

The Book of Discipline (the doctrine and organizational rules of the United Methodist Church), has two paragraphs cited if a congregation wishes to leave the denomination: paragraph 2553 and paragraph 2548.2 ¹.

The motion of the Leadership Team of Marysville First United Methodist to disaffiliate from the United Methodist church will reference paragraph 2553.

What is the difference?

- **Paragraph 2548.2** has been in the BOD for many decades. It allows the Bishop and District Superintendents to deed church property to another Methodist or evangelical denomination.
- **Paragraph 2553** was added to the BOD at the Special 2019 General Conference. The purpose of the Special Conference was to permanently settle the UMC disputes regarding human sexuality (which failed). As such, the new paragraph allows disaffiliation from the UMC specifically citing the deep divisions in our denomination regarding human sexuality and “the **actions or inactions** of its annual conference related to these issues” and allows congregations to keep their property (i.e. Graceful Exit).
 - Theologically traditional churches may chose to disaffiliate because of the Bishops inaction in upholding the current Book of Discipline’s stance on human sexuality
 - Theologically progressive churches may chose to disaffiliate because of disagreement over the Book of Discipline’s traditional interpretation of human sexuality

If our clergy and Leadership Team cite 7 primary reasons to disaffiliate from the UMC, why are we referencing a paragraph that only cites human sexuality (2553)?

The Leadership Team would prefer to disaffiliate under 2548, however the Judicial Council and Bishop Palmer ² have determined that paragraph 2553 will be the only paragraph permitted to be used and will not allow disaffiliation using 2548.2. All 7 of our primary reasons for disaffiliation are related to matters of conscience surrounding the inaction of the Council of Bishops in upholding church doctrine and the far reaching symptoms and effects of those inactions; including but not limited to human sexuality.

We may exit using paragraph 2553 before the expiration date of December 2023, with a 67% vote of professing members present and voting, and keep our church building. If we do not use this paragraph, we cannot keep our building and we would essentially be planting a new church. While we recognize that our church is God’s people drawn together in Christ Jesus and not a building, we also believe that our building is a gift from God, useful for and called to His ministry in this specific time and place.

¹ Paragraph 2548.2 and 2553 language:

<https://www.ctcumc.org/discipline-disaffiliation-paragraphs>

Or Full BOD:

https://www.cokesbury.com/book-of-discipline-book-of-resolutions-free-versions?cid=17963121816&gclid=Cj0KCOjwguGYBhDRARIsAHgRm48DbywLl3kPqYeyFFweNwtDiWFtwrrPb9AV8oE7SDy2e4A_avrGGcEaAICSEALw_wcB

² <https://www.westohioumc.org/conference/news/bishop-palmers-decision-law>