

Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation



Grassroots Solution Meeting

July 19, 2019, in Chicago

Participants

- Three Central Conference bishops
- Three Traditionalists
- Three Centrists
- Three Progressives



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July 19, 2019, in Chicago

Participants

- Three Central Conference bishops
 - Three Traditionalists
 - Three Centrists
 - Three Progressives
- Smaller group of two from each affinity group and two central conference bishops agreed to meet further



Three sets of meetings of the group

Oct. 17-18, Nov. 11-12 and Dec. 16-17 — all in Washington, D.C.



Mediated by
Kenneth R. Feinberg

- Sept. 11 Victim Compensation Fund
- Agent Orange Victim Compensation Program
- Aurora Victim Relief Fund

He volunteered to do this work



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Agreements and Commitments

- Signators agreed to fully support the protocol's implementation
- Signators will work together to draft legislation for the 2020 General Conference



Key Elements of the Protocol:

What it Means

- The agreement calls for an amicable separation, with traditionalists able to create a new Methodist denomination
- Other Methodist denominations also may be created as a result of this protocol



Key Elements of the Protocol:

What it Means

- Churches that leave for another Methodist denomination are allowed to keep their assets



Key Elements of the Protocol:

What it Means

- Assumption is that conferences and churches will remain in the UMC unless they actively choose to move to a new Methodist denomination



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Process and Timeline

- Intent to form a new denomination must be made known by May 15, 2021
- Central Conferences may choose with a two-thirds vote to affiliate with a new Methodist denomination by Dec. 31, 2021



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Process and Timeline

- Annual conferences, may choose to vote on whether to affiliate with one of the new Methodist denominations
 1. Requires motion from the conference session floor with 20% support
 2. Then the vote to leave the post-separation UMC must be by July 1, 2021, and requires 57% support



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Process and Timeline

- Churches that wish to affiliate differently than their annual conference may vote to do so by **Dec. 31, 2024**
 1. Vote must be in a church conference
 2. Church councils will decide the threshold for the congregation — either by simple majority of voting members present or 67%.



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Local Church Property



- Churches who join a new Methodist denomination retain their property
- Churches that do not join a new Methodist denomination still will be held to ¶2553 of the Book of Discipline



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Local Church Property



- Property of churches that close, or if the new Methodist denomination ceases to exist, will be subject to a lien in favor of Wespath on assets in the amount of the church's proportionate share of unfunded pension liabilities



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Financial Agreements



- The UMC will pay the new Methodist denomination \$25 million over 4 years
- \$2 million will be held in escrow for payment to potential additional denominations spawned by protocol



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Financial Agreements



- \$39 million will be allocated over the next eight years to support communities historically marginalized by the sin of racism



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Financial Agreements



- Pension plans will remain in place for all current clergy and lay employees, regardless of Methodist denomination under the protocol



Key Elements of the Protocol:

Abeyance of LGBTQ-related Trials



- Processes addressing restrictions in the Discipline related to “self-avowed, practicing homosexuals” regarding ordination and same-gender weddings shall be held in abeyance until after the first conference of the post-separation UMC



What it Means for General Conference



- Council of Bishops has requested a declaratory decision from the Judicial Council to ensure constitutionality of the protocol agreements
- A financial-impact statement should be released prior to GC 2020



What it Means for General Conference



- Council of Bishops will request an appropriate time for the protocol to be placed on the agenda
- Meeting space will be provided for those interested in forming a new Methodist denomination at adjournment

