



Middlesex United Methodist Church

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To Honor God by Making More Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World

Leadership Council Response Regarding Disaffiliation

January 25, 2023

MUMC Family,

On January 9, 2023, the MUMC Leadership Council held their first meeting of the new year. The topic of disaffiliation was on the meeting agenda. Council Chair Mary Groshans provided a summary of the information received when leadership representatives from local area churches met with Rev. Dr. Tom Salsgiver, Assistant to the Bishops of the Susquehanna Conference, on January 8, 2023.

Dr. Salsgiver explained the process of disaffiliation including the extensive costs involved and the need for disaffiliated churches to hire their own pastor if their current pastor wishes to remain United Methodist clergy. Dr. Salsgiver stated there are two reasons for a church to disaffiliate:

1. The local church disagrees with the Discipline as it relates to LGBTQ and human sexuality.
2. The Annual Conference where a church resides has not been faithful to the Discipline, such as allowing pastors to marry same-gender or ordaining LGBTQ persons.

Dr. Salsgiver reported that the 2019 Special Session of General Conference passed three amendments to the Book of Discipline. Within these amendments, statements about homosexuality were strengthened and tightened. Specifically, Bishops may not ordain LGBTQ pastors and pastors may not marry same sex couples.

Our Leadership Council discussed the fact that the Bishops of the Susquehanna Conference have publicly stated that they will follow the Discipline as it is currently written. In accordance with the current Discipline, there are no LGBTQ pastors being ordained and pastors are not performing same sex marriages amongst the churches in our Annual Conference. Therefore, our Leadership Council sees no reason to disaffiliate at this time, and we unanimously agreed that we wish to remain a part of the United Methodist Church and take no vote toward disaffiliation.

If there are any further questions or concerns regarding this matter, please feel free to speak to any member of our Leadership Council.

Respectfully submitted by,

Middlesex United Methodist Leadership Council

Mary Groshans (Chair), Laurie Barrick, Travis Clouse, Jim Cohick, Steve Conrad, Jolie Rankin, Barb Simpson, Earl Smith, Sue Walsh