

Disaffiliation Process Outline

The 2019 General Conference gave churches a pathway to disaffiliate (Paragraph 2553) from the UMC for reasons of “conscience”. This means that churches on either side of the issue could disaffiliate from the UMC. Our Conference webpage also contains information regarding the issues surrounding disaffiliation. The Conference website is www.awfumc.org Below is an outline of the process.

Paragraph for Disaffiliation Details:

Step One: Church Council Votes To Move Forward To Discern about Disaffiliation (This only begins the process of discernment. It is not a vote to approve disaffiliation)

Step Two: Church Town Hall Meeting with District Superintendent Presiding

Step Three: Church Conference (all members contacted in advance and membership verified at the meeting) Must have 2/3 majority vote of the members present at the Church Conference to approve disaffiliation.

Step 4: Disaffiliation Approved By Annual Conference (There are 2 called Annual Conferences in May and November of 2023 for this purpose)

This disaffiliation includes local churches being given ownership of their properties previously held in Trust (owned) by the Annual Conference.

Disaffiliation Breakdown of Costs:

1. Clergy Unfunded Pension Liabilities
2. Clergy Medical
3. One year of apportionments

We currently will have to wait til 2023 to recalculate the cost. Now the cost has been reduced from 1 million in April of this year to 800K.

One thing of note is that the legal paragraphs to disaffiliate ends in December 2023.

Some churches have chosen to disaffiliate now because there is uncertainty as to what will happen at the General Conference in 2024 and whether churches that want to disaffiliate can still be able to retain their properties. There are some who are hopeful, as our bishop, that the General Conference in 2024 will still create pathways for churches to disaffiliate in a less costly manner. But there is no certainty that will happen. The Conference just sent out a letter regarding a proposal that would extend the disaffiliation process beyond the December 2023 deadline. However, this must be approved by Annual Conference in June of 2023. (October 11, 2022)

I encourage everyone to continue to pray. Our church will continue to be open for prayer times on Wednesday mornings and Thursday evenings.

Continue to worship, study and serve in ways you can.

I pray you will continue to be the church for each other and our community as we move to make greater decisions.