

One Church Plan

As supported by a majority of bishops of
The United Methodist Church



Pastors are
not forced to but able to
marry same-sex couples.



Conferences are
not forced to but able to
ordain gay people.



Congregations are
not forced to but able to
host same-sex weddings
on church property.

One Church Plan Summary

In the One Church Plan, **no annual conferences, bishops, congregations, or pastors are compelled to act contrary to their convictions.** The plan maintains the leadership structure of The United Methodist Church, including the Council of Bishops, the General Conference, and the annual conferences as one body and one church. It offers greater freedom to many who desire change but do not want to violate The Book of Discipline.

There is no mandate that requires local churches, conferences, or pastors to participate in a vote that divides, segments, or separates. The plan grants space for traditionalists to continue to offer ministry as they have in the past; space for progressives to exercise freely a more complete ministry with LGBTQ persons; and space for all United Methodists to continue to coexist without disrupting their ministries.

Central Conferences outside the U.S. are not compelled to change their beliefs or practices and can adapt portions of The Book of Discipline for their own context. This plan provides United Methodists the ability to address their missional contexts in different ways.

The One Church Plan removes (in the United States) the language from The Book of Discipline that restricts pastors and churches from conducting same-sex weddings and annual conferences from ordaining self-avowed practicing homosexual persons. It adds language that

intentionally protects the religious freedom of pastors and churches that choose not to perform or host same-sex weddings and Boards of Ordained Ministry and bishops who choose not to credential or ordain self-avowed practicing homosexual persons.

The plan ends the threat of church trials over same-sex weddings. Boards of Ordained Ministry already have the authority to discern whom to credential. Local churches already have the authority to establish wedding policies. Pastors already discern whom they will or will not marry. While some annual conferences and related Boards of Ordained Ministry can adopt new practices, no annual conferences must make further choices or amend current practices unless they desire to do so. United Methodist institutions, foundations, universities, agencies, and General Boards will continue to offer their ministries without significant disruption or costly legal counsel related to their charters or articles of incorporation. Wespath will continue to offer its services without disruption.

The One Church plan also asks the General Council on Finance and Administration to find a means consistent with The Book of Discipline to ensure that each episcopal area in the United States supports the costs of its own episcopal leader and offices. Central conference bishops and episcopal services will continue to be covered out of the current General Church Episcopal Fund.