

## **The Trust Clause – A Tradition of the United Methodist Church**

According to conference information, each United Methodist Church is part of a larger connection of shared purpose and mission that has been in existence for hundreds of years. This connection is at the core of what it means to be United Methodist. We consider what is best for the whole connection, not “what is best for me?” or “what is best for my congregation?”

United Methodists today join the generations of our forebears who built and sustained the church so United Methodist ministry will continue into the future. The trust clause protects the property and assets that they have purchased, built, and improved over time so they will always be available for ministries offered by future generations of United Methodists.

Our founder, John Wesley, is at the core of the trust clause. He was aware that some local societies had members who veered from the teachings and principles of the larger group. He had also seen, at times, some members of a local society become influenced by outside organizations and sought to take the society’s property with them. Wesley wanted to assure that Methodist properties were used only and always to teach established Methodist doctrine and be available to Methodists for their ministries.

Today The United Methodist Church as the holder of the trust is required to use the property exclusively for the purposes of and to benefit The United Methodist Church. Its leadership and clergy (all members of the conference) have the same responsibility. If a time arises the property will no longer to function as part of The United Methodist Church, it forfeits all rights to continue to hold the property, and the property itself and all other assets transfer to the denomination.