

**FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**  
**Future Discernment Task Force District Meetings**  
***Updated September 1, 2022***

*A quick read of the New Testament reveals that faithful people have had differences of opinions and convictions since and before the days of the early church. John Wesley addressed this dynamic in his sermon, “Catholic Spirit.” That sermon can be found in its entirety without comment at:*

*<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=1682>. All are encouraged to read it.*

**Submitted Questions**

**East District**

1. *If funds to apply are paid but Board of Trustees denies affiliation will funds be refunded? In such an event the unfunded pension liability would be refunded. However, if a church has met the Principles Regarding Disaffiliation of a Local Church, it is most likely that the Board of Trustees would recommend approval for the request to disaffiliate to the session of the Texas Annual Conference, which is also highly likely to approve such recommendation. The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation were established so that the TAC would have clear and consistent guidelines.*
2. *If every step is accomplished to disaffiliate what reasons would lead to denial? See Question #1*
3. *What are the options to denial of disaffiliation? See Question #1*
4. *If a church stays UMC, how much will apportionment increase due to churches leaving the UMC? The 2023 apportionments are not expected to increase. Conference spending will need to be adjusted and some operating reserves may need to be utilized. While guarantees of frozen apportionments cannot be made, every attempt will be made not to increase a congregations proportional giving to conference benevolences (apportionments).*
5. *Can the new bishop replace the trustees with new members? No. Conference Officers are nominated by the Conference Committee on Nominations for 4-year terms and elected by the session of the Texas Annual Conference. Mid-year replacements are the responsibility of the*

Conference Leadership Team and mid-quadrennial replacements are made by the session of the TAC upon recommendation from the Conference Committee on Nominations.

6. *What is the UMC's view on the LGBT in Leadership Roles?* The three prohibitions related to the LGBTQIA+ community are that a same gender wedding cannot be officiated by a United Methodist pastor, a same gender wedding cannot be hosted by a United Methodist Church, and a non-celibate homosexual cannot be ordained or licensed as a pastor in the United Methodist Church. These restrictions are not new and have not been changed for decades. There are no restrictions stated in the Book of Discipline related to leadership roles beyond these.
7. *What is the UMC's view on abortion?* The United Methodist statement on abortion is found in our Book of Discipline as part of our Social Principles in Paragraph 161K. It is too lengthy to state here, but the beginning of the statement includes, “Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child.”
8. *Can the disaffiliating churches file a class action suit against the UMC for breach of contract resulting in serious suffering and damages based on failure of UMC to abide by the duly and repeatedly approved Book of Discipline?* The reality in the United States is anyone can sue anyone at any time for any reason. However, the church has made every attempt to stay out of the courts with our sisters and brothers and deal with one another in the covenant with which we have committed. The great majority of our members and leaders do live faithfully with one another in this covenant.
9. *Should the resolution to disaffiliate include whether the congregation commits/decides to go to another denomination or go independent?* It probably should, but that is not necessary, although some churches have offered a second resolution at the duly called church conference to declare specifically their intention to affiliate with another denomination, organization, or move toward an independent congregation.
10. *If a church or clergy person disaffiliates from the UMC and the TAC, will the district or conference provide any support for the that*

*congregation or clergy after the annual conference vote? For instance: will there be any equitable comp given, any support from conference office? any support for Churches that are part of "We Love all God's children"?* It is unlikely that United Methodist funds will be given to non-United Methodist Churches for ministry purposes. Those adjustments would be made on the date of disaffiliation, not the date of the vote of the Texas Annual Conference. There will be conversations about how such ministries can continue under the new circumstances so that the transition can be as smooth as possible for those ministries.

11. *Will this disaffiliation affect retired pastors or widow retirement compensation?* It will not unless the retired pastor chooses to withdraw from ministry in the United Methodist Church or seek to transfer into another Annual Conference. Then the retiree insurance stipend will no longer be available.
12. *Can the incoming bishop withhold unfunded liability amounts or not allow church conference necessary to disaffiliate?* The Principles Regarding Disaffiliation of Local Churches is the responsibility of the Conference Board of Trustees and requires approval by the Texas Annual Conference. Paragraphs 401-416 describe the nature and responsibilities of bishops in the United Methodist Church, beginning with "Bishops are elected from the elders and set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, general oversight and supervision." Much like a pastor has a great deal of influence in congregations, a bishop has a great deal of influence in an annual conference. Boards, committees, and conference ministry teams also have their lanes of responsibility. The voting sessions of the Annual Conference is where decisions are made and policies and practices are addressed.
13. *If a church disaffiliates, will they have to arrange new property insurance or electricity service if their providers are affiliated with the UMC?* Our understanding is those services are tightly connected to the church as a United Methodist Church in the Texas Annual Conference. Therefore, the church will need to let these providers and the Center for Connectional Resources know of the change of status. Those products more than likely can continue with the providers, but a new contract would need to be established between the provider and the church's new name. UPDATE: Our energy broker has assured us that all

churches currently in the plan will be maintained in the plan until the end of the term, but disaffiliated churches will not be renewed in the plan.

14. *If the UMC bishops and conferences will not uphold the BOD in the prevailing issues, how can we be assured that it will be upheld in the future on other issues?* The Texas Annual Conference and the South Central Jurisdiction to which the TAC belongs continues to be faithful to the covenant of the United Methodist Church. However, we do live in covenant with one another and covenants are sometime violated. When that happens those in closest covenant will need to address those violations. The same will be true in every denominational and local expression of the church.
15. *If a church disaffiliates how long does it have to remove ALL cross and flame symbols such as on a gym floor?* A church that has voted to disaffiliate will need to develop a plan for rebranding all of their materials and facilities in as much as is practical. While there could be encouragement to cease and desist use of any UM logos and names on the date of disaffiliation, consideration will be given to the timeline that the church provides for such rebranding.
16. *If a church disaffiliates what happens to any endowment associated with that church?* That will depend on how the endowment was established and who “owns” it. Consultation with an attorney and our Conference Center for Connectional Resources will be helpful.
17. *If our church is receiving regular interest checks from an endowment fund, would our church continue to receive that money if we disaffiliate?* See Question #16
18. *If a church waits until the May 2023 annual conference to disaffiliate, what two years of apportionments would need to be paid in full?* Our Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation require full payment of the current year’s and the previous year’s apportionments. In the example provided it would be full payment of 2022 apportionments and 2023 apportionments. This will also include district apportionments, which will need to be submitted to your district.
19. *What about people who actively support the church with their tithes and offerings, but because of age or disability cannot be present for the vote? How is their voice heard?* A Church Conference does allow for

every professing member present to cast a written ballot (all called church conferences for the purpose of considering disaffiliation will receive the vote through written ballot). However, because an important part of church conferences is for the holy conversation that is part of the deliberations, there is no provision for voting by proxy or submitting an absentee ballot. Members unable to be present can call their pastor or church leader to ensure that their voice is heard, but unfortunately will not be able to submit their ballot unless present for the discussion and subsequent vote.

20. *If we stay UMC, do we accept and agree to possible appointment of gay clergy our local church?* Currently, it is contrary to the Book of Discipline for a non-celibate person with same sex orientation to be ordained, licensed, or certified for pastoral ministry in the UMC. If that should change in the future, the appointment process more than likely would not. The appointment of clergy to local churches is done through consultation with the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the clergy person, and the district superintendent. The consultation includes many factors. While it is not wise to never say never, it is unlikely that a church with concerns regarding such an appointment would receive a gay clergy person.
21. *Has the GMC adopted the current UMC Book of Discipline?* No. Please see <https://globalmethodist.org> for the Transitional Book of Doctrine and Discipline.
22. *If we say in the UMC, is there a guarantee we will NEVER have a same sex wedding in our sanctuary? Or guarantee that we'll never have a practicing homosexual bishop? Or guarantee that we'll never have a homosexual pastor?* Please see Question #20. The local church board of trustees is responsible for establishing guidelines for wedding occurring at the church, as long as they do not conflict with the Book of Discipline.
23. *If our church disaffiliates, and individuals want to stay United Methodists, how do they withdraw their church membership?* Those individuals would need to transfer their membership to a United Methodist Church of their choice, after consulting with the pastor of that United Methodist Church.
24. *Will church as a whole be approved to move to GMC? Will each member have to go through process to become member of GMC?* If a

- church votes to disaffiliate from the UMC and affiliate with the GMC or other denomination, all members will become members of the new affiliation unless they transfer their membership prior to the effective date of disaffiliation (see Question #23)
25. *The UMC provides ministers and uses discernment in their placement. Is there a process by which disaffiliated churches receive itinerate ministers in the GMC? What about resources and missions like Lakeview and UMCOR? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org> and while we might assume that affiliated ministries will want to expand their ministries to include congregations from the GMC, it will be best to check with each entity as to what that relationship would be.*
  26. *What happens to the current UMC programs such as UMCOR, UARMY, UMM, UMW? While we might assume that affiliated ministries will want to expand their ministries to include congregations from the GMC, it will be best to check with each entity as to what that relationship would be.*
  27. *What would cause the TAC to disapprove the disaffiliation (of a local church)? See Question #1*
  28. *How does the recent court decision that struck down the trust clause impact the process of disaffiliation? The Trust Clause referred to in Paragraph 2501 of the current Book of Discipline is primarily a statement of covenant with a few legal attempts to define it or constrict it. Rulings in the secular court may speak to the legal enforceability of this expression of covenant and it is likely to vary widely state by state and somewhat in court by court. These secular rulings do not change our Book of Discipline and our covenantal commitments and expectations.*
  29. *The handout covers 2553, but it doesn't cover 2548.2. Why? Paragraph 2548.2 is under Judicial Council review as to its relevance to disaffiliation. That decision should be published before the end of July. The TAC did not want to advise churches to use a Paragraph that could be rendered unconstitutional for this application. If the Judicial Council does rule that Paragraph 2548.2 is applicable to the disaffiliation process for local churches, the full scope of our Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation will be employed. 8-22-22 UPDATE: The Judicial Council did release its decision stating, "The General*

Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of “Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.” Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.”

30. *To begin the process of discernment, does District Superintendent tell us when we begin?* The Period of Local Church Discernment outlines this process well, but in short, the church council (or its equivalent) is responsible for letting the District Superintendent know when your church determined to start the discernment process.
31. *Does church have to give written notification to members to begin?* See Question #30
32. *Is email or announcement from the pulpit qualifies as notification? Notification that the discernment process is started is the responsibility of the church council and can be communicated as they see fit.* Notification of a called church conference is authorized by the district superintendent and communicated according to Paragraph 246.8, “Notice of time and place of a regular or special session of the charge conference shall be given at least ten days in advance by two or more of the following (except as local laws may otherwise provide): from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a local church publication, or by mail.” Paragraph 248 talks about church conferences: “It may be called at the discretion of the district superintendent or following a written request to the district superintendent by one of the following: the pastor, the church council, or 10 percent of the professing membership of the local church.”
33. *2019 General Conference: P2553 mentions 'homosexuality'. What is the UMC's proposed and current standing on self-avowed practicing 'transsexuals' and 'pedophiles' AKA 'minor-attracted persons'?* These are very diverse categories of concern. The current conversation in the United Methodist Church has related to the three restrictions related to persons with same-gender orientation, (see Question #6). There is no current policy related to transgender individuals. Paragraph 266.2.a addresses the importance of background checks as do our current safe sanctuary policies.

34. *Does the bishop of the TAC have authority to impede or encourage a local church's potential disaffiliation in our conference?* This is beyond the scope of the responsibilities of the bishop.
35. *Who owns my church land and building? Will the UMC fight for the property if we leave?* The church owns the property, but it is held in trust assuring generations that a United Methodist church will continue to use the property for United Methodist ministry (see Paragraph 2501 in the Book of Discipline). Sale of the church property is governed by the Book of Discipline, but the church is the beneficiary of the sale and the responsible party for all debts. The current Principles regarding Local Church Disaffiliation do call for the full release of the trust clause if the Principles are met and the Annual Conference approves the recommendation of the Board of Trustees
36. *What about UMCOR?* See Question #26
37. *In this age of computers & assuming the UMC handled numbers correctly, why does getting our amount of our unfunded pension liabilities?* Unfunded pension liabilities are related to a Defined Benefit element in the current pension program for clergy. It is fairly detailed calculation, but the Center for Connectional Resources is able to provide that amount to all churches in the discernment process. These questions can be answered more fully by emailing [cbruse@txcumc.org](mailto:cbruse@txcumc.org) or [disaffiliation@txcumc.org](mailto:disaffiliation@txcumc.org)
38. *Reconcile page 1 #4 and P 2553 4B: they are very different.* The Conference Board of Trustees proposed an interpretation of Paragraph 2553.4.b as the twelve month period before disaffiliation as the previous year's and the additional 12 months being then the current year's apportionments. This was approved by the 2020 Session of the Texas Annual Conference and continues to be the process employed by the Board of Trustees.
39. *If a church votes to go one way, and the clergy wish to go another, will there be a period of grace? Who will pay for move? Will reappointment be immediate or deferred to next annual conference? If the SPRC, the pastor, the TAC bishop, and the other denominational leader all agree that it is in the Congregation's best interest for the pastor to remain in the appointment until June 30, 2023, Paragraphs 245 and 246 do allow for such an appointment. Moves from a UMC*

from a pastor who withdraws from pastoral ministry in the UMC are not the responsibility of the Texas Annual Conference. The receiving church may, however, assume those charges.

40. *If our church pastor refuses to allow a vote at Administrative Council to assess whether our church members wish to enter a period of discernment, what can concerned members do?* First, talk with the pastor about your concerns. The Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee or Church Council can receive those concerns if the pastor is not receptive or responsive to them. If the member feels like these leaders are not responsive, the District Superintendent can be contacted. Under Paragraph 248 of the current Book of Discipline, 10 percent of the professing membership of the local church can request a church conference in writing to the district superintendent to begin the discernment process (see Question #32). However, the Future Discernment Task Force recommends employing the other options listed above before exercising this option.
41. *If the church council votes to remain UMC, is the process over?* The Church Council are the elected leaders of the congregation responsible for decisions that impact the congregation. Their decision usually does signal the resolution of a concern. Paragraph 253.2 of the current Book of Discipline addresses church councils: “Meetings—a) The council shall meet at least quarterly. The chairperson or the pastor may call special meetings.”
42. *What procedure should members of a congregation follow if the pastor refused to allow a procedure of disaffiliation?* See Question #40
43. *How is notification handled to your congregants to vote? All congregants? All ACTIVE congregants? Time span notification is given before a vote is taken?* See Question #32. All professing members are eligible to vote in a duly called church conference. See also Paragraph 248 of the 2016 Book of Discipline
44. *Does the church board need to vote for the type of vote? By 2/3 majority or simple majority before the vote is taken?* The Period for Local Church Discernment does recommend a vote of the Church Council or its equivalent to move forward with the discernment process and, if needed, the request for a church conference. All votes in a United

- Methodist Church are simple majority unless specified otherwise. Therefore, it would be a simple majority vote at the Church Council.
45. *If the local church votes in August but the Annual Conference is in June---when is the local church out?* The congregation and annual conference agree upon an effective date of disaffiliation that is included in the request to disaffiliate submitted to the Conference Board of Trustees.
  46. *For 2023, the rules expire, will there be a special Annual Conference in December 2023 for those who vote after the Annual Conference?* That is certainly a possibility, but that would not be determined until after the 2023 Session of the Texas Annual Conference as it would depend upon a demonstrated need for such a special session.
  47. *Why is the December 31, 2023, deadline not followed in the TAC timeline? (Dec 31, 2022)* There are a number of churches who have been discerning disaffiliation throughout this year and are ready to make that decision. The special session of Annual Conference is to address their requests. Paragraph 2553 and the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation will be in place until the Paragraph expires, which is currently set for December 31, 2023.
  48. *When the current plan for disaffiliation expires in 2023, will there still be a different option for disaffiliation?* That is not yet clear. Paragraph was established for this interim time, but did not anticipate a pandemic that renders the deadline to come before the next session of General Conference.
  49. *Regarding the 2/3 vote for disaffiliation 2553, is this 2/3 of those in attendance? Of the meeting or 2/3 of the membership of the church?* The vote taken at a Called Church Conference to consider disaffiliation from the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church requires a 2/3 majority of all professing members present at the Church Conference through a written ballot.
  50. *Are there different steps of disaffiliation for those wanting to go independent rather than GMC?* No. However, the church will need to address a number of unique things should it determine to go independent.
  51. *Can the incoming bishop change the requirements for disaffiliation for the TAC? If so, how soon after taking office? See Question #12*

52. *If district has helped church with a full elder pastor's salary---(District paid some; church paid some). Will church be responsible for full pension disability or only the salary portion the church was able to pay.* If a congregation disaffiliates from the Texas Annual Conference, it will no longer receive support from the Texas Annual Conference, including any district of the Texas Annual Conference.
53. *P2553.1 mentions disagreements with the 2019 BOD or disagreements with the actions/inactions of the conference. Does this exclude conservative churches in the TAC from using P 2553 to disaffiliate?* This paragraph has been interpreted to include churches who are dissatisfied with the Texas Annual Conference's ability to hold accountable members throughout the church who are disobeying our shared discipline.
54. *Our church is very small. Can we have a federated church that is a UMC/GMC federation?* The appointive cabinet of the Texas Annual Conference are looking into this notion more deeply, but to date a model for such an arrangement has not been established.
55. *Is boy scout issue fully resolved? Any liability to local churches?* This is a complicated issue regarding the current bankruptcy plan (that has not yet received its final decision from the court), revised affiliate agreements, and BSA Councils' responses to the agreements. A letter is being sent to all pastors on July 18 with an update and a webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, August 9 at 7 pm.
56. *Disaffiliated churches: will they still be part of UMC Boy Scout agreement for lawsuits?* Our current understanding is that disaffiliated churches are not covered under the UMC participation in the BSA Bankruptcy Plan, but that is under legal review. GMC leaders are working to ensure that GMC congregations sponsoring a BSA unit will be covered.
57. *By law, is the 'trust clause' enforceable in Texas?* See Question #28
58. *If funds to apply are paid but Board of Trustees denies affiliation will funds be refunded?* See Question #1
59. *Can a church be held financially hostage if they can't pay the 'exit fees'?* There are no exit fees in the Texas Annual Conference. There is the expectation that covenantal commitments made up to that point will be fulfilled. This includes full payment of apportionments (conference

- and district for the year the church is disaffiliating and the previous year's apportionments, as well as any unfunded pension liability accrued through past and current participation in the pension program.
60. *What is the resource for a congregation whose pastor is not in favor of disaffiliation and works within the church to prevent it? See Question #40*
  61. *UMC demands reams and hours of complicated reporting that overwhelms small congregations with limited resources. Will GMC or the other denominations limit such frustrating wastes of resources? (Remember, 1 Chronicles 21 God told David NOT to take a census.) Please see <https://globalmethodist.org> or contact the other denominational entity for the answer to this question.*
  62. *Will GMC, will the other denominations, help small churches or will these denominations expect small churches to fend for themselves and complete huge senses of useless reports. See Question #61*
  63. *Many retired clergy are grieved by the blatant disobedience to the Methodist Book of Discipline and the Methodist Tenets of Faith (Jesus Christ Is Savior, Bible is inerrant word of God, His Word guides us to recognize sine and teaches how to repent of sin). Will GMC, other denomination, be able to welcome retired ministers? On that case, will UMC be required to turn over retirement funds in proportion to the exiting ministers? See Question 61. Pension benefits do travel with most clergy. The Unfunded Pension Liability is to cover a defined benefit portion of clergy pensions. Exiting clergy will need to "cash out" this portion of their pension benefit.*
  64. *Will any of the listed Methodist Churches return to Wesley Spirit-filled worship? Holy Spirit is generally not allowed in Methodist churches today. God does not fit into man's Sunday schedules. It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit is welcome in all Texas Annual Conference churches.*
  65. *Explain the May 2022 church disaffiliation case of Texas church vs UMC: How does UMC attempt to extract assets from local churches? See Question #59*
  66. *When in the disaffiliation process will we know whether UMC will extract assets? See Question #59*

67. *How will certified ministers be accommodated in the GMC? In the other denominations? See Question #61*
68. *Will the denominations help us survive and thrive? Help small churches grow? This is integral to the three foci of the Texas Annual Conference: cultivating growing, vibrant, missional congregations; forming transforming lay and clergy leaders; and investing in the young*
69. *That the churches who abide by the UMC duly approve (many times) Book of Discipline have to disaffiliate makes no good sense. No congregation is being asked or required to disaffiliate from the Texas Annual Conference. Some congregations believe that this is their best way forward to do the ministry that they feel God is calling them to do.*
70. *Please explain why Bishops, Ministers, and churches who fail to and who determine not to abide by the UMC tenets of Faith are not required to leave. Covenantal language assumes compliance. When persons in the covenant decide not to comply then accountability structures are called to respond. The United Methodist Church have had some of the flaws in those structures unveiled, which will take time and great effort to address. However, in the Texas Annual Conference and for the most part the South Central Jurisdiction, those structures are in place and accountability is maintained.*
71. *Why are the bishops and leadership of UMC not disciplined for ignoring the UMC Book of Discipline? See Question #70*
72. *How long does it take to calculate our discernment members & when can we expect them so we can set a day for church conference? This process has become faster over the summer, but the volume of churches wanting this information can extend the time it takes. Within 3 weeks is a safe estimate.*
73. *Why are we allowing the progressives to steal our heritage? Not all United Methodists of the TAC would agree with this perspective, but question #70 may provide some level of response.*
74. *UMC stance on abortion now and future? See Question #7*
75. *Do the current Texas Bishops have any say in what fiscal demands will be made of the churches that choose to disaffiliate? Our response is best kept to the Texas Annual Conference where we are most familiar. For that, please see Question #12*

76. *Is the covenant of obedience equivalent to a legal contract? What are the penalties of breaking that covenant? Is there no consequence?*  
There are responses to violation of the covenant spelled out in the Book of Discipline. Where in the BOD depends upon what part of the covenant is breached. The Texas Annual Conference seeks to be consistent in maintaining the Book of Discipline.
77. *Is the UMC guilty of a legal breach of contract when the bishops and leaders refuse to follow the Book of Discipline, that the UMC delegates have voted repeatedly to uphold? See Question #70*
78. *Where are names of those founders of GMC -- who are they? Where is the headquarters? An address? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>*
79. *Does GMC have tax-exempt status? See Question #78*
80. *Does GMC have a paid staff? If yes, who pays? See Question #78*
81. *Will GMC be able to provide salaries, retirement to staff & clergy? See Question #78*
82. *Can a church disaffiliate past the deadline? Disaffiliation under Paragraph 2553 does expire on December 31, 2023. Other avenues related to disaffiliation are being reviewed, but to date none has been set forth as the universally agreed upon pathway.*
83. *If Church stays UMC, can church deny a gay or lesbian preacher? See Question #20*
84. *Will the UMC approve LGBTQ membership like now if they are celibate? See Question #20*
85. *Will the UMC sanction marriage between a man and a woman? Paragraph 161.C in the current United Methodist Book of Discipline defines marriage as “a covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman.”*
86. *How long will GMC use UMC as its only mission field? See Question #78*
87. *GMC is getting rid of P 105 in the Book of Discipline. "Theological Tasks". What is this? And why? See Question #78*
88. *Is directing the congregation of small and medium churches wise, where the financial viability of our churches are already fragile, and does giving up a large established denomination's support of these*

*congregations make their survival more vulnerable?*

Discernment begins with a congregation discerning where God is calling them to be in ministry to the mission field in which they exist. Each congregation will need to first grasp this vision before determining what denominational alignment will best equip them for this ministry. The discernment process is filled with complex questions as this and it is wise for the congregation to consider all aspects after determining the ministry that God is calling them into in this season.

89. *Why has the church gone away from the Words of the Gospel?* Every church is called upon to worship God, share the grace of Christ with those in need, and edify the body of Christ. This mission will not change regardless of denominational affiliation.
90. *Why would "they" take a view they tarnish the churches reputation?*  
See Question #89
91. *What is the UMC beliefs on Jesus' virgin birth? Resurrection? Is Jesus the only way to salvation? The inerrancy of the Bible? Homosexual and lesbian weddings or homosexual and lesbian members?* The doctrinal standards of the United Methodist Church are found in Paragraphs 102-104 of the Book Of Discipline. They are too lengthy to insert here, but they are quite edifying to all who will take the time to read them. They can be found on pages 56-79 on the following link <https://www.cokesbury.com/book-of-discipline-book-of-resolutions-free-versions> See Question 8 for other elements of this question
92. *Does the Discipline overrule the KJV/ESV, NIV and NKJV Bible?* No. The Book of Discipline underscores this in its teaching on scripture, "United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine."
93. *Have you considered the Congregational Methodist Church? If not, why?* See <http://www.cm-church.org>
94. *Rev. Maxie Dunham, leader of the Confessing Movement of the UMC recently stated in a video that the majority of the churches in the new GMC will be African churches. What financial burden will this place on the American GM churches?* See Question #78
95. *Clergy: Will GMC have licensing school for local pastors? Will there be health insurance and pension?* See Question #78. There was a

- statement from the GMC that a defined contribution pension program and health insurance will be provided through Wespath
96. *Will each church moving to GMC ---be under the legal umbrella of the GMC protecting all churches? See Question #78*
  97. *Will Divorced clergy be allowed to preach in GMC? See Question #78*
  98. *What are the differences between GMC and Congregational Methodist? See Question #78 and Question #93*
  99. *Apportionments: How will this be determined for churches moving to GMC? See Question #78*
  100. *Pension: Please explain pension for pastors/churches under the GMC. All pastors can begin to pay into pension or when does the part-time or local pastor qualify for pension? See Question #78*
  101. *Do those in charge realize this is a volunteer organization? Can I not just stop giving to the church? Proportional giving of what a believer has been blessed with is a matter of discipleship and each believer is expected to determine in their heart what they will give in response to God's instruction.*
  102. *Why does GMC and UMC, vocal ability silent about God's word says about homosexuality, LGBT, Transgender issues facing us in our trying times. The UMC and GMC do have extensive statements about human sexuality that can be found in the UMC Book of Discipline and the GMC Transitional Book of Doctrine and Discipline.*
  103. *Why can a gay person be able to fill the pulpit but a person over 70 years of age cannot fill the pulpit? See Question #6. While the mandatory retirement age from full-time ministry is 72, many pastors over 72 serve churches in retirement.*
  104. *What is at stake: Please address issues beyond the LGBTQ: interpretation and importance of Bible in doctrine and re-interpretation of Jesus' role in Bible. The United Methodist Church has not changed its stance on the primacy of scripture or the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Much of the concern is related to the accountability of those who teach outside of these standards. See Question #70*
  105. *Life Insurance policy is through my local UMC. Will I be able to change it to another church? Please check with your insurer on the logistics of this.*

106. *Paragraph 2553: "reasons of conscience regarding a change..." BOD did not change (yet) so will that create a legal glitch for using this paragraph? See Question 53*
107. *Docket 1444: use of name, cross & flame, or other intellectual property including UMC hymnal.... Our hymnals and Bibles are personally purchased by individuals in memory of loved ones (book plates in them). If we have them rebound to remove UMC and Cross & Flame, can we use them? we have a CCLI license to sing the hymns and the Bibles are not a United Methodist translation. What exactly must we do to continue using them? The United Methodist Publishing House earlier stated, "The United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH) will extend all the grace we can as we provide resources congregations will choose, use, and value for their critically important ministries. As you may know, there are many materials in our official and unofficial products that are intellectual property owned by others, and only licensed to UMPH or Abingdon Press for specific uses." However, we will consult with them about this question and update as we get information.*
108. *Must we submit 2022 end of year report? Yes. The statistical tables serve the United Methodist Church and since churches considering disaffiliation will have been UMC congregations for the entire year, these records are important.*

### **Southeast District**

109. *Isn't part of what has us at this point in history the formation of the GMC? The launch of the Global Methodist Church in May 2022 has certainly generated increased interest in the local church disaffiliation. However, the Texas Annual Conference has had some churches disaffiliate before the launch of the GMC.*
110. *Isn't part of what has us at this point in history the likelihood of a shift in US votes at General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference? There are many factors that have contributed to the current discernments regarding denominational alignment. Decades of debate over human sexuality, frustrations over an attempt to restructure that did not prevail, increased disobedience to the Book of Discipline, repeated postponements to General Conference due to a global*

- pandemic, the launch of a new Wesleyan movement, and other factors have moved us to this point in history.
111. *Isn't a part of what has brought us to this point the swing in General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference clergy delegates from conservative to centrist/progressive? See Question #110*
  112. *Can a church member participate/vote at the Church (Charge) conference VA Zoom? (Given Covid and other health concerns). If the answer is 'no' -- is there a possibility to change this so that Zoom participation is allowed? See Question #19.*
  113. *If a church or clergy withdraws or disaffiliates, will there continue to be any support for that church of clergy from the district or conference? (i.e., Programs, Ministry support, consultations) See Question #10*
  114. *Are there any criteria that the TAC Board of Trustees would reject the request for disaffiliation? See Question #1*
  115. *If our church did nothing, and the national UMC had a mass exit, how would this effect the "apportionments (funding expense) at the local level (our church)?* The Texas Annual Conference is working very hard to keep apportionments from increasing by addressing spending cuts that could be made and continued downsizing of conference staff and ministries as needed.
  116. *It seems like there ought to be an established Book of Doctrines and Discipline BEFORE you ask others to affiliate to your doctrine. See Question #21*
  117. *Sin-hunting: Will the GMC also be 'banning' people of other sins such as divorce, gluttony, adultery, or other sins that have been normalized by society? See Question #78*
  118. *Why target homosexuality? Blasphemy by bishops & pastors is why I am here. Please tell us what got us to this point. See Question #70*
  119. *How is excluding people from the church based off of sexuality helping us reach our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Isn't this the opposite? Both the UMC and GMC have made it clear that all persons are welcomed in their congregations. Both the UMC and GMC have restrictions related to same gender weddings and non-celibate same gender orientated persons.*

120. *What is the typical result and typical path that the church and a pastor follow when a heterosexual pastor is found to have engaged in sexuality immorality? How does this differ in the rules framework and practical outcome that apply to LGBTQ? The Texas Annual Conference has a sexual ethics policy that conforms to the Book of Discipline including a disciplinary process for clergy engaged in sexually immoral behavior, which is a chargeable offense according to Paragraph 2702..*
121. *As a retired local pastor serving part-time, drawing my pension: is my pension in jeopardy as I leave to go to the GMC? Please email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org) with your particular questions and circumstances.*
122. *Has Anglican Church of North America formed the "Aldersgate Missionary Society" specifically to receive Methodist churches, clergy, and members? Any doctrinal info about that? See <https://aldersgatemissionsociety.org>*
123. *If you are retired clergy, will your pension and medical benefits remain the same? See Question #11*
124. *If a vote is made to allow homosexual marriages and clergy, will there be an opportunity to disaffiliate? There is a lot to speculate in this question. Only the General Conference can change the current restrictions regarding marriages and credentialing of clergy. Only the General Conference can extend or renew pathways for disaffiliation.*
125. *The UMC may officially uphold certain stances and beliefs, but bishops, pastors and conferences are blatantly disregarding them. So, does UMC doctrine and discipline really matter? Wedding vows can be betrayed, baptismal covenants can be broken, and membership vows can be discarded, but yes, they are important. Covenants matter even if there are some who choose to violate them at points.*
126. *Do we know how pastors will be assigned by GMC? See Question #78*
127. *Do we know if GMC will assign apportionments? See Question #78*
128. *Why would the church want to go against the Bible - God's Word?  
See Question #92*
129. *Why does the Methodist Church have to change their beliefs? See Question 91*
130. *Why don't the people wanting to change our church leave and start their own church? It seems like that is the better solution. Several*

different scenarios have been proposed over time. The last six years has made more substantive proposals and the leaders of the Global Methodist Church considered this the best way forward.

131. *What is the process to unite if we disaffiliate? At what cost?* This is one of the key questions in the Period of Local Church Discernment encouraging churches to examine the emotional, financial, and spiritual costs of leaving or staying in the UMC. It requires deep conversation.
132. *Why do we who have leave to satisfy the wishes of the minority? Our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness (63 years built this church. It seems as though the tail is wagging the dog.* No congregation has to leave. Some congregations feel that they can best serve the kingdom of God in another denomination. See Question 130
133. *Why should the traditionalists have to leave the United Methodist Church and not have the LGBTQ go to the GMC?* See Question 132
134. *How are we going to include homebound or persons with a disability to participate in this discussion and possible vote that are unable to attend?* See Question #19
135. *Define "professing members". Who is included in this term?* Paragraph 215.2 of the Book of Discipline states, "The professing membership of a local United Methodist church shall include all baptized people who have come into membership by profession of faith through appropriate services of the baptismal covenant in the ritual or by transfer from other churches."
136. *2553 - Define: Professing members that are able to vote* See Question #135
137. *What is the difference between a member of the church who is on the official membership roll and a "professing member"?* See Question 135
138. *Who is responsible for determining if someone is a "professing member"?* See Question 135
139. *If the doctrine were changed to allow same sex marriage in the church, would a pastor be forced to resigned if he or she refused to marry a same sex couple?* While this is quite speculative as the current restrictions regarding same gender marriages have not been lifted, it is highly unlikely that any pastor would be forced to officiate a wedding that the pastor could not support. United Methodist pastors currently

- have the option of declining a request to officiate a wedding if the pastor had reasons to believe that the marriage was ill fated.
140. *What about the disbelief of the Holy Trinity, the bodily resurrection of Jesus in literature and videos being denied by the United Methodist Church versus belief in the above by the Global Methodist Church? (My belief and others in my Christian family firmly believes we can't be called Christian under any denominational name without the understanding that Christ is who he said he was and died and was resurrected for my salvation) The United Methodist Church continues to hold to the Holy Trinity, the bodily resurrection of Jesus and the lordship of Jesus Christ. See Question #91. For GMC doctrines, <https://globalmethodist.org>*
  141. *What will happen if a minister, bishop, or district superintendent changes his or her sexual preference as a United Methodist?* Clergypersons are held to the same standard throughout their ministry and paragraph 304.3 prohibits a non-celibate same gender oriented individual from pastoral ministry. 2702 includes this as a chargeable offense.
  142. *We have these same rules--but were not enforced--and that's why we are meeting today. See Question #70*
  143. *If a church does not decide to disaffiliate, can that church decide or deny a particular pastor?* Paragraph 428 describes an extensive consultative process between the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the pastor, the district superintendent, and the bishop. This process will remain consistent seeking to make the most effective appointment for the congregation and the overall strength of the Texas Annual Conference.
  144. *If a church does not decide to disaffiliate, can that church refuse to officiate any weddings?* See Question #22
  145. *If a church does not disaffiliate, will the conference send a minister to that church who will perform gay marriages?* See Question #22. For off-site weddings the Staff/Pastor Relations Committee consults with the pastor regarding pastoral functions.
  146. *Where are GMC churches turning for ritual, hymnal, Bible Study, and publishing?* See Question #78

147. *Will Pastors (GMC) move around like they do now, or will they stay with the church?* See Question #78
148. *501(c)3 status: If disaffiliated, will the church need to file for tax exempt status if going independent? Or if joining the GMC? When a church conference votes to disaffiliate from the Texas Annual Conference, the Center for Connectional Resources will send the necessary checklist to be completed that will address these issues.*
149. *If church members decide to simply walk away and start their own church, what happens to their original church building?* It will be managed by the Conference Board of Trustees as an abandoned church according to Paragraph 2549 of the current Book of Discipline.
150. *How do we transfer property titles when we separate? (i.e., taxable properties? Do we title from Methodist church to new name?)* See Question 148
151. *Who do we contact to get a payout?* Email [disaffiliation@txcumc.org](mailto:disaffiliation@txcumc.org)
152. *Is the discernment process in 2022 going to be exactly the same in 2023? And payouts?* The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation is under the guidance of the Conference Board of Trustees and approved by the Texas Annual Conference. These are anticipated to remain the same through 2023. If a church disaffiliates in 2023 the apportionments for 2022 and 2023 (both conference and district) will need to be fully paid. The Unfunded Pension Liability is updated quarterly and fluctuates with market values.
153. *How does a 3-point charge move from UMC to GMC?* The Church Conference will include professing members from each church. If each church votes with a 2/3 approval, all congregations within the charge will disaffiliate from the Texas Annual Conference. For admission into the GMC, see <https://globalmethodist.org>
154. *If we stay UMC, would we have a choice of whether or not we have gay minister or have gay weddings?* See Questions 20 and 22.
155. *Which comes first: discussion and conversation or enter discernment and then discuss?* Consult Period of Local Church Discernment at [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF)
156. *What if our pastor does not want to talk about this with our members?* See Question #40

157. *Does Pastor vote in church disaffiliation decision?* No. Paragraph 2553 is written in such a way that only professing members of the local church are to vote. This disqualifies those who would typically be given a vote in charge and church conferences (e.g. the appointed pastors and retired pastors connected to the charge conference).
158. *Can a new bishop change the current process and amounts for disaffiliation by May 2023?* See Question #12
159. *We have been told that the "window of opportunity" to leave with our assets will be closing at the end of 2022. Due to the retirement of our bishop, we could get a bishop, that would impose more restrictions. Is that true?* No. See Question #12
160. *After Bishop Jones' retirement, can the new bishop come in and change the \$\$ for exit?* No. See Question #12
161. *Please verify: a church has to December 2023 to complete the disaffiliation process without any additional penalties? Some other conferences are adding additional financial requirements in 2023. Is that the case for the TAC?* See Question #152
162. *How might the process and financial requirements associated with disaffiliation change when Bishop Jones retires, and a new bishop is assigned?* See Question #12
163. *I am currently a certified lay minister with the UMC. I am called to pursue the Local Licensed Pastor position and further my service to our Lord. Could you provide any direction I may take at this time? (Beside patience :))* Continue to take the steps toward pastoral ministry to which you feel called. If that is in the UMC stay in touch with your district superintendent. If that is in the GMC or another denomination, examine their policies often available on their websites.
164. *What happens to the Wesley Foundation (such as Lamar Wesley)?*  
 Wesley Foundations are an integral part of the ministry of the Texas Annual Conference. It is anticipated that such a relationship would continue. For a deeper response, please see Question 7 in Qs from the Pews at [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF)
165. *If we go GMC, can we continue to use the UMC Hymnals?* See Question #107
166. *Why isn't there more representatives from GMC as that we could ask them question here today?* The WCA and the GMC are both hosting

events to help answer specific questions. Please go to <https://wesleyancovenant.org/> and <https://globalmethodist.org/> to find those resources.

167. *If a congregation continues under the UMC, how will that impact our apportionments, pastor's pension, and medical insurance? See Question #115. Our current insurance plan is a self-funded plan and is currently being studied as to its sustainability.*
168. *If the process can take a year, it cannot be done by December 31, 2022. Why is there such a short time given--less than 6 months? Paragraph 2553 does not expire until December 31, 2023. We anticipate that the Board of Trustees will recommend to the 2023 Session of the Texas Annual Conference a list of churches who have discerned the need to disaffiliate and have met all the conditions described in the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation. The discernment process is more fully described in the *Period of Local Church Discernment* available at [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF)*
169. *Why do you speak of doctrine and standards if they are currently ignored at no consequences? See Question #70*
170. *Why don't the disobedient leaders of church doctrine and those who agree with this disobedience leave or disaffiliate? See Question #130*

#### **North District (Longview)**

171. *It references that Global MC will require as much as 50% less in church requirements; does this allow supporting universities, UMCOR, etc.?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
172. *GMC: In choosing own pastors, do they need to go to seminary? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>*
173. *GMC: Is there a specific path for 'healing sexual brokenness' in the Global Church? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>*
174. *Is the UMC rethinking their stance on the virgin birth and other core Christian beliefs? No. Please see Question #91*
175. *Why have we not been able to enforce the current Book of Discipline by removing those who openly disregard it? Please see Question #70*
176. *What does it take to change the Book of Discipline? It depends on what part of the Book of Discipline one is seeking to change. All changes need to be proposed to the General Conference, considered at General*

- Conference and approved by General Conference. General Conference is composed of elected delegates (an equal number of lay and clergy) from every annual conference of the United Methodist Church around the world. More than 40% of these delegates reside and worship outside of the United States. Some changes require a supermajority of 2/3 or 3/4 and some changes require ratification from the annual conferences.
177. *GMC: What is the GMC's plan to do mission work around the world with one Board or Agency beyond the local church (functions like UMCOR, etc.)? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>*
  178. *Is it possible that the requirements for disaffiliation for TAC churches could change in 2023 or will they remain the same through 12-31-2023? See Question #152*
  179. *How many churches have begun discernment so far per district? This number is changing frequently and there is a spectrum of discernment. Some congregations are inquiring, discussing this in church council, and determining that further discussion is not warranted. Some congregations have already requested a called church conference and some congregations have already held a church conference. On the entire spectrum there are over 270 churches in our conference who are having some level of conversation. Your District Superintendent can address the number in your district.*
  180. *How many churches have finished discernment so far? This number is changing some, but most churches have not yet requested a church conference and begun submitting the paperwork for disaffiliation. We do not have the number of churches who have entered the discernment process and determined that a church conference is not necessary.*
  181. *What is the sense among Cabinet and/or Discernment Task Force that May 2023 Annual Conference will still be a viable path for discernment? They are confident that this will still be an available path. See Question 170.*
  182. *What can a church do if pastor and leaders will not go through discernment process and most of our church has no idea of all the layers? See Question #42.*
  183. *Is the disaffiliation timeline for the December Conference deadline realistic? Some congregations have determined it is not sufficient for a*

- serious discernment period. Some have found it to be sufficient. It is important for church leaders to make that determination.
184. *To approve 14 days to process seems short and may not be met this not allow disaffiliation.* The recommendation by all district superintendents in the Period for Local Church Discernment (see [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF)) is a minimum of 40 days from the time the church council or its equivalent has determined that a discernment is in the best interest of the church.
  185. *Does the bishop decide the process of disaffiliation including cost to the local church, or is it another entity?* No. See Question #12
  186. *Why are the rules being changed rather than enforced?* See Question #70.
  187. *Why are those respecting the rules being forced to leave?* See Questions #132 and #130
  188. *Why is it that those groups who have been faithful to God's Word are the ones who have to leave to start a new church and lost their property?* The Texas Annual Conference Board of Trustees' Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation requires only that a congregation fulfills its covenantal commitments related to unpaid apportionments and any unfunded pension liability. Also, see Questions #132 and #130
  189. *Why aren't the ones who are not keeping Biblical truth and Book of Discipline leave and start their own church?* Most United Methodist do honor the covenant contained in the Book of Discipline and would identify as people who hold the scripture as authoritative in their lives. Many of those members are not leaving the United Methodist Church. See Questions #132 and #130.
  190. *GMC: We are a small rural church, and have enjoyed local pastors who have no requirements for a parsonage or retirement benefits. Will this change in the GMC?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  191. *GMC: As a GMC church, can we still use Cokesbury?* Yes. Cokesbury is an online bookstore that is not restricted to United Methodists.
  192. *In the next 18 months to 2 years until the GMC's first conference, what is the process for pastor assignment if a church loses its pastor?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  193. *Will the United Methodist Church have their choice to be progressive or traditional/conservative?* Currently, there are no such formal

- choices, though many United Methodists join a local congregation that aligns with their convictions. That is not expected to change.
194. GMC: Are there jurisdictions? Are they set? Who are Bishops? Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  195. *Will the UMC Discipline be rewritten for the GMC?* See Question #21
  196. GMC: *What pensions and medical support is planned?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  197. *Is the Annual Conference on December 3 solely for disaffiliation?* The call for the special session of the Texas Annual Conference has not yet been issued. Once the call is issued, it will be limited to those items included in the call.
  198. *If we decide to become independent, will Wespath be able to continue to serve us in providing benefits?* We do not believe that Wespath serves Independent congregations or their clergy. Clergypersons would need to contact Wespath for implications of withdrawing from pastoral ministry in the United Methodist Church.
  199. *Will the future UMC be addressing disobedience to the agreed upon polity and Discipline in the future? If so, How?* These are matters that would need to be adopted by the General Conference in response to legislation that has been submitted. Please see <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-how-are-decisions-made-at-general-conference>
  200. If each church has its own non-profit status in the State of Texas, why is "UMC group tax exemption even important"? Please see, <https://www.gcfa.org/newsletter/2017/october/03/um-group-ruling-process-made-easy-fast-and-efficient/>
  201. *If a church disaffiliates, does it lost its pastors immediately after conference concurrence or in timing with normal rotational appointment?* See Question #39
  202. *Our town has 3 UMCs. If all 3 vote 65/35 to go global, what are the options for the 35%? Is one of the 3 going to stay United Methodist to accommodate those three 35%? What if all 3 went to go global?* Paragraph 2553, which is the Book of Discipline paragraph guiding the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation. It requires a 2/3 majority or 66.67%. If the disaffiliation of proximate churches creates a "United Methodist Church desert", that is there is an area not being

- served by the United Methodist Church, the New Faith Community ministry of the Texas Annual Conference will be looking at ways to start a new church in that community.
203. *Being a small rural church who has never had a full-time minister, will we be required to pay into retirement if we choose to split?* If a congregation has not participated in the pension program since 2007, there will be no unfunded pension liability for which that congregation would be responsible in the event of a move to disaffiliate.
204. *Given the voting block of African conferences and their stance on sexuality why require the Discipline will be changed at the next General Conference, why should we jump to an uninformed, unproven church?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. There are a lot of uncertainties and speculations related to the make-up of the next General Conference delegates and the outcome of the General Conference to be held in 2024. There are also uncertainties and speculations about a denomination that is just launching.
205. *If a church disaffiliates from the UMC and joins the GMC, what provision is made for local pastors?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
206. *How will disaffiliation impact clergy entitlement to group insurance benefits and retirement benefits?* Clergy considering withdrawing from the United Methodist Church are encouraged to email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org)
207. *GMC: Will the church have any part in selecting a pastor? Or will they be appointed as they have been in the past?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
208. *What will be done in the future at GMC to prevent UMC from taking over or bringing in their ideas?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
209. *Why don't the conference and pastors pass down information to the congregation about topics that concern the congregation? If that would have been done maybe more focus could have been brought are by the silent majority.* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. The Texas Annual Conference does attempt to

communicate significant issues through the Cross Connections, our Conference webpage, and occasional webinars. District Offices also work to communicate through emails, charge conferences, and district meetings. More specific questions could be addressed to [communications@txcumc.org](mailto:communications@txcumc.org)

210. Why is the GMC leaning on half truths and falsehoods about beliefs of the UMC's core belief in the divinity of Jesus, etc.? This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. Please see or contact <https://globalmethodist.org>
211. *Although the time may have passed to name the congregations those chose to follow the teachings of John and Charles Wesley, I believe the GMC is a misleading title for the people who choose to follow the Biblical teachings of the Wesley's. I believe the name "Wesley" or "Wesleyan" should define the traditional, Biblical worshippers. The name "Methodist" may be deleted, but the name "Wesley" or "Wesleyan" should be a part of the church's name.* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
212. *The video that was supposed to simplify did not. Hearing from ministers would have been more effective if one side had been presented and then the other side presented. This comparison would work in print, but no in video format. The quick presentation of ideas made it difficult for the audience to remember which side as speaking. Hopping from UMC to GMC back to UMC and GMC was too much information to process. The comparison chart may prove to be more helpful.*  
<https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/umc-gmc+comparison+chart.pdf>

#### **North District (Texarkana)**

213. *Is it true that a new bishop can make it difficult to leave, even with the current book of Discipline?* See Question #12
214. *Is there any way our incoming bishop (1/2023) will be able to halt or put off disaffiliation process for churches selecting the May 2023 Annual Conference date?* This is unlikely as the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation is the responsibility of the Conference Board

of Trustees and action by the Texas Annual Conference would be required to change these. Leaders on various sides of the presenting issue (Wesleyan Covenant Association, That We May Be One, and Reconciling Ministries) have all expressed support for continuing the process as is for as long as Paragraph 2553 allows it.

215. *What happens if UMC elect homosexuals to offices within the church? Will same sex marriages be performed? How can we support this when the Bible is against this?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. Currently, the Book of Discipline prohibits the ordination or licensing of a candidate who is a “self-avowed practicing homosexual” (Paragraph 304.3). Questions regarding the lifting of this prohibition are speculative as such action would require General Conference legislation.
216. *What are some of the other issues the progressives will push onto the church in addition to the issues of homosexuality and leadership? For example: Progressive's stance on Jesus as the only way and the Bible on the definitive Word of God. What else?* While there are groups and individuals in the United Methodist Church who would want the restriction mentioned in Question #6, the Future Discernment Task Force is not aware of any requests to General Conference that seek to change the doctrinal standards of the church that include a recognition of the authority of scriptures and the divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord. See Question #91.
217. *Please explain the belief in the new United Methodist Church that Jesus is God's son? Is this being questioned and are parts of the Bible being denounced in any way?* The United Methodist Church is not “new” and the Future Discernment Task Force is not aware of any requests to General Conference that seek to change the doctrinal standards of the church that include a recognition of the authority of scriptures and the divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord. See Question #91.
218. *How will UMC in future affect scripture authority?* See Question #217
219. *If more than 2/3 UMC choose local church disaffiliation, will the leaders of General Conference change their mind and have churches who want LGBTQ clergy and gay marriage disaffiliate?* This is more

- of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
220. *Please define 'professing' members.* See Question #135
  221. *What scriptures say marriage of same sex is in God's Word? Aren't we to follow God's word? We can best serve Christ by being obedient to God's Word -- the Holy Bible.* See Question #219. There are people who have differing views on this matter, yet have the same conviction on the authority of scripture.
  222. *Are the requirements by GMC for baptism and faith in God meaning infant or older baptism?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  223. *How can Bishop Jones suggest that UMC is a good thing, especially if down through the years--UMC may allow same sex marriage and gay clergy? Is this what God said do? Of course, there will be progressives, but in the end, where will they spend eternity?* See Question #221
  224. *What is the GMC process for ordaining licensed local pastors?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
  225. *Why was it printed and said that the Global Methodist Church, who are being a part of the new Wesleyan movement, when it's the United Methodist Church is wanting to change the doctrine in a progressive way?* The Global Methodist Church is a new denomination. The United Methodist Church maintains its same process for addressing any change in doctrinal standards and current practices, which is only the General Conference can speak for the United Methodist Church. See Paragraph 509 in the UMC Book of Discipline.
  226. *Why don't the progressives form their own church instead of the traditional, John Wesley, God-fearing, believers being the ones who have to go through all this research and discernment? I want to know if there is a way to either over-rule the Bishops who do not believe the Holy Bible cover-to-cover or how we can get rid of the Bishops who are leading us astray?* See Question #70.
  227. *Why are the traditionalists the ones being forced to leave the UMC? We support our Discipline. Those who have rebuked their vows should be forced with de-ordination and apportionments should serve their conferences or retirement. We should not surrender.* See Questions #132 and #130.

228. *If you stay United Methodist as a traditionalist, how does the District Superintendent and Texas Conference assure assigned pastors are traditionalists and the right to refuse gay wedding within the church will be honored? See Questions #20 and #22.*
229. *Why has the UMC become so governmental/bureaucratic? It seems to be the unavoidable path of institutions. The call is for us all to remain faithful citizens of the kingdom of God, loving God and loving neighbors, and being recognized as followers of Jesus by our love for one another.*
230. *How do we stop this from happening again? If this question is referring to division in the church, it seems to be an almost unattainable goal when viewed from the perspective of church history. Faithful people often come to different places in their convictions and sometimes those differences lead to a mutually recognized impasse that is adapted to and other times leads to a decision to separate.*
231. *I'm hearing folks (UMC folks) seemingly bashing the trust clause and vowing to do away with it in the GMC; all the while touting themselves as strongly Wesleyan. But in the interest of full disclosure, clarity and honesty, wasn't the trust clause a Wesleyan construct? Wasn't the purpose of the trust clause to help hold the Methodist connection together? We found this statement on [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org), "Trust clauses in Methodism go back to John Wesley himself in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century England. By 1750, John Wesley had accumulated three properties as meeting places and ministry sites for the Methodist societies. He wanted to make sure that local societies could not take control of these properties from the connection he was creating. He was aware of some other religious societies where local society members had refused to accept or sought to remove clergy or other leaders sent to them by the leaders of the larger society of which they were part. Wesley had also seen situations where people in a local society became influenced by teachings contrary to those of the Methodist movement and sought to leave while taking the society's property with them. Wesley wanted to ensure that leaders chosen by him would never be shut out or removed by local societies. He also wanted to make certain that Methodist properties were used only and always to teach established Methodist doctrine and be available to Methodists for their ministries. With those*

concerns and purposes in mind, Wesley asked several lawyers to craft deeds for the Methodist preaching houses in England at the time. These deeds served as models for all future deeds for Methodists. In 1796, a form of these deeds, often referred to as “The Model Deed,” was approved by the General Conference for American Methodists. This Model Deed and the mandate for a trust clause in all church property documents first appeared in the Book of Discipline in 1797.”

232. *I was told clergy had to turn in credentials if disaffiliating. Is that true or do we simply withdraw our conference membership?* Paragraph 360 guides the clergy considering withdrawing from pastoral ministry in the United Methodist Church. Those withdrawing to unite with another denomination are required to surrender their certificate of conference membership. Those withdrawing in any other fashion would need to surrender both certificate of ordination and conference membership. Please email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org) with your particular questions and circumstances.
233. *Will the church furnish a full audited financial statement before we vote?* The Texas Annual Conference provides a financial statement at Annual Conference. Local congregations typically provide these statements at Church Council (or their equivalent) meetings which are “open meetings” that any member may attend (though without voice or vote)
234. *Has consideration been given to a fair and equitable distribution of the billions of dollars?* General Conference has not met since 2019 and no proposal for distribution of assets and liabilities has been submitted or considered. It alone has the authority to move in this way.
235. *If clergy and church discern different futures, will the clergy be allowed to stay on loan to the local church? Will UMC/GMC be allowed to serve across denominational lines?* See Question #39
236. *Can you further explain the 2/3 vote and how that works? Is it all professing members or those present at the meeting?* See Question #49

### **Northwest District**

237. *The last presentation appeared to be a commercial for staying with the UMC; confusing meeting.* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include

all appropriate submissions. The videos followed the amendment given to the FDTF related to included advocates from the very groups to speak about the various options. Members of the Future Discernment Task Force volunteered to create such presentations in video format to provide consistency in all nine districts.

238. *Will the GMC seek 501(c ) 3 (tax exempt status)?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
239. *What is GMC's stand on abortion?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
240. *Who will write the doctrine of the GMC?* See Question # 21.
241. *How will each church in this GMC be accountable?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
242. *How will the monies of each church in this GMC be dispersed?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
243. *Will pastors of the GMC have a pension or 401K?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
244. *What is the structure of GMC regional conferences, etc.?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
245. *Who will be the Bishop of the GMC?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
246. *Since we are all saved only by grace through faith, not by 'right' beliefs or 'flawless' judgments, and since we are all fallible human beings, what makes our persons prayerful, studied interpretation of scripture more authoritative than their persons prayerful studied interpretation?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
247. *Has the GMC written the Book of Discipline? Who is writing it?* See Question # 21.
248. *Are there costs associate with joining the GMC? If yes, can you speak to the expected costs?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>
249. *What is the scriptural basis for marriage between same sexes?* While the United Methodist Church has debated this for decades and there is ample amounts of material related to this on the internet and in print, it is important to note that the UMC has not changed its teaching on this matter and can only do so by General Conference action.
250. *Will UMC continue its lack of accountability next 2 years?* See Question #70 Additionally, the lack of enforcements thus far can be

- attributed to both pastors and bishops. The bishop is the key source of enforcement. Bishops are accountable to the jurisdiction's Committee on Episcopacy. In the South Central Jurisdiction the Committee has held bishops accountable whereas the Committees within other jurisdictions have been lenient.
251. *Will UMC continue its acceptance of same sex marriage and openly gay bishops?* The UMC teaching on these matters have not changed and can only be changed by General Conference action. For accountability matters, see Question #70
252. *Do you anticipate the formation of a U.S. Regional conference? If so, do you anticipate it will ultimately remove restraints in the Discipline to their LGBTQIA+ ideologies?* These are good questions, but the level of speculation it would take to answer these questions surpasses the confidence of the Future Discernment Task Force and our commitment to education over advocacy and information over speculation.
253. *Do you anticipate UMC Rev. David Felten will remain his UMC pulpit? (preaching against virgin birth, hell, sin, Bible inerrancy, omnipotence, substitutionary atonement).* See Question #70 as it relates to accountability beyond an annual conference and jurisdictional conference.
254. *Will there be a way for members who are away at college, serving in the military or homebound to vote?* See Question #19.
255. *What happens to memorials, gifts, and endowments with specific reference to a United Methodist Church after disaffiliation?* Do these assets follow the congregation or become the property of the district or annual conference? This is a legal matter, but it is likely that these assets will follow the congregation without legal action. The question posed to the conference office should result in a dependable answer.
256. *What happens when/if a congregation who wishes to disaffiliate but unwilling/unable to pay 'fees'?* There are no fees related to disaffiliation in the Texas Annual Conference. The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation based on Paragraph 2553 does include the requirement of fulfilling all apportionment commitments from the previous year and the current year and covering any unfunded pension liability. The Board of Trustees cannot recommend a church for disaffiliation without these commitments being fulfilled. Some churches

- who are clear in their decision to disaffiliate have borrowed the money to fulfill these commitments and receive a clear title released from the Trust Clause.
257. *What if a church just walks away from their church?* The Conference Board of Trustees would need to consider their response to this breach of covenant. However, there is a deep commitment from this task force and the conference leaders to maintain a fair process that does not place any extra demands on a church and one that assists with clear documentation that will be helpful for all churches seeking to disaffiliate. We recommend talking with your District Superintendent before considering anything beyond the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation.
258. *Could you outline the written ballot process?* At a church conference called to consider a resolution to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church, the local church Board of Trustees or Church Council would introduce the resolution. The District Superintendent would guide the church through a time of questions for clarification then speeches for and against the resolution. When the time comes for a vote, members would indicate on a ballot whether they are “for” the resolution or “against” the resolution to disaffiliate. Tellers would count and verify the vote and report the total and percentages to the District Superintendent who would announce the results to the church conference.
259. *How can we be assured that your unbiased meetings will take place with the local church when pastors are biased in one direction?* The outcome toward disaffiliation will be governed by the vote of the laity—not the pastor. To the extent that the laity have been given only biased materials and explanations, it is up to the laity to obtain credible information from both sides and make informed decisions. These district meetings are designed to provide such information. More information is available on the FDTF website: [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF). Qs from the Pews are important questions with opposing responses.
260. *What is being done to ensure homebound members get a vote?* See Question #19.
261. *Does state law supersede the Methodist discipline in who owns local buildings and facilities?* Moving covenantal expectations, requirements,

- and disagreements into contractual environments is complex, costly, and unpredictable. As such there is no simple answer to this question.
262. *Since the Book of Discipline has not been actively enforced since at least 1995, is there any reason we should expect the UMC to begin following the rules regarding LGBTQ inclusion?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. See Question #70.
263. *Why is the UMC going with the progressives instead of the traditionalists?* See Question #130
264. *Why are those of us who support the traditional path forward being forced to disaffiliate from the UMC when 2/3 of the 2019 General Conference delegates voted for staying on the traditional path?* 53% of General Conference delegates approved the Traditional Plan in 2019. See Question #132
265. *Why does UMC, which has always been a Bible believing church, be the one to have to change name?* Both the UMC and the GMC affirm the primacy of scriptures. Paragraph 105 of the Book of Discipline reads, “United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine. Through Scripture the living Christ meets us in the experience of redeeming grace. We are convinced that Jesus Christ is the living Word of God in our midst whom we trust in life and death. The biblical authors, illumined by the Holy Spirit, bear witness that in Christ the world is reconciled to God. The Bible bears authentic testimony to God’s self-disclosure in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as in God’s work of creation, in the pilgrimage of Israel, and in the Holy Spirit’s ongoing activity in human history.” For alignment decisions see Question #132.
266. *At annual conferences, following the current traditional Book of Discipline has been reaffirmed. Why then, must traditional congregations needs to leave to have it followed?* See Question #132
267. *If a local UMC church in good standing disaffiliates, does this church have to affiliate with GMC?* No. Churches who vote to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church may choose to affiliate with another denomination or become independent. It is important to have deep

- discussions of alignment and fulfillment of God's call upon your congregation before disaffiliating and affiliating with another group.
268. *Can a UMC become an Independent Methodist Church, such as Free Methodist?* The Free Methodist Church is a denomination in the Wesleyan family. See Question #267.
269. *Is it 2/3 of all professing members of the church's roll, or 2/3 of all voting professing members?* A church conference vote to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church (per Paragraph 2553) requires a 2/3 majority of all professing members present at the church conference. This vote is to be taken by written ballot.
270. *How would you answer the question: Why do conservatives/traditionalists have to pay to leave when we are the ones who are upholding the Discipline and scripture?* All United Methodist Churches are expected to make full payment of apportionments their first benevolent responsibility (see Paragraph 247.14 of the current Book of Discipline). Unfunded pension liability (which is offset by current pension reserves) cares for a defined benefit plan in which the church has participated with its appointed clergy. There is no financial payment expected beyond these. For alignment decisions see Question #132.
271. *If a clergyperson with UMC ordination credentials chooses to serve the GMC denomination, what is the process?* Clergy considering withdrawing from the United Methodist Church are encouraged to email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org)
272. *Does a pastor turn in or surrender their credentials and seek ordination in GMC?* See Question #232.
273. *If credentials are not to be surrendered, will UMC clergy be able to serve other denominations (ELCA, PCA, UCC)?* Yes. See Question #232. *What is the difference?* For differences, the clergyperson will need to examine each denomination being considered.
274. *Is there a plan for clergy who stay UMC if their church chooses to leave?* See Question #39. Beyond June 30, 2023, the Bishop and Cabinet will work with the clergy for a missional appointment in the Texas Annual Conference.
275. *If we decide to stay with the UMC, does anything change?* It is doubtful that the departure of churches in the Texas Annual Conference and the

- retirement of our current bishop will leave the TAC unchanged. We cannot speculate how much of a change. However, most UMC churches with UMC clergy will continue to do ministry as they are doing today.
276. *If the preacher goes to another denomination, what happens?* See Question #39. If the conditions in Question #39 are not met, then the District Superintendent would consult with the Staff Parish Relations Committee for a profile of the qualities that would best serve the mission field and congregation in the next pastor and appoint the next pastor.
277. *If we disaffiliate, what happens to our current UMC pastor? What are his options?* See Question #39.
278. *If my church does not disaffiliate this year, can this process be done, say 2 years or so from now?* The guiding paragraph regarding disaffiliation was approved by the 2019 General Conference. With the expectation of a 2020 General Conference the paragraph was written and approved to expire on December 31, 2023. General Conference has not met to extend that deadline and will not meet until the Spring of 2024. So, the current paragraph would not be available as a path beyond 12/31/2023. It is not yet clear if another path could be employed.
279. *Can a transcript of what the comptroller read today, be made available?* A video of the presentation offered at the Future Discernment Task Force district meetings can be found on our webpage [www.txcumc.org/FDTF](http://www.txcumc.org/FDTF)
280. *Since beginning today's session, I have not heard one single reference to scripture, the Bible, God's Word. Wesley's words are many times a reflection of scripture. However, God's Bible is our 'reference/study guide' in how we are to live. Please comment on this.* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. Congregations are encouraged to study the scriptures carefully and pray for the Spirit to guide you in the discernment process.
281. *Why don't they leave? Who are they? (what % is lay and % is clergy)?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. However, there is no “they” in this conversation. First of

all, we are all sisters and brothers in the kingdom of God. Second, we are all currently United Methodists who have worshipped with each other, learned from each other and served with each other. Third, we are all part of the Texas Annual Conference who have done a lot of great things together. As for alignment discussion, see Question 132.

282. *What do they want to change?* See Question #281. Related to human sexuality, the focus has often been on the three prohibitions in the Book of Discipline: that a same gender wedding cannot be officiated by a United Methodist pastor, a same gender wedding cannot be hosted by a United Methodist Church, and a non-celibate homosexual cannot be ordained or licensed as a pastor in the United Methodist Church. These restrictions are not new, have not been changed for decades, and are often debated at General Conference.
283. *What do they want to rewrite in gospel/scripture, marriage?* See Question #176 as to the process to change a teaching of the United Methodist Church.
284. *Why is my church holding its meeting to vote on disaffiliation on a Monday instead of after church on Sunday, which, likely would have a greater attendance?* This would be a question best directed to the pastor, church council, or district superintendent. It often has to do with availability of a presiding elder (usually the district superintendent) or the decision to move such a deep discussion to a time of its own given the investment of time already committed to a Sunday morning.
285. *The webpage of my church mentions the split over difference including the authority of scripture, the deity of Christ and the nature of salvation (In addition to matters of human sexuality, and related ordination). Those statements are very offensive and pertain to the foundations of Christian faith. What are the significant differences in theology?* This question includes a statement, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. For a comparison of GMC/UMC can be found on <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/umc-gmc+comparison+chart.pdf> See also Question #91.
286. *How does a church in discernment determine if they are ready to move on to disaffiliation?* This is a good question for the pastor and church

- leaders to address in consultation with the district superintendent. Some congregations use straw polls in Town Hall Meetings. Some engage in deep discussion in the church council (or its equivalent) weighing the impact that a discussion could have on the congregation.
287. *Once discernment has officially begun, can it be halted by anyone other than the local congregation?* What could cause that to happen and what recourse does the congregation have if it does? The pastor and church council have some leadership responsibilities on determining the path for these conversations. See Question #40 related to concerns about the decision of leaders.
288. If a church decides to disaffiliate but the pastor doesn't due to financial concerns for pension, will there be enough pastors within GMC to serve all the churches? See <https://globalmethodist.org> and Question #39
289. *What happens to a pastor's pension if he disaffiliates and goes to GMC?* Clergy considering withdrawing from the United Methodist Church are encouraged to contact Wespath and email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org)
290. *If we choose to disaffiliate, what happens to those pastors in Course of Study?* If the local pastor does not intend to withdraw, see Question #39. If the pastor does plan to withdraw from the United Methodist Church the pastor is encouraged to email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org)
291. *What options for continuing in the Course of Study are available if a licensed local pastor, if they choose to withdraw from the UMC?* The Course of Study is for licensed local pastors in the United Methodist Church. Pastors in other denominations would need to consult with leaders of that denomination for continuing education opportunities.
292. *Can you tell us about Adam Hamilton's ideas for a "united" church?* Adam Hamilton is widely published and quite active on the internet and social media. You would do well to look into these resources. Reverend Hamilton is the keynote speaker at That We May Be One events July 31 and August 1. For more information <https://twmbo.org>
293. *What do you say to people who see this as religion and politics, inviting the divisiveness of our country into the church?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.

294. *What will keep this from happening again years down the road to the GMC?* See Question #230
295. *If a retired minister with UMC goes with the GMC, will they still receive their retirement?* Our understanding is that a retired pastor's pension will not be impacted, but the pastor (and spouse) will no longer be eligible for the monthly insurance stipend. The pastor is encouraged to email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org)
296. *Can you take our current pastor with you when you change from UMC to GMC?* See Question #39.
297. *Do you have to be present at Annual Conference in order to disaffiliate?* No. You do have to be present at the Special Session of Annual Conference on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to vote on the recommendation by the Board of Trustees regarding local churches requesting disaffiliation.
298. *If GMC has to pay \$\$ (apportionments for this year and next year, plus bills, insurance), what does UMC pay?* The GMC as a denomination does not pay anything to the UMC or the Texas Annual Conference. Local Churches who are disaffiliating pay their portion of the unfunded liability, which was vastly reduced by an overwhelming majority of the AC in May of 2022 by allowing the Pension Reserve Fund to be credited toward that amount. Disaffiliating churches also pay the **current** year's apportionments plus the **previous** year's apportionments in full. So, if a church disaffiliates in Dec. of 2022, the church pays 2021 and 2022 apportionments. If a church disaffiliates any time in 2023, the church pays 2022 and 2023 apportionments. Any local church that follows the disaffiliation protocols and meets all the scheduled deadlines will keep their property and other assets and will be released from the trust clause. As for churches remaining UMC, all United Methodist Churches are expected to make full payment of apportionments as their first benevolent responsibility (see Paragraph 247.14 of the current Book of Discipline). Congregations continuing in the United Methodist Church will continue to be responsible for pension liabilities.
299. *Who gets possession of the buildings?* Churches who have voted to disaffiliate will retain all current liabilities and assets (including buildings). See Question 298. The Texas Annual Conference will retain all current liabilities and assets as a non-disaffiliating entity.

300. *If a church disaffiliates before the GMC is assigned legal non-profit status, what happens to the donations given by congregations -- not tax deductible?* Yes. The IRS recognizes all churches automatically as non-profit, tax-exempt organizations. The law first that represents the GMC has issued their opinion letter stating that local churches are exempt from taxation pursuant to a mandatory exception in the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section 508(c)(1)(A). Local churches are not required to file an application with the IRS to qualify as tax exempt under section 501(c)(3). Contributions to such local churches in the U.S. are eligible for tax deduction. The GMC has applied for a group ruling and it is currently pending. The GMC is advising that churches not file for their own tax exempt status with the IRS, but rely on the automatic exemption and wait for the group ruling.
301. *Of all the reasons that are leading churches to consider disaffiliation, what is considered the number one reason?* The reasons to disaffiliate or stay UMC will be different for each church as it goes through the discernment process. However, in the spirit of the question, the most common is this: many considering leaving believe that the accountability measures in the UMC to enforce the Book of Discipline are not adequate to address the issues facing the UMC currently or in the future. Many of those believe that starting a new church is a better solution than trying to restructure the current UMC. When you create something from scratch you can create it with whatever accountability protocols you like. To read about the GMC protocols of accountability, you can refer to the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline on the GMC website: <https://globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe/>
302. *If disaffiliation is chosen, what guarantee is there that the original reason does not come up again?* This is a good question that requires a bit more speculation than the Future Discernment Task Force is confident in offering. Even pinpointing the “original reason” may not receive unanimous support of the 35 capable leaders on the FDTF.
303. *What is the UMC stance on abortion?* See Question #7.
304. *Do you have to change the UMC symbol (flame and cross) if your church goes to GMC? If so, what will the symbol be?* The United Methodist Church’s Cross and Flame is copyrighted for use only on United Methodist Churches and publications. It will need to be removed

and the any removable markings with the name United Methodist Church will need to be removed. For GMC branding, to go to <https://globalmethodist.org>

305. *Will there be only a one shot chance on 2/3's vote to disaffiliate?* Discerning whether a local church should disaffiliate is on the scale of determining whether a local church should relocate. Nothing prohibits it from being voted on more than once, but it requires deep discussion and fervent prayer. If a congregation were to seek another vote, it would have to renew the discernment process.
306. *Are there any current UMC churches in Texas that have left the UMC thus far? If so, where (city).* We have had five churches to disaffiliate Katy Grace Fellowship in 2020; Houston Bering Memorial in 2021; Texarkana Buchanan, Texarkana Eylau, and Marquez in 2022.
307. *How can a church start the process of discernment if their pastor does not want to have the conversation?* See Question #40
308. *If the pastor and church council do not want to begin the process of discernment and will not call a council meeting to do so, yet the majority of the congregation wishes to do so, what recourse does the congregation have?* See Question #40
309. *What if local pastor and DS try to stall, obstruct or don't want to include all members in the process?* The rules for contacting the DS are distorted and confusing. What are the rules for discernment process? The Period for Local Church Discernment written by the District Superintendents to provide a standard guide for a process that will have differences from church to church begin, "From beginning to end this process should take at least forty days. The possibility of entering discernment can be raised to the church council for approval by either the pastor or member of the congregation. Church Council (or equivalent) votes to begin the process."
310. *If a TAC UMC church were to wait until 2023 to seek to disaffiliate, and say the new TAC bishop implemented disaffiliation rules say similar to the Louisiana Conference, how much more would the cost of disaffiliation be for that church?* The responsibility for the terms and conditions belong to the Conference Board of Trustees per Paragraph 2553.4. See Question #12.

311. *Are other UMC bishops implementing rules to discourage conference churches from disaffiliating by charging significant penalties to leave? There are reports of other conference boards of trustees including in their principles regarding disaffiliation exit fees.*
312. *After Bishop Jones retires in 2022, can local churches expect the same options available to them if they wait to have disaffiliation approval in May 2023 conference as those that were voted on in December 3, 2022 conference? Yes. See Question #12*
313. *Since disobedience has been allowed to happen, what happens if more Book of Discipline violations occur? See Questions #14 and #70. If violations occur accountability processes are included in the Book of Discipline are expected to be maintained in the Texas Annual Conference and the South Central Jurisdiction. Violations beyond the South Central Jurisdiction are very difficult to address from the South Central Jurisdiction.*
314. *Process of discernment if church board chair holders will not call a meeting or intention to vote to consider discernment while 75% of congregation is begging to enter into discernment. See Question #40*

### **South District Meeting**

315. *Why did the UMC decide this was the time to address this issue? The United Methodist Church has not decided on the pathway for disaffiliation other than a temporary measure provided by Paragraph 2553. The delays of the General Conference due to the Covid-19 pandemic prompted the Global Methodist Church to launch in May 2022, which has generated interest in disaffiliation.*
316. *Why must churches who want to follow the Book of Discipline feel the need to leave the UMC? Instead, why cannot the UMC hold churches and clergy accountable to the Book of Discipline? Then if a church or clergy do not want to follow the Book of Discipline, they can be the ones to leave the UMC. See Questions 70 and 130.*
317. *I understand that a new bishop has been identified, upon Bishop Jones end of year retirement. Is it possible to hear his views on gay marriage, should this be permitted in the future via a change to the Book of Discipline? Bishops will not be assigned until November 5, 2022. The new bishop will either be an experienced bishop currently*

- serving one of the areas in our jurisdiction or one of the three bishops elected at the Jurisdictional Conference.
318. *Is this split more than just about homosexuality? Is it a split on the theology on the core values?* The United Methodist Church does not currently have any core doctrinal statements being considered for revision. There are some leaders who continue to express a desire to have the three restrictions noted in Question #6 removed. There are also concerns expressed about the level of accountability mentioned in Question #70.
319. *Why have bishops and pastors not been disciplined for insubordination of our current disciplines?* See Question #70.
320. *How will Bishops be held to the Book of Discipline's Laws?* See Question #70.
321. *How does this decision affect UMC Churches internationally?* The United Methodist Church is a global church and as such any decisions made at General Conference have global implications.
322. *Will UMC churches in other countries also be forced with this decision?* See Question #132.
323. *Who does the UMC say Jesus is? Who does the GMC say Jesus is?* See <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/umc-gmc+comparison+chart.pdf>, <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/articles+of+religion.pdf> and <https://globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe/>
324. *Are we sure that the UMC will become more progressive? Are we sure that the GMC will not?* Responding to these questions requires more speculation than the members of the Future Discernment Task Force are comfortable in expressing with any level of confidence. The General Conference is the determining body of the United Methodist Church and the Convening Conference of the Global Methodist Church will establish its standards.
325. *Of the 38,000 UMC pastors in the US, how many have broken the discipline by conducting same-sex weddings?* We do not have records of the number of violations. However, as with all covenants it is not the number of violations that concern adherents, but the violations themselves.

326. *I was told that the UMC is planning to remove reference of “Father” and other gendered reference from doctrine. Is this truth or just speculation?* This is not true and may even be generous to be referred to as speculation.
327. *Where does the UMC stand on following Biblical guidance?* See Question #92
328. *Are there any changes in the wind regarding the UMC stand on atonement?* No.
329. *Does the UMC believe the Bible is outdated?* No. See Question #92.
330. *Will the UMC look to change Biblical interpretations?* There are some General Conference delegates in the UMC who have shifted in their understanding of homosexuality as contextually different than the conditions in the first century and before. However, the General Conference of the UMC has continued to affirm the same stance since 1972.
331. *Can you confirm that the recent UMC proposals on gay marriage would only lift the blanket ban, and that individual churches and pastors would be able to follow their beliefs and not be forced?* There have been proposals to lift the three restrictions mentioned in Question #6, but we are not aware of any proposals that would mandate churches to host same gender weddings or mandate pastors to officiate same gender weddings. See also Question #22.
332. *Is the UMC changing our theological beliefs? If in the future it does, can we disaffiliate and join the GMC and what requirements and restrictions will there be?* Shifts in theological beliefs are not being proposed. Currently, the paragraph (§ 2553) being used for disaffiliation does have an expiration of December 31, 2023. It is unclear whether this paragraph will be extended or other pathways provided at the General Conference to be held in 2024.
333. *Please define “professing member” since only a “professing member” can vote for disaffiliation.* See Question #135.
334. *How do we ensure that only members vote during a disaffiliation vote?* Most churches have a list of professing members and can have members check off their names when they sign in at a duly called Church Conference. Some are also requesting professing members to pre-register for the Church Conference.

335. *Are votes at a church conference anonymous?* Yes. While members are required to sign in as they attend a church conference, the written ballots do not require a signature and are to be anonymous.
336. *Does a vote to disaffiliate require 51% or 67% approval?* ¶ 2553 requires a 2/3 majority. See Question #29 for why it is the preferred paragraph. 8-22-22 UPDATE: The Judicial Council did release its decision stating, “The General Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of “Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.” Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.”
337. *What is a reasonable attempt to contact members still on the roles but not “recently” active?* Each church will need to determine its best practices. ¶ 228.2 list some recommended procedures.
338. *Why is there only one day and time to vote? I will be out of town that day and want to know that my vote will be counted. Please consider offering an alternate day.* Church Conferences and Special Sessions of Annual Conferences are days that require a great deal of planning and coordinating, making multiple dates impractical. Members unable to attend are encouraged to express their preferences to leaders of the church. However, only present members at these conferences will have their vote counted. See also Question #19.
339. *The website materials mention the possibility of a straw vote. Can you describe that process, including timing in the discernment process?* Some churches have employed non-binding straw polls at town hall meetings to determine a best path forward. If the straw poll clearly reveals a preference one way or another, the church leaders have a better sense as to whether a request for a church conference is warranted.
340. *When do you have to name which entity you choose IF you choose to disaffiliate from the UMC?* Since disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church does set in motion the altering of a lot of legal documents, determining where a church will affiliate would need to occur soon after a decision to disaffiliate.

341. *Why does the UMC need past apportionments as this is a barrier to disaffiliation (is the UMC in financial difficulty)?* The apportionments that are required under our current Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation are the apportionments that support the current budget. The 2023 budget was approved at the 2022 Session of the Texas Annual Conference. Any payment of 2021 apportionments that were not paid in 2021 will be used to offset some of the losses incurred in the 2023 budget.
342. *How urgent is it for a congregation interested in disaffiliation to formally be disaffiliated before 12/31/22?* That would need to be determined by the local church. A number of churches were considering disaffiliation earlier in the year, but waited to see if the Texas Annual Conference would disaffiliate. When the Judicial Council clarified that an Annual Conference could not disaffiliate, a special session was called to consider those churches who had determined that disaffiliation from the UMC was their best path forward. ¶ 2553 does expire on December 31, 2023, so some churches do feel the need to discern before the December 3, 2022 Special Session or the 2023 Session of the Annual Conference.
343. *What determines the amount of disaffiliation funds owed to the conference?* Currently, the financial requirements are full payment of apportionments from the previous year and the current year (conference and district), as well as unfunded pension liability. Our current pension reserves covers all unfunded liability quoted by Wespath. This is recalculated each quarter, so the unfunded pension liability could change on October 1, as could the pension reserves due to market fluctuations and interest rate changes.
344. *When a church disaffiliates and pays its past apportionments, does the church own its property and assets?* Our current Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation in accordance with Paragraph 2553, does release the Trust Clause of the United Methodist Church.
345. *What legally binds those churches that choose to disaffiliate to pay the UMC? Why should those churches have to pay those that choose to NOT follow the code of discipline? Could they take the UMC to court and pay nothing?* See Question #261

346. *What happens to the assets of a church if the church disaffiliates and goes broke because they cannot afford all bills? Sells property? Where does the money go?* This would depend on with whom the church affiliates and the bylaws of the congregation.
347. *If we disaffiliate will we be able to use Lakeview, participate in UMARMY, Methodist Women, etc.?* See Question #25.
348. *What about Methodist Hospital and SMU/Perkins School of Theology?* Neither of these entities limit participation in their ministries and resources to United Methodists.
349. *Do I understand that there is NO unfunded pension liability up to 9/1/22?* Actually, the quarter ends on September 30, so new calculations will apply on October 1. The current market combined with Wespath modifications for determining unfunded pension liabilities have brought the Texas Annual Conference Unfunded Pension Liabilities at Wespath to less than what we currently hold in pension reserves. See also Question #351.
350. *If our church disaffiliates (or not) how do we handle this year's charge conference reports? We won't know our leadership pool or finances until after the church conference vote.* A church's continued ministry would indicate that it would be beneficial for the church to elect leaders and establish a budget for 2023, regardless of its denominational affiliation.
351. *If the unfunded pension liability costs go up after 10/1/2022, do you expect the increase to be hundreds of dollars? Thousands? Tens of thousands?* While it is difficult to predict markets, we do not expect huge shifts in these figures from one quarter to another.
352. *What is the impact to our current pastoral leadership? Do they automatically follow the vote of the church?* Not every pastor will decide in the same way of the congregation. See Question #39.
353. *What are the plans to immediately replace clergy that disaffiliate and the church that decides to stay UMC?* See Question #39.
354. *If we remain UMC but are at the conservative end, how will the appointment of clergy be handled?* The appointment of clergy to local churches is done through consultation with the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the clergy person, and the district

superintendent. The consultation includes many factors. This process is not expected to change.

355. *Do ordained ministers need to be reordained if disaffiliating?* See Question #232. Please email [clergyquestions@txcumc.org](mailto:clergyquestions@txcumc.org) with your particular questions and circumstances.
356. *What will leaving the UMC do to the retirement for our pastors?* See Question #11.
357. *How urgent is it for a congregation interested in disaffiliation to formally be disaffiliated before 12/31/22?* See Question #342.
358. *If a church disaffiliates from the UMC and joins the GMC, I understand the GMC will place a lien on the church property. True or false? If true, why?* Our understanding is there is no trust clause in the GMC. Please see <https://globalmethodist.org>
359. *How are short term tax id numbers handled since the government response is not quick?* See Question #300.
360. *Does my church need to be incorporated (and what state) to position itself for a move to the GMC, especially since they'll be little protection through connectionalism?* There is a checklist for disaffiliating churches that should guide a church through that process. See <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/local+church+disaffiliation/new+docs/revisions/disaffiliation+timeline+for+2553+december+3%2c+2022.pdf> and <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/local+church+disaffiliation/new+docs/revisions/disaffiliation+timeline+for+2553+may+30%2c+2023.pdf>

### **Central South District Meeting**

361. *Someone told me that if her church decided to stay in the UMC they would not be able to say that Jesus is the son of God or that they believe in the virgin birth. Is that true?* No. The United Methodist Church's doctrinal standards and theology of Christ are unchanged. Please see <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/articles+of+religion.pdf> and <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/confession+of+faith+umc.pdf>

362. *How will the decisions impact the appointment process? Will the size of the conference change?* The size of the Texas Annual Conference will change with every disaffiliation of a local congregation. The appointment process will continue under the consultative approach with which it currently operates.
363. *We hear “230” in discernment. How many are actually discerning vs just asked for \$ information?* See Question #179.
364. *Can/will LGBTQ couples be able to marry in the UMC?* See Question #6.
365. *Has anyone (Bishop Jones, judicial council, etc.) addressed the ethics of UMC pastors keeping their ordination while leading their church to disaffiliate and join the GMC?* Disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church is a provision in the current Book of Discipline (Paragraph 2553). While we do encourage a fair process of discernment and dissemination of accurate information, providing leadership in the discernment process is not contrary to our covenant.
366. *Of the 38,000 UMC pastors in the US, how many have broken the discipline by conducting same-sex weddings?* See Question #325.
367. *In his opening remarks, Bishop Jones said “where doctrines change the discipline changes.” How are doctrines projected to change in the UMC? What is the process that could happen?* Bishop Jones’ remarks were in the context of discussing the prohibitions identified in Question #6, which he believes will either be lifted (through General Conference action) or neglected (through lack of accountability) in the future.
368. *When you speak of clergy and bishop disobedience, specifically what are you speaking about?* See Question #367
369. *How will apportionments for church that remain in the UMC be impacted if a substantial number of churches disaffiliate?* The TAC is committed to controlling expenses and leveraging our reserves in as much as is practical to prevent significant increases in local church apportionments.
370. *How is it that this great church break is because of one issue?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
371. *Are the leaders who have expressed a desire to go GMC been allowed to remain in leadership in the UMC in spite of their new found*

- loyalties? Such as DCOM, BOM, Pastoral, etc.?* See Question #365. We remain people of covenant and expect high capacity leaders to continue to lead with high capacity and integrity.
372. *Are provisions in place to assure that members who vote not to disaffiliate from the UMC who vote in the minority are given any consideration other than the ability to join churches who choose not to disaffiliate from the GMC? The Texas Annual Conference is committed to establishing new faith communities in areas where the UUMC presence is significantly reduced.*
373. *Why is the group that is desiring to change the discipline staying while those upholding the discipline have to leave?* See Questions #130 and #132.
374. *After all of this is over, what will happen to the UMC? Where do we go from here?* The United Methodist Church will continue to seek to represent God in the community through missions and evangelism, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
375. *After Bishop Jones retires, is the TAC at risk of changing any disaffiliation requirements (such as length of discernment time) before the May 2023 Annual Conference meeting?* See Question #12
376. *How or who makes the decision whether or not a specific church/congregation will have a discernment process? (pastor is saying we are not going to do this.)* See Questions #40 and 41.
377. *Who should contact the DS to start the discernment process in the local church?* See Question #30.
378. *What is the proper role of a pastor who is trying to avoid discussing this issue with the congregation? (That is, make the decision or have a small group make the decision?)* See Question #40.
379. *What is our recourse when our GMC positive pastor refuses to allow a UMC positive pastor (from outside of the congregation) to come participate in information meetings? Doesn't this ignore the point of the Burnham amendment at Annual Conference? The Burnham Amendment addressed the process of Future Discernment Task Force District Meetings. Concerns over pastoral leadership should follow the process recommended in Question #40.*
380. *What are the objective standards before starting a discernment process?*  
See

<https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/+period+of+local+church+discernment.pdf>

381. *What if a church votes to disaffiliate but cannot pay the fees/apportionments?* See Question #59.
382. *If 100% of the congregation approved move to disaffiliate, why do we need a 40 days discernment period?* The 40 day discernment period is a recommended minimum time frame for the period of prayer and discernment for such a significant decision for a congregation. However, the District Superintendent has the responsibility to make a final determination about what is appropriate for a specific congregation
383. Can we get a copy of the video of the choice between GMC and UMC? Yes. Please see <https://www.txcumc.org/FDTF> \
384. With the PowerPoint presentation be available to us to share with our congregation? Yes. Please see <https://www.txcumc.org/FDTF> \
385. *Is there a reason to disaffiliate by the end of 2022 vs. May 2023?* See Question #342
386. *What happens if the church and pastor want different things? Church wants to disaffiliate but the pastor does not? Vice versa?* See Question #40.
387. What are the steps of **staying** UMC? There are no required steps for remaining in the UMC. Some churches are electing to enter into a discernment process resulting in affirming their commitment to the UMC or deciding to deliberate on disaffiliation, but this is not a requirement for any congregation wanting to remain UMC.
388. If churches have financing through TMF, will refinancing be required for disaffiliation?
- a. When a church disaffiliates, the new entity will forward its updated Articles of Incorporation to TMF, along with the Quit Claim Deed from the TAC. A title update will be required, and the new entity assumes the note with TMF at the same rate and terms, including the remaining term on the note.
  - b. The new entity would need to pay whatever fees are associated with this transaction. If the new entity is created by some other method other than disaffiliation, and the Conference does not release the

Trust Clause and/or it is ruled invalid by some other means, the note can still be assumed by the new entity.

- c. The new entity will need to provide a new Title Policy, and pay any other fees associated with this transaction. The new entity would have the option of creating a new note with a new deed of trust (i.e., the new entity wanted to obtain more favorable terms); if this is the path chosen, it would go through TMF's normal loan process.
389. *Under what circumstances is a "simple majority" vote required as opposed to a "two-thirds" majority vote? See Question #29. 8-22-22 UPDATE: The Judicial Council did release its decision stating, "The General Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of "Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality." Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church."*
390. What happens if the church does not disaffiliate but the pastor and associate pastors decide to leave the UMC? See Question #39.
391. *Coming from a smaller church, at times it can be difficult to pay into the conference. What is the TAC's commitment to assisting smaller churches with costs associated with disaffiliation? See Question #59.*
392. If you remain in the UMC can you request not to have a LGBTQ+ minister? See Question #20.
393. *If a disaffiliation vote has majority but not 2/3, can a second vote be held? If not for December 3, then for annual conference 2023? While a second period of discernment can be employed by a congregation resulting in a subsequent called church conference, such action must consider the emotional costs to the congregation.*
394. *As a church do we need a lawyer to help the church to disaffiliate? No. The Texas Annual Conference has a fair process for disaffiliation and the broad representation on this Future Discernment Task Force would advise against such an expensive and unnecessary option.*
395. *What happens to my UMC membership if my church goes GMC or other? Membership is with a local congregation. If the congregation affiliates with the Global Methodist Church, the members of that church by default become members of a Global Methodist Church unless they have taken action to transfer to a nearby United Methodist Church.*

396. *If we vote to disaffiliate, what happens if our creditor/landlord will not accept assignment of our lease/loan?* The process for assignment of leases, loans, or other credit obligations is something that will have to be negotiated with the new entity and each individual lessor or financial institution. There is no standard path for this to take place. Each church should examine their lease, loan documents, or credit approval guidelines to determine what is allowed for assignments, etc.
397. *My pastor says everyone must preregister to vote. If a member doesn't preregister but comes to the church conference, can that person vote?* Yes. Every professing member of the church present at a Church Conference will be given the opportunity to cast a written ballot. Pre-registration helps to prepare for who is coming and verify membership status in advance.
398. Will the GMC be able to donate church funds to anti-LGBTQ groups?  
See <https://globalmethodist.org>

### **Southwest District**

399. *If your church remains in the UMC, could an individual pastor make his or her own decision as to whether or not to conduct gay marriage ceremonies?* See Question #331
400. *The UMC seems indifferent to churches wanting to leave, even coaching churches on how to go about it. Why has the UMC chosen to support fringe elements, at the expense of retaining traditionalists? Couldn't this split be prevented, just by rejecting progressivism and adhering to doctrine?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. For matters of accountability see Question #70. For doctrinal standards, see Question #91.
401. *Can someone explain or speak to the ethics of UMC paid pastors promoting the GMC and leading their UMC congregation to leave?* See Question #365.
402. *Are there options for a local church to stay affiliated with the UMC and adopt Traditional doctrine to protect/align itself with the current Book of Discipline and ensure future clergy appointments would be consistent with the Traditional viewpoint?* Yes. There are a number of

- traditional/conservative churches remaining in the UMC. See Question #20.
403. *What about historical sites or cemetery grounds?* This would depend upon any organizational structure and identity of those entities. It would be good to check the deeds and documentation.
404. *Why shouldn't congregations that are unhappy with the BOD have to leave instead of those that are happy with it?* See Question #130.
405. *Why does the provision for disaffiliation state it is related to ordination of homosexual pastors but the present doctrine of the UMC does not allow it? Is it because all assume this will be changed in the future?* The current provision has been used by churches who are troubled by the current prohibitions and by churches troubled by a possible lifting of the prohibitions identified in Question #6. It is unclear whether those prohibitions will be lifted in the Book of Discipline by the General Conference.
406. *Is the concern mostly about homosexuality or about churches not following the Book of Discipline regarding homosexuality?* The impasse appears to be in regards to a persistent appeal to lift the prohibitions identified in Question #6 and recent violations of those restrictions by leaders in the church (bishops, clergy, and boards of ordained ministry).
407. *If the UMC Book of Discipline remains unchanged, how will ongoing disobedience by some churches be dealt with in order to maintain/restore the credibility of the UMC?* See Question #70. Strengthening accountability would require some additional legislation and structure by the General Conference.
408. *Will the UMC continue to not discipline churches that don't follow the theology of Methodism?* See Question #70.
409. *Has our next bishop already been selected/assigned?* See Question #317.
410. *When will the judicial council vote to determine the validity of 2548.2 from the 2016 Book of Discipline?* While the commitment is before the October meeting of the Judicial Council, some informed leaders expect a decision in the month of August.
411. *Are there churches in the Pan-Eurasian Conference under Bishop Sergey that have announced discernment or is it only an American*

- activity?* There are churches outside of the United States discerning the possibility of disaffiliating from the United Methodist Church.
412. *What happens to laity who have gone through most of the training to be a certified lay speaker after their church disaffiliates?* If the laity are disaffiliating from the UMC, they would need to check with the entity with whom they are affiliating.
413. *What is the UMC doing to rein in rogue clergy and bishops that are preaching against the trinity, resurrection, virgin birth and the second coming?* While there has always been such extremes in other denominations as well as the UMC, the doctrinal standards have not changed and the accountability depends on faithful denominational leaders (Bishops, District Superintendents, Boards of Ordained Ministry, etc.).
414. *What do we do if the pastor drags their feet, doesn't share information on disaffiliation, wasn't interested in coming today?* See Question #40
415. *The 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence in "Period of Local Church Discernment".... "this process is meant for the local church, not the pastor." What does that mean? And what does a local church do if the pastor insists on being present for local church meetings?* The pastor is the spiritual leader of the congregation. It is appropriate for the pastor to be present for these meetings and even providing leadership in these meetings. However, the decision belongs to the members of the church. (see Question #157).
416. *We've heard that 228 churches are in the discernment process. What does that mean exactly? That 228 have contacted their DS? That they've requested \$ estimate? That they plan to vote?* See Question #179.
417. *If you complete a process of discernment and don't vote now, can you vote before 2023 annual conference without a new discernment process?* Technically, yes. However, we would encourage the congregation and pastor to stay in touch with your District Superintendent.
418. *If a church disaffiliated then decides later to re-affiliate with the UMC, what happens to its property?* The property belongs to the local church. The Trust Clause insures the perpetuity of its use for United Methodist worship and ministry. Most likely the trust clause would be reinstated for a re-affiliating congregation.

419. *How was the question: “How can an Annual Conference leave the UMC?” posed to the jurisdictional committee?* The declaratory decision was requested of the Judicial Council. See <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/judicial-council/judicial-council-decision-home/judicial-decisions/decision-1444>
420. *If you don’t get the 2/3 vote, can you vote again later and how soon?* See Question #393.
421. *Can the Texas Annual Conference disaffiliate as a whole? No, at least not at this time.* See <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/judicial-council/judicial-council-decision-home/judicial-decisions/decision-1444>
422. *After 2553 expires, will churches be allowed to leave the UMC ever?* It remains unclear whether the next General Conference will extend this timeline, create another pathway, or take any other action.
423. *If the Judicial Council rejects 2548.2 as a process, what happens to the churches that used it?* It is unclear at this point, but the Judicial Council could render all such votes null and void, especially if they fall short of the 2/3 threshold stated in Paragraph 2553. For this reason, churches are advised to use Paragraph 2553, until the Judicial Council offers its decision on Paragraph 2548.2.
424. *Since the GMC will not hold property, to what entity do we deed our church?* See <https://globalmethodist.org/connect/>
425. *Might it be possible to disaffiliate in 3 or 5 years? If not, why?* See Question #82.
426. *Is there any reason that after all of the work of trying to disaffiliate, that the church would deny disaffiliation?* See Question #1.
427. *What if a church decides to disaffiliate while currently owing on a loan to the Methodist Foundation? Will it be due immediately?* See Question #388
428. *Will the names of the people who voted to disaffiliate be used by the UMC to harass or intimidate those members, or will they otherwise be provided to other religious or political groups either for advertising or targeting purposes? How will the identity of those members be protected?* Votes at Church Conferences are not linked to names of who

voted for and who voted against. The Texas Annual Conference has never tolerated such harassment and is certainly committed to lead with love.

429. *To get to the 2/3 majority, must every member of the church vote or do we just count the votes of the members we received?* The vote following Paragraph 2553 to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church requires a 2/3 majority of all professing members present at a duly called church conference.
430. *Does the written vote for disaffiliation need to include your name?* No. While voters need to be professing members of the local church they do not sign their ballots.
431. *If a traditional leaning congregation remains in the UMC, what is your prediction that a future pastor who is homosexual would be appointed to that church against the desires of the SPR? (I think this is an implied fear that isn't likely but needs to be addressed.)* See Question #20.
432. *If a church voted to disaffiliate this year but a pastor chooses to remain with the UMC, does that pastor have to be immediately reappointed? If the pastor and local church are both willing, could a UMC pastor serve at a GMC church, or vice versa, for the 2023-2024 appointment cycle?* See Question #39. Beyond June 30, 2023, it is unlikely that such a cross denominational appointment would continue.
433. *Please explain how a church can go one way (ex GMC) and for months the pastors (who plan to go GMC ultimately) don't resign their UMC ordination? Are they waiting for the GMC to become official in the 18-24 months listed on the GMC website?* Most pastors who plan to withdraw from the UMC and serve a church who intends to disaffiliate on December 31, 2022, seem to be trying to sync those dates so the shifts happen simultaneously.
434. *What happens if pastors want to be in a different denomination from the congregation vote? What is the timing of the change, July 1 like the current appointment cycle? Could pastors stay on until other pastors are appointed?* See Question #39.

## **Central North**

435. *When in August will the judicial council rule on 2/3 or simple majority vote?* On August 22, 2022 The Judicial Council did release its decision stating, “The General Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of “Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.” Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.” ¶ 2553 stipulates, “The decision to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church present at the church conference.”
436. *What financial strategies and plans are being made now to help keep the UMC financially healthy after congregations disaffiliate? What happens next?* The Conference Council of Finance and Administration is looking carefully at the financial implications on the Texas Annual Conference by disaffiliations of local churches. They will be recommending financial guidelines as we move into 2023, utilizing spending adjustments, designated reserves, and undesignated operating reserves.
437. *Why did our board of ministry pass a document asking our candidates to refrain from using masculine language for God including father and son? How does our board plan to use this in evaluation of candidates readiness for ministry? Could this document be share with laity?* The Board of Ordained Ministry has encouraged candidates, through a document authored by Carol Turner and Chappell Temple, to expand their language when referring to God, but has not suggested or forbidden candidates from referring to God as Father. Excerpts from the document are provided below:
- “While there is a preponderance of masculine imagery and pronouns used in referring to God in scripture, there are other places within the scripture that present a more expansive portrayal of God that transcends human categories such as the designation of gender... Accordingly, it is helpful to paint a wider picture of who God is and thus allow all to find within God the One who loves them irrespective of such human distinctions as gender or race. Care should be taken when writing papers to include expansive language about God.

"In speaking about Jesus, the human incarnation of God was obviously male, so masculine pronouns make sense. References to the Godhead, however, including the Holy Spirit, allow us to utilize neutral or even feminine pronouns and other non-gender specific references as appropriate. Again, the goal of our language should be to present God as relatable to those of every station and circumstance in life, recognizing that male-only references will fall short of depicting the full majesty of who God is.

"Recognize that biblical translations are never exact representations of the original language, and thus there is flexibility in how ideas are rendered. The masculine plural suffix for Hebrew nouns, for instance, is used when there is a group of mixed gender, so that "sons," for example, can be faithfully translated as "children."

438. *Should the discernment process be unbiased? Fair? What does that look like in the local church?* It should. Please see <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/+period+of+local+church+discernment.pdf> for guidance in a fair discernment process.
439. *Assuming we believe both viewpoints should be presented, what constitutes a balanced discernment? Should both UMC and GMC have equal time to present their views?* See Question #438
440. *If a church votes to disaffiliate from the UMC, what if any reasons would there be that the Annual Conference would not approve that request?* See Question #1, which assumes all expectations in *The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation* have been met.
441. *With the number of churches expected to leave the UMC, how will traditional values have a voice in the big tent of the BOD is changed to a progressive doctrine?* There is much speculation in this question, but one of the tenets of the breadth of the United Methodist Church is to honor the traditionalists and conservatives in the UMC, even as it seeks to honor include voices that are more progressive and centrist.
442. *Are ministers who preach against basic doctrinal beliefs being disciplined?* See Question #70.
443. *If a congregation leaves the UMC, do individual memberships automatically transfer to the new denomination or must each*

- individual elect to transfer?* Yes. The members are members of the local church. If the local church changes its affiliation, the members move with the church by default unless they take steps to unite with another United Methodist Church.
444. *What is the benefit of going through discernment now or waiting until after December 3?* As with every decision, there are costs and benefits. Some churches have determined their direction and acting in 2022 would not include apportionment responsibilities for 2023. However, some churches have not yet determined their direction and a rushed discernment could be detrimental to the cohesion of the congregation.
445. *What are the bounds of the big tent that the United Methodists speak of?* The big tent is an expression to indicate the breadth of theological perspectives, styles of worship, and forms of church government in the United Methodist Church, which is a global church.
446. *What happens if a church chooses to disaffiliate after December 2023? Why is this timeline prior to the 2024 General Conference?* Paragraph 2553, the guiding paragraph related to disaffiliations, expires on December 31, 2023. General Conference will not meet until the Spring of 2024. There is not a clear path for disaffiliation in that time span and only General Conference can determine if a pathway is provided beyond that session.
447. *If the local UMC does not own the property of the church can they still leave?* Paragraph 2553, the guiding paragraph related to disaffiliations, provides a path for chartered United Methodist congregations to disaffiliate, whether they own property or not.
448. *Are bishops following the rules of discipline?* The vast majority are. See Question #70 for the exceptions.
449. *What can be/is being done for bishops who ignore and/or break the rules of discipline?* See Question #70
450. *How can they be trusted to honor the disciplines moving forward?* See Question #70
451. *What is the precedent for 2/3 vote to disaffiliate vs simple majority?* See Question #29. 8-22-22 UPDATE: The Judicial Council did release its decision stating, “The General Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of “Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human

Sexuality.” Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.”

452. *How will UMC apportionments be affected by the churches that are disaffiliating? Go up, down, stay the same? See Question #4*
453. *It was stated that pension liability is zero through September 30. How can churches understand potential liability for disaffiliation on or after October 1? See Question #343*
454. *It seems 2553 was put in place in 2019 for 4 years in hopes that the GC2020 would address graceful exiting the UMC. Could the judicial council possibly extend 2553 to GC2024? Only the General Conference has that authority and it will meet in the Spring of 2024.*
455. *After gay marriage is affirmed in the UMC, what guard rails can be relied upon to withstand future cultural pressures? There is much speculation and generalizations in this question making a specific response difficult. The General Conference would need to lift the current restrictions related to same gender weddings and it has not yet done so.*
456. *How many churches in the district are in the process of disaffiliation? See Question #179.*
457. *Is it true the two largest churches have voted to leave? The Woodlands Methodist Church and Faithbridge have both voted through duly called church conferences to disaffiliate and will be among the churches presented by the Board of Trustees for disaffiliation at the Special Session of the Texas Annual Conference on December 3.*
458. *Will the UMC allow GMC to participate in UMC foreign mission work? See Questions # 25 and #26.*
459. *How is the discussion going for disaffiliation with Lakeview and UMARMY? See Questions # 25 and #26.*
460. *If the trust clause was created to ensure orthodox teachings in the church, why is it now being used as a weapon against those who wish to affirm orthodox doctrinal teachings? This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.*
461. *Will the TAC’s newly affirmed priority of shifting funding from the conference to the district and local churches continue or will these*

- dollars our local churches gave to the conference be cut? See Question #436. Money given for designated ministries will be spent on those designated ministries.*
462. *If our church elects to affiliate with GMC but our pastor elects to stay with the UMC, how does our church (under GMC) get a new pastor, what is the GMC process? See Question #39 and beyond June 30, 2023 see <https://globalmethodist.org>.*
463. *With so many churches leaving the TAC, won't this eventually raise the apportionment about of those churches who stay in the UMC? See Question #4*
464. *If there are far more pastors than appointments following disaffiliation, how will pastors compensation be funded given the reality of guaranteed appointment? Will the conference spend down reserves for this? United Methodist elders in good standing are guaranteed an appointment at minimum salary or better. The Center for Leadership Formation is carefully monitoring this and we do not anticipate depleting reserves.*
465. *The BOD is completely irrelevant as bishops can decide what they will and will not follow with no accountability. If we stay UMC, how will this change? Why would laity trust again? See Question #70. General Conference would need to address accountability standards and processes for this to change.*
466. *Does the GMC ordain LGBTQ and/or marry same sex people? See <https://globalmethodist.org>.*
467. *What discretion will the new bishop have to change the requirement for a local church to disaffiliate? See Question #12.*
468. *Will the TAC settlement with BSA continue to shield the disaffiliated local churches from lawsuits? If the church was a UM church when the BSA Bankruptcy Plan was approved, it will be included in the plan.*
469. *Why does the UMC continue to increase the apportionments when the UMC general agencies have missions of \$ in endowments and reserves when the local churches are struggling? Both the Texas Annual Conference and the General Church have been reducing budgets in recent years.*
470. *Since the unfunded pension in the TAC now exceeds the liability, why is there no consideration of refunds? Pension Reserves and Unfunded*

- Pension Liability numbers are fluctuating numbers related to market sensitivity and interest rates making refunds impractical.
471. *Since the entire western jurisdictional council of bishops has ignored the judicial council, as a matter of conscience and justice, why can't a local church do the same with no consequences in regard to disaffiliation?* See Question #70. Members of the Texas Annual Conference and the South Central Jurisdiction continue to hold one another in covenant. The Texas Annual Conference has sought to be fair in its following the Book of Discipline regarding disaffiliation.
472. *Is the reason to form the GMC to facilitate changing the Book of Discipline for the UMC since it has failed twice by 60-40 vote?* See <https://globalmethodist.org>.

### **West District**

473. *Why have the disobedient not been “defrocked” and dismissed?* See Question #70
474. *For those that stay with the UMC what will happen to their apportionments, will they go up or down?* See Question #4
475. *Will the Global Methodist Church welcome same sex couples who are legally married by the State of Texas or another U.S. state?* The Future Discernment Task Force has tried to stay away from answering questions on behalf of the Global Methodist Church. Instead, you are encouraged to go to <https://globalmethodist.org>
476. *If our small church never had/supported a boy scout troop, does the “Boy Scout Indemnity Clause” have to stay in the formal disaffiliation agreement? If the answer is yes, why?* It does not. The local church has no liability for an entity with which it has not been connected.
477. *Does the DS need to be at the vote meeting?* Technically, the district superintendent or an elder designated by the district superintendent is to preside over charge and church conferences according to Paragraph 246.5 of the current UM Book of Discipline. Practically, every district superintendent has committed to be present and preside over these church conferences related to disaffiliation.
478. *Will the GMC have programs such as UMCOR and UMARMY?* Please see <https://globalmethodist.org> and Questions #25 and 26.

479. *Who establishes the dates of the key decision points? As the discernment process has progressed, do you see a need to establish more reasonable deadlines?* One of the disadvantages of submitted questions is the lack of opportunity for conversation. The timelines on <https://www.txcumc.org/FDTF> were developed with *reasonable* as a guiding principle.
480. *How did the UMC address the disobedience of bishops? How were or are they being disciplined? Doesn't the past leadership of the church say something about leadership for the future?* See Question #70
481. *Is it the sense that the bishops will change the discipline to allow the ordination of practicing homosexuals and gay marriages in the UMC?* Only the General Conference can change the Book of Discipline through submitted and approved legislation at its sessions.
482. *For churches that share a preacher now, will both churches have to agree on which option to approve or can one go one option and the other go another option?* See Question #39. It is assumed that churches and clergy will be denominationally aligned on July 1, 2023.
483. *How is it determined that the UMC will become more progressive? If the church of Africa holds a large % of the vote and doesn't want to be more progressive, how will the progressive move be possible?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions. General Conference delegates are responsible for considering and approving any legislation that is included in the Book of Discipline.
484. *Will policies be set in place to positively constrain the clergy and especially the bishops to church law in the UMC?* See Question #70
485. *After reading Mark 10:6-9 which states "Jesus answered that marriage was between a man and a woman" how can this be interpreted to bless the same sex marriage by the church?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
486. *Why unfunded pension liability? Apportionment is paid every year.* See Question #349 and #37.
487. *Can you be a "Methodist" church, not a "free Methodist" church? Can you be a Methodist Episcopal?* There are many denominational options for those congregations who are disaffiliating from the United

Methodist Church. It is highly recommended that a congregation do a deep dive into the history, doctrine, and polity of any denomination they are considering.

488. *Should our church vote to disaffiliate and go with the GMC would our pastor be able to go with us should he/she so desire?* See Question #39.
489. *Should we vote to disaffiliate would we lose the property that we now utilize?* No. The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation include the release of the Trust Clause that binds the church and its property to the United Methodist witness in their mission field.
490. *If a church had a preliminary vote and voted to not leave the UMC can they vote again at a later date?* Yes. As long as they follow the discernment process and stay in touch with the district superintendent. Paragraph 2553 that guides the Principles does, however, expire on December 31, 2023.
491. *How can we remain in a denomination that allows pastors, while taking their vows of ordination, kneeling at a Holy Altar, in the presence of God and the Holy Spirit, in the presence of the Bishop, the Elders, their family and friends..... all while crossing their fingers behind their back?* This is more of a statement than a question, but our commitment as a Future Discernment Task Force is to include all appropriate submissions.
492. *Isn't it possible that this discernment plays out, the church splits, and no change is made to the UMC Book of Discipline?* What then? It is possible. The congregation is still called to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ to their mission field.
493. *Section 2548.2 lets any church disaffiliate without paying the UMC any money. All of a sudden, in 2019, a new rule was added, section 2553, which give each conference power to decide what a church must do to disaffiliate, including financial obligations. What gives? Not fair.* 1) Paragraph 2548.2 was included in the Book of Discipline in 1948 and did not have as its intent disaffiliation of local congregations. On August 22, 2023 the Judicial Council released its decision stating, "The General Conference enacted ¶ 2553 with the intent that the process set forth therein be used for the stated purpose of "Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality." Therefore, the process in ¶ 2548.2 may not be used as a pathway for local churches

- to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.” 2) The financial obligations included in the Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliations are the commitments that every congregation makes. See Question #59.
494. *What happens to pastors who want to remain UMC but the church chooses to disaffiliate? Will there be an immediate shuffle of appointments? See Question #39.*
495. *What about extension ministries and the reduction of their apportionments? See Question #436.*
496. Who does all of this effort? Is it the Church Council including all other groups (trustees, finance, membership, etc.)? See <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/+period+of+local+church+discernment.pdf>
497. After disaffiliation 12/31/22, churches can't use United but you have federal forms like 1099 to be completed for 2022 but completed in 2023. Expenses and fund were developed under the name of United and should be used the 1099 form. How to handle? Forms should be filed under the name of the entity under which they were managed. For more information please email [disaffiliation@txcumc.org](mailto:disaffiliation@txcumc.org)
498. Our deeds are very old, 1852-1914. Can we list where deeds are recorded in county records (book #, page #, article #) and just turn in those references? A copy of the records from the county should suffice. For more information please email [disaffiliation@txcumc.org](mailto:disaffiliation@txcumc.org)
499. *What is the future of the Methodist Retirement Communities such as The Langford next door to this church and Crestview in Bryan? In a recent Methodist Retirement Communities Board meeting the following statement was affirmed, “Since MRC’s relationship is historically with the Texas Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, that should remain the primary relationship. For now there will be no changes in the relationship with the TAC.”*
500. What happens to campus ministries in this schism? See Question #7 in <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/questions+from+pews+7.11.22.pdf>
501. *Where do members of the UMC go if their church votes to leave? The Center for Leadership Formation is creating list of United Methodist*

- Churches that are remaining in the Texas Annual Conference as well as a list of potential new faith communities that will be forming.
502. *With the progressive and centerist removing their support of the resolution, will that effect the future process of allowing for separation?* The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation submitted for consideration of the 2020 General Conference is still in place for consideration at the next General Conference. Other forms of legislation may also be submitted before the deadline.
503. *How can the UMC make a statement that there will be a place for traditionalists in the UMC when they are unwilling to follow the traditional doctrine already in place?* Does that mean they expect us to concede our Biblical beliefs and go along with “progressiveism”? See Question #70.
504. *What is the role of the pastor in the discernment process?* The pastor is the senior administrative leader of the church and is responsible for guiding the church in a process that belongs to the laity as members of the church. See also Question #40.
505. *What in the discipline is likely to be changed? About God? About Jesus? About the authority of the Bible?* None of the above are being discussed for revision in the upcoming General Conference.
506. *Will the Apostles Creed be used in the UMC? Born of the virgin Mary? Resurrection of the body?* Yes. No change in the use of the Apostles Creed or core doctrines of the church are being considered for revision or deletion.
507. *Are the miracles to be discounted or disbelieved? Resurrection? Feeding of the 5000? Conversion of Paul?* These are not subjects being deliberated for any change by the upcoming General Conference.
508. *What does an unbiased fair process local church look like?* See <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/+period+of+local+church+discernment.pdf>
509. *Who votes at a Church Conference?* See Questions #43 and #135.
510. *Will pathways of disaffiliation change?* The Principles Regarding Local Church Disaffiliation will remain applicable until the expiration of Paragraph 2553 (December 31, 2023).
511. *What exit fees are in TAC?* See Question #59.

512. *It sounds like there will be 2 votes. 1<sup>st</sup> to disaffiliate, 2<sup>nd</sup> where the church will move to (GMC, Free Methodist, Church of Christ, Independent....) Is this correct, a 2 vote process?* There are two action items that could be included in one resolution or separated into two resolutions (one for disaffiliation and a second for affiliation) for consideration.
513. *Why are some traditionalists leaving to form the GMC?* See Questions #130 and #132.
514. *Is the local church obligated to have a Charge Conference if they are expecting to disaffiliate?* A church Conference is required. A vote taken at a Called Church Conference to consider disaffiliation from the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church requires a 2/3 majority of all professing members present at the Church Conference through a written ballot. See <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/local+church+disaffiliation/principles+regarding+local+church+requests+for+disaffiliation.pdf> and <https://www.txcumc.org/files/navigating+the+waters/fdtf/+period+of+local+church+discernment.pdf>
515. *Will the conference provide support (mental/emotional) to those cast out of their lifelong church home and families when their church disaffiliates and they stay UMC?* See Questions 464.