



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
OKLAHOMA AREA
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JAMES G NUNN
BISHOP

OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE
OKLAHOMA INDIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

May 2, 2023

Clergy of the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church,

On April 24, 2023 you received a letter which indicated that:

Clergy of the Oklahoma Annual Conference are not to serve in a ministerial capacity outside of the United Methodist Church without the express written permission of the Bishop.

This is the case for active and retired UM clergy members (elders, deacons, associate members, and local pastors), UM clergy serving in extension ministries, and UM clergy on leave or honorable location.

This letter provides specific guidance to active United Methodist (UM) clergy who are currently serving at a church that is disaffiliating effective May 6, 2023 and provides further clarification to retired UM clergy members, UM clergy serving in extension ministries and UM clergy on leave or honorable location.

Please note that recent Judicial Council rulings do not change these requirements in any way.

If the church you are currently serving was ratified for disaffiliation at the April 22, 2023 Called Annual Conference, and you plan to continue serving at that local church after the disaffiliation effective date, your next steps are:

- **Immediately initiate a withdrawal (for deacons and elders) and discontinuance (for local pastors) from the United Methodist Church** by submitting a written request to withdraw to Bishop Nunn, your District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Joseph Harris (the Conference Secretary of the Oklahoma Annual Conference), Rev. Brandon Blacksten (Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry), and Rev. Nancy Hamilton (Executive Secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry) AND
- **Deacons and elders, immediately submit your certificate of ordination and your certificate of membership in the Oklahoma Annual Conference** to Dr. Joseph Harris. In the event that credentials cannot be located, a letter to Dr. Joseph Harris, with a copy to your District Superintendent, should be submitted stating your withdrawal and stating

that your certificate of ordination and/or your certificate of membership in the Oklahoma Annual Conference cannot be located.

Letters of withdrawal and the submission of your certificate of ordination and your certificate of membership in the Oklahoma Annual Conference must be provided to the Conference Secretary via hand delivery, certified mail or regular mail, and delivered or postmarked no later than May 6, 2023.

- **Local pastors, immediately submit your license to your District Superintendent via hand delivery, certified mail or regular mail, delivered or postmarked no later than May 6, 2023. You will be immediately discontinued as a United Methodist licensed local pastor.**

Should you elect not to submit your credentials in their entirety or send a statement that you have lost them by **May 6, 2023**, I will file a complaint against you under ¶2702.1d, “disobedience to the order and discipline of the United Methodist Church.” Since you no longer hold membership or credentials in the United Methodist Church, you do not have the right of fair process.

United Methodist credentials are the property of the United Methodist Church, which has issued them to you. They are not your personal property. In order to prevent potential misuse of credentials, this requirement is non-negotiable if you wish to leave in good standing. If you wish to retain but not use the United Methodist Certificate(s) of Ordination you have received; simply make a request to the Conference Secretary, Dr. Joe Harris, to have the document(s) stamped and returned to you.

If you do not submit your credentials in their entirety by May 6, 2023, your withdrawal will be under complaint pursuant to ¶360.3 “withdrawal under complaints or charges” and will be noted in your permanent record.”

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Joseph Harris, your District Superintendent, or Rev. Nancy Hamilton.

Necessary addresses:

Bishop James Nunn, Resident Bishop of the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the UMC, PO Box 60467, Oklahoma City, OK 73146-0467

Dr. Joe Harris, Conference Secretary, 1501 NW 24th, Oklahoma City, OK 73106-3536 and jharris@okumc.org

Rev. Brandon Blacksten, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, revbrandonblacksten@gmail.com

Rev. Nancy Hamilton, Executive Secretary of the Board of Ordained Ministry, nhamilton@okumc.org

James G. Nunn



Oklahoma Area UMC