



St. Luke's

United Methodist Church

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

Future
of St. Luke's



Dear Family of Faith,

Below you will find a letter that we received this morning from the Oklahoma Annual Conference Bishop James Nunn. We are required to send it today to the St. Luke's congregation.

If you have any questions about the letter or regarding disaffiliation, please do not hesitate to visit the "Future of St. Luke's" page on our website, stlukesokc.org/future or submit a question on the FAQ [page here](#).

Sincerely,

St. Luke's Key Leaders:

Darcy Schein, Chair of Ad. Board
Steve Ford, Vice Chair of Ad. Board
Ray Lees, Chair of Transitional Ministry
Geoff Stallings, Chair of Finance Committee
Richard Forshee, Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee
Richard Nix, Vice Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee
Rick Johnson, Chair of Trustees
Don Douglas, Vice Chair of Trustees
Margaret Dixon, Chair of Management Council
Keith Peters, Vice Chair of Management Council



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE
OKLAHOMA INDIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

March 17, 2023

I know this church family has received a lot of correspondence regarding the upcoming vote about severing your relationship with the United Methodist Church.

I want to thank you for letting me be a part of a meeting on Feb. 13 at your downtown campus, where I had the opportunity to speak to you directly about the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church. The integrity of the UMC means so much to me so I was glad to be able to provide clarity to some of the misunderstandings about budget allocations and perceived mismanagement.

Since that meeting, your church leaders have had four additional meetings with a lot of information encouraging you to vote in favor of disaffiliation.

As I shared on Feb 13, my heart breaks for the damage that this whole situation is creating in relationships. Additionally, it is hard for me to see my team members – who have devoted their lives to the UMC and have spent so many hours trying to navigate this unbelievably hard time with integrity, get insulted, their integrity questioned, and frankly, misinformation spread about their work. Yet still, they show up and try to continue to do God's work over and over. So, while a part of me wants to address the information that has been shared point by point, I don't believe it would be productive to do so in this letter.

What I will say is that we have always been grateful to have the St. Luke's actively involved in our conference leadership. It is difficult to hear the church's leadership insinuate incompetence or improprieties regarding strategies they helped create in various committees, and in some cases, led.

I must, however, clarify the process and agenda of the meeting on Sunday so there is no confusion. The St. Luke's leadership has indicated that this meeting will follow guidelines established by the Oklahoma Annual Conference and Robert's Rules of Order. For the sake of clarity, I have included an official description of the process below. I have notified Rev. Long of this clarification but wanted to make sure I shared it with the rest of St. Luke's congregation prior to the meeting.

As an official notice, please note the following:

The meeting Sunday, March 19, 2023, is a called Church Conference. The District Superintendent has fixed the time of the meeting (BOD 246.4) and will preside at the meeting (BOD 246.5). The District Superintendent is an extension of the episcopal office (BOD 401) and is fully authorized to conduct the meeting according to the agenda set by the Superintendent. The local church does not set the agenda.

The organization of this meeting is called under the authority of the Book of Discipline and the Oklahoma Conference Policy for disaffiliation. Roberts Rules is supplementary to the Book of Discipline and the Conference Disaffiliation Policy, which includes all terms and conditions of the disaffiliation agreement. In the event of any conflict, the BOD and Conference Disaffiliation policy will control over Roberts Rules of Order.

As you discern in these final days before the vote, I encourage you to continue asking questions of me and others in our office. We are happy to respond to any clarifying questions you have after hearing all the information provided by your church's leadership.

Please reach out to any or all of the below:

- Bishop James G. Nunn, jnunn@okumc.org
- Director of Connectional Ministry Derek Belase, dbelase@okumc.org
- Director of Transitional Ministries Tish Malloy, tmalloy@okumc.org

The campaign drive toward Sunday's vote is nearing an end. The recommendation has been made by the leadership.

But all the votes count the same. You get to decide the future.

I pray for discernment and peace. I know we might not be able to overcome fractures, both perceived and real. St. Luke's might decide to disaffiliate, and if that happens, I pray for a great future where this church thrives, grows and introduces generations to come to the love of Jesus Christ.

I pray for unity, not uniformity. I pray for diversity to overcome differences. And as we enter this vote, I pray for grace to prevail – grace received and grace extended.

Grace and peace,

Bishop James "Jimmy" Nunn



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