



# Wesleyan Covenant Association

Alabama - West Florida Chapter

## 2022 Q1 Update

### UPDATE ON UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE

For the third year in a row, the 2020 General Conference of the United Methodist Church has been postponed.

- In 2020 and 2021, the General Conference was postponed for health concerns due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. This year, the General Commission on the General Conference has postponed due to visa access for international delegates. This decision has been deeply controversial, but in the end, we have to abide by the decision. This means that the much anticipated "Protocol" that would have allowed for an amicable separation will not have a chance for a vote in 2022 or 2023.
- That said, we are joining with hundreds of thousands of other pastors, laity, and like minded orthodox churches to move forward with a process of withdrawal / disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church and align with the Global Methodist Church (GMC).

### WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFO ON THE GMC?

To learn more about the Global Methodist Church go to [globalmethodist.org](http://globalmethodist.org). You can read the entire Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline. We strongly suggest that you sign up to receive the email newsletter, as the GMC has sought to be fully transparent in every decision that it has made.

### WHEN WILL THE GMC BEGIN?

The Global Methodist Church will officially launch on May 1, 2022

### HOW CAN A CHURCH DEPART THE UMC?

**There are four ways a local church can depart the United Methodist Church and join the GMC according to the United Methodist Book of Discipline:**

1. **Disaffiliation under ¶2553** requiring at least two year's apportionments and the church's pro rata share of unfunded pension liability plus other requirements. This must be completed by December 31, 2023.
2. **Withdrawal under ¶2548.2** allowing a local UMC to essentially move from the UMC to an evangelical denomination like the GMC. A comity agreement must be approved between the local church, the GMC, and the Annual Conference (Bishop/Cabinet, District Board of Church Location & Building, and Annual Conference meeting).
3. **Closure under ¶2549** where the local church will close and then could negotiate to purchase its real estate/assets.
4. **Depart the UMC and refuse to turn over assets** under the trust clause with the understanding that a lawsuit will likely ensue (We believe this is the option of last resort and potentially the most expensive).

## SHOULD WE WAIT UNTIL 2024 TO LEAVE?

We no longer have confidence that the Protocol will pass at the 2024 General Conference. By that time, four years will have passed since it was negotiated.

During those four years, we will have been through a presidential election, two congressional elections, a years-long global pandemic, and multiple world crises. Moreover, several of the major conveners of the group that negotiated the Protocol, including Bishop John Yambasu, have died.

Additionally, ¶2553 will sunset on December 31, 2023 – before the General Conference convenes. There is no assurance that the 2024 General Conference would approve such a measure again. The longer your local church waits, the riskier it becomes.

## PROCESS FOR CLERGY TO TRANSFER TO THE GMC

Currently or formerly licensed or ordained United Methodist Clergy may transfer to the Global Methodist Church. Clergy should not withdraw their credentials from The UMC until they speak with a representative from the WCA or GMC.

WCA Vice President for Clergy and Church Relations, Angela Pleasants, is working on a simple process for clergy to transfer. As that process becomes available, we will share it.

The GMC's Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline covers accepting clergy under ¶417 which can be read at [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org).

Clergy retirement accounts will continue to remain at Wespath. All balances from the legacy plans (Pre-82, MPP, CRSP) will continue to grow (or decline) as the markets fluctuate. On the day the clergyperson becomes a GMC pastor, they will automatically be enrolled in the new GMC retirement plan.

## WHAT ARE MY NEXT STEPS?

Much of this information has just come to light in the past few weeks. Our leadership is working tirelessly with the Global WCA council and other fellow chapters to recommend the best ways forward.

For now - we encourage churches to educate themselves on the current state of the United Methodist Church and more importantly, the Global Methodist Church. Our leadership is available to you. Please contact us and we would love to come and share with your local congregation and help answer any questions that you have.

We hope to have answers and a detailed guide to local churches that wish to depart the UMC in the coming weeks/months. There is much work to be done in the coming future, especially through the passage of important resolutions at the Annual Conference session this summer.

Our goal in this process is to make sure that churches and clergy who would like to align with the Global Methodist Church are able to do so as quickly and as affordably as possible so the mission of both the Global Methodist Church and the United Methodist Church can move forward.