



Aldersgate

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August 30, 2022

Bishop Frank Beard
P.O. Box 19207
Springfield, IL 62794

District Superintendent Stan Irvin
1508 Sioux Drive Ste. C
Marion, IL 62959

To Bishop Frank Beard and District Superintendent Stan Irvin,

The Church Council of Aldersgate UMC authorized a team of leaders from the congregation to study the issues related to the deep and growing conflict in the United Methodist Church. The volunteer members of the Study and Facilitation Team (SFT) are Cecil Atchison, Sharon Atchison, Wally Dodge, Bridget Douglas, Harrold Gurley, Joe Main, Bill Nielsen (chair), John Payne, Somer Slone, Sherry Smedshammer and Carolyn Smoot.

Aldersgate Methodist Church is evangelical and has a long history of believing and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is what God has done through Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins, redemption, and pouring out the Holy Spirit. Aldersgate stands firmly within the Wesleyan theological tradition of justification, regeneration, assurance, and sanctification. Aldersgate church seeks to extend the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people as all people are of sacred worth.

The SFT by a unanimous vote recommended to the Church Council that Aldersgate church move forward in the process of disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church (UMC) and take appropriate preparatory steps. The Church Council unanimously voted to approve the recommendation of the Study and Facilitation Team.

Phase 1, Step 1 of the IGRC Process on Disaffiliation was completed on August 1, 2002. This request completes Phase 1, Step 2.

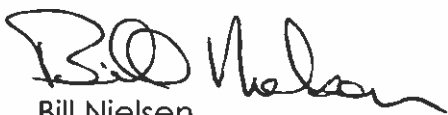
Our decision for leaving the United Methodist Church is based on the following reasons:

1. We are convinced that the future vision of the UMC, as articulated by our current leadership, is not the future we want for our church. We believe in the authority of Scripture and the doctrine stated in the Apostle's Creed. Council of Bishops President Thomas Bickerton was recently quoted saying, "I've been saying that I believe God has opened the door for us for the next expression of Methodism. The question is: Do we have the courage to walk through the door?" We are not looking for a new type of Methodism. The gospel of Jesus Christ is still true and relevant today.

2. The UMC has lost our Wesleyan mission of bringing people to Jesus and helping them walk in the Way of Christ.
3. The UMC is a dysfunctional denomination. UMC bishops have refused to enforce provisions of the Book of Discipline with which they disagree. They have refused to take action to address clear violations of *The Discipline*. Furthermore, the North Central Jurisdictional Conference has officially requested this inaction of bishops continue.
4. We are convinced the leadership of the United Methodist Church is leading us away from traditional Biblical standards of spirituality and morality. This has been most pronounced in the debates concerning human sexuality.
5. We disagree with the United Methodist Church regarding their departure from strict adherence to the Book of Discipline regarding matters that the Bible defines clearly concerning human sexuality and marriage as well as the actions and inactions of the UMC in response to this departure. Marriage is clearly defined in Scripture as between one man and one woman ordained by God through holy matrimony. Any perversion of this sacred union goes against the Word of God. The Council of Bishops currently has a female member who is married to another female and action to remove her from her position has not been taken to comply with the Book of Discipline. For reasons of conscience, we wish to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the Church Council of Aldersgate United Methodist Church,



Bill Nielsen
Church Council Chairperson



Linda Kobler
Church Council Secretary

CC: Janice L. Griffith, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
Rev. Charliam Renner, District Superintendent, Embarras River District
Rev. Mike Potts, Director of Administrative Services
