



St. Luke's

United Methodist Church

One Church Multiple Campuses | stlukesokc.org | (405) 232-1371

January 10, 2023

Dear Friends,

Last evening, the Administrative Board (this board is a large diverse group made up of people from both the Edmond and Downtown campuses, from all worship services, women and men, and all ages) of St. Luke's received the following recommendation:

For well over a year, the St. Luke's Key Leaders, made up of the Chairs and vice-chairs of the Governance committees, have been diligently studying the ongoing situation of the United Methodist Church denomination. We are truly concerned that the UMC has had an increasing loss of people attending worship, without a concerted plan to address it.

We are saddened by the financial problems and ineffectiveness of the denomination. While many of us can remember years ago that apportionments truly made a difference, lately we have seen the administrative cost of the UMC structure grow, while cutting payments to life-changing missions like Lydia Patterson, Circle of Care, and Neighborhood Services Organization.

And perhaps most needed of all, are changes to the Book of Discipline to reflect the Methodist theology of grace and assurance of God's love.

While the denominational structure served our church well in the past, we feel that to most effectively and efficiently live out our God-given mandate to make disciples of Jesus Christ, we should be unencumbered by the UMC structure. We remain fully Methodist in our message of grace, our commitment to bringing people closer to Christ, and our devotion in serving those in need.

On behalf of the Executive Lay Leadership Team - representing the chairpersons and vice-chairs of the Trustees Committee, the Management Council, the Staff Parish Relations Committee, the Finance Committee, and Ray Lees who has led us in Diversity and Transition - we unanimously recommend, and I (Steve Ford) provide as a motion, that St. Luke's begin the discernment phase of the disaffiliation process.

After much discussion, the Ad. Board voted 60-0 to officially enter the discernment phase of the disaffiliation process. This is not a vote against the United Methodist Church; St. Luke's has always been, and will continue to be Methodist. In fact, St. Luke's has been part of three different Methodist denominational structures: The Methodist Episcopal Church South, The Methodist Church, and for the last 54 of its 133-year history, the United Methodist Church. The Methodist theology of God's grace and assurance is at the very core of St. Luke's identity.

As part of this discernment process, we will have a Church Conference that has been called by our District Superintendent, Dr. Victor McCullough where all are invited to attend. It will be held Monday, January 23, 7:00 pm at the Downtown Campus Christian Life Center, for a presentation by the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the UMC Director of Transitional Ministry, Rev. Tish Malloy. There will not be a vote taken that evening, it is just for the purpose of hearing information from the Oklahoma Annual Conference regarding the United Methodist Church.

There will be informational meetings led by Dr. Bob Long, Rev. Wendy Lambert, and Rev. Josh Attaway that all are welcome to attend:

February 13 - 6:30 pm Edmond Campus Worship Center

February 19 - 2:00 pm Downtown Campus Christian Life Center

March 12 - 2:00 pm Edmond Campus Worship Center

March 15 - 6:30 pm Downtown Campus Sanctuary

You can also find information on our website at: stlukesokc.org/future which has informational videos, recordings of the Fall 2022 WNA class taught by Dr. Long and Rev. Wendy Lambert, FAQ's, and more!

For 133 years St. Luke's has focused on following Christ, sharing a message of His grace, growing in our faith, and serving the community, all in our mission to share God's love and bring hope to the world - and that is what we will continue to do for the next 133 years. Please be in prayer as we discern God's path for an exciting future!

Sincerely,

Darcy Schein, Chair of Ad. Board
Bob Long, Senior Pastor

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