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# Current Status of the United Methodist Church

**Trinity on the Hill UMC**

Fact Finding Committee  
Education/Communication Subcommittee  
1.4.22 E

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# Overview

- Purpose:  
Educate/inform TOTH members regarding current issues in the UMC that will likely lead to a split
- Desired Outcome:  
TOTH members will be prepared to make an informed decision in the event a split in the UMC occurs



**Split into two or more  
separate  
denominations**

**Why?**

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# What are the two major perspectives?

## Traditionalist

- Historic interpretation of the Bible
- Does not believe in culturally redefining the Bible
- Beliefs align with the current UMC Book of Discipline

## Progressive

- Includes a wide range of interpretation and theological ideas (may believe in a few, many, or all views listed)
- Range from moderate to strongly progressive

**BOTH GROUPS BELIEVE THEIR VIEW IS TRUE TO THE GOSPEL**

# Wide Range of Progressive Beliefs



**NOT ALL BELIEFS ARE SHARED, BUT ALL BELIEFS ARE ACCEPTED**

- Hold traditional views, but support same sex marriage in the church & ordination of practicing homosexuals

- No virgin birth
- Not all parts of the Bible are relevant in today's culture

- Jesus' death on the cross is not necessary as atonement for sin
- Bible is a metaphor

- Believe in Universal Salvation (Jesus is not the only way)
- Do not believe in bodily resurrection of Jesus



# UMC Book of Discipline: Current Language

- **Inclusiveness (¶ 4 and ¶ 104) and Eligibility ( ¶ 214):**
  - "... all persons are of sacred worth" created in the image of God
  - ".. "All people may attend its worship services, participate in its programs, receive the sacraments and become members in any local church in the connection."
- **Human Sexuality (¶ 161.G):**
  - "... does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching."
- **Marriage (¶161.G):**
  - "...whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage."
- **Ordination of Ministers (¶ 304 and ¶ 2702 ):**
  - "...self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church."



# UMC Book of Discipline

## TRADITIONAL

- Language related to human sexuality should remain the same
- Marriage in the church is between a man and a woman

## PROGRESSIVE

- All language related to human sexuality should be removed
- Allows for same sex marriage and ordination of practicing homosexuals

**Not all beliefs are shared, but all are accepted**



# Theology - Scripture

## TRADITIONAL

- Word of God
- Biblical revelation is complete
- Bible is true & authoritative
- Experience is subject to Scripture

## PROGRESSIVE

- Contains word of God
- New revelation takes precedence over old
- Parts of Bible are true; portions can be dismissed as not authoritative; not relevant today
- Experience supersedes Scripture

**Not all beliefs are shared, but all are accepted**



# Theology - Nature & Role of Jesus

## TRADITIONAL

- Incarnate (fully human & fully divine)
- Virgin Birth
- Physical Death
- Bodily Resurrection

## PROGRESSIVE

- May or may not believe in any or all of these tenets of the Apostles' Creed

Not all beliefs are shared, but all are accepted



# Theology - Nature & Role of Sin

## TRADITIONAL

- Personal, separates us from God
- Requires atonement
- Forgiveness comes from faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus

## PROGRESSIVE

- Societal from external forces
- No original sin (Man is inherently good)
- It is possible for sin to be corrected through works of justice & mercy
- Jesus' death on the cross is not necessary for atonement

**Not all beliefs are shared, but all are accepted**



# Theology - Salvation

## TRADITIONAL

- Precious gift received in response to God's grace
- Only comes through faith in Jesus

## PROGRESSIVE

- Universal Salvation; all receive salvation regardless of belief
- More than one path to salvation

**Not all beliefs are shared, but all are accepted**



## Current State of UMC Governance

- Human sexuality language has been voted on and kept in the *Book of Discipline* by a majority vote at General Conferences for decades
- Book of Discipline is not followed in many churches & conferences
- BOD not enforced by current leadership
- No accountability for violations of BOD



# Causing Harm

- Conflict is hurting our witness to others
- Disrupting the missions & ministries of the church
- Causing fear & confusion in the body of Christ
- Distracting focus of the church



# Irreconcilable Positions

- Theological orientations are significantly different
- Both groups believe their own perspective is true to the gospel

# Differences of Opinion

The wide range of disagreements about theology, human sexuality and the interpretation of scripture illustrates how deep our divide has become. Both sides believe their understanding of the Bible is correct. The purpose is not to persuade, but rather to present the major issues confronting our denomination today. Your church's future will be decided by you, the professing members.

## What if some of my beliefs are in both views?

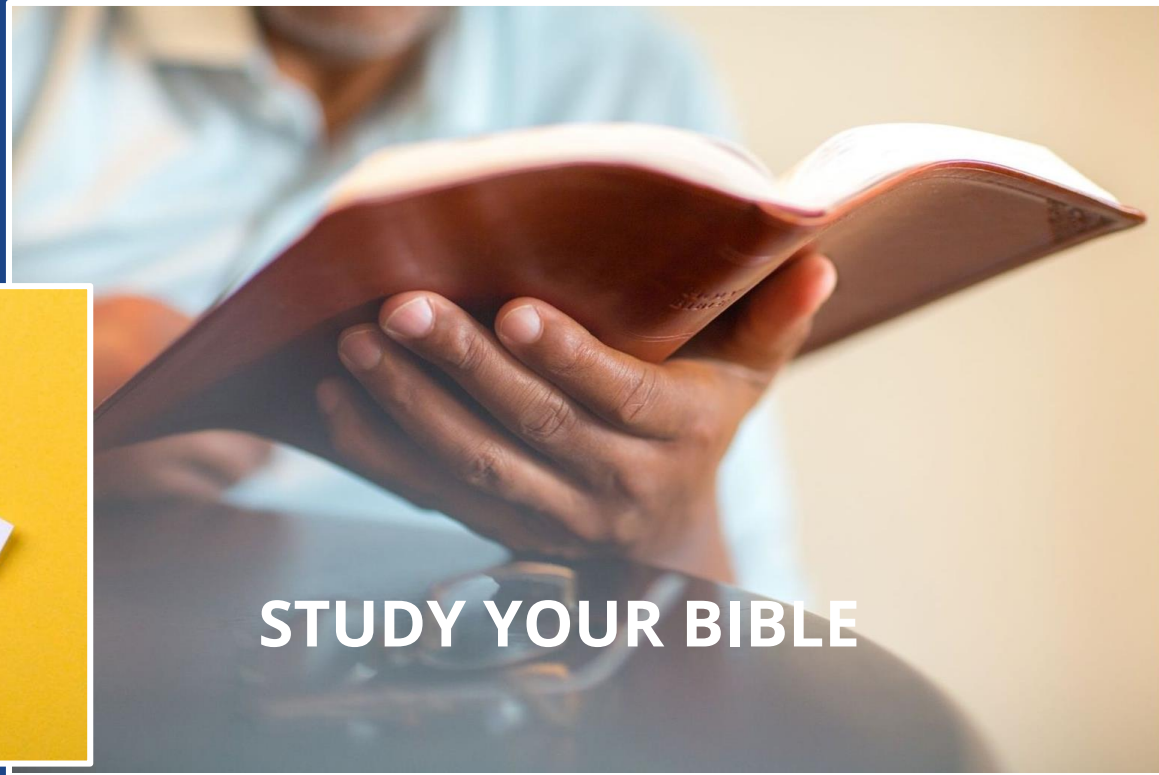
- Prayerfully consider how important each belief is in your faithwalk
- Read Scripture related to the belief/topic
- Use the references provided to read about current practices in the UMC
- Ask questions; contact a committee member, a member of our clergy, or a spiritual mentor



# What should I do?



**PRAY**



**STUDY YOUR BIBLE**

**ASK  
QUESTIONS**



# Next Steps

- The FFC will continue to gather information
- Trinity members will continue to be informed
- Scriptures and references used in the presentation are available
- FAQs are available to members

## Education Subcommittee:

Van Haywood

Jessica Blanchard

Larry Moss, Advisor

Jeri Whitworth

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