

COMMON DISAFFILIATION MISCONCEPTIONS

MISCONCEPTION 1: The United Methodist Church is falling apart.

While some churches have left the denomination, after disaffiliation, there will still be roughly 25,000 United Methodist Churches in the United States and roughly the same number internationally. The United Methodist Church remains steadfast and, in a position, to spread the word of God and do ministry all over the world. We are 12,000,000 members worldwide and a connectional church. Conference and general church apportionments allow us to reach beyond the local church. Ministries like Lydia Patterson, African University, and Youth 2023 are all made possible through apportionment giving. The Youth 2023 experience in Florida had over 2500 youth worshipping and seeking God last month. See link below.

[We are the church. Together. Let's #BeUMC. - YouTube](#)

[Youth 2023: BOLD youth connect with God, one another \(umnews.org\)](#)

MISCONCEPTION 2: The doctrine of the United Methodist Church will change.

The United Methodist Church will continue to be a big tent church. Even with disaffiliation making the news, many theologically traditional/conservative churches are remaining in the United Methodist Church. And both clergy and laity will continue to be all along the theological spectrum.

The traditional church doctrine and creeds, including the belief in the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and salvation through Jesus Christ, will all remain. All new ordained pastors will continue to be required to proclaim that they believe in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and that they will be loyal to the doctrine of the United Methodist Church. Below are links to resources on doctrine and belief.

[Our Christian Beliefs \(umc.org\)](#)

[The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church \(umc.org\)](#)

As a church with over 30,000+ clergy and even more laity, there will be many viewpoints on The UMC and its doctrine. Regardless of what one might hear or read on the internet, the doctrine of the church will not change.

MISCONCEPTION 3: Conservative churches remaining after disaffiliation will be punished.

Many conservative churches are remaining in the United Methodist Church and will be valued members of the denomination. The United Methodist Church has always viewed its diversity of thought as a keystone value of the denomination.

In the Rio Texas Conference, Bishop Schnase has been intentional about allowing diversity of thought and will continue to maintain that intention. The bishop's cabinet and conference

leadership are intentionally diverse with representation from members (clergy and lay) all along the theological spectrum.

Finally, the conference wants all churches to thrive. We have been on a journey of discernment and some churches have chosen to walk a different path and we have blessed them as they have left. We will continue to do so for those who remain. We value the ministry of all our congregations and find value in the diversity that comes from progressives, centrists, and traditionalists when we work together for the mission of the Church to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

[NEWS+RELEASEJune823kjRL.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

MISCONCEPTION 4: If we stay in the UMC, our church will be forced to become “affirming” on LGBTQ issues.

There is no legitimate, serious effort that would force churches to perform gay marriages if they choose not to do so.

The Rio Texas Conference is trying to live into a space where different perspectives can live together as a church even when they may not totally agree on every aspect of this issue. This has always been the case of the United Methodist Church. We do not agree on a number of issues ranging from addressing gun violence in our communities to end of life measures and, yet, we are unified in our profession that Jesus Christ is Lord.

If “affirming” means welcoming LGBTQ members, most churches claim to do that already. Going forward, there will be efforts to amend or completely remove the current language in the Book of Discipline that states “The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching” (§304.3). There will likely be a more permission giving spirit regarding ministry towards and with our siblings in the LGBTQ community. Only General Conference can make any changes to the UMC’s Book of Discipline. The General Conference will convene in late April 2024 in Charlotte. This topic will be one of many that they will take up. Below is a link to a FAQ document on disaffiliation and the last questions expand on concerns of more traditional members.

[We are UMC — Rio Texas Annual Conference](#)