets every four years and will meet beginning April 23rd-through May 3rd 2024 in Charlotte, NC.



Slide 18: Apportionments are sent to strengthen ministries across the connection of the UMC worldwide.



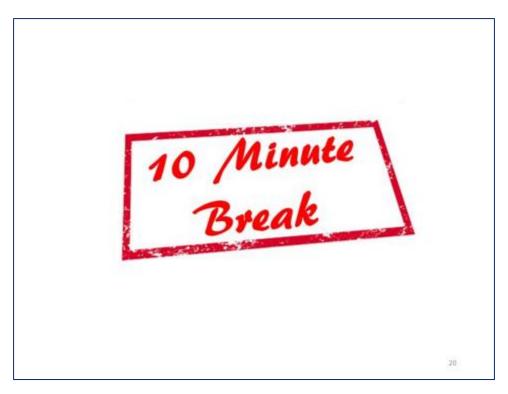
Slide 19: UMC by the Numbers

Prior to Annual Conferences being held in 2023:

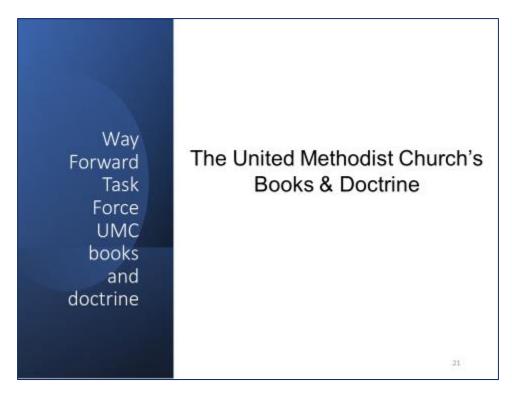
Worldwide, The United Methodist Church had about 12 million members.

In the United States, Methodists represent about 6.6 million members. Methodism ranks fourth in the US behind Catholics, Baptists, and non-denominational (most of the mega-churches are nondenominational)

There about 2.5 million Methodist in our jurisdiction and 212,000 in South Carolina. Our church has a little over 400 members.



Slide 20: 10 Minute Break: When we return, we will take a look at the UMC's books and doctrine

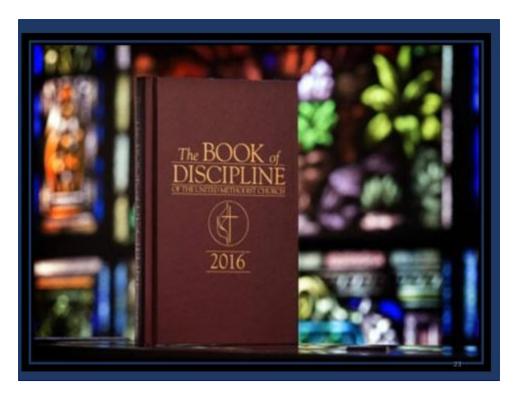


Slide 21: UMC's Books and Doctrine



Slide 22: The Bible

The first and most important reference to any Christian denomination should be the Bible. And it is in the Methodist church. John Wesley said "I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship and the whole world for my mission field."

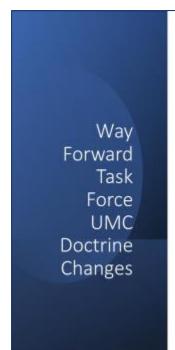


Slide 23: The Book of Discipline

Our second reference is the Book of Discipline. This is the volume of church history, doctrinal standards, church laws, administration, and social principles. For those things that the Bible has not specifically spelled out ... the Book of Discipline takes care of.

Originally published in 1784 and has been published every 4 years thereafter following the meeting of the General Conference.

Changes were made at the special called General Conference in 2019 but the last printed edition is 2016.



Articles of Religion & Confession of Faith

- · "The Bedrock" of Methodism
- Together they represent official doctrinal standards of the church.
 - To alter any part:
 - 3/4 vote from all Annual Conferences
 - 2/3 vote from General Conference

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Slide 24: Doctrine Changes

Within the Book of Discipline, there are several sections. The Articles of Religion and Confessions of Faith are two sections that make up the Fundamental Doctrine. These sections make up the "bedrock" of Methodism.

The two sections discuss our beliefs as a denomination and are very similar to other Christian denominations. For instance, Article I of the Articles of Religion covers our belief in the holy trinity – God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Changing any of these doctrines is VERY difficult process.

3/4 of all the Annual Conferences and Central Conferences must vote to amend. Then, the General Conference has to have a 2/3 vote to approve any changes.

Way Forward Task Force UMC Social Principles & Legislative

- HOW Petitions may be pre-submitted or introduced on the floor by delegates. Most legislation requires a simple majority vote to pass.
- WHO 600-1,000 Worldwide Delegates to the GENERAL CONFERENCE vote on all legislation.
- WHEN Every 4 years at the GENERAL CONFERENCE (unless the Council of Bishops calls a special session of the General Conference to address a specific issue like they did in 2019).

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Slide 25: Social Principles & Legislative

The Social Principles and Legislative Sections are the more flexible sections of the Book of Discipline. These are the sections of the book that are debated and voted on at General Conference every session. They are the portions of the Book of Discipline that will differ from General Conference to General Conference; and necessitates a new revision to the Book of Discipline after every General Conference.

HOW are these sections changed? Petitions are brought to the floor of the Conference. They are discussed and debated, and a vote takes place. A simple majority is usually required for change.

WHO changes these section? Delegates representing each Annual Conference and Central Conference throughout the world have a vote. Delegates are made up of Clergy and Lay Members

of the church and there is an equal number of each. Both Clergy and Lay Member delegates are elected at the Annual Conference level. And, to ensure that representation is complete, alternate delegates are elected to replace anyone who needs to miss the conference.

Way Forward Task Force UMC Apportionments & Finances

Apportionments

- Money paid by each church/charge conference to the UMC.
 Used by the Annual Conference and General Conferences to:
- Educational Efforts (private schools, seminaries, etc)
- Pastoral Care (education, training, insurance, etc)

Special Givings

- Disaster Relief (UMCOR)
- · Epworth
- · UMC Causes (mission work)

South Carolina apportionments are set at 10% of unrestricted income LUMC's yearly apportionments are about \$37,000

Slide 26: Apportionments & Finances

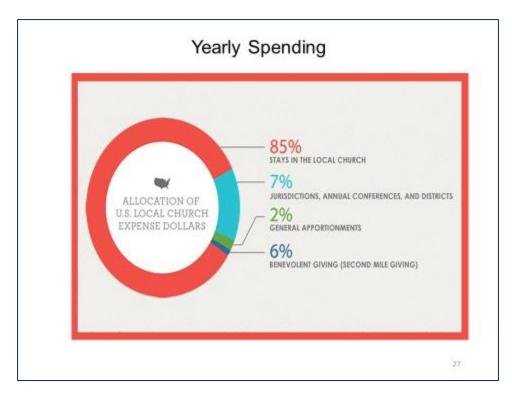
Now it's time for the money section of the talks. What are apportionments and how is the UMC funded?

Apportionments are the monies that each church or charge conference pays to the Annual Conference. Specially, this is the amount of money that Leesville UMC pays to the South Carolina Annual conference. You can view it as our church's tithe to the UMC.

A portion of this money is used at the Annual Conference level, and some is sent to the General Conference. At the Annual Conference Level, it is mostly used for local causes. We give money to local Methodist colleges (Spartanburg Methodist and Wofford) and private schools. We also give some to seminaries. Funding also goes to continuing education, training, and insurance for pastors. Special givings go to Disaster Relief like UMCOR. And, we send money to special UMC causes like Epworth Children's Home.

At the General Conference Level, funds are used similarly. We fund thirteen Methodist seminaries, a number of Historically Black Universities, and schools in poor countries. We also fund international Disaster Relief. We recently sent funds and supplies to earthquake damaged Haiti and Syria.

In South Carolina, our apportionments are calculated very simply. It is 10% of our unrestricted income. Any money that comes into the church and goes into our general fund is considered unrestricted and is used for the basis for apportionments. For Leesville UMC, our apportionments are about \$37,000 year.

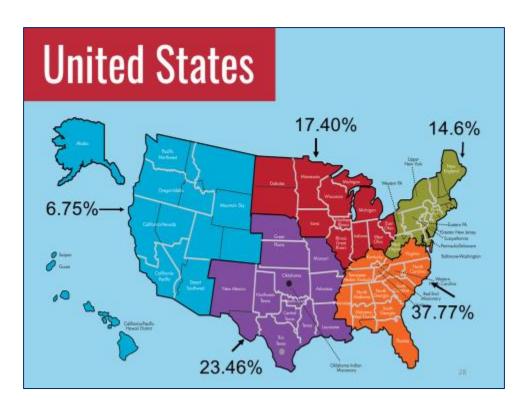


Slide 27: Yearly Spending

How is the local church's giving spent yearly? Nationally, the local church retains about 85% of its giving for local expenses. This includes church salaries, facilities maintenance, and local charities.

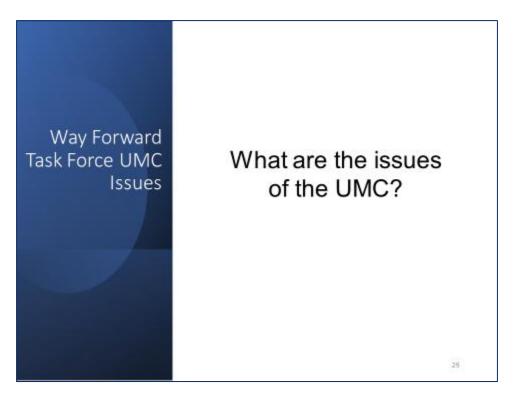
7% is used for annual conference and jurisdictional expenses. As mentioned in the previous slide, these expenses include state colleges and universities. 2% of the spending goes to the General Conference. This money is used for United Methodist Church organizational costs.

Finally, 6% of the money is to fund "second mile" programs. This is where funding for UMCOR is generated.



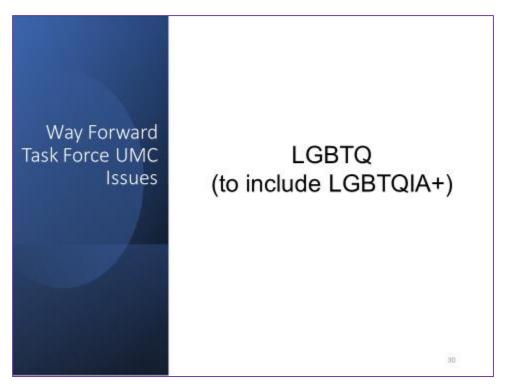
Slide 28: Jurisdictional Spending

The southeastern and south-central jurisdictions make up about 60% of the funding. Europe brings in some revenue ... and, Asia and Africa are usually net negative funding areas (they take more money than they give back). But, economically, that makes sense.



Slide 29: Issues

With all that being said the UMC is facing some concerns. What are the issues that we face in the UMC?

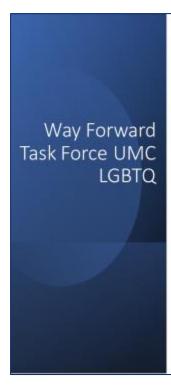


Slide 30: LGBTQ (to include LGBTQIA+)

LGBTQIA+ issues are the "headlines" that gets the most publicity today. For ease of presentation, we will refer to these as LGBTQ issues. We are not doing this to demean anyone or make anyone feel less important. It is simply for done for brevity.

But for everyone's clarification, LGBTQIA+ stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersexual, Asexual and the plus is for other categories that do not fit into these abbreviations (for example pansexual and non-binary). Also, the use of the word "queer" will be used interchangeably with any one of the LGBTQIA+ categories. This is done by the LGBTQ community ... and not meant to be a slur.

Also, we want to clarify some terms that will be used to describe churches in the UMC. The first is conservative or traditional. This a church that follows the current wording of the Book of Discipline. The second is liberal or progressive. This is a church that would like to be more inclusive of the participation of LGBTQ persons. These are not our terms. They are the terms used on the UMC Conference floor and are not meant to be derogatory in any way.



United Methodist Church adds wording to the Book of Discipline: "homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth, though we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian Doctrine

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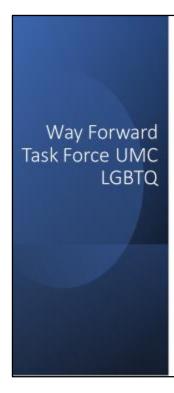
Slide 31: LGBTQ

The first mention of LGBTQ issues at General Conference was in 1972. So this is not a new issue.

In 1972, wording was adopted and added to the book of Discipline. Article IV was added stating that "homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth, though we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian doctrine."

In 1992, the General Conference voted to uphold the wording in the Book of Discipline

In 2000, the General Conference, again, voted to uphold the wording in the Book of Discipline.

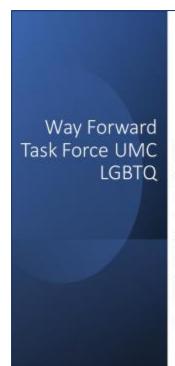


United Methodist Church adds wording to the Book of Discipline: "sexual relations are affirmed only within the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage.

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Slide 32: 2008 Book of Discipline Amended

In 2008, the General Conference added the following language ... "sexual relations are affirmed only within the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage." In other words, any sexual relations outside of a monogamous, heterosexual marriage, are not sanctioned. That does not only pertain to homosexual relations ... but it includes premarital sex, extra marital affairs, and polygamy.



Some Annual Conferences Voted to allow full inclusion of LGBTQ members and clergy. They were: Baltimore/Washington, California/Nevada, California/Pacific, Desert/Southeast, New England, New York, Northern Illinois, Virginia, Rocky Mountain, and Oregon/Idaho

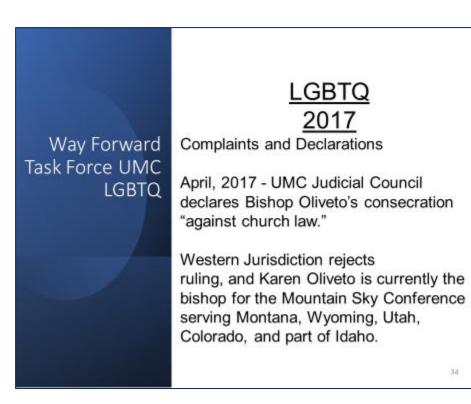
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Slide 33: 2016 Some conferences allowed full inclusion

In 2016, eleven Annual Conferences voted to allow full inclusion of LGBTQ members and clergy. Remember,

Annual Conferences cannot change the Book of Discipline. Therefore, these votes would be symbolic and would not take effect until, or even if, the General Conference made changes to the Book of Discipline.

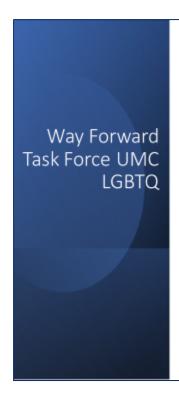
Also in 2016, the Western Jurisdiction elected Karen Oliveto as the first openly married lesbian UMC bishop.



Slide 34: Complaints and Declaration

Complaints about Karen Oliveto's election were immediately filed within the Western Jurisdiction and outside of it. Because of her self-avowed lifestyle, in April 2017, the UMC's Judicial Council declared Karen Oliveto's consecration as bishop "against church law". They also asked the Western Jurisdiction to remove her from office.

The Western Jurisdiction rejected the ruling, and she is currently still a Bishop for the Mountain Sky Conference serving Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and part of Idaho.



Because of the actions in 2016 and 2017, a special conference was called in 2019 to address all LGBTQ issues. There were three plans for moving forwarded presented at the conference.

The first would allow individual churches to decide if they would ordain LGBTQ clergy and allow same-sex marriages.

The second plan would split the UMC into three denominations based on different LGBTQ beliefs. All of which would report up to the General Conference and all would be part of the UMC.

The third plan, called the "traditional plan" would affirm the current language of the Book of Discipline and provide for stricter enforcement of current church laws. This plan was adopted on a 53-47 vote.

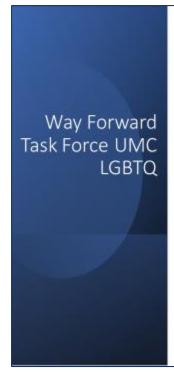
Slide 35: 2019

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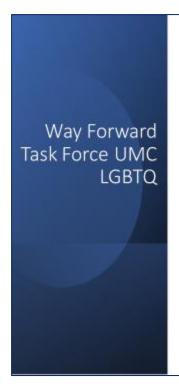


LGBTQ Paragraph 2553

For those churches that continued to disagree with the ruling, Paragraph 2553 was adopted to provide a path for those churches to leave the UMC with their property and members.

36

Slide 36: For those churches that continued to disagree with the ruling, Paragraph 2553 was adopted to provide a path for those churches to leave the UMC with their property and members.



Paragraph 2553 allows a church to leave the UMC after it has:

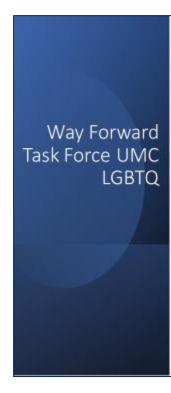
- Performed a vote in which 2/3 of the present members agree to leave
- Pays to its Annual Conference the required payments. These payments vary according to each annual conference. But, they are usually in the range of 10% of liquid assets, 10% of property value, any past due apportionments and an additional year of apportionments, and the remainder of pastor's salary and unsubsidized pensions.
- And the Annual Conference has to approve the exit. So technically, a church could do everything they need to do, and the Annual Conference deny the exit. This has been done in some Annual Conferences.

There is one caveat to Paragraph 2553 ... it has a "sunset" clause, which means it expires, on Dec 31st, 2023.

Slide 37: Paragraph 2553 allows a church to leave the UMC after it has:

- 1. Performed a vote in which 2/3 of the members that are present agree to leave
- 2. Pays to its Annual Conference the required payments. These payments vary according to each annual conference. But, they are usually in the range of 10% of liquid assets, 10% of property value, any past due apportionments and an additional year of apportionments, and the remainder of pastor's salary and unsubsidized pensions.
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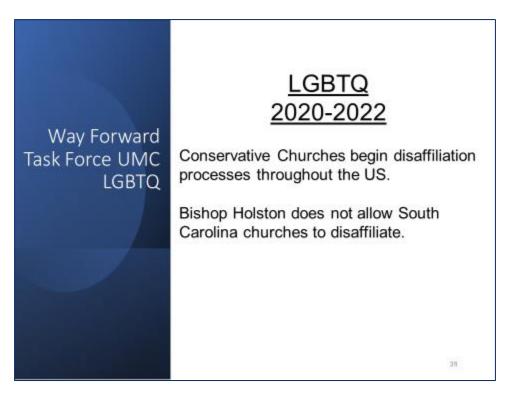
LGBTC 2020

Judicial Council Ruling 1442 allowed for any church to disaffiliate independent of reasons.

Slide 38: Paragraph 2553

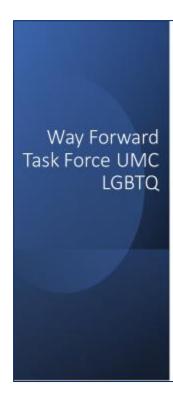
Remember ... 2553 was originally provided for churches that disagreed with the 2019 General Conference rulings. These would be liberal or progressive churches. But, those churches decided to stay and continue to push the UMC to change.

So, conservative/traditional churches decided to leave the UMC using the same Paragraph 2553 procedures. In 2020, the Judicial Council ruled that any church could disaffiliate from the UMC independent of the reasons. In other words, 2553 was not specifically contained to liberal/progressive churches.



Slide 39: Except SC

So, beginning in 2020, traditional/conservative churches began considering disaffiliation from the UMC. Except in South Carolina...... Bishop Holston stated that since South Carolina churches were not acting in opposition to the Book of Discipline, we were not eligible to disaffiliate under Paragraph 2553.



LGBTC 2022

December 19th, Bishop Holston allows South Carolina churches to separate from UMC via ¶2549.

Slide 40: Separation

That belief continued until December 19, 2022 when Bishop Holston released a letter explaining that South Carolina churches can separate from the UMC using a modified version of Paragraph 2549.

This is the process usually used to close a church that can no longer serve as a UMC facility (for instance: congregation dwindles or has to file bankruptcy). Bishop Holston's modified 2549 plan still requires a 2/3 vote of members present at the time of the vote to leave the UMC.

There are financial considerations similar to Paragraph 2553. It also requires a formal 30-day Discernment Period before a vote can take place and the Annual Conference has to approve the exit.

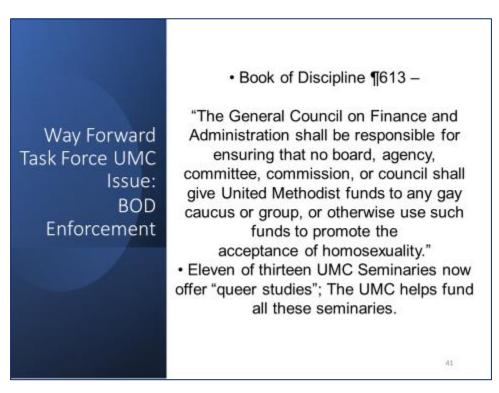
Because the Annual Conference has to approve the exit, Bishop Holston placed a deadline of March 1st, 2023 for any church that wanted to leave before the 2023 Annual Conference.

That left seventy-two days from announcement to deadline to accomplish everything.

What is the main difference between 2549 and 2553? 2553 is a transfer of property and members to another church. 2549 is only the transfer of property.

Members will need to refile membership with a new church. And, as mentioned earlier, 2553 has an expiration of December 31st, 2023.

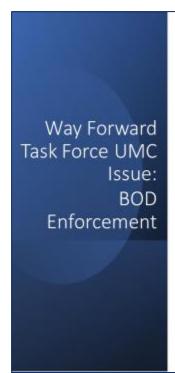
Paragraph 2549 does not expire. However, South Carolina's use of Holston's modified 2549 is available at his pleasure. He could close it at any time or continue to use it throughout his term. A new bishop could also choose to continue or close this option. Holston's term is currently scheduled to end of 2024.



Slide 41: BOD Enforcement/Paragraph 613

An additional concern for many UMC members has to do with the nonenforcement of the Book of Discipline. Many feel this is the root of issues within the church and that current struggles are simply results of this action. It has long been the tradition of the United Methodist Church that "we can all argue about anything. But we are duty bound to abide by the General Conference and therefore, the Book of Discipline."

It is the concern of many that this is no longer the rule. As mentioned in the timeline discussion of LGBTQ issues, there were a number of examples of the violations to the Book of Discipline that have been allowed to continue.

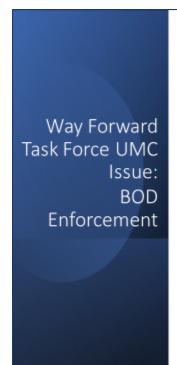


- Book of Discipline ¶304.3 –
 "Self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church."
- "Self-avowed practicing homosexual" is understood to mean that a person openly acknowledges to a bishop, district superintendent, district committee of ordained ministry, board of ordained ministry, or clergy session that the person is a practicing homosexual.

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Slide 42: Paragraph 304.3

Paragraph 304.3 states "Self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church." There are several recent incidents of violations to Paragraph 304.3. As mentioned previously, Karen Oliveto is a self-avowed married lesbian Bishop in the Western Jurisdiction who was elected back in 2016. The Western Jurisdiction also elected Cedrick Bridgeforth, an openly gay man, as Bishop in November of this past year.



Other Violations of Articles of Religion & Confession of Faith

- 2004 Bishop Joseph Sprague stated the "virgin birth was not intended to be a historical fact", he "believed in the resurrection of Jesus, but I cannot believe that his resurrection involved the resurrection of his physical body." He was cleared by a council of 4 UMC bishops of any violating church doctrine. Today he is a retired Bishop.
- 2015 Roger Wolsey proclaims in his patheos.com blog that "I don't believe that he's (Jesus) is God" and "Christianity is not the only way for humans to experience salvation." He is still a licensed minister in the UMC and director of the Wesley Foundation at UC Boulder.
- 2021 David Felton addressed a number of Christianity's most destructive ideas and why it's critical for them to be defused, disavowed and abandoned.
 "These obsolete and toxic notions included Hell, Satan, Original Sin, Omnipotence, Biblical Inerrancy and the need to be Born Again," He is still the pastor of The Fountain UMC in Phoenix, AZ.

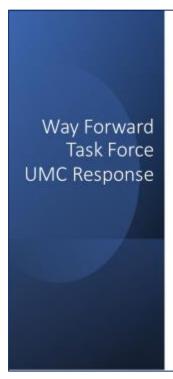
Slide 43: Other Violations of Articles of Religion & Confession of Faith

This is not a brand-new issue for the UMC. Going back almost 20 years, there are violations of church doctrine and law that have been allowed to stand.

In 2004, Bishop Joseph Sprague stated the "virgin birth was not intended to be a historical fact". He also said "I believe in the resurrection of Jesus, but I cannot believe that his resurrection involved the resurrection of his physical body." He was cleared by a council of four UMC bishops of any violation of church doctrine. Today he is a retired Bishop. This is important because Bishops are named for life. They continue to receive their salary after retirement. Bishop Sprague, in retirement, makes \$175k/yr.

In 2015, Roger Wolsey, a UMC pastor, proclaimed on his patheos.com blog that "I don't believe that he's (Jesus) is God" and "Christianity is not the only way for humans to experience salvation." His blog is still up and available to read. He is still a licensed minister in the UMC and director of the Wesley Foundation at UC Boulder.

• 2021 – David Felton addressed a number of Christianity's most destructive ideas and why it's critical for them to be defused, disavowed and abandoned. "These obsolete and toxic notions included Hell, Satan, Original Sin, Omnipotence, Biblical Inerrancy and the need to be Born Again,". He is still the pastor of The Fountain UMC in Phoenix, AZ. As mentioned previously, these violations have not spawned any effort to change the Fundamental Doctrines of the church. And, they are individual incidents.



Complaint processes, by design, are confidential. The intention is to protect the integrity and dignity of all parties involved from the beginning of a case to its conclusion.

You may not hear that a complaint was filed, a particular case is proceeding, or even, necessarily, how it was resolved.

That does not mean that nothing was done. It means that if a complaint was filed, the case is proceeding with the confidentiality all parties deserve.

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Slide 44: UMC Response

And, as a response to these violations and others, the UMC states "complaint processes, by design, are confidential. The intention is to protect the integrity and dignity of all parties involved from the beginning of a case to its conclusion.

You may not hear that a complaint was filed, a particular case is proceeding, or even, necessarily, how it was resolved. That does not mean that nothing was done. It means that if a complaint was filed, the case is proceeding with the confidentiality all parties deserve."

Way Forward Task Force Control of Apportionment Spending

- Current Apportionment money is being distributed to organizations that act contrary to the Book of Discipline.
- 11 Methodist Seminaries are currently in violation of ¶613 - \$10.5M/yr
- Connectional Table lobbies UMC Bishops to pass LGBTQ legislation -\$15.7M/yr
- UMC Commission on the Status and Role of Woman (aka CoSRoW) CEO, Dawn Hare, pushed for 2019 amendment to allow for polygamous marriage. -\$1M/yr.

Slide 45: Issue 3: Controlled Apportionment Spending

The third issue concerning United Methodist today is control of Apportionment Spending. As you may remember, Apportionments are sent the Annual Conference from each church. Once that money has left the local church, the Conference determines how the money is spent. The only influence on spending is our representatives to the Annual Conference placing a vote for the local church. Dr. Armstrong and David Giesen are our current representatives. Today, there are organizations that the UMC help fund that are contrary to UMC Doctrine and Law.

As previously mentioned, we send about \$10.5M/yr to 11 seminaries that have curriculums in contradiction to the Book of Discipline.

Connectional Table is a group, within the UMC, that is tasked to articulate the vision of the UMC. This is not a violation of any church law. In fact, it is a great idea to have a group that can help spread the message of Christianity and Methodism. However, they also fund a lobbying group to lobby UMC bishops for LGBTQ causes. So, we as a church fund a lobbying group that lobbies our own bishops. We give Connectional Table about \$16M/yr. And, Dane Hare, the CEO of the UMC's Commission on the Status and Role of Women pushed for a 2019 amendment at the Special Conference to allow for polygamous marriages. Her group gets about \$1M/yr.



Slide 46: Annual Conference Spending

As for the specific spending of the South Carolina Annual Conference: The largest expenses for SC's annual conference are administrative costs. The annual conference spends about 70% on administration for the state. We spend another 16% on state colleges, campus ministries, and scholarships. 6% is used for new church development. Just under 5% is used for pastoral and laity education. And 2.5 % is used for missions.

Way Forward Task Force UMC Trust Clause

¶2501 requires that all properties of the United Methodist local churches and other United Methodist agencies and institutions are held, in trust, for the benefit of the entire denomination, and ownership and usage of the church property is subject to the Discipline.

- Originally meant to be a "safeguard" for churches that fail (protect cemeteries, histories, documents, etc.)
- LUMC purchases property, constructs buildings, and maintains property.
- SCUMC has ultimate authority in decisions of property.

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Slide 47: UMC Trust Clause

The final issue is the UMC Trust Clause. Paragraph 2501 "requires that all properties of the United Methodist local churches and other United Methodist agencies and institutions are held, in trust, for the benefit of the entire denomination, and ownership and usage of the church property is subject to the Discipline."

- A version of the trust clause has been in every Methodist Book of Discipline since 1864. It was originally meant as a safeguard for failing churches. Some feel that the clause is now being used punitively for churches that do not agree with the trajectory of the UMC.
- The way the trust clause works is that local churches procure land, build structures, and maintain properties and facilities with local money. However, the UMC has final say on any changes to the property.

A question may be asked - "can the UMC take your church?" The answer to that question is "yes". It is very rarely done. But, the trust clause was recently used in Jonesboro, AR by the Arkansas Annual Conference to seize control of church property after a church voted to leave. The Annual Conference deemed the vote improper, suspended the pastor, and seized the property. We are not judging whether the justification for the seizure

was warranted or not ... We are simply stating that the trust clause was used to seize the property.



Future of the UMC Direction 1

- The 2024 General Conference will address all of the issues mentioned in this presentation.
- A definitive decision on LGBTQ inclusion will be made that satisfies both sides of the argument.
- The Book of Discipline will be upheld according to the decisions made at 2024 General Conference.
- Either way, an exit procedure will be developed for those churches that disagree with the UMC after 2024.

Direction 2

- The 2024 General Conference will agree with one side of the LGBTQ argument and leave the other side dissatisfied.
- The Book of Discipline will remain unenforced to appease the opposing side of the LGBTQ argument.
- If an exit plan is allowed after 2024, it may involve significant financial impacts

Slide 48: What's Next?

What is next for the UMC?

In order to answer this question, it will involve speculation. But, this is what we know for now ... and maybe it will help you decide the most likely course for the future.

There are 2 thoughts on the future of the UMC.

The first thought says that the 2024 General Conference will address all the issues and allow for a peaceful, non-monetary exit if you still don't agree with the outcome of General Conference.

The second thought says that the 2024 General Conference will agree with one side of the argument for LGBTQ inclusion and alienate the other. Any exit plan that is presented will require significant financial impacts.

As mentioned, picking between the 2 viewpoints is speculation. But, we do have one indication of the possible stance that will be taken by the UMC at the 2024 General Conference. At the 5 Jurisdictional meetings that took place in November 2022, there were 3 resolutions that were passed by all 5 jurisdictions.

Way Forward Task Force Jurisdictional Resolutions

Three resolutions were passed at all 5 jurisdictional meetings in November 2022.

- "Leading with Integrity" Any member of a church that has voted to disaffiliate from the UMC should recuse themselves from leadership roles in the UMC.
- "Justice and Empowerment of LGBTQ People" The resolution urges the SEJ to support LGBTQ
 people, affirm a moratorium on lawsuits and
 complaints surrounding sexual orientation, and not
 pursue (or resolve complaints in a non-punitive
 and just manner) against bishops around their
 sexual orientation or who officiate LGBTQ
 weddings, and support elections of bishops who
 uphold this.
- "A US Regional Conference" Expedite the process to separate the US Jurisdictions from Central Conferences.

Slide 49: Three Resolutions

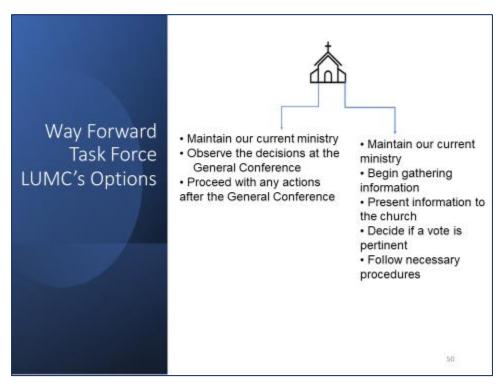
The first resolution asked for conference member of churches that have decided to leave the UMC to recuse themselves from leadership roles in the UMC. Remember, a church has not officially left the UMC until the Annual Conference approves it. So, even though a local church may have voted to leave the UMC, it is still a member until that final step is taken by the Annual Conference. Therefore, until a church is formally dismissed, representation for that church remains.

The second resolution asked for the full inclusion of LGBTQ people into UMC membership and clergy. It also asked for the legalization of LGBTQ weddings and the non-punitive resolution to any outstanding lawsuits toward clergy involving sexual orientation. "Lawsuits" in this statement is not a US court-based lawsuit. It is referring to the internal process of handling disputes within the UMC.

The final resolution asked to expedite a separation of the US Jurisdictions from the International Central Conferences. Remember, the US Jurisdictions and the Central Conferences are what make up the General Conference. This would essentially make the US a stand-alone division of the UMC. Since the international Central Conferences usually lean conservative, this would shift the General Conference to a more progressive viewpoint. This resolution is commonly referred to as the

Christmas Covenant and until recently has been overwhelmingly rejected by international churches.

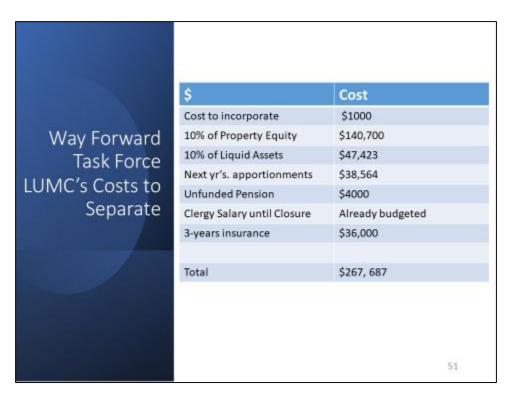
Everyone should know that these resolutions are non-binding. They do not carry any weight toward laws or regulations within the UMC. However, they are usually an indicator for legislation that will be presented and voted on at the next General Conference.



Slide 50: LUMC's Options

Now that we have discussed the issues within the UMC, what are LUMC's options?

- The first option is to maintain ministry as we are, while continuing to learn and observe decisions made through the General Conference process. That is the option that a lot of churches have made.
- The second option is what LUMC has done so far. We began a process of gathering information and determining if we would like to pursue leaving the UMC. If we decide that the current situation does not warrant a vote, then we continue to watch the UMC and revisit the question later. If we decide that the current situation is unmanageable and we should conduct a vote to leave, then we have to follow the steps set in Bishop Holston's process.



Slide 51: LUMC's Costs

If LUMC decided to pursue a vote, one of the biggest questions is how much would it cost? Based on the formulas set forth in Bishop Holston's process to separate:

- It costs about \$1000 to incorporate as a new entity.
- We have to pay 10% of our property equity. We have an appraisal of \$1,407,000 in property. 10% of that would be \$140,700
- We have to pay 10% of liquid assets. We have about \$474,234 in liquid assets. 10% of that would be \$47,423.
- We have to pay any unpaid apportionments and an additional year's apportionments. LUMC always pays 100% of our apportionments. So we would only owe the additional year. Next year's apportionments would be another \$38,564.
- Unfunded Pensions would be about \$4000
- Clergy Salary is not included as we have that line item in our budget anyway.
- 3-year insurance requirements comes to about \$36,000.

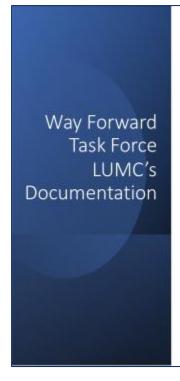
Total needed to pay the Annual Conference would be around \$267,687.

Pastor · Chose denomination we would join ... if any A permanent pastor will be determined · Retired pastors may need to transfer to another UMC church. Way Forward Laity Development and Training Task Force · SPPRC, Lay Leaders, and Lay Speakers LUMC's Staff **UMC Groups** and Support We would lose association with United Methodist Women and Men, and UMCOR **UMC Financial Support** Lose emergency UMC Financial Support We could possibly owe apportionments at another denomination

Slide 52: LUMC's Staff and Support Groups

Once we determine a denomination to join (if any), a permanent pastor would be determined. And, any retired pastors in our congregation would need to make a choice of whether to stay with the UMC or not. If the choice is to remain UMC, then they would transfer to another UMC church.

Denominational choices will also influence laity development. For instance, the UMC gives extensive training options for SPPRC members, lay speakers, and lay leaders. We could also lose association to United Methodist Women and Men. Our participation with UMCOR could be affected also. And, we would no longer have the assured financial support of the UMC in case of emergencies. This support became imperative in the recent lawsuits filed against the Boy Scouts. Each UMC church was completely supported legally and financially though the process by the United Methodist Church.



- Send a list to UMC documenting any professing member that did not vote or voted "no".
- Provide digital copies of membership rolls, meeting minutes, historical documents, and funeral, cemetery, and wedding documents to UMC.
- Determine a new Church Name (cannot use UMC in anyway)
- Cease using UMC logo in any publications (website, church sign, bulletins, etc.)
- Transfer any debt/deeds to new church Name
- · File for new tax exemption for new Entity
- · Update all insurance to new Entity

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Slide 53: Documentation

- Send a list to UMC documenting any professing member that did not vote or voted "no".
- Provide digital copies of membership rolls, meeting minutes, historical documents, and funeral, cemetery, and wedding documents to UMC.
- Determine a new Church Name (cannot use UMC in anyway)
- Cease using UMC logo in any publications (website, church sign, bulletins, etc.)
- Transfer any debt/deeds to new church name
- File for new tax exemption for new entity
- Update all insurance to new entity

There is also documentation that we have to provide to the Annual Conference.

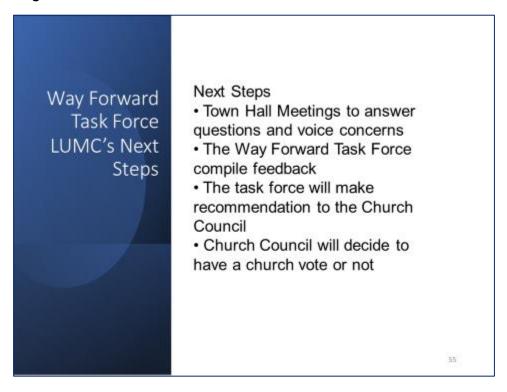
	UNITED METHICOST CHURCH	GLOBAL METHICOST CHURCH	PREE MITHORIST CHURCH	INCEPTINGENT METHODEST/NETWORK	METHODOST COLLEGATE CHURCH	NOUNCET NETWORKS
CHARCH DOCTORE	CURRENT BOOK OF DISCHLARE	TRANSTIONAL BOOK OF SOCTIMES & DOCUMES IN OFFICE WITH THE COMMISSION OF THE GLOBAL MICHIGANIC PROPERTY OF THE GROWN OF THE	PRES METHODOST CHARGO HALLITS CHAR RIGOR OF CHICPILINE	MASE ON SIME DOCKEME/S-BOLODY CARRENTY FOLLOWIS COMMICTIVITY	TRANSPORTAL BOOK NETH LIMITED REQUAL FOR HIGH FOR ALL OWNERS. ACCEPT ROOK OF DISCRIME	NOTHING HT
CURRENT CHURCH STRUCTURE/ GOVERNANCE	BS-KOPS-APPOINTED FOR LIFE; AVAILAE CONFERENCES	-PEMERSHOPS -PRESONG EDRES OVER LOCAL CHARDRES	THREE RESIDES ELECTED EVERY 4 YEARS	GOVERNES BY DISTING CHURCH STADERSHIP	AUTONOMOUS CHURCHES/LAMTED NUMBER OF BISHOPS	ROPENDENT CHURCHES LINESS THROUGH A NETWORK
APORTOMENTS	FORMULA SET DE ANNUAL CONFERENCE -SEN DE UNRESTRICTED RECORPES	6.5 % OF OPERATING INCOME	CAPPLE AT \$180,000	MONE	LIMITED APPORTORMENTS	NOTHING YET
CHURCH PROPERTY	HELD ON TRUST FOR THE UNIC	BELDNES TO LOCAL CHURCH	MAY BELONG TO LOCAL CHURCH	BILONGS TO LOCAL CHURCH	BELONGS TO LOCAL CHURCH	BELONGS TO LOCAL CHURCH
PASTORAL PLACEMENT	DECOED BY BISHOP WITH INPUT FROM PROFOR AND CONGRESATION	DECOED BY BISHOP/PRESONG SIDER WITH INPUT FROM CONGRESIATION	DECIDED BY COMPRENCE AND LOCAL CHURCH	LOCALORINO	LDOLOURON	LDCOL CHURCH
MONBERS	10,000 O URCHES	1,100 CHURCHES	900 O URCHES	40 OURCHES	2000065	5400048

Slide 54: Denomination Options

If we were to choose to leave, we could align with another denomination or chose to remain independent. In regard to denomination options, this is a list of available Methodist Options and how they compare to each other. The first column is the current UMC.

- The next column shows the Global Methodist Church. The GMC is a traditional denomination started in May 2022 from churches that disaffiliated from the UMC. The GMC is currently operating from a transitional Book of Discipline. Their apportionments are currently capped at a smaller amount than the UMC and there is no trust clause. There are about 1100 churches in this denomination ... and it is growing.
- The third column is the Free Methodist Church. This a branch of Methodism that started back in 1860. They do have a trust clause but it is not mandatory. It only has about 900 churches.
- Independent Methodist is just that ... a standalone Methodist Church. The local church is responsible for everything ... financials, pastor search, leadership, etc.
- Methodist Collegiate Church just started and has 2 churches White's Chapel and First Methodist Carrolton, TX

• Foundry Networks – Another Methodist denomination in its infancy. There are 5 large churches that have founded it.



Slide 55: Next Steps

What are the next steps for LUMC?

We have Town Hall meetings that will give the congregation a chance to ask questions regarding this information session and for the task force to address questions that were not covered at today's meeting.

The task force will then compile feedback from the church and prepare a recommendation to the Church Council

The task force will then present the recommendation to the Church Council at an appointed meeting.

And, the Church Council will make a final decision if a church vote is appropriate or not.

Based on the decisions of the Church Council, LUMC will follow the steps set forth in this presentation.

Thank you for attending this morning. You may submit your questions for the Town Hall meeting via Google Forms and/or question forms available in the Fellowship Hall Foyer and the podium outside of the sanctuary.