

Why Stay UMC

“Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences.” ~John Wesley

The United Methodist Church is not perfect, and like most denominations, there have been disagreements and decline. The existence of disagreement and decline is not a new phenomenon. One of the things that has made The United Methodist Church unique is our ability to agree to disagree.

For years, The United Methodist Church has used the slogan, “Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.” We have always welcomed everyone to the communion table recognizing that the table belongs to God, not us. We have always acknowledged that all persons are of sacred worth. We have always affirmed that the essence of being a Christian is loving God and loving our neighbor as ourselves. And in the face of differences, we have always recognized that we are called to worship together and spread the love of Christ.

So why would we stay UMC in the midst of all this turmoil?

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church was supposed to meet in 2020. When the pandemic came about, it was delayed until, 2021, then 2022, and now has been delayed until 2024. It is still possible that the Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation (Protocol) may be passed at General Conference in 2024. However, in the absence of such legislation, there are lots of questions as to what choosing another option would entail.

More important than the absence of the Protocol legislation, is that The United Methodist Church is our home. Most of us, were baptized in The UMC. Many of us have grown up in The UMC and supported it. Others have been to summer campers at Camp Glisson and have attended United Methodist colleges and/or were part of a Wesley Foundation. Many of us and our children were confirmed in the UMC, and it is where a lot of us first experienced a personal relationship with Christ. The UMC has always embraced the reality that we don't all think alike. This honesty only strengthens our commitment to Christ and our bonds with each other.

We acknowledge that The UMC has issues that often get in the way of what we are called to do: love God and love our neighbors. Our focus should be on bringing people to Jesus and being a staple of the community of West Cobb. All denominations have issues that stem from differences among individuals. There will always be these differences of opinions. However, when our focus is solely on God and spreading the message of His love, then nothing is more important.