



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 CONSEIL JUDICIAIRE DE L'EGLISE METHODISTE UNIE
 RECHTSHOF DER EVANGELISCH-METHODISTISCHEN KIRCHE
 CONSELHO JUDICIAL DA IGREJA METODISTA UNIDA
 CONSEJO DE LA JUDICATURA DE LA IGLESIA METODISTA UNIDA



Report by Bishop on Decision of Law

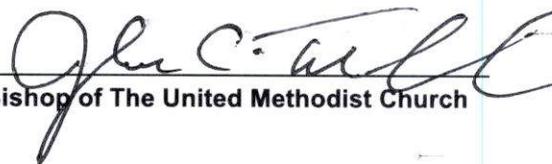
This form is to be used for (please check one):

- Reporting of decisions of law made by bishops in response to questions of law submitted to them in writing during the regular business of a conference session (§ 56.3 Const. and § 2609.6 *The Book of Discipline 2016*).
- Reporting of episcopal decisions on questions of law when such decisions are appealed by one-fifth of the members of the conference (§ 56.2 Const. and § 2609.7 *The Book of Discipline 2016*).

Name of Bishop: Bishop Julius C. Trimble
 Address: 301 Pennsylvania Pkwy, Suite 300 City: Carmel
 State/Province: IN ZIP/Postal Code 46280 Country: USA
 Phone: 317-924-1321 Fax: _____ E-mail: bishop@inumc.org
 Annual Conference: Indiana Date of session: 6/9/2022 (month/day/year)
 Question(s) of Law: _____
See attached

Authorities Cited (indicate paragraph or decision number where applicable):

Constitution: _____ Book of Discipline: _____
 Judicial Council Decision(s): _____

Signature:  Date: 7/11/2022
Bishop of The United Methodist Church (month/day/year)

The following must be attached:

- Decision of Law, including facts, rationale and ruling
 - Text of the written request for decision
 - Minutes of annual conference proceedings
 - List of names and addresses of interested parties
 - Other relevant materials (e.g. conference rules, resolutions, policies, reports)
- Thirteen (13) hard copies must be submitted via USPS or other delivery service to:
**UMC Judicial Council, c/o LaNella Smith, Assistant to the J.C. Secretary,
 1215 Shady Lane, Durham, NC 27712**
- Electronic copies in both Word and PDF (with security features disabled) must be submitted to: secretary@umcjudicialcouncil.org.

Resolution 3

Reverend Darren Cushman Wood:
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Indiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

MOTION FORM

Day/Date 6/10/22

Session: Morning Afternoon Evening

Subject: AC authority to determine application of ¶ 2548.2

Your Name (Please print) DARREN Cushman - Wood
(First) (Last)

Proposing: New Motion Amend Substitute Refer Other

QUESTION of LAW:
Did Bishop Trimble infringe on the
authority of The Indiana AC to designate
who constitutes "another EVANGELICAL DENOMINATION"
per para. 2548.2 in ruling out of order
Resolution R-3 lines 35-40?

Signed: _____ Clergy Lay

- Passed
- Not Passed
- Referred
- Other:

Secretary Use Only

Tracking # _____

Agency/Unit _____

Follow-up needed _____

A RESOLUTION

Providing Clarity for Congregations Disaffiliating in the Indiana Annual Conference

WHEREAS, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church contains two options for disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church: 1) Paragraph 2548.2 relating to release of the trust clause to join a church “represented in the Pan-Methodist Commission or another evangelical denomination;” or 2) Paragraph 2553 which grants the limited right, until December 31, 2023, for United Methodist congregations to disaffiliate for reasons of conscience over the practice of ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals; and

WHEREAS, the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation* offers a proposal to restructure the United Methodist Church by separation as a means to resolve our differences, and allow each part of the Church to remain true to its theological understanding, while recognizing the dignity, equality, integrity, and respect for every person; and

WHEREAS, prolonged delay of General Conference, and uncertainty whether the Protocol will be enacted, as well as limited understanding of the requirements in the Indiana Annual Conference for congregations desiring to disaffiliate continues to create anxiety and distraction in United Methodist congregations; and

WHEREAS, clarity and transparency about disaffiliation process and requirements will reduce anxiety and empower local churches to make informed decisions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2022 Session of the Indiana Annual Conference directs the Board of Trustees of the Indiana Conference and all officials of the Annual Conference to be governed by the following principles, policies and processes in engaging congregations desiring to disaffiliate to join “one of the other denominations represented in the Pan-Methodist Commission or to another evangelical denomination (Paragraph 2548.2), or to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church “for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provision of The Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals as resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues which follow” (Paragraph 2553).

1. Congregations joining one of the denominations represented in the Pan-Methodist Commission or another evangelical church may, at their sole discretion, choose to disaffiliate under the provisions of Paragraph 2548.2. For the avoidance of doubt, the list of churches considered to be an evangelical church for the purposes of Paragraph 2548.2 shall include the Global Methodist Church.
2. Only congregations disaffiliating to an independent status shall be required to use the provisions of Paragraph 2553. All churches, regardless of their theological position, should be permitted to disaffiliate pursuant to Paragraph 2553 so long as they meet the requirements of Paragraph 2553.
3. Any required payments for unfunded pension liability shall be based on Wespath calculations of the aggregate unfunded liability of the Annual Conference. Allocation of a proportional share of that liability to the local church shall be determined using the ratio of the church’s

total annual appointed clergy compensation (salary + housing) to the Indiana Conference's total appointed clergy compensation for all clergy. Actuarial reports and financial statements supporting the proportional share formula shall be provided upon request.

4. The Indiana Conference Trustees and officials shall adhere to the following policies in administering Paragraph 2548.2:
 - a. Any allocation, exchange of property, or comity agreement shall include only the following requirements.
 - i. In addition to releasing the local church's property in accordance with the policies of the receiving denomination, the local church retains all its other assets and liabilities.
 - ii. The local church shall repay previously documented loans from the Annual Conference.
 - iii. The local church shall either remain under Wespeth and carry its unfunded liability forward with it or repay the Indiana Conference for the local church's proportional share of the unfunded liability. The liability shall include unfunded obligations related to The United Methodist Church's pre-1982 pension plan, the Ministerial Pension Plan, and/or the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Actuarial reports and financial statements from Wespeth affirming the unfunded liability shall be provided to departing churches.
 - iv. No additional sums will be required to obtain release of all the congregation's property and assets from the trust clause.
 - b. The local church shall make the decision to disaffiliate at a church conference duly called according to the provisions of The Book of Discipline. The Church Council (or its equivalent) shall determine whether a simple majority or a two-thirds super majority shall be required for approval of the motion to disaffiliate. The district superintendent shall approve the request of the Church Council and shall preside or choose another elder to preside at a church conference to take place no later than sixty days after the request is made.

FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that having approved the principles, policies, and processes contained in this resolution, the Indiana annual conference members thereby give their consent to the disaffiliation of any local church meeting the requirements of this resolution and no further vote of approval of the Indiana Annual Conference members shall be required.

7.2 Dismantling Racism -Annettra Jones Stephens shared an update on what is being done in the area of Diversity, Missions, and Justice. She demonstrated that racial diversity is in our communities but not in our congregations and celebrated the 18 ministry areas housed under the Diversity, Missions, and Justice umbrella. Annettra concluded by announcing the recipients of the Creation Care Awards, given to congregations with community gardens. The recipients are: Southport UMC, Indianapolis; Carmel UMC, Carmel; and Community of Hope UMC, Muncie.

7.3 Resolution 3 – Providing Clarity for Congregations Disaffiliating in the Indiana Annual Conference (Womack) Bishop Trimble ruled this resolution to be out of order as it is in violation of the Book of Discipline. Womack requested a Point of Privilege. He anticipated the resolution could be considered out of order and regrets it cannot be voted upon.

7.4 Resolution 4 – Symbolic Restitution to Indigenous Peoples by Churches of the Indiana Annual Conference (Pfaff). Bishop Trimble rules this resolution to be out of order as it exceeds the authority of the Annual Conference and has financial implications. Pfaff requested a Point of Privilege. He understands and respects the decision and will prepare a proper resolution next year.

7.5 Offering – Glenn Howell shared the various ways to give to the mission project. He shared stories of the Afghan refugees receiving services from Exodus Refugee. The services are many and diverse, as are the needs. The response from this conference has been tremendous. The trailer serving as a collection site for the school kits is overflowing, and financial donations continue to pour in.

7.6 Board of Trustees – Teri Crouse called to order the 2022 annual meeting of the Corporation. The Annual Report of the Trustees can be found on the Annual Conference 2022 section of the INUMC website. Twenty-eight closed or abandoned church properties were sold or disbursed in Indiana since last year's report. A total of \$2,724,250 was received and are designated as new District and Core Ministry Funds and are used for new local church ministries.

The following congregations have chosen to disaffiliate under paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline from the United Methodist Church in 2022. The total for these disaffiliations amounts to \$1,118,040. The unfunded liabilities for these churches will be held in deposit at Wespath.

Central District: First UMC Martinsville, Greenwood Honey Creek UMC, Mt. Comfort UMC

East District: Hartford City Pleasant Grove UMC, Lynn Union Chapel, Muncie Union Chapel Ministries, Normal City UMC, Rehoboth UMC, The Garden of Gethsemane

North Central District: Kokomo St. Luke's UMC

Northeast District: Columbia City St. Matthew's UMC, Etna UMC, Liberty Center UMC, West Point Trinity UMC

Northwest District: Dayton UMC, Fulton UMC, McGrawsville UMC, South Pleasant UMC

South District: Depauw UMC

Southeast District: Mt. Nebo UMC

Southwest District: Branchville First UMC, Dale UMC, Lynnville UMC, Nobels Chapel UMC, Spurgeon UMC, Wheatland UMC

West District: Barbour Avenue UMC, Brazil Bethel UMC, Brazil Union UMC

Decision of Law Regarding Resolution #3 “providing Clarity for Disaffiliating Congregations”

Question Of Law: Submitted by Darren Cushman-Wood

Bishop Trimble ruled out of order R-3 and gave following reasons.

Resolution seeks to give authority to Annual Conference to supersede action already taken at General Conference that made disaffiliation permissible under paragraph 2553- “disaffiliation of Churches over issues related to human sexuality.”

As per 2553 Disaffiliation votes require 2/3 of professing members of local church at a church conference. Annual Conference cannot adopt a rule that is in conflict with the Discipline or ignores authority inherent in the office of the Bishop and Cabinet. Judicial Council ruled in decision 1144, “disaffiliation is a connectional matter, only General Conference can set terms for a disaffiliation.

General Conference has authorized 2553 as the process for disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church. The Council of Bishops has requested the Judicial Council to rule on the relevance of paragraph 2548.2 in the disaffiliation of churches since the General Conference has already provided a pathway through 2553. Without further clarity on the use of paragraph 2548.2, this resolution is out of order.

Embedded in the resolution is the recognition of the Global Methodist Church as another evangelical church. No formal action has been taken by General Conference or authority been given to the Annual Conference to recognize new denominations.

The last “Be it Resolved” sentence in the resolution speaks of the approval of the resolution. Policies and principles contained in the resolution indicates approval of the resolution, serves as approval for disaffiliation of churches and no further

approval of the Indiana Annual Conference shall be required. The resolution is out of order because it seeks to strip authority of an Annual Conference and require action of an Annual Conference that has already been directed by a General Conference.

While it is unclear whether an Annual Conference can designate a new church, i.e. Global Methodist, “another evangelical Denomination” per paragraph 2548.2, Resolution #3 “Providing Clarity for Disaffiliating Churches” was ruled out of order for its attempt to preclude provisions in place and in practice authorized by General Conference and Book of Discipline Paragraph 2553.

Bishop Julius C. Trimble

1022-23
Interested Parties/Persons
Indiana Annual Conference 2022

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