

Dear Hope Community,

As many of you know, The United Methodist Church has been in a state of conflict since 1972 over the concepts in the Book of Discipline that refer to aspects of the life in the Church of homosexuals (and others in the LGBTQ+ community).

Over the last few years, both the progressives and traditionalists of the Church have been working on ways to either: live together with different understandings, or to split along ideological concepts. The options would be discussed and acted upon at the 2022 General Conference of the world-wide United Methodist Church.

The United Methodist Church decided that, given the state of the world in regard to the pandemic and world travel restrictions, it would postpone the General Conference to 2024. As a result of that decision, the theologically conservative Methodist clergy and laity, known as the Transitional Leadership Council announced that the Global Methodist Church would be launched on May 1, 2022.

In response to that announcement, the Mountain Sky Conference sent out a memo asking the governing bodies of the churches in the conference let them know by June 15 if their church wanted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church this year.

Disaffiliation is the process by which a church leaves the denomination and joins another established denomination or becomes independent. The Trustees of the Mountain Sky Conference have now approved a procedure for disaffiliation. It has several steps that each church must complete and involves monetary obligations that the church must meet before it can disaffiliate.

The first step in the process is for the governing body of a church to decide if it wants to explore the disaffiliation process. At Hope, the governing body is the Church Council. The members of the Church Council, after careful discernment and listening to those parishioners who chose to let their opinions be known, did vote on whether or not to explore disaffiliation.

On Wednesday May 18, 2022, the Church Council of Hope United Methodist Church voted unanimously not to explore the process of disaffiliation. Which, in plain English, means that at this time Hope intends to stay in The United Methodist Church.

If you have questions about the process or anything related to the stand that the Church Council took, do not stay silent, please reach out to us.

Respectfully,

Patti Jo Oakley, Chair Church Council,  
Brent Motz, Brian Dixon, Chris Wiant, Cindy Wiant, Clyde Oakley, Herb Casner, Jan Petro, Jane Uylaki, Kari Motz, Linda Brooks, Nancy Duncan, Neill Kipp, Pam Lee, Pat Lozier, Scott Senter, Stan Hodgson, True Morgan, Reverend Lin Cheek, Reverend Ken Daniell.

## FAQ

- ***What is the process of disaffiliation?***

Disaffiliation does not become official until:

- 1) Church Council votes to begin the process by a simple majority vote;
- 2) The District Superintendent and Bishop are notified of the church's intent;
- 3) Financial information is given to the church regarding what monies are owed by the church to the Conference;
- 4) Paperwork is submitted regarding church inventory and buildings and grounds appraisal and tax assessments;
- 5) An All-Church Conference is called where all members present would vote on disaffiliation. 2/3 of the members of the church must be present and a 2/3 majority vote of those members is required;
- 6) Negotiation begins between the church and the Conference Board of Trustees to come to an agreement regarding property;
- 7) Payment is made by the church to the Conference, per the financial agreement;
- 8) Finally, it is voted upon at our Annual Conference, needing a simple majority vote of all members present.

- ***What is the cost of disaffiliation?***

The cost is negotiated between the local church representatives and the Mountain Sky Conference, and is different for each church, depending upon debt, liens, endowments, monies owed to the conference, etc.

- ***Why is this happening so fast?***

The business portion of our 2022 Mountain Sky Annual Conference will take place in October, so in order to disaffiliate this year, especially for those churches that wish to join the Global Methodist Church, the process needed to begin rather quickly. Of course, any church may disaffiliate at any time, but for this year, the Disaffiliation Form needed to be submitted by 6/15 and support documents turned in by 6/30.

- ***How many churches have disaffiliated?***

According to United Methodist News, 150 churches have already left the UMC to join the Global Methodist Church (GMC). Out of over 30,500 churches in the US, that is less than 1%. We do not know how many will leave in the future.

- *Does the congregation get a vote?*

The first step was taken by the Church Council, who, on behalf of Hope Church, voted to remain UMC. If Church Council had decided to explore disaffiliation, then the congregation would have needed to vote.

- *What if I don't agree with this decision?*

Please tell us!! Nothing is set in stone and we may revisit this subject later if we feel there is a need.

- *What will the UMC be like after the split?*

Our Mountain Sky Conference (MSC) will be free to ordain clergy that are called and found fit regardless of sexual orientation, and all clergy will be free to perform same sex weddings without fear of reprisal, just as we are doing now in the MSC. The process of revising our Book of Discipline so that it reflects a fully inclusive Church will probably take a few years.