



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why has the General Conference been postponed yet again to May 2024?

That's a great question, and the General Commission on the General Conference has given reasons for their decision with which we strongly disagree that have to do with visa availability and COVID-19. In the end, it really doesn't matter. We have to abide by the decision. That said, we are no longer willing to let the Council of Bishops and Commission on the General Conference have influence over the destiny of our movement. That is why the Global Methodist Church launched on May 1, 2022 and began allowing local churches to depart The United Methodist Church and align with the GMC.

2. Where can I find out more information about the Global Methodist Church?

To learn more about the Global Methodist Church go to [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org). You can read the entire Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline on that website. Additionally, the names of the members of the Transitional Leadership Council are published as well as other information. We strongly suggest that you sign up to receive the email newsletter, Crossroads, that is sent out frequently. The GMC has tried to be fully transparent in everything it has done. Please check out the FAQ section on the website for many forms and processes.

3. What are the ways that a local church can depart The UMC and join the Global Methodist Church?

There are three ways a local church can depart The UMC and join the GMC:

- Disaffiliation under ¶2553 requiring at least two year's apportionments and the church's pro rata share of unfunded pension liability plus other requirements
  - Closure under ¶2549 where the local church will close and then could negotiate to purchase its real estate/assets
  - Depart The UMC using a joint legal strategy coordinated by your WCA regional chapter.
4. What is the difference between ¶2553 that allows for disaffiliation and ¶2548.2 which allows for withdrawal and alignment with another evangelical church?

Paragraph 2553 was added to *The Book of Discipline* by the special-called 2019 General Conference. It was known as the "Taylor Disaffiliation Petition." Although it passed, it was not the favored legislation by the WCA. The WCA favored the "Boyette Disaffiliation

Petition.” The Boyette Petition had far less onerous provisions to it. To read ¶2553, you must go to the following website because a new *Book of Discipline* has not been published: <https://www.umofficialresources.com/updates/15/book-of-discipline-addendum-and-errata-december-2019>. Paragraph 2553 also “sunsets” on December 31, 2023.

Paragraph 2584.2 has existed in *The Book of Discipline* since 1948. While 2548.2 provided some hope for local churches to depart The UMC with the ability to handle pension liabilities in a creative fashion (i.e. promissory note or long-term letter of credit), the Council of Bishops has recently asked the Judicial Council for a declaratory decision essentially invalidating the paragraph. While we strongly believe 2548.2 is a viable option, we believe it’s likely the Judicial Council will rule in favor of the Council of Bishops.

5. Can you explain what the unfunded pension liabilities are all about?

It gets complicated quickly. The United Methodist Church has multiple retirement plans. The current plan is called the Clergy Retirement Security Plan or CRSP. Prior to its inception, there was the Pre-82 Plan and the Ministerial Pension Plan. On a funded bases, most, if not all, annual conferences are fully funded or over-funded. On a much more conservative market basis (which assumes a catastrophic, worst-case scenario), all annual conferences are under-funded. The Book of Discipline requires the annual conference to use the most onerous market bases calculation. Each annual conference apportions the liabilities in a different manner. You should contact the Conference Treasurer to learn your church’s amount. The Global Methodist Church’s new retirement plan, the Covenant Plan, is a defined contribution plan and will never create unfunded liabilities.

6. If the pastor of our church won’t allow the church council to begin the process of disaffiliation, can the laity do so? If our pastor doesn’t move to the GMC, how will we get a new one?

Yes! Paragraph 248 of *The Book of Discipline* allows 10% of the professing membership of a local church to call a church conference by sending a petition with signed names to the District Superintendent. The reason for the church conference must be stated: to inform the Annual Conference that our church intends to begin the disaffiliation process under ¶2553 of the Book of Discipline. This will only start the process. Later there will have to be another meeting to officially vote to disaffiliate.

If a local church’s pastor does not follow them to the Global Methodist Church, the bishop, president pro tempore, or presiding elder for the local church’s GMC provisional conference or district will appoint a new clergy person for their church. The GMC’s Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline guarantees that local churches and their pastors that transfer together will stay together. We want as few pastoral moves as possible during the transition period before the first General Conference.

7. Why shouldn't we just wait until the General Conference meets in 2024 and see if the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation passes?

We no longer have confidence that the Protocol will pass at the 2024 General Conference. Recently, progressive signers of the Protocol, as well as all of the progressive endorsing organizations, have withdrawn their support. It is highly unlikely that it will pass the next General Conference. 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. The worst option is waiting for General Conference 2024.

8. What is process for clergy to transfer to the Global Methodist Church?

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 GMC. GMC Clergy and Church Relations Officer, Angela Pleasants, is working hard handling all of the many clergy and churches seeking to transfer. The process and forms to transfer are available on the FAQ section of the GMC's website which can be read at [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org). Clergy retirement accounts will continue to remain at Wespath. How balances from legacy plans (Pre-82, MPP, CRSP) are handled depends on your clergy status. Full connection elders and deacons are handled one way with all other clergy handled another. On the day the clergyperson becomes a GMC pastor, they will automatically be eligible in the new GMC retirement plan called The Covenant Plan.

9. What will change if our church joins the Global Methodist Church?

There will be some differences, and we believe that they are all good! The Global Methodist Church will be leaner and less complex. For example, the GMC Book of Doctrines and Discipline is 103 pages. The UMC Book of Discipline is 898 pages! There will be less infrastructure and overhead to support with apportionments. That will mean local churches will retain more money to be used to make disciples of Jesus that worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly. Local churches will have much more control over how they organize. The ordination process will be simpler and allow qualified clergy to be ordained much faster. There will be no trust clause allowing local churches to fully own their property.

10. I've heard that the Global Methodist Church will have an appointment system that will allow churches to have a veto over who their pastor is. I'm afraid that will keep women and persons of color from ever getting appointed. Is that true?

No! This was one of the important decisions reached at the meeting that led to the formation of the Global Methodist Church. The appointment system in the Global Methodist Church will be similar to the current system. The new system, however, does

give churches and clergy guaranteed and enhanced consultation in the process with the right to request reconsideration. The GMC will have a strong commitment to female clergy and clergy of color.

11. Will bishops continue to be elected for life in the Global Methodist Church? Will the GMC have district superintendents?

Bishops will be elected for a term of years. At the end of their term, bishops will either return to the local church or elect senior status (retirement). Former bishops may retain the title “bishop emeritus” and be addressed as “bishop.” The Global Methodist Church will have district superintendents. They will be called presiding elders, but they will have similar duties to current DSes.

12. I’ve heard that the Global Methodist Church will not have a status for licensed local pastors. Is that true?

We have wonderful news for local pastors! Local pastors, depending on their educational level (Course of Study, Bachelor’s or Master’s Degrees), will transition into the Global Methodist Church as either ordained deacons or elders. For a complete list of the educational requirements for ordination, we encourage you to go to [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org) and click on the link to read the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline. Scroll down to paragraph 407. You can also click on the FAQ section and read the helpful information contained there.

13. If our church leans towards being traditionalists, but our pastor leans towards being a progressive, what should we do?

The decision to align with the Global Methodist Church ultimately lies with the church members – not the pastor. If your pastor chooses to remain with The UMC, she or he will be appointed to a new church once your congregation aligns with the GMC. We encourage you to treat your pastor with love, grace, and respect. We also encourage you to follow Jesus’ teaching from the Sermon on the Mount to be clear and forthright with your clergy. (Matthew 5:33-37) If your clergy person insists on lobbying the church to remain with The UMC, respectfully request equal time to share the advantages of joining the GMC. Please feel free to contact the WCA regional chapter for guidance.

14. What should I do if I’m a traditionalist, but my church votes to remain with The UMC?

In this case, you have a hard decision to make. You must decide if you can remain with your church or if you want to find a new one. We encourage you to pray to God for discernment. We are happy to help you figure out what Global Methodist Churches would be closest to you. Lastly, if there are enough traditionalist laity in your church that might be interested in starting a new church or merging with a like-minded group from another

church in a similar situation, then please let us know! We will pass along that information to the Global Methodist Church.

15. If I have further questions, where can I go for answers?

There are multiples places you can go.

1. We encourage you to contact our chapter president. S/he can be reached at **[Insert Phone]** or **[Insert email]** S/he's always glad to talk with you.
2. The website for the Global Methodist Church is [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org). Be sure to check out the FAQ section and read the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline*.
3. We encourage you to "like" our Facebook page. We post updates frequently. You can search for it under: **[insert identifying information for regional chapter]**.
4. Our regional website is a great place to find current information. You will find it at **[insert regional chapter website]**.
5. The website for the global WCA is [www.wesleyan covenant.org](http://www.wesleyan covenant.org).