



January 29, 2021

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God.” 1 John 4:7

Dear Friends,

Some misinformation has been circulated recently and I wish to bring clarity. At a local church meeting, it was stated that the denomination is soon to be splitting and that theologically and socially “traditional” churches need to disaffiliate quickly from the United Methodist Church. The person speaking at the meeting stated that this is because there will be a “take-over” of liberal entities and dire financial suffering will result. **This is inflammatory, hurtful, and not true.**

Here are the facts:

- The United Methodist Church has before its General Conference a petition known as the **“Protocol”** which would allow churches that have traditional views about homosexuality (marriage and ordination) to leave the denomination at **no cost to the local churches**. There would be no “appraisal” charge for this departure. **The only allowable reason for this split is around the issue of homosexuality and not any other social issue.** The General Conference date is pending so this has not become a reality at this time.
- There was a provision added to the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* in 2019 that allows churches to disaffiliate in the meantime. A church wishing to disaffiliate would need to follow a number of prescribed steps (a church conference with 2/3 of voting members in agreement, payment of a variety of fees outlined in our conference disaffiliation document, a majority vote at annual conference, and a number of legal documents). **The only allowable reason for departure would be around the issue of homosexuality and not any other social issue.** **[You can review the Conference Board of Trustees Disaffiliation agreement.](#)**
- It is likely (but not decided) that the Peninsula-Delaware Conference will be paired with the Baltimore-Washington Conference sometime in the next year or so. We are downsizing the number of bishops in the Northeastern Jurisdiction and creating more two-point charges for bishops. Currently, the Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference is paired with the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference and is served by one bishop. The new configuration with the Baltimore-Washington Conference would be the same with the bishop serving both but

each conference remains separate (like we are now).

- **There is no plan to merge Peninsula-Delaware with Baltimore Washington.**
- **Our large churches are not being apportioned to pay for “failed” districts or churches.** Our apportionment formula is based on a local church’s budget. Our re-districting efforts (going down to 3 districts in July 2021) was planned in order to lessen the apportionments for all churches and not to ask churches of wealth to bear additional costs.
- The Annual Conference provides organizational services to our churches that brings valuable protections, group health and pension programs for our pastors, numerous training opportunities, vetting and ordaining of our clergy, conflict resolution and crisis intervention, mentoring and leadership development, and a host of mission work with the poor, including schools, hospitals, prison ministry, camps, and church development. **Conference churches through our apportionment system extend the ministry of Christ with our dollars and our service.** Clergy are expected to interpret this to their churches and promote the paying of apportionments as mission giving.

We are called to love one another, respect our differences and work together with the ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ first and foremost.

Please stem the tide of fear and the spread of misinformation. Your District Superintendent and Director of Connectional Ministries stands ready to visit your church and provide accurate information and answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson