

A Case for Disaffiliating from the United Methodist Denomination

Several people have asked about the research I have done on the matter of our church disaffiliation. So this is a LONG letter to help explain some of the reasons why I feel we must Disaffiliate from the UMC. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, and I respect each of my friends and my fellow church members tremendously. As you review the following information, keep in mind the passion I put into this type of research. This is just one person's opinion (but an opinion many others share as well).

I'm begging church members NOT to take our beloved church down the path towards "progressive Christianity." (Not sure what progressive Christianity is? Please look it up.) By your vote, you are choosing the path for you, your children and your grandchildren, in addition to the path for your fellow church members. If this seems like a desperate plea, well, it is. The future of our church is at stake.

Yes: Disaffiliate to "Remain the same"

If you love our church the way it is, and you love our current leadership and what they've done for our church, our members, the community, and those abroad, then please vote to disaffiliate...to remain the same...and continue the wonderful momentum our church has now.

No: Do NOT Disaffiliate; Stay UMC...our church and denomination needs to change.

If you think our church and our book of discipline needs to change, and you want new leadership for our local church, then you will unfortunately vote No, to NOT disaffiliate...to stay with the current UMC denomination and the direction it is heading. Current leadership and many church members will leave.

Yes, it seems backward...but that is the way the choice has been designed by UMC bishops. Disaffiliating is the choice that Pastor Powell and the rest of our church leadership supports. They studied and prayed enough to know what was coming, and are very wisely leading us exactly where we need to be, at the most opportune time. We are blessed to have a strong pastor and strong leadership. But some think it is time for Pastor Powell to go...and they have specifically and bluntly said so. This makes many of us very sad.

Please do not reject our current leadership and our current local congregation. Please vote to disaffiliate, so we can keep a good thing going. Voting to "Stay United" is actually a vote to tear our local congregation apart. Those who want our church to "stay united" are actually voting to unite with Progressive churches across the country, at the expense of our local congregation (whether they know that's what they are doing or not). Progressive churches are snubbing current doctrine and are trying to force their ideologies on those of us who have been and wish to remain traditional. And based on the current rules, if only 34% of church members vote to "Stay UMC," they will succeed in not only pushing out our leadership, but also in alienating the other 66% of our local church congregation.

Some of the stuff you read and hear sounds unbelievable. Many in the UMC say that changes are not likely to happen and if so, not for years to come. But they are ALREADY happening. A lot. The problem is that those who should be keeping a check on things are choosing not to (against the Book of Discipline that they vowed to uphold). And this is where things have gotten out of hand.

Regardless of what we personally think or feel about various topics, read some of the information below and decide who we should put forth as role models for our children and grandchildren. God knows no one is perfect. But we should aim to put the best role models in leadership for the task at hand. For example, a dentist may have a cavity here and there, but they shouldn't let their teeth rot out. A nutritionist might eat junk food from time to time, but they probably should be relatively healthy eaters. A personal trainer might skip work outs sometimes, but they probably ought not to be obese. People who violate their own teachings may all be very good at their jobs. But are they the best role models?

Progressivism becomes a Religion ... Religion becomes Progressivism

“Progressivism” has become a religion. Now, our religion is turning into progressivism. Rather than focusing on activism for Christ, UMC is moving towards political activism in the pulpit. This is NOT the UMC in which you and your parents may have grown up. Some cities and some churches are fortunate that they have not yet been exposed to the type of activism that has pushed its way into the UMC. It is time to wake up and see what is really happening. Many of us are like the frog in the pot of warm water. The heat is being turned up little by little, and if we aren’t careful, we won’t realize we’re boiling until it’s too late.

This is NOT all about homosexuality in the church. Many in our congregation have a hard time with the prohibition of gay marriage in the church...which is completely understandable. But this is a very small part of the issues going on in the UMC right now. Voting to “Stay UMC” (NOT Disaffiliate) would mean you must be prepared to accept the entire progressive agenda, along with any progressive pastors sent to our church to lead us. Anyone who says that changes will come slowly over the course of many years is either naïve, has not done their homework, or is unintentionally (or intentionally) deceiving themselves and others.

Below are just some examples of many things happening in UMC right NOW. These occurrences may be outliers, but where is the correction and condemnation by the UMC? This is part of the problem. All too often you can determine true colors by what is *not* said. By not condemning, the UMC is effectively condoning certain actions and behavior. Are you really ready for progressive Christianity? Ask yourself...are these really the types of things with which you want to “Stay United”?

Rob Renfroe (from the 6 videos on our church website, <https://fumcmhc.org/disaffiliation>) lists the following examples of things that are happening in the UMC now: <https://goodnewsmag.org/a-few-hard-questions/>

“The UM Church presently has a bishop who has taught that Jesus can be an idol. We have a past UM seminary president who said it’s wrong to tell others about Jesus if they already have a religion. We have pastors who believe that Jesus did not die on the cross to pay for our sins. We have annual conference boards of ministry that will not ordain persons who believe Jesus is the way, the truth and the life for everyone. We have pastors who do not believe in the virgin birth and some who either do not believe in the resurrection or who teach that believing in the resurrection is not essential for Christian faith.”

(Names and citations are not provided for each example above, but a quick web search can reveal names and evidence behind the statements.)

Below is a link to a short article on the history of the breakdown of the UMC:

Why the United Methodist Church is REALLY Splitting: The Big-Picture History - Juicy Ecumenism

<https://juicyecumenism.com/2021/01/21/why-united-methodist-church-splitting/>

We love seeing friends and acquaintances at church. But church does not need to be another social club. Every day, society and the ways of the world press hard on us, and more importantly, on our children! If church changes to be more like the world, where will we go to get back on track? We need church to stay true and direct us in the way to go. We don’t need church to rub our backs and tell us “you do you” ...“you can do whatever you want.” Some days we *need* it to be uncomfortable and convict us to do and be better.

When I was younger, other kids sometimes got to do things that I was forbidden from doing. When I used to question my father on certain things, asking him “why?” he might eventually answer me with a simple “Because I said so!” Regardless of how furious it made me, and regardless of whether I understood why, I had to trust that he truly loved me and only wanted what was best for me. I believe it’s often the same way with our heavenly father. We may struggle to understand certain things in his Word, but sometimes we just have to trust that he loves us and only wants what is best for his children...regardless of what others are doing. I will not be so brazen as to challenge God’s wisdom regarding his ultimate plan and desire for his children whom he loves.

Since *everyone* (traditional and progressive alike) has been talking about it, let's discuss some of the more widely known controversies within the UMC...examples of things that concern many traditionalists (and hopefully progressives too).

“Ms. Penny Cost is reportedly the first Drag Queen in the world to become a Certified Candidate for Ordination within the United Methodist Church.”

Isaac Simmons (They/Them) also known as Ms. Penny Cost: Associate Pastor at Hope United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Illinois. (Isaac also goes by pronouns (She/Her/Hers).)

“The Bible is ... Nothing” “God is nothing”

“The Bible is no more holy than Allen Ginsburg’s howls of life, no more peaceful than Oscar Wilde’s Requiescat in pace, and no more stronger [sic] than Tammy f—ing Faye’s g—d— eyelash glue.”

<https://www.mspennycost.com/> (Be forewarned...Isaac’s “poem” featured on his/her web page is vile.)

<https://www.behopec church.org/about> (Isaac’s bio, from his UMC church webpage)

No, Ms. Penny Cost has not yet been ordained. But he/she was still recommended for ordination and currently serves as an associate pastor in a UMC church. He/she currently represents the UMC. Church leaders are supposed to be good role models for our laity. Church members should try to be good role models for others. Are we creating good role models for our children? (It is difficult enough to raise children without these sorts of influences.)

Commentary: **Celebrated United Methodist Drag Queen Activist Denounces Bible**

<https://juicyecumenism.com/2022/05/27/methodist-drag-queen/>

Adam Hamilton’s comments: Ms. Penny Cost (starting at minute 43:45 in Adam’s video on the StayUMC webpage)

In the video, Adam raises the topic of Ms. Penny Cost and his/her “poem.”

“He’s a young man who’s you know, trying to follow Jesus and trying to figure things out. ...”

“...if you didn’t understand the point he was trying to make and you didn’t give him the benefit of the doubt, you’d go...you’ve got to be kidding me. And so some of the Christian radio stations picked up on that and, and here’s the thing, you know, there are certain things we can do that aren’t helpful in most contexts and so, you know, I feel that way about him.”

<https://fumcmhc.org/stayumc> (minute 43:45 in the video)

Progressive minded people often act like the parents who cannot tell their children NO! That is wrong. That is bad behavior. That is not Christian behavior. That is not God’s desire and plan for his children. Adam Hamilton (a spokesperson for the StayUMC movement, as featured on the “StayUMC” webpage), refused to say any of these things about Ms. Penny Cost’s poem and behavior. Instead, Adam says such behaviors “aren’t helpful in most contexts” makes light of the situation and even jokes...but never condemns the behavior and actions being flaunted and publicized.

Adam Hamilton’s bucket list

"In my upcoming book, *Making Sense of the Bible*, I suggest that there are three “buckets” into which scriptures fall:

1. Scriptures that express God’s heart, character and timeless will for human beings.
2. Scriptures that expressed God’s will in a particular time, but are no longer binding.
3. Scriptures that never fully expressed the heart, character or will of God.

<https://www.adamhamilton.com/blog/homosexuality-the-bible-and-the-united-methodist-church>”

(Adam writes and sells lots of books <https://www.adamhamilton.com/books>.)

Who gets to decide which scriptures go in which bucket? Can we all decide for ourselves which scriptures we should follow or ignore? An “anything goes” mindset and society is sure to follow. Just because everyone is doing it does not make it acceptable or right. We should change ourselves to follow scripture, not try to change scripture to suit us.

Commentary: **Adam Hamilton: Parts of Bible Don’t Reflect God’s Will** <https://juicyecumenism.com/2014/04/25/adam-hamilton-parts-of-bible-dont-reflect-gods-will/> (or simply do a web search for “Adam Hamilton buckets”)

Duke Divinity Pride Service (Tuesday, March 22, 2022 11:45am, Goodson Chapel – Duke University)

“Would you please stand, step into this worship space and pray with me the words found in your bulletin and on the screen: Strange one, fabulous one, fluid and ever-becoming one, do not allow us to make our ideas of you into an idol. You are as close to us as our own breath and yet your essence transcends all that we can imagine.”

[video shows the congregation repeating the words printed in the bulletin along with the speaker]

“You are mother, father and parent. You are sister, brother and sibling. You are drag queen and trans man and gender fluid, incapable of limiting your vast expressions of beauty embodied in us, your creation. We recognize our flesh in all its forms is made holy in you.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VT2o6PEm7Y> (3:06 minutes, Communications Coordinator for Duke Divinity Pride, 2nd Year MDiv)

“I was not only allowed to question white male God, I was called to do so. And that is my call story. As I ended one relationship with the God of my childhood, I began another with a deliciously queer God, who loves in scandalous ways and created us for pleasure and wholeness.”

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220416104547/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDktgNcUY3k> (from min 16:19 of full service 52:40 minutes – 3rd Year MDiv student)

The last speaker quote above is by the sister of one of our own previous UMC Associate Pastors (from Duke), who publicly supported and praised this service on Facebook. This is not some far off occurrence in San Francisco or Seattle. This is at Duke Divinity School, from which the UMC currently gets a large percentage of our locally assigned pastors.

“Duke Divinity School will hold a Service of Word with reflections from the Divinity Pride community. This service is in collaboration with Divinity Pride.” (<https://divinity.duke.edu/events/service-word-divinity-pride>)

(The opening speaker/organizer states: “We want to thank everybody who had a hand in making this happen, from the Chaplain's office...”)

A Duke staff member (Reference and Circulation Librarian) participated as one of the speakers, and one faculty member (Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies) closed the service. Duke Divinity cannot be easily disassociated from this service. If Duke Divinity and others really want to distance themselves from this service, where is a public statement of disapproval by Duke Divinity (which is financially supported by the UMC)?

For more info: <https://www.facebook.com/DukeDivinityPride/>

Commentary: ‘**God is Queer,**’ Duke Divinity Students Proclaim <https://juicyecumenism.com/2022/04/05/queer-god-duke-divinity/>, **The Truth about United Methodist Seminaries** <https://juicyecumenism.com/2022/09/14/united-methodist-seminaries/>

Is UMC Really...? (UMC’s response to both “Ms. Penny Cost” and the Duke Divinity Pride Service)

“Nothing in the Book of Discipline disqualifies persons who are gay but not practicing or who perform in drag from consideration or certification as a candidate.”

“Exactly one of the students named is identified as United Methodist”

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-is-the-umc-really-part-2>

The response by the UMC regarding both of these topics is astoundingly weak. Read the whole response at the link above. “Exactly one of the **students named...**” (i.e. one of the speakers). The UMC’s response overlooks the fact of just how many UMC ordination candidates were in the congregation and recited the horrid “prayer” (“to drag queen and trans man and gender fluid...”) along with the opening speaker. NOT ONCE does the UMC denounce “Ms. Penny Cost’s” conduct or the Duke Divinity Pride Service. Why is the UMC incapable of publicly and specifically condemning such behavior? (Refusing to condemn is akin to condoning.)

Commentary: **Misinformation Abounds** <https://goodnewsmag.org/misinformation-abounds/>

More on Misinformation <https://goodnewsmag.org/more-on-misinformation/>

UMC Pastor Transgenderism

Quotes below are pulled directly from an article posted on the website of the UMC Baltimore-Washington Conference about a UMC Bishop's Spouse who "Comes Out" as a transgendered United Methodist Minister.

Johnson shares her story of transitioning to trans woman (Posted on 10/11/2021)

"Living in the 'closet,' was difficult," Bishop Johnson said. "It would not be an understatement to say that being an active bishop with a trans woman spouse would be a challenge to my credibility if it was widely known." During the past decade, the couple has learned, and gone on to teach, formally and in other encounters, about transgender people and faith.

"As I entered into a greater understanding of the diversity of gender, I realized all binary thinking is flawed," Mary Johnson said.

"The denomination's Book of Discipline does not talk about trans people at all," Bishop Johnson said. "The paragraphs that oppose homosexuality do not apply to people's gender identity. Homosexuality is about sexual orientation. Gender identity is totally different."

<https://www.bwcumc.org/news-and-views/johnson-shares-her-story-of-transitioning-to-trans-woman/>

If a grown man decides to become a woman, that is certainly his (her?) own decision to make. No "hate" should be directed at this pastor. We should still show love for this pastor. But is this the example we want to set for our children? Once upon a time, if someone was struggling with gender dysphoria, doctors, psychologists, therapists and families would try to help the struggling person come to terms with the truth about their actual sex. But now we affirm, encourage and celebrate untruths.

Many are afraid to speak up, out of fear of being labeled transphobic or a bigot. If your own child struggles with feelings of confusion about their gender, do you affirm and encourage those feelings? Or instead, do you love your child by helping them to accept the truth about who they really are? We should love and support them regardless. We should try to guide them down the path that is best for them...God's plan and desire for his children. (I hope we never encourage anorexics the way people currently encourage, embolden and celebrate transgenderism.)

"How the precious children of Zion, once worth their weight in gold, are now considered as pots of clay, the work of a potter's hands!" Lamentations 4:2 (<https://biblehub.com/lamentations/4-2.htm>)

Read that scripture again. It almost ominously reflects the transgender influence being exerted on our children these days. Why do we confuse our children by exposing them to such options at a young age. When we used to ask kids "What do you want to be when you grow up" the answer we would typically expect was "teacher" or "doctor" or "astronaut" etc. But now they answer we receive might instead be the gender they decided to choose. How did we get here?

Commentary: **UMC Bishop's Spouse "Comes Out" as Transgendered United Methodist Minister**

<https://juicyecumenism.com/2021/10/21/umc-bishops-spouse-comes-out-as-transgendered-united-methodist-minister/>

Below is an organization that has been lobbying and influencing the UMC for years. Although they may have “helpful intentions,” many believe they continue to push the UMC in the wrong direction.

Reconciling Ministries Network (<https://rmnetwork.org/>)

“Living into our shared baptismal covenant, Reconciling Ministries Network equips and mobilizes United Methodists to resist evil, injustice, and oppression as we seek justice for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconciling_Ministries_Network,

Below are some of the “resources” available to church families **and their children**:

<https://rmnetwork.org/resources/> , <https://rmnetwork.org/rmns-resource-library/?type=book>

“transACTION: A Transgender Curriculum for Church and Religious Institutions”

(http://welcomingresources.org/transaction_final.pdf)

“Beyond a Binary God: A Theology for Trans* Allies”

“Queerfully and Wonderfully Made: A Guide for LGBTQ+ Christian Teens”

“Are you LGBTQ+? Not sure? Whether you’re queer or questioning, understanding sexuality and gender identity can be confusing. And if you’re a Christian, questions of identity can be even scarier. Is there something wrong with you? Will your friends accept you? When should you tell your family? What about church?”

“How to They/Them: A Visual Guide to Nonbinary Pronouns and the World of Gender Fluidity”

“What does nonbinary really mean? What is gender nonconforming? And isn’t they a plural pronoun? In this charming and disarming guide, a real-life they-using genderqueer writer unpacks all your burning questions in a fun, visual way. No soapboxes or divisive comment-section wars here!”

“Transfigured: A 40-day journey through scripture for gender-queer and transgender people”

“Transfigured offers a 40-day exploration of scripture through the lens of a God who is the designer of gender in all it’s magnificent variety. While reading it you’ll encounter a Creator who is both male and female, and come to realize that God’s image and likeness are most fully manifested by gender-queer people.”

“The Gender Identity Guide for Parents: Compassionate Advice to Help Your Child Be Their Most Authentic Self”

“Nurture and celebrate your child’s true self with this parent’s guide to gender identity”

“Find a Reconciling Ministry” (<https://rmnetwork.org/find-a-reconciling-ministry/>)

Reconciling United Methodists Sound District, NC Conference – New Bern, NC

<https://www.facebook.com/Reconciling-UM-Sound-District-226466411538975>

Commentary: “Reconciling” United Methodist Churches Lose Members

<https://juicyecumenism.com/2018/03/28/rmn-causes-decline-united-methodist-umc-congregation>.

Racism in the Church

Most of us agree that racism is bad. But the current hyperfocus on finding racism under every rock has gone way overboard. The story of the “boy who cried wolf” comes to mind. So when racism really does rear its head, we unfortunately have become deaf to the cries. This hyperfocus is causing resentment and even more division, and many people feel it is hurting more than it is helping.

The quotes and links below are pulled directly from the webpages of the **North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church** (<https://nccumc.org/>).

The NC Conference is committed to Anti-Racism (<https://nccumc.org/anti-racism/>)

Faith, integrity and anti-racism (UMC Pastor Laquaan Malachi)

“Church in America has always been racist. Sundays mornings are among the more segregated hours of the week everywhere. Even in churches that consider themselves diverse, most of the leadership and power, formal or informal, often lies in the hands of white members.”

“A hard truth is that whiteness is dangerous to black lives...”

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/faith-integrity-and-anti-racism>

What We Believe (<https://nccumc.org/media-center/anti-racism-resources/#believe>)

The link above discusses UMC beliefs on the following topics:

- Social Principles: Racism, Ethnocentrism and Tribalism
- Environmental Racism
- Indigenous, Native and Aboriginal Communities
- Migrants, Immigrants and Refugees
- Book of Resolutions 3371: A Charter for Racial Justice (<https://nccumc.org/media-center/res3371>)
- 3374: Responsibilities for Eradication of Racism (<https://nccumc.org/media-center/res3374>)
- 3378: Racism and Economic Injustice Against People of Color in the United States (<https://nccumc.org/media-center/res3378>)
- 3379: Stop Criminalizing Communities of Color in the United States (<https://nccumc.org/media-center/res3379>)

The documents at the above links contain far too many notable quotes to list. Read the above resolutions and decide where you stand on the above topics. “When approved by the General Conference, resolutions state the policy of The United Methodist Church on many current social issues and concerns.” Unfortunately, with the current progressive domination of UMC leadership, the voice of traditional clergy and laity may not be fairly represented in such resolutions.

To search for other topics, download the full 2016 Book of resolutions:

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/is-the-book-of-discipline-available-online>

<https://www.umcsc.org/home/wp-content/uploads/2016-Book-of-Resolutions.pdf>.

For current UMC pastoral candidates for ordination, their studies often focus more on items like “cultural sensitivity” rather than pastoring and the Bible. Required reading for the ordination process includes books such as Ibram X. Kendi’s “Be Anti-Racist.” If you are not familiar with the term “anti-racist,” the concept is not striving to be colorblind, as taught by Martin Luther King. But instead, it views almost *everything* through the lens of race...often leading to more divisiveness and even more racism. This “anti-racist” philosophy is being pushed in big companies, the military, other branches of government, our universities, and sometimes even in our public schools. We don’t need it preached in our pulpits as well.

Commentary: **Anti-Racism 101 is anti-Christian** <https://juicyecumenism.com/2020/09/14/antiracism-antichristian/>

Covenant to Build BeLoved Community

Many UMC churches, districts and jurisdictions are moving to adopt a Covenant to Build BeLoved Community.

NCJ Delegates Adopt a Covenant to Build BeLoved Community

The NCJ (North Central Jurisdiction) is one of five UMC districts in the U.S., consists of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

<https://eocumcnews.com/2021/11/12/ncj-delegates-adopt-a-covenant-to-build-beloved-community/>
<http://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NCJ-Covenant-to-Build-BeLoved-Community-2.pdf>

Below are quotes from the adopted baptismal vows used in the jurisdiction:

“As the North Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church (NCJ), we covenant to Build BeLoved Community.

Baptism is the foundation of the BeLoved Community, as through it we are called into a covenantal relationship with God, with each other, and with all of God’s creation. It is in the spirit of this covenantal relationship that we affirm our baptismal vows ...

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

We do. We confess our need for God’s grace as we struggle to renounce and reject the spiritual forces and evil powers of colonialism, racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism. We apologize for the ways the NCJ has and continues to harm people who live in other parts of the world, Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), people who live in poverty, and LGBTQIA+ people.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

We do. We pray for God’s freedom and power to resist colonialism and racism in all the forms they present themselves.”

...

“We request that the Mission Council, in conjunction with the NCJ College of Bishops, develop an exercise for the NCJ delegates to engage in a conversation during the next session of the NCJ that seeks to understand the impact of white supremacy and Christian nationalism/white nationalism within The United Methodist Church.”

...

Commentary: <https://juicyecumenism.com/2021/12/15/ncj-bishops-must-fully-comply-umc-discipline/>

What about abortion? Below are statements directly from the UMC on its official stance.

UMC bishops bemoan US Supreme Court's decision on abortion

“WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church says the decision by the Supreme Court of the United States to overturn Roe v. Wade has denied the sacred worth of women who face “the tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion.””

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/umc-bishops-bemoan-us-supreme-courts-decision-on-abortion>

Roe v. Wade Statement from Council of Bishops

<https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/files/roe+v.+wade+cob+response+062422.pdf>

Commentary: <https://juicyecumenism.com/2022/08/04/umc-on-abortion/>

And since most every other progressive cause has been covered, we cannot leave out the push for pastors to start preaching to their congregations about climate change. (Do we REALLY need pastors preaching to us about climate change?)

Ministry Leaders Gather at the Duke Marine Lab

“Pastoral Care for Climate Change: Weaving Together Science and Theology for Justice”

(Professors from Duke Divinity and the Nicholas School for the Environment lead sessions on pastoral care for climate change)

- “Creation care does tie into those big theological words: covenant, reconciliation, and incarnation,” she said. “And I would ask you to use those words when you preach about the climate crisis. It signals to your congregation that this is not some politicized fad, but it is central to Scripture.”
- “...encouraged pastors to take the long view on climate, preaching on climate justice often...”
- “There is a great deal of questioning climate change coming from the more conservative members of our society, many of which are people of faith. Climate change is already bringing suffering to communities across the planet—from Kentucky to Kolkata. We need to be able to convince the clergy to recognize that these changes are coming for us, and we need to be ready to come to the aid of those most in need.”

<https://stories.divinity.duke.edu/ministry-duke-marine-lab/>

Book of Resolutions: US Energy Policy and United Methodist Responsibility

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/book-of-resolutions-us-energy-policy-and-united-methodist-responsibility>

Below are some quotes from some UMC pastors and retired bishops. Yes, they may be outliers, but they are unfortunately still representatives of the UMC whose words should be condemned.

“It’s time for Progressive Christianity.” – Rev Roger Wolsey

“Friends, **Jesus isn’t God. Jesus didn’t die for our sins. Jesus wasn’t killed instead of us. God isn’t wrathful or vindictive. There isn’t a hell** (other than ones that we create here on this earth). Going to heaven after we die isn’t what the faith or salvation is about. God didn’t write the Bible. There isn’t going to be a “rapture.” Jesus’ resurrection didn’t have to be understood as a physical one for it to be a real and meaningful one (Paul and many of the early disciples encountered a spiritually risen Christ). Science and faith aren’t incompatible. God didn’t create the Creation in 6 literal days. The earth isn’t only 6,000 old. Human aggravated global warming isn’t bogus. God isn’t male. Women are fully equal to men. Homosexuality isn’t a sin. Being transgender isn’t sinful or to be rejected. Racism is sinful. And Christianity isn’t the only way for humans to experience salvation.”

--Rev. Roger Wolsey is an ordained United Methodist pastor who directs the Wesley Foundation at the University of Colorado at Boulder

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogerwolsey/2018/05/its-time-for-progressive-christianity/>
<https://progressivechristianity.org/author/rev-roger-wolsey/>, <https://progressivechristianity.org/>

Commentary: “When Morality Is the Enemy” <https://juicyecumenism.com/2018/08/10/roger-wolsey/>

The Methodist mess in St. Louis

“At some point I shifted my own prayers to, ‘Lord, please melt the hardened hearts and smite everyone who intends to vote against the One Church Plan.’” - William H. Willimon is a retired bishop in the United Methodist Church and professor of the practice of Christian ministry at Duke Divinity School, where he directs the doctor of ministry program. <https://www.christiancentury.org/blog-post/guest-post/methodist-mess-st-louis>,

<https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/person-detail/2464115>, <https://divinity.duke.edu/faculty/william-willimon>

Commentary: <https://juicyecumenism.com/2019/03/04/response-retired-united-methodist-bishop-will-willimon/>