



# **MADISON**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

## **NEXT STEPS AFFILIATION RESOURCE GUIDE**



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## INTRODUCTION

Our Next Steps sub-committee has produced this new Resource Guide to inform our church family about our possibilities and process for our affiliation with another denomination. Our church members voted in March to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. The annual conference will vote on our disaffiliation at their annual meeting on June 28, and we will finalize our requirements and payment to the conference on July 5 to complete our withdrawal from the UMC.

## ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL ACTION

At their last two meetings, the Administrative Council expressed their preference that we enter the process of affiliation after Lent and have a church vote prior to our date of disaffiliation. The Council decided it would be advantageous for many reasons (loans, paperwork, emotional closure, continuous accountability, people leaving for summer activities, and more) to vote for our denominational affiliation prior to Memorial Day. We will set the date and procedure for that vote soon and look for that news in our upcoming social media, newsletter, and website.

We have had a sub-committee studying five Wesleyan and Methodist denominations since June of 2022. The Council voted to propose two of those denominations to our church family for potential affiliation – the Global Methodist Church and the Congregational Methodist Church. With these two options, our church family will be able to retain the word “Methodist” in our church’s new name. The other three denominations had many strengths, but they also had enough concerns, like trust clauses that bind a church’s property to the denomination, so our Council withdrew them from our consideration.




The Council also considered becoming an independent church but for various concerns, such as, our “connectional” nature as Methodists, accountability for our pastors and church, sharing of resources, fellowship, and missions with partner churches, and more, the Council believes that option does not fit the commitments and theology of our congregation.

The GMC and CMC have basically identical theological, biblical, and sacramental standards to our church. Both denominations do not have a trust clause, so property is owned by the local church. If you want specific information about their beliefs about scripture, marriage, sacraments, women in ministry, human sexuality, and more, please visit their websites (GMC – [www.globalmethodist.org](http://www.globalmethodist.org); CMC – [www.cm-church.org](http://www.cm-church.org)). We will share some key positions and commitments in the following pages.

The Administrative Council is asking representatives from the two denominations to speak to our membership on May 7, 2023. Those meetings will also be recorded so you can watch them anytime on our YouTube channel. Members from the sub-committee and our pastors will be available to meet with Sunday School classes, small groups, and individuals so please email the committee at [nextsteps@madisonumc.org](mailto:nextsteps@madisonumc.org) to set a date for that or to ask any questions to the sub-committee.

## NEXT STEPS & TIMELINE

We will amend the web version of this information packet and reprint it when there are significant updates so please revisit our website ([www.madisonumc.org/nextsteps](http://www.madisonumc.org/nextsteps)) and check the time stamps on our printed materials. Here is the general timeline for hearing your questions and concerns, for sharing information with you, and for our next steps as an Administrative Council:

-  Next Steps Information Packet and Website Update – April 27
-  Information Meetings – May 7 (2:30pm – GMC; 3:30pm – CMC | Sanctuary)
-  Church Conference Vote – May 21 (9:45am - 12:15pm | Atrium [A-J], Fellowship Hall [K-Z] )



# GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

## CHURCH TOTALS: Over 2,500

Many more churches will be added as UMC churches disaffiliate from their annual conference this spring and at the additional fall conference as well.

## GMC Churches in Mississippi: 65-70

Many more churches will be added as UMC churches disaffiliate from their annual conference this spring and at the additional fall conference as well.

## APPORTIONMENTS

There will be a maximum of 1.5% of general (non-mission) income to the denomination and a maximum of 5% to the annual conference.

This system would be 35%-50% less than our UMC apportionments.

## APPOINTMENTS

The Staff Parish Relations Committee will start their own search or request candidates from the bishop. Bishops will not move pastors without initiation from the pastor or a church.

The SPRC manages transitions, interviews candidates, and makes a final recommendation to the bishop.

The approval of the bishop, presiding elder (formerly known as a District Superintendent), the SPRC, and clergy are needed to set an appointment.

## BISHOPS

Bishops are elected for up to 12 years of service and then would go back to serving as a pastor.

They will guide appointments but will have less of an administrative role and will give more attention to the teaching role of a bishop and to defending the apostolic faith.

Presiding Elders (District Superintendents) are elders in full connection appointed by the bishop to the cabinet as an extension of the superintending role of the bishop within the annual conference. They serve at the bishop's pleasure and for a specific term of years to be determined by the convening conference.

These persons will likely be pastoring a church and will have significantly less churches and pastors to oversee.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE

The GMC plans to set their convening General Conference in the fall of 2024. That will allow for more churches to disaffiliate from the UMC and to give more churches a voice in the voting for the establishment of their Book of Doctrines and Discipline. Their transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline can be found on their website (<https://www.globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe/>).

## STRUCTURE

The General Conference and the Book of Doctrines and Discipline will set the doctrines and expectations for churches.

There will not be regional/jurisdictional accountability among bishops, clergy, and churches but there will be a denomination-wide accountability system.

A church will be a part of a geographical annual conference which will meet to organize local churches for mission.

Like the UMC, a Judicial Council will be made up of laity and clergy and will interpret the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

## GLOBAL METHODIST

The Global Methodist Church was named that, first, because there were few good names left with "Methodist" in the title. Admittedly, the word "global" can have negative political connotations. But they chose that name to communicate their desire to reach the world for Christ (Acts 1:8). They have churches preparing to join, or have already joined, in the Philippines, Eastern Europe, and Africa and have inquiries from South American countries, too. Lastly, whatever denomination we choose, the name of our local church, and our outdoor signage and communications will read, "Madison Methodist Church."

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 🌐 The GMC is filled with UMC people who have disaffiliated from the UMC and who have the same history, culture, and practices and with potential pastors and staff who we know very well.
- 🌐 The GMC launched as a new denomination in May of 2022. As a new and emerging denomination, there may be some changes to their Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline at their convening General Conference.
- 🌐 The GMC is growing in churches and also has a strong commitment to, and has created funding for, church planting. Additionally, much groundwork has already been completed to restore classic Wesleyan discipleship to the church through small groups, resources, and catechisms.
- 🌐 The GMC has solid pastoral training options already in place for equipping the next generation of pastors and lay ministers.
- 🌐 Though churches will have more autonomy and influence in the selection of their pastors, the GMC has accountability systems that are nationwide for churches and pastors.
- 🌐 The GMC is already much more global with churches, church plants, and pastors in East Europe, Philippines, and Africa which is in keeping with our commitment to serve in “Madison, Metro, Mississippi, and MORE.”

## CONCERNS ABOUT BEING AN INDEPENDENT CHURCH

As we stated earlier, the Administrative Council considered the possibility of our church remaining independent permanently or for a season before choosing a denomination. Here are many of the factors that caused our Council to not suggest that option to our church family:

- 🌐 Coming from the Wesleyan tradition means that being a connectional church is important to who we are and how we exist.
- 🌐 We would not be allowed to use the word “Methodist” in our church name and signage if we are an independent church.
- 🌐 We would be without any corporate accountability for our church and for our pastors.
- 🌐 If any of our pastors were to leave, we would not have an established process or a pool of pastors from which to find another pastor.
- 🌐 We would have more costs and time given to re-applying for incorporation, bank loans, a federal tax number, renewing our deeds, etc.
- 🌐 Acquiring insurance and benefits for our pastors would be more costly.
- 🌐 There is a concern that our church needs closure and to remain independent, even for a season, prolongs the process of deciding what is next for our church.



### CMC Churches in the USA: 200

They project this number will grow to 300 as UMC churches disaffiliate this year and join with the Congregational Methodist Church.

### CMC Churches in Mississippi: 35

This number will also grow as churches disaffiliate and join with the CMC from the Mississippi UMC Annual Conference, as Raymond UMC recently did.

## APPORTIONMENTS

They suggest a tithe of 10% of our non-designated funds. 1% would go to the annual conference of Mississippi, 5% would be for the national denomination (missions/admin), and 4% is to be spent on local causes.

This system would be 35%-50% less than our UMC apportionments.

## APPOINTMENTS

Churches call their own pastor. However, there is some framework for help from the denomination, if needed. The denomination does not have final say in who the pastor is for a local church.

## BISHOPS

The CMC does not have bishops.

They elect a denominational president and also have several division leaders and staff.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE

Their General Conference meets every two years.

Their geographic annual conference, one of which is the state of Mississippi, meets annually.

## STRUCTURE

There is denominational support staff and division directors.

The CMC has regional annual conferences and a general conference and those are all delegate-driven.

Their Book of Discipline sets the doctrines and expectations for churches. Their Book of Discipline is not available online but here is a link to their doctrinal standards and articles of religion:  
<http://www.cm-church.org/what-we-believe>

Churches are autonomous and make their own decisions about ministry and governance though doctrine and scriptural faithfulness must be adhered to. There is no hierarchical authority over the local church or the minister.

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 🌐 The CMC is a well-established denomination with a long history.
- 🌐 There is a significant amount of CMC churches in Mississippi compared to the other three denominations we chose not to consider as an option for us.
- 🌐 Many church members have interacted with several of their pastors through Emmaus/Cursillo Retreats and other ministry and mission groups and so there is already a familiarity with their pastors and churches. There is some concern though that their pool of pastors will not have many pastors with large-church experience.
- 🌐 Accountability on a regional and national level for the UMC was a great concern to many in our church family during our disaffiliation process. So, a congregational governance system might be too loose of a structure for accountability, both locally and nationally, for our church.



Our mission is to build faithful disciples and to serve Jesus Christ.

The vision of our church is that we are "to be a Family of believers in harmony with God's Word that glorifies God."

