

Church Options Comparison Chart

Information below is based on current information available. Information is subject to change in the future.

	Current Methodist Denomination Options		
	Post-Separation United Methodist Church (UMC)	Global Methodist Church (GMC)	Disaffiliated Lifehouse Church
General Conference, Annual Conference, District Structures	Yes. Annual conference and district boundaries likely will be adjusted in many locations following the separation.	Yes. Annual Conference and District boundaries will be new in many places. The General Conference will meet every 2 years while the church is organizing and every 6 years afterward.	Potentially be loosely affiliated with other independent churches to share best practices, share resources and potential purchasing power. Multiple options exist to be researched and to determine the best option for Lifehouse
Boards and Agencies	Inherits the current 13 general boards and agencies.	New, leaner structure with a single connectional operations officer overseeing.	Lifeboard
Trust Clause on Local Church Properties	Local church property held in trust by the Annual Conference.	Local church property owned by the local church.	Local church property owned by Lifehouse
Global in Nature	Likely yes. (U.S., Western Europe, parts of Philippines, and possibly Africa.	Likely yes. (U.S., Eastern Europe, part of Philippines, and Africa.)Some former UMC conferences in Latin America and Asia have indicated an interest in joining, too.	No Autonomy to implement best practices to meet the needs of the local community
Openly Noncelibate homosexual or transgender bishops and clergy	Yes	No	If Lifehouse chooses to create a position statement on this subject, the statement will be developed & ratified based upon our core values, beliefs and historical perspectives of Lifehouse
Clergy performing same-sex weddings	Yes, if they choose.	No	Same as above
Female clergy at all levels of leadership	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clergy Deployment	Ordained clergy guaranteed an appointment by the bishop, and the local church guaranteed a pastor of the bishop's choosing with consultation.	Collaborative appointment system where church lay leaders have a bigger voice in the appointment. No guaranteed appointments for clergy. Bishop must sign off on the selection made. Minority candidates must be considered.	A direct hire by Lifehouse with a yearly review process to be established. Local autonomy to hire and fire.
Ordination	Elders and Deacons are separate orders. Commissioning is a step toward ordination in both orders. Many/most clergy are non-ordained, licensed local pastors with limited sacramental authority. Deacons do not have full sacramental authority.	Note: This is a work in progress. In an effort to restore the connection between ordination and the sacraments, there may be a return to the pre-1992 understanding that elders are first ordained as deacons. Local pastors will first be ordained as deacons. When they have completed courses of study, they may pursue elder's orders. There will be permanent deacons and deacons on their way to becoming elders. Deacons have sacramental authority.	A position statement of our expectations of our pastors to be developed & ratified based upon the core values, beliefs and historical perspectives of Lifehouse

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Bishops	Yes. Bishops for life (in the U.S.). Selected by Jurisdictional/Central Conference and paid by the General Church.	Yes. Term-limited. Called by the annual conference from a list of candidates approved at the General Conference.	No
Conference Superintendents	Yes. Appointed by the bishop.	Presiding Elders (historic term for Conference Superintendent) may also serve a local church. They will be selected by the bishop from a nominated slate elected at a district conference. District size will be smaller.	No
Clergy Appointment Length	One year at a time.	Open-ended. The bishop's consent is required to declare a pulpit open.	Negotiable with a minimum of a yearly review process.
Clergy Pensions	Administered by Wespath	Administered by Wespath.	A review process to be established to determine the best path for Lifehouse to take. Multiple options exist.
Tithe	Yes (currently \$61,000.00 per year)	Yes. General church tithes will be about half of what is paid by a UMC congregation currently. Conference tithes are up to each annual conference but encouraged to be lean.	None A savings of \$61,000 per year to be redirected into other areas of need.
Position on Abortion	Current UMC: “The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child. ...” (UMC Book of Discipline, ¶161, Section K).	“We believe that life is a holy gift of God whose beginnings and endings are set by God, and that it is the particular duty of believers to protect those who are powerless to protect themselves, including the unborn. We believe human life begins at conception and abortion ends a human life.”	If Lifehouse chooses to create a position statement on this subject, the statement will be developed and ratified based upon the core values, beliefs and historical perspectives of Lifehouse
Theology	Current UMC: The current theology of the United Methodist Church can be found in the Book of Discipline, section ¶102-105. Currently, the theological task of the UMC is “critical and constructive, individual and communal, contextual and incarnation, and essentially practical (Book of Discipline, ¶105, Section 4, “The Nature of Our Theological Task). The articles and confession of faith are retained as historical markers.	Classic, as per the Methodist Articles of Faith and EUB Confession of Faith, but updated into a single document in today's vernacular (this work is to be done by a blue-ribbon commission created at the first Convening Conference.)	A position statement to be developed and ratified based upon the core values, beliefs and historical perspectives of Lifehouse
Financial Obligations	Approximately \$61,000.00 per year in tithe payments.	Tithe payments less than currently paying, but no definitive answer has been given.	1 time payment of \$395,000.00

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