



## ASBURY UMC

Loving, Growing, Reaching

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Dear Asbury Congregation,

As we navigate these changing times in the United Methodist Church, your Church Council values the importance of involving our entire congregation in the decisions that will shape our future together.

With the developments from the UMC General Conference and the Holston Annual Conference, our leadership has been in close contact with various Holston Conference officials. We have been diligently monitoring updates and determinations that impact our congregation. The Conference is expected to deliver clarifications and guidelines in the coming weeks. As many of you are, the church council is eager to get additional information from the Conference. We ask for your patience as we complete our initial evaluation of this process and disseminate this information to the congregation once it has been issued. As part of our commitment to transparency and inclusive decision-making, we want to ensure everyone has a voice in our way forward. In our scheduled church council meeting on July 14<sup>th</sup>, the Church Council will consider the process provided by the Holston Conference for churches who want to consider and determine their continued affiliation with the United Methodist Church.

The Church Council commits to the following steps to facilitate any decision that might be considered concerning our way forward:

1. We will organize a series of meetings moderated by a neutral party. This will ensure that discussions are fair and balanced, allowing all members of our congregation the opportunity to be heard.
2. We will seek to identify and share any available resources to help the congregation conduct their own study and prayerful reflection of the issues at hand. This will empower everyone to participate in informed and meaningful discussions.

As we continue through this process, we respectfully ask that we maintain our focus on the unity of Asbury and avoid words and actions that could create division among us. Let's remember that being united in Christ does not require uniformity of opinion on every issue that arises in the life of the church. Let us strive to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3 (NIV)). Our primary focus is to ensure that we proceed thoughtfully and correctly, prioritizing the best interests of our congregation in the Spirit of Christ.

We commit to being open and transparent, seeking to model the servant leadership of our Lord Jesus Christ in all that we do. As our denomination's founder John Wesley stated, "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike?" We deeply appreciate your patience and understanding as we undertake this important process. Your voice is crucial, and we are dedicated to ensuring that the members of our congregation have the opportunity to contribute.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. We Love Asbury, we are Asbury.

Church Council