

1. When we hear that 'diversity makes us unique' what does that mean?

- Good diversity – Racial and ethnic representation
 - All ages represented
 - All socio-economic groups represented
 - All are welcome regardless of race, creed, gender, or sexual orientation
- Bad Diversity – Differences in theological beliefs i.e., the authority of Scripture; the divinity of Jesus; the Resurrection; the Virgin Birth; Differences in practice of ordination and marriage

2. Why should a church stay UMC?

A church should stay in the UMC if it:

- Wants to have ordained gay clergy
- Wants to allow same sex marriages in the church
- Wants to have a pluralistic theology
- Wants to be in a declining denomination
- Wants to have a weakened witness to the world because it presents a cultural worldview instead of a Biblical one

3. Are Traditionalists welcome in the future UMC?

- The larger question is why would we want to remain in the UMC? Traditionalists worship in different ways, under different theologies, with different understandings of Scripture, and even different approaches to our denomination's governing Book of Discipline.
- This has been a conflict for 50 years in the UMC. Both sides finally agree that we are at an impasse, and we should go our separate ways. It does no good to try to keep

Methodists with polar beliefs in the same denomination. It damages the effectiveness of our ministry and our mission.

- We do not need to be theologically diverse to be a better reflection of our community. We need to be Scripturally sound to present the absolute truth to the lost in our neighborhood.
- Traditionalists will not be welcome in the UMC – a denomination that declares truth is relative and ethics are situational. That, when necessary, the church should “conform to the pattern of the world” (Romans 12:2). rather than transform the world. Again, those are opposite beliefs.
- The UMC decries traditionalists as mean-spirited and say we are a ‘virus’ infecting the church.
- Jesus accepted all and so do we! This is not about allowing any specific person or group to be included or excluded in the life of our church. HOWEVER, Jesus didn’t accept the sin.

4. Will our Book of Discipline change at General Conference 2024?

- Yes. Every leading UMC clergy or bishop, including our own Bishop David Graves has gone on record saying that the Book of Discipline will change the wording pertaining to the ordination of gay clergy and giving permission for gay couple to be married in a UMC.
- The composition of the voting delegates at GC2024 will be different for the first time since the first GC in 1972. With the departure of so many traditional churches, the only people left to be delegates will be liberal voters.
- Our focus is on our spiritual leaders who have not adhered to the vows they took at ordination and to the obvious fact that they are receiving no retribution nor are they being held accountable.

- Will the AWFC uphold the new 2024 Book of Discipline when it permits gay clergy and marriages?
 - Jesus accepted ALL and ALL will be accepted in the future expression of Methodism – the Global Methodist Church.
5. If other Jurisdictions in our denomination don't follow our current Book of Discipline, why would you want to continue to align yourself with a denomination that doesn't uphold rules?
- The Southeastern Jurisdiction which is where the AWFC lies, has just elected 3 new bishops for a total of 11 bishops in our jurisdiction. All of these bishops are aligned with the UMC in their stance to change the wording of the Book of Discipline to be inclusive of gay clergy and hold gay marriages in the church, as well as to have diverse theology.
 - The other 4 jurisdictions in the country also have progressive bishops. The UMC Council of Bishops is now comprised of not one evangelical bishop.
 - The Western Jurisdiction just elected their second gay bishop who is married to his husband. This is in direct violation of the UMC Book of Discipline, and nothing is being done to hold them accountable.
6. Why are Traditionalists leaving the UMC instead of the Progressives?
- The simple answer to why traditionalists who voted to keep the Book of Discipline as it is are leaving, is that traditionalists are tired of fighting. We realize that staying with a denomination that is divided on core issues is not a possibility any longer.
 - The day after the vote was held at the Special General Conference in 2019 to keep the wording on sexuality the

same the following occurred: 1) 12 annual conferences signed a petition stating that they would not follow the Book of Discipline 2) 26 of the 53 annual conferences nationally stated outright that they would not follow the Book of Discipline.

7. Was the Bible written for the unity of God's people?

- The Bible was NOT written for the unity of God's people.
- The Bible was written to show us who God is and that He created us to be in relationship to Him and to each other.
- Jesus spoke of unity in John 17:21-23. He wanted his disciples and future believers to be one with Him and the Father so that they could be a powerful witness to the reality of God's love. This refers to spiritual unity. Christians can know unity among themselves if they are living in union with God – not in union with each other.
- When Paul speaks of unity in Romans, he's speaking of being united with Christ in His death and resurrection. In Ephesians, Paul speaks of unity of the Spirit and faith in our spiritual realm.

8. Will the wording of the Book of Discipline change regarding human sexuality?

- Again, it is 100% certain that the wording in the Book of Discipline pertaining to human sexuality will change. See #4.
- When the wording is changed, pastors will be in violation of the Book of Discipline if they don't accept gay clergy or perform gay marriages in the church. They will risk losing their jobs or being legally sued. But that will depend on whether or not the Council of Bishops holds them

accountable. Currently, the Council isn't performing this part of their role.

9. What happens to churches that disaffiliate regarding their pastoral leadership?

- All churches that disaffiliate will make a decision regarding their future affiliation. Most churches that disaffiliate join the new expression of Methodism in the Global Methodist Church. It is not a risk to leave the UMC. The Global Methodist Church has the procedure in place to make this a seamless, risk-free transition.
- The GMC has policies in place to help new GMC churches seeking a new pastor to be placed with a pastor. Each church will have a great amount of input into who this pastor will be.

10. Will AUMC have to take a disaffiliation vote?

- Yes. AUMC will take a vote to decide to disaffiliate after the discernment process is completed. There will be no straw vote.
- This is a vote to preserve our church and to go forward in a traditional, Wesleyan, orthodox denomination.
- This is not about causing a division in the church. The division has already been created by the UMC when it decided not to uphold the current Book of Discipline.
- The purpose of the discernment process is to inform and educate church members who have not been given information.

11. What happens when paragraph 2553 sunsets on December 31, 2023?

- Currently, Par 2553 is the ONLY method approved by the

Book of Discipline for disaffiliation.

- Please refer to the “Response to Wait” document included in this section which explains that the recommendation by the AWFC Board of Trustees is a huge risk and improbability.
12. If our church disaffiliates, do we get to keep our property?
- Yes. Our AWFC trustees using Par 2553 in the Book of Discipline, require churches that disaffiliate to pay two years of apportionments as well as their share of the annual conference’s unfunded pension liability and post-retirement medical liability. The approximate amount that AUMC will be required to pay to date is \$1.8 M.
13. Will Bishop Graves continue to be our bishop in the AWFC?
- Yes, Bishop Graves was just re-appointed to our conference for another two years.
 - See question #5. These are the people who will appoint our future clergy in the AWFC.
14. How can the laity in our church be more involved in bringing about a change in our church to preserve our traditional values?
- It is important to note that the traditional laity at AUMC are being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit to show Christ’s love and God’s truth to all of our members.
15. What happens to UMC members who do not vote to disaffiliate?
- Members who wish to remain in the UMC can do so. There may be the possibility of a new UMC church planted in our area.
16. Is our Book of Discipline and the doctrine of the UMC in

in jeopardy?

- Yes, our doctrine is in jeopardy. See #4.
- Another very important note to understand, is that our doctrine is simply a piece of paper that is not being practiced.
- Not only are the areas pertaining to human sexuality not being upheld, but also the basic theological teachings of the authority of Scripture, the way to salvation, and who Jesus is and what His life and ministry involved are not being upheld as absolute truth.

17. If a pastor doesn't leave with a disaffiliating church and remains UMC, what will happen to the pastor?

- The cabinet will seek a new appointment for them; they can retire; they can seek an administrative post in the UMC