



EAST END UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1212 Holly Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37206
office@eastendumc.org | www.eastendumc.org

Note: This message was originally read by Rev. Scott Marshall-Kimball before the beginning of worship on March 6th, 2022

I want to take a moment to provide an update on some news from within the United Methodist Church denomination this week.

The United Methodist General Conference is a legislative body made up of elected delegates from churches around the world that meets once every four years to make decisions on church policy and church teaching. The May 2020 general conference, a conference in which the approval of a denominational split in which those against LGBTQ+ inclusion would leave the denomination to form their own church was anticipated, was postponed due to the covid pandemic. This gathering was subsequently postponed again last year and scheduled for Late Summer of 2022.

On Thursday, citing concerns over covid safety and visa difficulties for international delegates the Commission on the General Conference, the group responsible for the planning and facilitation of the General Conference, announced that the General Conference will be postponed until 2024.

Immediately following this announcement, which was expected for some time. Conservatives in the church announced they will be launching a new, conservative, denomination, the Global Methodist Church, or "GMC", on May 1st 2022. This will allow churches against LGBTQ+ inclusion to begin departing the UMC and joining the "GMC" with the approval of their annual conferences starting this May.

I do not know exactly what this will look like, how long it will take, and how many churches will be leaving. There will be more information in the coming weeks and when there is enough information to share, we'll have a town hall where the congregation will be given a presentation and will be able to ask questions.

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What I can say is that I truly believe East End UMC is in a good spot in all of this. Even in some of the worst case scenarios I have run through my head in the past few days, East End remains well positioned to be a strong church that is in a denomination that no longer carries written discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons.

It is likely that East End UMC will not have to take any action as a local congregation to find itself in a UMC that better lines up with East End's inclusive values, but you will be kept well informed on all of this so that you are equipped to make any necessary decisions that present themselves.

Please be in prayer for our denominational leaders as they navigate a complex and stressful time and be on the lookout for more information as it becomes available.

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