



Coffee Conversations – Questions from Session 2: Methodist History with LGBTQ+ Exclusion

Methodist History with LGBTQ+ Exclusion

1. Over its history, has the United Methodist Church generally ignored or actively excluded LGBTQ+ people from the church?

The United Methodist Church has largely ignored LGBTQ+ exclusion since 1972, when harmful language was first adopted. Over time, the language in United Methodist policy has become incrementally less accepting. However, at every General Conference between 1972 and 2016, there has been legislation seeking to remove the 1972 "incompatible" language from the Book of Discipline.

2. What is the history of other denominations' handling of LGBTQ+ inclusion?

Other denominations have their own history with LGBTQ+ inclusion shaped by their theology and organizational structure. This [Pew Research Center report](#) compiles a synopsis of religious groups' official position on same-sex marriage.

3. How would John Wesley have responded to our current denominational dispute?

John Wesley's writings are silent on homosexuality. His focus was on the "forgotten people" of his day.

4. Are we going to have Minnesota churches split off from the United Methodist Church?

Since 2022, 23 Minnesota churches have disaffiliated from The United Methodist Church.

5. Will the two campuses of Centennial split over LGBTQ issues?

Any decision on changing Centennial's reconciling status would be a congregational decision across both campuses.

General Conference

6. When is General Conference?

General Conference is April 23 – May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

7. Who is in the Global Methodist Church? Will this new denomination support existing Methodist institutions such as Africa University?

The Global Methodist Church is a new theologically conservative denomination, composed largely of clergy and churches that have separated from the United Methodist Church. Launched in May 2022, its policies and programs are still being formulated. Adoption of formal constitution is set for the fall of 2024.

8. Is the issue for General Conference regionalization?

We do not yet know what specific legislation will be considered by General Conference. But regionalization is a likely discussion point. Regionalization allows different regions of the United Methodist Church to operate under policies relevant to their context. Presently, churches in the United States work under the current Book of Discipline. Churches in other parts of the world operate under their local context.

9. How are United Methodist congregations distributed across the world?

The United Methodist Church connects more than 12 million members on four continents. The global distribution is represented at General Conference and has shifted over the past 40 years. In 1980, 8% of General Conference delegates came from outside the United States. In 2024, 44% of the delegates will come from outside the United States.

10. Who can change the UMC Book of Discipline? Who can change the UMC Constitution?

The General Conference can change the Book of Discipline. Amendments to the United Methodist Church Constitution are passed by vote at the Annual Conference level. To pass, an amendment must receive $\frac{2}{3}$ of all votes cast across all Annual Conferences.