



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH
SOUTH CAROLINA

hope
FOR TOMORROW

AFFILIATION DISCERNMENT 2024

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

Why Should We Join the Global Methodist Church?

Practicing the Christian faith within a larger community is an essential element of Wesleyan Methodism. Affiliation with another Methodist denomination is necessary to maintain this faith heritage.

The Global Methodist Church offers a lean organizational structure, giving more autonomy and authority to local congregations while maintaining strong connectional ties for its member clergy and congregations — and ties that are rooted in the original Wesleyan standards of the Christian faith.

Why Should We Join Now?

There is a Holy Spirit-filled excitement and energy building within the new Global Methodist movement — both here in South Carolina and across the U.S. and international connection. There are many opportunities for leadership involvement during the start-up phase of our new Annual Conference, including participation in the Convening General Conference of the Global Methodist Church September 20–26, in San José, Costa Rica.

Practically speaking, it is far more cost effective and efficient to update bylaws, business banking, signage, and other materials to reflect your new church name and branding, once, following disaffiliation from the UMC. Making iterative changes to the organization takes away valuable time, financial resources, and energy from your ministry.

If we choose to stay independent, and then realize down the road we would prefer more accountability/structure from the GMC, can we switch affiliations?

Yes, however, affiliation in an independent-to-GMC scenario would still require a congregational vote and final approval by the GMC Transitional Leadership Council. Visit gmcofsc.org/application to learn more about the process of affiliation.

PASTORS & STAFF

How will affiliation affect our pastors and staff?

If the congregation votes to join the GMC, our pastors will transfer their credentials and will be ordained into that denomination.

It is up to each local church to ensure that clergy benefits are adequately maintained throughout any affiliation transition. Non-clergy staff will be unaffected by affiliation.



GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH SOUTH CAROLINA

Would it make finding and securing future pastoral staff easier if we went GMC vs independent?

Yes. The connectional system within the GMC is specifically designed for pastors to know and be known among their colleagues on a broad scale. There is an established pipeline of theologically conservative clergy within GMC-approved seminaries and U.S. Annual Conferences. There is an established process for credentialing and ordination of new clergy. Independent Methodist churches will rely on the free market to source and recruit new pastors. There is no clearly identified process for credentialing and ordaining clergy outside a Methodist denominational system.

FINANCE, PROPERTY & LEGAL

What are the cost commitments of affiliation for our church?

Member churches in the Global Methodist Church of South Carolina (GMC of SC) are currently required to contribute 3% of their adjusted operating income to the GMC of SC, and 1% to the greater GMC denomination. Financial commitments are expected to gradually rise as the GMC becomes more fully developed. The GMC *Transitional Book of Doctrine and Discipline* caps the local congregation's Connectional Giving at 6.5% of its adjusted operating income.

Will we retain our property and buildings?

Unlike other U.S.-based Methodist denominations, the Global Methodist Church allow each member congregation to retain full ownership of their property and assets.

MEMBERSHIP

How will this affect my church membership?

Your vows of membership are honored regardless of denominational affiliation. Your membership is recorded in your local church database. If your church votes by simple majority to join the Global Methodist Church, you will be recorded as a member of the denomination once affiliation is complete.

How many churches are in the GMC?

As of early March 2024, there are approximately 4,500 Churches and 4,820 clergy members of the Global United Methodist Church. These numbers are growing every week.

THEOLOGY

What value does affiliation with the GMC add for churches that are already solidly anchored in traditional Wesleyan theology?

There is high value in a connection of likeminded, like-hearted Wesleyan Methodists who are working together to advance the Kingdom of God on a truly global scale. Independent Methodist churches and networks exist on a very small scale in comparison.



How is the GMC setting up its organization structure and governance to provide the right checks and balances to prevent the problems that developed in the UMC?

The dysfunctional power dynamic within the UMC is effectively eliminated with the GMC's removal of the property trust clause, removal of guaranteed clergy appointments, imposed term limits for bishops, and a truly enforceable *Transitional Book of Doctrine and Discipline* which enables action and removal of bishops, clergy and congregations that stray from its standards for theology and practice.

(See GMC Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines Part Three – Local Church, Sect. 354 – Congregational Fidelity; also, Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules)

VISIT globalmethodist.org/what-we-believe

to access an online version of the GMC's *Transitional Book of Doctrine and Discipline*

What specific steps is the GMC taking to empower local churches while maintaining their accountability to the denomination? What limitations will the GMC place on the authority of local churches?

Whereas the UMC exists in a top-down structure like an inverted triangle, the GMC is specifically designed to be a bottom-up structure with local churches and provisional annual conferences of local churches forming a strong base for ministry activity and productivity. The GMC is extremely small “at the top.” There are no global boards and agencies within the GMC, so whatever ministry takes place happens through the collective efforts of local churches working together in their own communities.

Local churches exist as members of a regional conference with group oversight and accountability at the clergy and congregational levels. As members of their conference, the GMC invites both clergy and lay participation in ordering the ministry within a local church that includes support, accountability, and adherence to the *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* — which enables action and removal of clergy and congregations that stray from its standards for theology and practice.

(See GMC's Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines, Part Three – Local Church, Sect. 354 – Congregational Fidelity; also, Judicial Practice and Procedure Rules)

Has the GMC defined clear performance expectations and performance evaluation processes for officials at each level (bishops, clergy, key lay leaders, etc.)?

Too numerous to list here, the GMC's *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* outlines very specific standards by which clergy and bishops are qualified and credentialed for their roles, and by which they are held accountable for their performance in those roles. *(See Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines, Part Four – Ministry of the Called, Sects. 405-408; also, Part Five – The Superintendency)*

The *Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines* also outlines specific duties of lay leaders within the governance structure of local church council, and their involvement as representatives to the annual conference. *(See Part Three – Local Church, Sect. 342)*



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH
SOUTH CAROLINA

What has the GMC defined as the roles and division of responsibilities between local churches, annual conferences, and general conference?

Local GMC churches are empowered and expected to be the spiritual and relational growth centers for ministry in their communities. The purpose of the regional conference is to equip local churches within their conference to be effective at multiplying their ministries and growing disciples of Jesus at the local church level.

The General Conference is the denominational legislative body comprised of bishops, clergy and lay delegates gathered for the purpose of creating new or modifying church law and adopting it into the GMC's *Book of Doctrine and Discipline*. The GMC's convening General Conference will take place in San José, Costa Rica, September 20–26, 2024.

#####