

Q&A About the Disaffiliation Process in the North Georgia Conference

What is the Disaffiliation Process?

The 2019 Special Session of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a disaffiliation agreement allowing United Methodist churches to leave the denomination through the end of 2023 "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 Conference Board of Trustees Process and the subsequent Disaffiliation Agreement follow ¶2553 of the 2019 Book of Discipline.

What is involved in the process?

The process outlined by the Board of Trustees presents the step in chronological order. It begins with a call for a Church Conference by the District Superintendent, and includes the instructions that to proceed, a two-thirds majority of the professing members of the local church present and voting at the Church Conference approve the resolution. The resolution must then be ratified by the members of the North Georgia Annual Conference.

Prior to the disaffiliation date, a local church shall pay to the Annual Conference any unpaid apportionments for the 12 months immediately prior and an additional 12 months of apportionments, plus unfunded pension obligations, direct-bill obligations, and other liabilities. A local church must be in good standing as a United Methodist Church in order to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church.

If a church votes to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church, when will they know the payment amount?

The congregation will know before taking the vote at the Church Conference.

Working with Wespath, the North Georgia Conference has calculated the amount of the unfunded pension liability attributed to each church. This valuation has been conducted solely for this purpose. The Conference will update this amount quarterly.

Clergy and others with church permissions may see the amount for their local church in Conference Data Services at any time. Find it in the Church section on the Main Index. There is a green button labeled "Bene Unfunded Lookup" for accessing the page. The button only appears for clergy and users who have church-level permissions.

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The number reflected on the Data Services page on the date of the church conference is the final number and will be honored.

What is the timeline for this process?

Disaffiliation using paragraph 2553 must be complete by December of 2023, therefore must be approved by the June 2022 or June 2023 North Georgia Annual Conference.

Is the process negotiable?

This process doesn't involve negotiation. The steps and terms defined in the process and agreement must be followed to the letter and are not negotiable.