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# Messenger

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P. O. Box 444, Yazoo City, Mississippi 39194

## How We Got Here: UMC Update

On **Tuesday, October 25, at 6 p.m.** we will have a **Disaffiliation Information Meeting** with Dr. Stephen Cook, our District Superintendent, and David Stotts, our Conference Treasurer. Currently, there are around 160 churches in the Mississippi Annual Conference who are exploring disaffiliation. That raises the question: Why are so many churches exploring disaffiliation? How did we get here? So, here's a brief review:

**General Conference 2016:** A proposal was made to table all legislation on marriage and human sexuality and to empower the Council of Bishops to form a committee to draft a plan and present it at a future special called session of General Conference.

This committee became the Commission on a Way Forward, and they proposed the **One Church Plan** which would have changed the definition of marriage from one man and one woman to two consenting adults and would have allowed each pastor and church to decide whether they would preside over and host same-sex weddings.

**Western Jurisdictional Conference 2016:** In July of 2016, the Western Jurisdiction elected Rev. Karen Oliveto as bishop. Rev. Oliveto is an open practicing lesbian married to another woman. Her election was appealed to the Judicial Council, who ruled she should not have been eligible and sent it back to the Western Jurisdiction to remove her. They refused, and she is still an active bishop.

**Called General Conference 2019:** This was a special called session that was supposed to resolve our differences over human sexuality once and for all. While the Council of Bishops promoted the One Church Plan, the delegates passed the **Traditional Plan**, which reaffirmed and strengthened our current Book of Discipline. It passed by a mere 54 votes. Immediately, many progressives and centrists said it was untenable and that they would not abide by it. Tensions increased as a result.

**Protocol for Separation 2020:** In the aftermath of 2019, Bishop Yambasu of Sierra Leone gathered leaders from all the major advocacy groups: progressive, centrist, and traditional. With the help of Kenneth Feinberg, a professional mediator, they drafted a proposal for an amicable separation of the UMC called the **Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace through Separation**. It was an imperfect compromise that would have created a new traditional, conservative Methodist denomination and given

the remainder of the UMC to the progressives and centrists. All groups promised to support and promote it, and it was widely expected to pass at General Conference 2020.

**General Conference 2020:** This was supposed to meet in May of 2020. But then, COVID happened. In March of 2020, the Commission on General Conference postponed the meeting until August/September 2021. Then, in 2021 they postponed it again until August/September 2022.

On March 3, 2022, the Commission announced that they were postponing the General Conference yet again. This time from 2022 to May 2024, which would be the next regularly scheduled GC. They said this due to lingering concerns over COVID, vaccinations, and passport/visa issues for global delegates. However, many objected that every other major group was able to meet (like the Anglican Lambeth Conference in England), so why not the UMC?

**Global Methodist Church:** On May 1, 2022, the Global Methodist Church launched. This was supposed to be the traditional Methodist denomination formed as part of the Protocol for Separation. Because of the further delay of General Conference to 2024 and the growing list of bishops ignoring the Book of Discipline, the leaders of the GMC decided to go ahead and start the new denomination.

**Judicial Council:** This is our equivalent of the Supreme Court. They made two key rulings recently. First, since so many bishops are needing to retire, they ruled that the Council of Bishops may convene the needed Jurisdictional Conferences to meet this November 2-4, 2022 to elect new bishops. Our own Bishop Swanson retires this year, and we will receive a new bishop as of January 2023.

Second, they ruled that Annual Conferences may not withdraw as a whole from the UMC, whether to be independent or join with another denomination. Technically, they said that Conferences have the right to vote to withdraw, but not the right to act on what they voted. This was after the Bulgarian Annual Conference voted to withdraw from the UMC and join the Global Methodist Church.

**Disaffiliation Clause 2553:** This was a path of exit from the UMC approved at the 2019 Called General Conference. It was proposed by a Centrist delegate (Taylor), anticipating that many progressives wouldn't want to stay in a traditional UMC.

Ironically, since that time, it has become the primary means of exit for traditional churches that don't want to remain in an increasingly progressive UMC. It requires a payment of 2 years apportionments and the church's share of the unfunded pension liability. It also requires a 2/3 majority vote of all members present at a Church Conference convened by the DS, and a majority vote of the Annual Conference.

**Status of the Protocol:** In June 2022, five of the Centrist and Progressive leaders who helped negotiate the Protocol for Separation withdrew their support and said they would not vote for it any longer. Many have taken that to mean that progressives and centrists are unlikely to ever vote for the Protocol. So, you may hear the line "The Protocol is dead."

As you can see, a lot's happened in just a few short years. Hopefully, this gives some background to what is going on and how we got here. As we await our meeting with the DS on October 25, I encourage you to pray for God to lead and guide us in His paths. In all things, may we glorify Him.

*Brother Lauren*

# October



## Operation Christmas Child

### TIPS ON PACKING YOUR SHOEBOX

1. Use new items as used clothing and toys will be discarded.
2. Each box stands alone so don't divide items between two boxes.
3. Include some fun in each box as this may be the only gift some of these children receive all year.
4. Remove all wrappings from your items as many sites have no place to put trash.
5. A toothbrush may be put in a zip lock bag. No candy or toothpaste as they have a "use by date."
6. Include your \$10 check for each box. If you do multiple boxes, write only 1 check and place in one of your boxes. You may go online and use a credit card where you will get a tracking number strip to print and attach to the box.
7. Place boy/girl strip at the end of the box. Later these boxes will be taped around the middle to shipment.

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 9:50 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
- 11:00 a.m. Live Stream Worship
- 6:00 p.m. Bro. Lauren's Bible Study

## MONDAY, OCTOBER 10

Church Office Closed/Columbus Day

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 4:30 p.m. Ladies' Handbell Choir
- 5:15 p.m. W.O.W. Wednesday Children's Bible study
- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
- 6:00 p.m. Snack Supper
- 6:00 p.m. Youth

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

9-12 noon Methodist Market



- 10. Van Ray  
Sandra Martin
- 11. Mary Karson Hart  
John Cobb
- 14. Mallory Pender
- 15. James Cresswell  
Laura King



Our church, along with other churches in our community, are partnering with Martha Coker Green Houses in Yazoo City, "Adopt A House" program.

We have chosen the Luse House as our own project. We have committed to provide something special for this house as often as we wish, at least once a month. We can have parties; play games such as bingo, trivia, puzzle games, etc.; visit; provide music and sing with the residents; and any other activities that you would like.

If you or any group such as Sunday School classes would like to participate by volunteering your time or resources, please contact Rosemary Knox at the church office, at 662-746-7648.

# Children's Page

Last Sunday we began a new series, *God Delivers Us*, which we will continue throughout the month of October. This week our lesson "Whining and Thanking," we learn that the Israelites began complaining about their journey and new-found freedom. They complained about food and water, but God met their needs.

## HISKIDZ W.O.W. Wednesday



W.O.W. Wednesday is our mid-week Bible Study for K - 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Along with Bible Study, we will have snack supper at 6:00 p.m. There will be many fun games and activities planned for this year. Invite a friend and get ready for our first fun Bible Study about **BIBLE HEROES**. For the first 5-6 weeks, we will be "unmasking the true hero behind well-known Bible characters." Last week we learned about Samuel- Boy Wonder. Next Wednesday our lesson will be about the Peacemaker.



## Sunday School

As we continue to follow the story of Moses, we see him emerging as a strong leader. Moses is learning to deal with and handle many of the frustrations the Israelites are facing. Just like the Israelites faced temptations, so do we. Moses helped lead them away, just as God has a way for us to turn from temptations. However, we have to seek Him and His will. God has a plan for each of us, and it is important that we seek Him and His plans for our lives.

## Youth Bible Study and Small Group

There will be **NO** Youth Bible Study this week. We will resume next Sunday night in the Youth Basement at 6:00 p.m. Currently our Bible Study for Sunday nights is a series on the book of James. This week we move to lesson 6 in the series, *Practicing Presence*. God is always there for us, we just need to seek Him.

Wednesday Night Youth Group will meet every Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. with snack supper in the Fellowship Hall followed by Bible Study in the Youth Basement. Our topics on Wednesday night will vary but will focus more on everyday life experiences, life application, and testimonies.



\*Exploratory meeting about disaffiliation with David Stotts, will be Tuesday, October 25, at 6 pm.

\*2023 budget proposals due by October 31, 2022.

## Sunday, October 9, 2022

Greeters	Wanda & Tommy Woodard/Phil & Sharon Nichols
Scripture	Matthew 7:21-29
Sermon	<b>“Built on the Rock”</b>
Flowers	Steve and Bettina Newman

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

#### OCTOBER

<b>9. 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>Matthew 22:1-14</b>
10. Prepare for the Lord's coming	Jude 17-25
11. The people in mourning	Exodus 33:1-6
12. God will feed the believer	John 6:25-35
13. God's glory revealed to Moses	Exodus 33:12-23
14. Proclaim God's greatness	Psalm 99
15. Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica	
	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10