

Dear Friends,

One of the major issues that keeps coming up throughout our discernment process is “the trust clause.” Here’s an attempt at explaining it:

In the UMC, local churches don’t own their own property. Although we raise money, take on and pay debt, and are responsible for insurance and maintenance, we don’t own it. Instead, we hold it “in trust” for the Texas Annual Conference and if anything happens to our church (like closing), ownership reverts to the conference. For this reason, we can’t buy, sell, or take debt out on any part of our property without conference approval.

Under the current UMC rules allowing disaffiliation from the denomination, churches that disaffiliate from the UMC are allowed to leave with their buildings, property, and other assets.

Alternately, In the GMC, local churches will own their own real estate and are free to make decisions that are best for the ministerial goals of the congregation without permission from a higher body. In other words- the church would belong to the congregation.

If you have any questions, please reply here and, as your Trustee Chair, I’ll be happy to answer them.

Stacie Spindle
AUMC Trustee Chair