

Appendix E

0423-02 The Written Questions of Law

REQUEST FOR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S DECISION ON A QUESTION OF LAW

Reverend Jean Tippit, District Superintendent of the Pensacola District,

Pursuant to ¶¶ 419.10, 2718.1, and 2718.2 of the *Book of Discipline* ("Discipline")¹, I hereby submit to you in writing during the regular business of a church conference of the First United Methodist Church of Pace ("FUMC of Pace") in the Pensacola District my request for a District Superintendent's decision of the following question of law:

Whether the resolution for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace from The United Methodist Church and its presentment to the church conference for a vote of approval along with such vote of approval are unlawful circumventions of the disaffiliation mandates, limited qualifications, and minimum requirements of ¶ 2553 of the *Discipline*; subvert the action of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference; and therefore are null and void as actions that negate, ignore, and violate the provisions of the *Discipline*, in particular ¶ 2553, when:

1. Where the presenters and proponents of the disaffiliation referendum have failed to provide and establish:

(a) the actual and valid reasons for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace, including facts and circumstances that support and are the basis for only the limited reason(s) of conscience mandated and specified in ¶ 2553.1 permitted to justify the eligibility and qualifications of the FUMC of Pace to the limited right to disaffiliate under ¶ 2553.1; and

(b) that the FUMC of Pace and its members are actually conscience bound to disagree, object, or not comply with:

(1) A change in the requirements and provisions to the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-

¹ Judicial Council has ruled in Decision 1443:

One of the duties of a District Superintendent is to "interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 419.10. When a written question of Church law is properly raised during a charge conference session, the District Superintendent is to make a ruling thereon, and the secretary is (i) to ensure that a copy of the request and the ruling thereon by the District Superintendent are included in the charge conference minutes, and (ii) that certified copies thereof are sent to the secretary of the annual conference to be heard as an appeal by "the bishop presiding in the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 2718.2.

Discipline at ¶ 2718.1 states: "1. The order of appeals on questions of law shall be as follows: from the decision of the district superintendent presiding in the charge or district conference to the bishop presiding in the annual conference, and from the decision of the bishop presiding in the annual conference to the Judicial Council, and from a central conference to the Judicial Council."

avowed homosexuals resolved and adopted by the General Conference in 2019 [“the 2019 amendments”], which are:

(i) ¶ 304.3: In particular, the amendment to footnote 1 of ¶ 304.3 that was amended to broaden the scope of relationships or activities that were encompassed in the definition of “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” who, under ¶ 304.3, are “not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.”

(ii) ¶ 304.5: Prohibitions were added against approvals and recommendations by the district committee on ordained ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry of persons who did not meet the qualifications in ¶ 304, including ¶ 304.3 (*see above*), and it specified additional instructions for the clergy session presiding bishops to rule that the unqualified candidate to be out of order and ineligible for the appointment.

(iii) ¶ 415.6: An amendment to prohibit bishops from consecrating bishops, from commissioning persons on the deacon or elders track, and from ordaining deacons or elders if any of them are self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

(2) Subsequent actions (such as complying with, implementing, or enforcing the 2019 amendments) or inactions (such as omissions, failures, or refusals to comply with, implement, or enforce the 2019 amendments) by the annual conference of the Alabama-West Florida Conference that are related to the change of requirements and provisions in the 2019 amendments noted above.

2. The proposed disaffiliation resolution (which also pertains to the release of the connectional obligations by the FUMC of Pace under the Trust Clause of the Discipline) is actually and factually predicated upon paragraphs of the *Discipline* other than ¶ 2553, and therefore is improper as a matter of church law and is null and void because it “[subverts] . . . and circumvents the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

3. The proposed disaffiliation resolution and its approval are predicated upon the “reason” and argument of the presenters and proponents that they cannot wait (and therefore the members of the FUMC of Pace should not wait) for the 2024 or other future General Conference of the UMC, and a their reliance “upon potential proposed legislation that might be considered at a future General Conference (such as those references that were made to the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*).” Such future General Conference(s) and/or proposed legislation or future votes have “no bearing or effect” as a reason of conscience under Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline*, ¶ 2553, and therefore the resolution and any adoption of it are improper, null, and void as unlawful circumventions and subversions of the strict and limited requirements for eligibility and entitlement for the limited right of disaffiliation under ¶ 2553. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

4. The presenters and proponents of the proposed disaffiliation resolution have failed to demonstrate and establish that the church conference of the FUMC of Pace on the ¶ 2553 disaffiliation vote was fairly and legally noticed to all of its professing members and that the vote will be and is validly, fairly, and legally being attained in accordance with ¶¶ 248, 246.8, and 2553.3 of the *Discipline*, including that, as mandated by the Standard Form of Disaffiliation Agreement required by ¶ 2553.4(a); the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), and the rules and policies of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, the motion or referendum and ballot must:

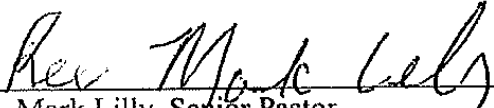
(a) Specify that the vote was (a) “to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church”;

(b) Specify that the FUMC of Pace is only “allowed to exercise *the limited right* in ¶ 2553 of the Book of Discipline to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church *only* for its reason(s) of conscience *under the conditions stated in ¶ 2553.1*”; and

(c) Identify and delineate the specific, actual, and truthful and substantiating facts and circumstances for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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.

The noncompliance of these requirements in this instance “subvert[s] . . . and circumvent[s] the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]”; it is therefore a null and void resolution under the *Discipline*. See Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. Mark Lilly, Senior Pastor
First United Methodist Church of Pace, Inc.

Date: September 6, 2022

0423-02 Interested Parties
Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference

Rev. Ashley Davis

Annual Conference Secretary
ashley@awfumc.org

Bishop David W. Graves

Presiding Bishop
Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference
4719 Woodmere Blvd.
Montgomery, Alabama 36106
334-356-8014
888-873-3127 fax
bishop@awfumc.org

Rev Ashley Davis [Conference Secretary] <ashley@awfumc.org>
Rev. Jean Tippit [District Superintendent] <jeantippit.dsumc@gmail.com>,
Lisa Sasser[First UMC of Pace, Church Sec'y] <secretary@pacefumc.org>,
Robbie Thurman [First UMC of Pace] <rthurman@mchsi.com>,
Rev Mark Lilly [First UMC of Pace, Sr Pastor] <GMLilly@yahoo.com>,
Bishop David Graves [Presiding Bishop] <bishop@awfumc.org>,
Robert F Northcutt [Chancellor] <Bob.Northcutt@chlaw.com>,



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CONSEIL JUDICIAIRE DE L'ÉGLISE 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 David W. Graves

Address: 4719 Woodmere Blvd City: Montgomery

State/Province: AL ZIP/Postal Code: 36106 Country: USA

Phone: 3343568014 Fax: _____ E-mail: bishop@awfumc.org

Annual Conference: Alabama-West Florida Date of session: 9/6/22 (month/day/year)

Question(s) of Law: Whether the resolution for disaffiliation of FUMC Pace from the United Methodist Church and its presentment to the church conference for a vote of approval along with such vote for approval are unlawful circumventions of the disaffiliation mandates, limited qualifications, and minimum requirements of paragraph 2553.

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

Constitution: _____ Book of Discipline: 419.10, 2718.1, 2718.2, 2553, 246-2

Judicial Council Decision(s): 1449, 1422, 1433

Signature:  Date: 9/20/22
David W. Graves (Sep 19, 2022 11:03 EDT) (month/day/year)

Bishop of The United Methodist Church

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.

Bishop David Graves's Review of District Superintendent's Ruling in Response to the Request for a Decision of Law Made at the Special Called Church Conference of Pace United Methodist Church

After reviewing the facts of this request for a decision of law at the church conference held at Pace United Methodist Church on September 6, 2022, I concur with the ruling of the District Superintendent. Rev. Tippit was correct that for the reasons stated no rule of law was required when considering the eligibility portions of this request under the first three points of the request (see Judicial Council Decision 1422.). The fourth point under the request for a ruling of law submitted to the District Superintendent was whether or not there was a duly called church conference resulting in the vote to disaffiliate. Based on church communications before and during the special called church conference, including church bulletins, emails, newsletter and postcards as well as the resolution, eligibility requirements for disaffiliation and ballot presented during the church conference, attached as exhibits, the facts demonstrate the church conference was properly held in accordance with the Book of Discipline. The purpose of the called special meeting was clearly stated and the provisions of paragraph 2553 regarding limited qualifications were included in multiple communications and explained to church membership during the meeting. According to the District Superintendent, there were no expressions of confusion about the purpose of the meeting or eligibility requirements.

Based on the facts and documents presented to me and the paragraphs of the Book of Discipline and Judicial Council Decisions cited in the Request for a Decision of Law, I concur with the Decision of Law made by District Superintendent, the Reverend Jean Tippit, on September 19, 2022.



The Pensacola District
Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church
District Superintendent Ruling of Law

Exhibits

- I. District Superintendent's Decision on Request for Ruling of Law
- II. Request for District Superintendent's Decision on a Question of Law
- III. Church conference resolution
- IV. Copies of church bulletins from August 21st and September 4th
- V. September newsletter
- VI. Postcard to church membership
- VII. Sample email to church membership
- VIII. Minutes from special called church conference with question of law as appendix
- IX. Ballot from church conference
- X. Eligibility requirements read at the church conference

Exhibit I

District Superintendent's Ruling in Response to the Request for a Decision of Law Made at the Special Called Church Conference of Pace United Methodist Church

Statement of Facts:

A special called church conference meeting occurred at Pace United Methodist Church ("PUMC") on September 6, 2022. The Senior Minister of PUMC requested the District Superintendent (the "DS") schedule the special called meeting following a vote of the PUMC church council on August 17, 2022. The purpose of the special called church conference was to discuss and vote on UMC's possible disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church ("UMC"). The DS conducted the meeting at which time a resolution was submitted to approve PUMC's disaffiliation from the UMC, pursuant to Paragraph 2553 of the *United Methodist Church Book of Discipline (the "Discipline")* (See Resolution at Exhibit 3.)

Prior to the special called meeting, notice thereof was communicated to church membership in multiple ways. Notice of the meeting was announced from the pulpit and published in church bulletins on August 21 and September 4 of 2022. (See copies at Exhibit 4), in the September Newsletter (Exhibit 5) and one or more postcards and emails to church membership (Exhibits 6 & 7). As shown in the Minutes of the special called church conference (Exhibit 8), the Disaffiliation Resolution and a proposed ballot to be used to vote thereon (Exhibit 9) were presented to those in attendance. The Eligibility Requirements for disaffiliation from the UMC pursuant to Paragraph 2553 of the *Discipline* (Exhibit 10) were read to those in attendance by the DS.

The postcard mailed to members in advance of the meeting advised members that the purpose of the meeting was to vote on disaffiliation (Exhibit 6). One or more emails sent to the membership by the Senior Pastor stated those attending the meeting would have the opportunity to vote on PUMC disaffiliating from the UMC. The email explained that paragraph 2553 of the Discipline provides the reasons a church may disaffiliate from the UMC and quoted section 1 of paragraph 2553 therein. (Exhibit 7). In addition to the DS reading the requirements of paragraph 2553 to the membership, the resolution and ballot submitted to memberships during the meeting referred to paragraph 2553 and quoted section 1 thereof.

During the special called meeting, the Senior Minister requested a ruling on a Question of Law (the "Request") from the DS (Exhibit 2). In summary, the Request was submitted for a ruling of law on whether the resolution for the disaffiliation of PUMC from the UMC, its presentment to the church conference for vote and the approval thereof was an unlawful circumvention of the *Discipline* and the 2019 General Conference and in violation of the requirements of paragraph 2553 of the *Discipline*. The DS responded that she would rule within 30 days and this is that ruling.

Analysis and Rationale.

I find that no ruling of law is required in response to paragraphs 1-3 of the Request because the Alabama West Florida Conference has determined that it is the policy of the Conference that it will not question "reasons of conscience" behind a church's decision to disaffiliate. If the church conference is held fairly and in conformance with the *Discipline*, and the resolution made at the church conference clearly articulates that the resolution proposes disaffiliation from the UMC pursuant to Paragraph 2553 of the Discipline, and contains language from paragraph 2553 that is then duly voted upon, the Conference policy is that it will not require further inquiry into the "reasons of conscience" behind the vote. See also Judicial Council Decision 1422.

However, it should be noted that the resolution presented to the special called church conference referred to and cited specific language from Paragraph 2553 (Exhibit 3). As shown in the Church Conference Minutes (Exhibit 8), the Eligibility Requirements for Disaffiliation pursuant to Paragraph 2553 (Exhibit 10) were read to those in attendance by the DS prior to the church vote. The ballot used to vote on disaffiliation refers to and cites critical language from Paragraph 2553 and states in part "the disaffiliation process from the United Methodist Church, under the terms of Paragraph 2553...". In an email to church membership announcing the special called church conference with the DS, the Senior Minister announced the purpose of the meeting was to vote on disaffiliation and therein he referred to and cited language from Paragraph 2553. (Exhibit 7). Given the discussion that took place at the special conference meeting and multiple documents discussed herein related to the vote, I know of no

reason to question the reasoning behind the vote at the special called church conference.

According to Paragraph 2553, a Local Church must provide documentation, to the satisfaction of the Annual Conference, which evidences the "result of the disaffiliation vote" taken at the church conference. The result of the disaffiliation vote at PUMC was 171 to disaffiliate and 55 to remain United Methodist. The attached Exhibits provide documentation believed to be satisfactory to meet Conference requirements.

Judicial Council Decision 1449, referred to in the Request concerns paragraph 2548 and is not applicable to this situation other than perhaps for the limited purpose to reinforce that church conferences must be called in accordance with paragraph 247-248 in the Book of Discipline. That was done in this case.

Regarding paragraph 4 of the Request, I rule that the special called church conference was a duly held conference in accordance with paragraphs 246 and 248 of the Book of Discipline. The Senior Pastor asked the DS to schedule a church conference following the vote of the church council on August 17, 2022. (Exhibit 7) The DS scheduled the church conference for September 6, 2022, in the PUMC sanctuary. The call for the church conference was announced from the pulpit, in church bulletins on August 21, 2022 and September 4, 2022 (Exhibit 4) and in the September Newsletter (Exhibit 5). Additionally, the church mailed post cards to church members which stated the purpose of the meeting was to vote on disaffiliation (Exhibit 6). Email(s) were sent by the Senior Minister (like the one attached as Exhibit 7) which advised not only the purpose for the special called meeting but advised further that the disaffiliation discussion and vote would be held in connection with paragraph 2553.

The purpose of the special called meeting and notices thereof were communicated multiple ways and times and the resolution, ballot and minutes reflect that the reason for the meeting and vote was the proposed disaffiliation from the denomination pursuant to paragraph 2553 of the *Discipline* for reasons of conscience related to the human sexuality issue stated therein. I was in attendance at the special called meeting, read aloud the provisions of Paragraph 2553 and heard the discussion that took place. I heard nothing to suggest there was any confusion or disagreement about

the purpose of the meeting or any suggestion the meeting had not been properly noticed as a special called church conference. It is not the policy of the Conference to disregard or question the stated reason for a special called meeting or the reasons of conscience for disaffiliation, when the reasoning is clearly articulated as being pursuant to paragraph 2553 of the *Discipline* and documentation provided in connection with the disaffiliation supports the basis stated.

Ruling:

Based on the above, I find that the PUMC special called church conference was properly noticed and conducted in accordance with the Discipline and that the resolution proposing that PUMC disaffiliate from the UMC pursuant to paragraph 2553 was properly approved by a vote of 171 to 55. I know of no facts to suggest the vote to disaffiliate is contrary to the requirements of paragraph 2553 or based on reasons other than those stated in the Resolution, ballot and other documents discussed herein.

Rev. Jean Tippit
District Superintendent of the Pensacola District


Rev. Jean Tippit (Sep 20, 2022 17:36 CDT)

Sep 20, 2022

Exhibit II

**REQUEST FOR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S DECISION
ON A QUESTION OF LAW**

Reverend Jean Tippit, District Superintendent of the Pensacola District,

Pursuant to ¶¶ 419.10, 2718.1, and 2718.2 of the *Book of Discipline* ("Discipline")¹, I hereby submit to you in writing during the regular business of a church conference of the First United Methodist Church of Pace ("FUMC of Pace") in the Pensacola District my request for a District Superintendent's decision of the following question of law:

Whether the resolution for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace from The United Methodist Church and its presentment to the church conference for a vote of approval along with such vote of approval are unlawful circumventions of the disaffiliation mandates, limited qualifications, and minimum requirements of ¶ 2553 of the *Discipline*; subvert the action of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference; and therefore are null and void as actions that negate, ignore, and violate the provisions of the *Discipline*, in particular ¶ 2553, when:

1. Where the presenters and proponents of the disaffiliation referendum have failed to provide and establish:

(a) the actual and valid reasons for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace, including facts and circumstances that support and are the basis for only the limited reason(s) of conscience mandated and specified in ¶ 2553.1 permitted to justify the eligibility and qualifications of the FUMC of Pace to the limited right to disaffiliate under ¶ 2553.1; and

(b) that the FUMC of Pace and its members are actually conscience bound to disagree, object, or not comply with:

(1) A change in the requirements and provisions to the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-

¹ Judicial Council has ruled in Decision 1443:

One of the duties of a District Superintendent is to "interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 419.10. When a written question of Church law is properly raised during a charge conference session, the District Superintendent is to make a ruling thereon, and the secretary is (i) to ensure that a copy of the request and the ruling thereon by the District Superintendent are included in the charge conference minutes, and (ii) that certified copies thereof are sent to the secretary of the annual conference to be heard as an appeal by "the bishop presiding in the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 2718.2.

Discipline at ¶ 2718.1 states: "1. The order of appeals on questions of law shall be as follows: from the decision of the district superintendent presiding in the charge or district conference to the bishop presiding in the annual conference, and from the decision of the bishop presiding in the annual conference to the Judicial Council, and from a central conference to the Judicial Council."

avowed homosexuals resolved and adopted by the General Conference in 2019 [“the 2019 amendments”], which are:

(i) ¶ 304.3: In particular, the amendment to footnote 1 of ¶ 304.3 that was amended to broaden the scope of relationships or activities that were encompassed in the definition of “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” who, under ¶ 304.3, are “not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.”

(ii) ¶ 304.5: Prohibitions were added against approvals and recommendations by the district committee on ordained ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry of persons who did not meet the qualifications in ¶ 304, including ¶ 304.3 (*see above*), and it specified additional instructions for the clergy session presiding bishops to rule that the unqualified candidate to be out of order and ineligible for the appointment.

(iii) ¶ 415.6: An amendment to prohibit bishops from consecrating bishops, from commissioning persons on the deacon or elders track, and from ordaining deacons or elders if any of them are self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

(2) Subsequent actions (such as complying with, implementing, or enforcing the 2019 amendments) or inactions (such as omissions, failures, or refusals to comply with, implement, or enforce the 2019 amendments) by the annual conference of the Alabama-West Florida Conference that are related to the change of requirements and provisions in the 2019 amendments noted above:

2. The proposed disaffiliation resolution (which also pertains to the release of the connectional obligations by the FUMC of Pace under the Trust Clause of the Discipline) is actually and factually predicated upon paragraphs of the *Discipline* other than ¶ 2553, and therefore is improper as a matter of church law and is null and void because it “[subverts] . . . and circumvents the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

3. The proposed disaffiliation resolution and its approval are predicated upon the “reason” and argument of the presenters and proponents that they cannot wait (and therefore the members of the FUMC of Pace should not wait) for the 2024 or other future General Conference of the UMC, and a their reliance “upon potential proposed legislation that might be considered at a future General Conference (such as those references that were made to the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*).” Such future General Conference(s) and/or proposed legislation or future votes have “no bearing or effect” as a reason of conscience under Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline*, ¶ 2553, and therefore the resolution and any adoption of it are improper, null, and void as unlawful circumventions and subversions of the strict and limited requirements for eligibility and entitlement for the limited right of disaffiliation under ¶ 2553. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

4. The presenters and proponents of the proposed disaffiliation resolution have failed to demonstrate and establish that the church conference of the FUMC of Pace on the ¶ 2553 disaffiliation vote was fairly and legally noticed to all of its professing members and that the vote will be and is validly, fairly, and legally being attained in accordance with ¶¶ 248, 246.8, and 2553.3 of the *Discipline*, including that, as mandated by the Standard Form of Disaffiliation Agreement required by ¶ 2553.4(a); the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), and the rules and policies of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, the motion or referendum and ballot must:


(a) Specify that the vote was (a) “to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church”;

(b) Specify that the FUMC of Pace is only “allowed to exercise *the limited right* in ¶ 2553 of the Book of Discipline to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church *only* for its reason(s) of conscience *under the conditions stated in ¶ 2553.1*”; and

(c) Identify and delineate the specific, actual, and truthful and substantiating facts and circumstances for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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.

The noncompliance of these requirements in this instance “subvert[s] . . . and circumvent[s] the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]”; it is therefore a null and void resolution under the *Discipline*. See Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

Respectfully submitted,


Rev. Mark Lilly, Senior Pastor
First United Methodist Church of Pace, Inc.

Date: September 6, 2022

Exhibit III

**Church Conference Resolution
Appendix C**

Church Name: Pace
Date and Time: September 6 at 6:00pm

Whereas the local church has held a town hall meeting with the District Superintendent; and

Whereas the local church members have spent a period of time in discernment; and

Whereas the local church members have read and understand the eligibility for exercising the ¶12553 limited right of disaffiliation;

Therefore, be it resolved that:

Pace UMC begin the disaffiliation process from the United Methodist Church, under the terms of ¶12553 of the current Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church which reads:

“Basis – Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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;”

Be it further resolved that:

Trustees of Pace United Methodist Church work with the Trustees of the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference to establish a Disaffiliation Agreement to that effect, to be enacted subsequent to ratification by the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference, and to complete all necessary steps to fulfill said agreement to include the formation a new non-profit corporation and the payment of all required financial obligations as outlined in the Disaffiliation Agreement.

Exhibit IV

First United Methodist Church of Pace

4540 Chumuckla Highway
Pace, FL 32571

Phone: 850.994.5608

Email: secretary@pacefumc.org Website: www.pacefumc.org

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday
8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Connect with our Church on Facebook: [First United Methodist Church of Pace](#)
Connect with our Church on Instagram: [pace_fumc](#)

Interested in Baptism or becoming a Member?

Please see Pastor Mark or contact the church office for more information
850.994.5608 or secretary@pacefumc.org

SUNDAY TOTALS for 8/14/2022

8:30AM	Traditional Service	85
10:30AM	Contemporary Service	51
9:30 AM	Sunday School	42

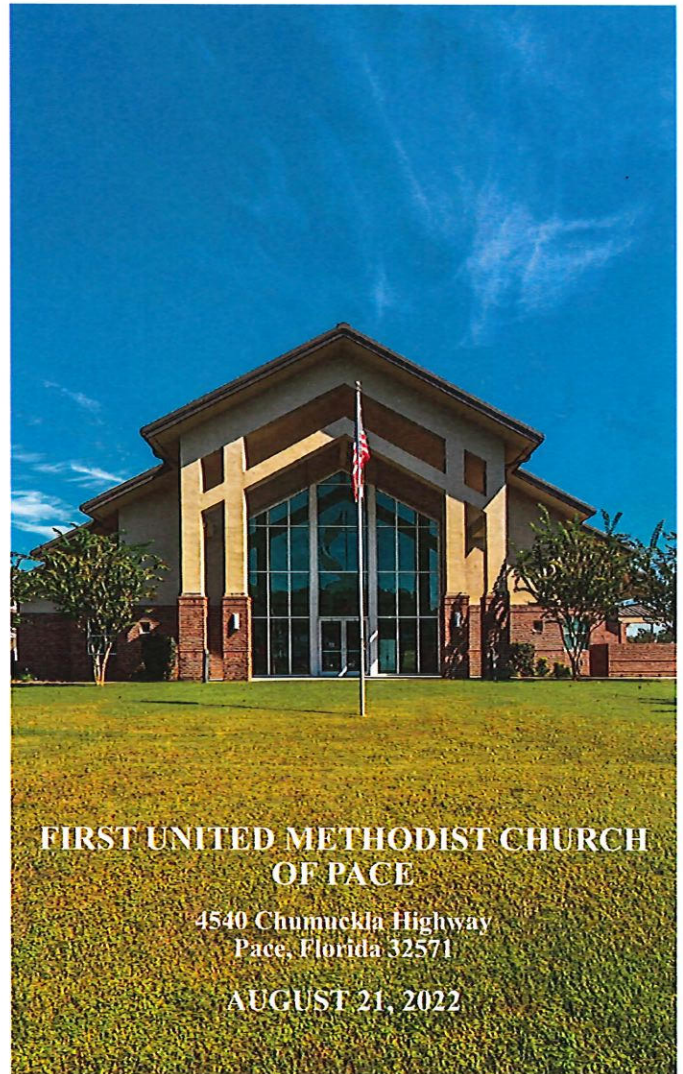
Coffee & Donuts available every Sunday Morning in the Carol Gillet Building starting @8:00am and open prior to each service.



- 8/21/22:** Educational Meeting @2pm
- 8/22/22:** Educational Meeting @6pm
- 8/26/22:** Emmaus Meeting @6pm
- 8/27/22:** Emmaus Meeting @6pm
- 8/27/22:** Megan's Love Ministry Outreach @11am
- 8/28/22:** Children Ministry Pool Party @4pm
- 9/1/22:** Educational Meeting @6pm

Please Keep Your Church Staff in Prayer

Reverend Mark Lilly Senior Pastor pastor@pacefumc.org	Reverend John Webb Pastor Emeritus	Hugo Garnier Youth Minister Business Administrator
Caroline Sonen Children's Director children@pacefumc.org	Megan Nelson Church Bookkeeper bookkeeper@pacefumc.org	Lisa Sasser Church Secretary secretary@pacefumc.org
Chris Cook Contemporary Song Leader & Sound System Tech	Cheryl Smith Chancel Choir Director	
Joey Modglin Church Custodian & Landscaper	Tina Webb Pianist	



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PACE

4540 Chumuckla Highway
Pace, Florida 32571

AUGUST 21, 2022

First United Methodist Church of Pace
 4540 Chumuckla Highway
 Pace, FL 32571

Phone: 850.994.5608
 Email: secretary@pacefumc.org Website: www.pacefumc.org
 Office Hours: Monday through Thursday
 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Connect with our Church on Facebook: [First United Methodist Church of Pace](https://www.facebook.com/FirstUnitedMethodistChurchofPace)
 Connect with our Church on Instagram: [pace_fumc](https://www.instagram.com/pace_fumc)

Interested in Baptism or becoming a Member?
 Please see Pastor Mark or contact the church office for more information
 850.994.5608 or secretary@pacefumc.org

SUNDAY TOTALS for			
	8/21/2022 (corrected)	8/28/2022	
8:30AM	Traditional Service	73	84
10:30AM	Contemporary Service	43	62
9:30 AM	Sunday School	48	50

Coffee & Donuts available every
 Sunday Morning in the Carol Gillet
 Building starting @8:00am and
 open prior to each service.



9/5/22: Labor Day—Church Office Closed
9/6/22: Special Church Conference @6pm
9/7/22: Quilting Group @9am
9/10/22: Wednesday Night Activities @5:30pm
9/10/22: United Methodist Men's meeting @8am
9/10/22: Megan's Love Ministry Outreach @11am

Please Keep Your Church Staff in Prayer

Reverend Mark Lilly
 Senior Pastor
pastor@pacefumc.org

Reverend John Webb
 Pastor Emeritus

Hugo Garnier
 Youth Minister
 Business Administrator

Caroline Soren
 Children's Director
children@pacefumc.org

Megan Nelson
 Church Bookkeeper
bookkeeper@pacefumc.org

Lisa Sasser
 Church Secretary
secretary@pacefumc.org

Chris Cook
 Contemporary Song Leader
 & Sound System Tech

Cheryl Smith
 Chancel Choir Director

Joey Modglin
 Church Custodian
 & Landscaper

Tina Webb
 Pianist



**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 OF PACE**

4540 Chumuckla Highway
 Pace, Florida 32571

SEPTEMBER 4, 2022

WELCOME



5:30 - 6:15 p.m. Dinner is Served
 6:20 - 7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Studies,
 Children & Youth Activities
 7:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Practice

Cost: \$6 Adults; \$3 Children (under 10);
 \$20 Family.

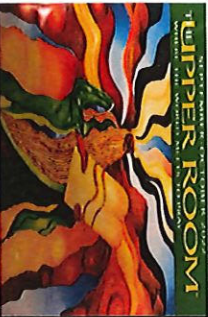
**** MAKE RESERVATIONS BY NOON ON
 MONDAY. VIA EMAIL or PHONE****



**Wednesday Night
 Supper Menu**
 Chicken Spaghetti
 Veggies
 Salad
 Garlic Bread
 Dessert

Trena Webb will be starting a new Bible Study on
 Wednesday Nights. Books have been pre-ordered.
 Book Title: "But Encourage One Another Daily"
 Author: J.D. Walt. (In-person or via Zoom)

****For more info: Contact Trena @850-324-4999 or
 email webbtrena@gmail.com



The New UPPER ROOM DEVOTIONS
 Available and Located in
 Guest Central.
FREE!! Please take one & share
 one...



If you wish to schedule a flower arrangement to be placed in our
 Sanctuary for Sunday worship services, please contact the Church
 Office. The flowers can be placed in memory or in honor of family
 members or in celebration of special occasions. You may sign up
 for a specific date on the Flower Calendar. When the flowers are
 ordered through the church office, the cost is \$60 per arrangement.
 Payment may be placed in the offering plate marked "Sanctuary
 Flowers."

**CONFIRMATION
 REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH
 RECEPTION INTO THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 RECEPTION INTO A LOCAL CONGREGATION**

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are
 initiated into Christ's holy Church. We are incorporated into God's mighty
 acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit.
 All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

Through confirmation, and through the reaffirmation of our faith, we renew
 the covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for
 us, and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy Church.

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Nylah Jane Turnage
Derek Del Rosario
Molly Penrod
Adam Penrod

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

On half of the whole Church, I ask you: Do you renounce the spiritual forces
 of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?
 I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice,
 and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?
 I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in His grace,
 and promise to service Him as our Lord, in union with the Church which
 Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?
 I do.

Will you nurture these young persons in Christ's holy Church, that by your
 teaching and example they may be guided to accept God's grace for them-
 selves, to profess their faith openly, and to lead a Christian life?
 I will.

According to the grace given to you, will you remain faithful members of
 Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?
 I will.

Will you who sponsor these candidates support and encourage them in their
 Christian life?
 I will.

Do you, as Christ's body, the Church, reaffirm both your rejection of sin and your commitment to Christ?
We do.

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life and include these persons now before you in your care?

With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.

Let us join in profession the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?
I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
[who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.]**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
[the holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting.]**

CONFIRMATION OR REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Name, the Holy Spirit work within you,
That having been born through water and the Spirit,
You may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Remember your baptism and be thankful. **Amen.**

RECEPTION INTO THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

As members of Christ's universal Church,
Will you be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church,
And do all in your power to strengthen its ministries?

I will

RECEPTION INTO THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

As members of this congregation,
Will you faithfully participate in its ministries
By your prayers, your presence,
Your gifts, your service
And your witness?

I will

COMMENDATION AND WELCOME

Members of the household of God,
I commend these persons to your love and care.
Do all in your power to increase their faith,
Confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

We give thanks for all that God has already given you
And we welcome you in Christian love.

As members together with you
In the body of Christ
And in this congregation
Of The United Methodist Church,
We renew our covenant

Faithfully to participate
In the ministries of the Church
By our prayers, our presence,
Our gifts, our service, and our witness
That in everything God may be glorified
Through Jesus Christ.

The God of all grace,
Who has called us to eternal glory in Christ,
Establish you and strengthen you
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
That you may live in grace and peace.

First United Methodist Church of Pace

SEPTEMBER 4, 2022
ONE SERVICE 10:00am

*CALL TO WORSHIP	<i>"Amazing God"</i>	Chancel Choir
WELCOME / GREETING / OPENING PRAYER		
*HYMN #618	<i>"Let Us Break Bread Together"</i>	Vs 1 & 2
*CONFIRMATION	<i>"Apostle's Creed"</i>	
PALTER READING	<i>Psalms 139:1-6</i>	Cheryl Smith
PASTORAL PRAYER WITH LORD'S PRAYER		
*HYMN (Remain Seated) #424	<i>"Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone"</i>	Vs. 1 & 3
OFFERING WITH DOXOLOGY		Tina Webb
SPECIAL MUSIC	<i>"Still"</i>	Michelle Spann
MORNING MESSAGE	<i>"Too Hard?!"</i> <i>Luke 14:25-33</i>	Rev. Mark Lilly
COMMUNION		Eunice Sutter; Cheryl Smith Jill Kerr; Heather Cromer
*CLOSING HYMN #393	<i>"Spirit of the Living God"</i>	Vs 1

"O Lord, you have searched me and know me!"
Psalms 139:1



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

9/1/2022

EDUCATIONAL MEETING

There will an Education Meeting Thursday, 9/1/22 @6:00pm.

9/4/2022

ONE SERVICE SUNDAY

There will only be One Service on Sunday, 9/4/22 @10:00am.

9/5/2022

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

9/6/2022

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

There will a Special Church Conference Tuesday, 9/6/22 @6:00pm.

9/7/2022

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

Our Wednesday Night Activity schedule starts back @5:30pm.

9/6/2022 &

QUITTING GROUP

The First and Third Tuesday of every month @9:00am. Meeting in the GYM. **Come and join in on a great ministry!

9/20/2022

9/10/2022

UMM MEETING

The UMM Committee Meeting is planned for Saturday, 9/10/2022 @8:00am.

9/12/2022

EMMAUS MEETING

Emmaus meeting @6pm.

9/16/2022

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

The Children's Ministry will be having Movie Night @5pm.

9/17/2022

EMMAUS MEETING

Emmaus meeting @8am.

9/22/2022

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND HOPE

The CFH meeting is planned for Thursday, 9/22/2022 @10:00am. The meeting is held in the choir room.

September 2022 **MEGAN'S LOVE**

Megan's Love meets at the church every Saturday morning around 11:00am. Next dates include: 9/3/22; 9/10/22; 9/17/22; 9/24/22

Exhibit V

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

9/1/2022 **EDUCATIONAL MEETING**

There will be an Education Meeting Thursday, 9/1/22 @6:00pm.

9/4/2022 **ONE SERVICE SUNDAY**

There will only be One Service on Sunday, 9/4/22 @10:00am.

9/5/2022 **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED**

9/6/2022 **SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE**

There will be a Special Church Conference Tuesday, 9/6/22 @6:00pm.

9/7/2022 **WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES**

Our Wednesday Night Activity schedule starts back @5:30pm.

9/6/2022 & **QUILTING GROUP**

9/20/2022 The First and Third Tuesday of every month @9:00am. Meeting in the GYM.
**Come and join in on a great ministry!

9/10/2022 **UMM MEETING**

The UMM Committee Meeting is planned for Saturday, 9/10/2022 @8:00am.

9/12/2022 **EMMAUS MEETING**

Emmaus meeting @6pm.

9/16/2022 **CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

The Children's Ministry will be having Movie Night @5pm.

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Emmaus meeting @8am.

9/22/2022 **CHRISTIAN FAITH AND HOPE**

The CFH meeting is planned for Thursday, 9/22/2022 @10:00am.
The meeting is held in the choir room.

September 2022 **MEGAN'S LOVE**

Megan's Love meets at the church every Saturday morning around 11:00am.
Next dates include: 9/3/22; 9/10/22; 9/17/22; 9/24/22

Exhibit VI

•••••
••••• A Special Called Church
••••• Conference is scheduled for
••••• September 6, 2022 @6:00pm.

•••••
••••• AGENDA: Disaffiliation Vote.

•••••
••••• **You must bring a Photo ID
••••• to cast your vote.

•••••
••••• A Special Called Church
••••• Conference is scheduled for
••••• September 6, 2022 @6:00pm.

•••••
••••• AGENDA: Disaffiliation Vote.

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••••• to cast your vote.

•••••
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•••••
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••••• **You must bring a Photo ID
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•••••
••••• A Special Called Church
••••• Conference is scheduled for
••••• September 6, 2022 @6:00pm.

•••••
••••• AGENDA: Disaffiliation Vote.

•••••
••••• **You must bring a Photo ID
••••• to cast your vote.

Exhibit VII

Subject: Fwd: Fw: Fwd:

Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 3:39:58 PM Central Daylight Time

From: Jean Tippit

To: Ashley Davis

One of Mark's email.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lilly Mark <gmlilly@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed, Sep 7, 2022 at 11:19 AM

Subject: Fw: Fwd:

To: Jean Tippit <jeantippit.dsumc@gmail.com>

2nd email

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "Lisa Sasser" <secretary@pacefumc.org>

To:

Sent: Thu, Aug 18, 2022 at 9:51 AM

Subject: Fwd:

LETTER FROM REV. MARK LILLY

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mark Lilly <pastor@pacefumc.org>

Date: Thu, Aug 18, 2022 at 9:33 AM

Subject: UPDATE: Administrative Board Meeting on 8/17/2022

Dear First United Methodist Church of Pace friends, last night, the Administrative Council voted to have a Church Conference on September 6 at 6 PM with our District Superintendent. At this church conference all members present will be given the opportunity to vote on disaffiliating from the United Methodist Church. I have made my position on this issue well known. I will be staying United Methodist. I am proud to be a United Methodist Christian. The staff and I have consistently maintained integrity despite what some may have heard. It breaks my heart to see our church walking through this and to see the consistent flow of disinformation coming from clergy in our conference; clergy who have overstepped their bounds and have shown no integrity in seeking to influence your vote. I encourage you to look deeply into this before you vote on September 6.

In the United Methodist Book of Discipline paragraph 2553 states the reasons a church may disaffiliate.

“¶ 2553. Disaffiliation of a Local Church Over Issues Related to Human Sexuality.

1. Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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.”

--

Rev. Mark Lilly

--

Rev. Jean Tippit
District Superintendent
Marianna-Panama City and Pensacola District
jeantippit.dsumc@gmail.com
(251)656-6857

Exhibit VIII

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of PACE

September 7, 2022 @ 6pm

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE MINUTES

The District Superintendent, Rev. Jean Tippit, called the meeting to order and had the opening prayer.

Members present is at Appendix A.

Eligibility for Exercising the 2553 is at Appendix B.

The resolution is at Appendix C.

A copy of the written ballot is at Appendix D.

The resolution was submitted, and the District Superintendent read the Eligibility for Exercising the 2553 Limited Right of Disaffiliation and there was discussion.

First: George Rials

Second: Robbie Thurman

Rev. Mark Lilly requested personal privilege to present "A Question of Law" to the District Superintendent, Rev. Jean Tippit. See Appendix E.

Rev. Jean Tippit response to Rev. Mark Lilly personal privilege is as follows:

This is the first time I have been presented with this motion. I have up to 30 days to rule on this matter, and I will take this time to deliberate and make a motion. Then based on paragraph 419.10 of the Book of Discipline any decision I make is subject to review of the presiding bishop.

Call to Question to continue the vote.

First: Nelson Faircloth

Second: Dave Mawhinney

The vote was called for and written ballots were distributed to members. The ballots were collected and counted.

Yes: 171

No: 55

Abstain: 0

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by the District Superintendent, Rev. Jean Tippit closed.

(Signed copy attached on next page)

Church Conference Minutes

Church Name: Pace

Date and Time: September 6 at 6:00pm

The District Superintendent, Rev. Jean Tippit, called the meeting to order and had the opening prayer.

Members present is at Appendix A.

Eligibility for Exercising the ¶ 2553 is at Appendix B.

The resolution is at Appendix C.

A copy of the written ballot is at Appendix D.

The resolution was submitted and the District Superintendent read the Eligibility for Exercising the ¶ 2553 Limited Right of Disaffiliation and there was discussion.

Motion: George Riaks

Second: Robby Thurman

The vote was called for and written ballots were distributed to members. The ballots were collected and counted.

Yes 171
No 55
Abstain _____

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by the District Superintendent.

Respectfully submitted,

Printed Name of Secretary Sisa Sasser Signature Sisa Sasser
Printed Name of DS Rev. Jean Tippit Signature Rev. Jean Tippit

Appendix E

REQUEST FOR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S DECISION ON A QUESTION OF LAW

Reverend Jean Tippit, District Superintendent of the Pensacola District,

Pursuant to ¶¶ 419.10, 2718.1, and 2718.2 of the *Book of Discipline* ("Discipline")¹, I hereby submit to you in writing during the regular business of a church conference of the First United Methodist Church of Pace ("FUMC of Pace") in the Pensacola District my request for a District Superintendent's decision of the following question of law:

Whether the resolution for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace from The United Methodist Church and its presentment to the church conference for a vote of approval along with such vote of approval are unlawful circumventions of the disaffiliation mandates, limited qualifications, and minimum requirements of ¶ 2553 of the *Discipline*; subvert the action of the 2019 Special Session of the General Conference; and therefore are null and void as actions that negate, ignore, and violate the provisions of the *Discipline*, in particular ¶ 2553, when:

1. Where the presenters and proponents of the disaffiliation referendum have failed to provide and establish:

(a) the actual and valid reasons for the disaffiliation of the FUMC of Pace, including facts and circumstances that support and are the basis for only the limited reason(s) of conscience mandated and specified in ¶ 2553.1 permitted to justify the eligibility and qualifications of the FUMC of Pace to the limited right to disaffiliate under ¶ 2553.1; and

(b) that the FUMC of Pace and its members are actually conscience bound to disagree, object, or not comply with:

(1) A change in the requirements and provisions to the *Book of Discipline* related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-

¹ Judicial Council has ruled in Decision 1443:

One of the duties of a District Superintendent is to "interpret and decide all questions of Church law and discipline raised by the churches in the district, subject to review by the resident bishop of the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 419.10. When a written question of Church law is properly raised during a charge conference session, the District Superintendent is to make a ruling thereon, and the secretary is (i) to ensure that a copy of the request and the ruling thereon by the District Superintendent are included in the charge conference minutes, and (ii) that certified copies thereof are sent to the secretary of the annual conference to be heard as an appeal by "the bishop presiding in the annual conference," *Discipline* ¶ 2718.2.

Discipline at ¶ 2718.1 states: "1. The order of appeals on questions of law shall be as follows: from the decision of the district superintendent presiding in the charge or district conference to the bishop presiding in the annual conference, and from the decision of the bishop presiding in the annual conference to the Judicial Council, and from a central conference to the Judicial Council."

avowed homosexuals resolved and adopted by the General Conference in 2019 [“the 2019 amendments”], which are:

(i) ¶ 304.3: In particular, the amendment to footnote 1 of ¶ 304.3 that was amended to broaden the scope of relationships or activities that were encompassed in the definition of “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” who, under ¶ 304.3, are “not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.”

(ii) ¶ 304.5: Prohibitions were added against approvals and recommendations by the district committee on ordained ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry of persons who did not meet the qualifications in ¶ 304, including ¶ 304.3 (*see above*), and it specified additional instructions for the clergy session presiding bishops to rule that the unqualified candidate to be out of order and ineligible for the appointment.

(iii) ¶ 415.6: An amendment to prohibit bishops from consecrating bishops, from commissioning persons on the deacon or elders track, and from ordaining deacons or elders if any of them are self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

(2) Subsequent actions (such as complying with, implementing, or enforcing the 2019 amendments) or inactions (such as omissions, failures, or refusals to comply with, implement, or enforce the 2019 amendments) by the annual conference of the Alabama-West Florida Conference that are related to the change of requirements and provisions in the 2019 amendments noted above.

2. The proposed disaffiliation resolution (which also pertains to the release of the connectional obligations by the FUMC of Pace under the Trust Clause of the Discipline) is actually and factually predicated upon paragraphs of the *Discipline* other than ¶ 2553, and therefore is improper as a matter of church law and is null and void because it “[subverts] . . . and circumvents the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

3. The proposed disaffiliation resolution and its approval are predicated upon the “reason” and argument of the presenters and proponents that they cannot wait (and therefore the members of the FUMC of Pace should not wait) for the 2024 or other future General Conference of the UMC, and a their reliance “upon potential proposed legislation that might be considered at a future General Conference (such as those references that were made to the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*).” Such future General Conference(s) and/or proposed legislation or future votes have “no bearing or effect” as a reason of conscience under Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline*, ¶ 2553, and therefore the resolution and any adoption of it are improper, null, and void as unlawful circumventions and subversions of the strict and limited requirements for eligibility and entitlement for the limited right of disaffiliation under ¶ 2553. *See* Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

4. The presenters and proponents of the proposed disaffiliation resolution have failed to demonstrate and establish that the church conference of the FUMC of Pace on the ¶ 2553 disaffiliation vote was fairly and legally noticed to all of its professing members and that the vote will be and is validly, fairly, and legally being attained in accordance with ¶¶ 248, 246.8, and 2553.3 of the *Discipline*, including that, as mandated by the Standard Form of Disaffiliation Agreement required by ¶ 2553.4(a); the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), and the rules and policies of the Alabama-West Florida Conference, the motion or referendum and ballot must:


(a) Specify that the vote was (a) “to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church”;

(b) Specify that the FUMC of Pace is only “allowed to exercise *the limited right* in ¶ 2553 of the Book of Discipline to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church *only* for its reason(s) of conscience *under the conditions stated in ¶ 2553.1*”; and

(c) Identify and delineate the specific, actual, and truthful and substantiating facts and circumstances for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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.

The noncompliance of these requirements in this instance “subvert[s] . . . and circumvent[s] the disaffiliation mandates and minimum requirements that the General Conference has set forth in Section VIII of Chapter Six in the *Discipline* [¶ 2553]”; it is therefore a null and void resolution under the *Discipline*. See Judicial Council Decision 1449 (Aug. 22, 2022).

Respectfully submitted,


Rev. Mark Lilly, Senior Pastor
First United Methodist Church of Pace, Inc.

Date: September 6, 2022

Exhibit IX

Appendix D

Ballot

Proposing that Pace UMC of Pace, FL begin the disaffiliation process from the United Methodist Church, under the terms of ¶2553 of the current Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church which reads:

"Basis – Because of the current deep conflict within The United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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;"

and to authorize the Trustees of Pace UMC of Pace, FL to work with the Trustees of the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference to establish a Disaffiliation Agreement to that effect, to be enacted subsequent to ratification by the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference, and to complete all necessary steps to fulfill said agreement.

As a professing member of Pace UMC of Pace, FL present at this duly called Church Conference, I hereby vote:

_____ Yes (In favor of disaffiliation from the UMC)

_____ No (In favor of remaining a part of the UMC)

Exhibit X

Church Conference Minutes
Eligibility for Exercising the ¶ 2553 Limited Right of Disaffiliation
Appendix B

Church Name: Pace
Date and Time: September 6 at 6:00pm

Eligibility for Exercising the ¶ 2553 Limited Right of Disaffiliation

A local church is allowed to exercise the limited right established in ¶ 2553 of the *Book of Discipline* to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church only for reasons of conscience under the conditions stated in ¶ 2553.1 which reads: "Basis – Because of the current deep conflict within the United Methodist Church around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination for reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions 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."

The following changes in the requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline relating to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals were resolved and adopted by the 2019 General Conference:

(1) Amendment to ¶ 304.3: In particular, footnote 1 of ¶ 304.3 was amended to broaden the scope of relationships or activities that were encompassed in the definition of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" who, under ¶ 304.3, are "not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church."

(2) Amendment to ¶ 304.5: Prohibitions have been added against approvals and recommendations by the district committee on ordained ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry of persons who did not meet the qualifications in ¶ 304, including ¶ 304.3 (*see above*), and specified added instructions for the clergy session presiding bishops to rule that the unqualified candidate to be out of order and ineligible for the appointment.

(3) Amendment to ¶ 415.6: Amended to prohibit bishops from consecrating bishops, from commissioning persons on the deacon or elders track, and from ordaining deacons or elders if any of them are self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

(4) Amendment to ¶ 2702.1(b): Amendment to footnote 1 of ¶ 304.3 (*see above*) affects the usage of the term "self-avowed practicing homosexual" in the list of chargeable offenses related to clergy (*viz.*, "being a self-avowed practicing homosexual; or conducting ceremonies which celebrate homosexual unions; or performing same-sex wedding ceremonies . . .")