

Resolution on 2020 Apportionments Frequently Asked Questions

What are apportionments?

As part of the United Methodist connectional system, each local church pays a certain percentage of its income to both the local Mountain Sky Annual Conference and to the General United Methodist Church. Currently, that percentage for the Mountain Sky Annual Conference is 13%. That formula is changing for 2020 in the Mountain Sky Conference, with the Annual Conference apportionment and General UMC apportionment being separated, and the General UMC apportionment being assessed by the Annual Conference rather than calculated as a percentage of local church income. TLUMC pays approximately \$115,000 per year in total apportionments and, to date, that has been paid in monthly installments.

What is the purpose of this resolution?

The resolution authorizes the TLUMC Finance Committee to hold our calculated 2020 apportionments temporarily in two designated funds—one in which Mountain Sky Conference apportionment will be calculated and deposited, and the other in which the General UMC apportionment will be calculated and deposited.

Why did the TLUMC Church Council propose this resolution?

There is uncertainty as to the future of the United Methodist Church and the Mountain Sky Annual Conference, our local governing body. The Mountain Sky Conference has indicated its refusal to abide by church law in *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* governing issues of human sexuality and has also indicated the possibility of withdrawing from the United Methodist denomination in 2020. The global United Methodist Church appears to be heading for a separation of some nature, which will be determined at the 2020 General Conference meeting in May in Minneapolis. There are many different scenarios that could play out at General Conference, some of which may involve TLUMC needing to make decisions about its future denominational affiliation. In light of denominational uncertainty, the situation in the Annual Conference, and in order to provide maximum financial flexibility to respond to any potential scenario, the Church Council thought it prudent to hold on to our apportioned funds for now. The Council believes this is a responsible step in our financial stewardship of church funds.

TLUMC has paid its full apportionments monthly in the past. Why change now?

TLUMC has faithfully paid its apportionments in full each year and the Church Council still desires to do so. With the United Methodist Church in turmoil, however, and the Mountain Sky Conference and Western Jurisdiction indicating their movement in a different direction than the global United Methodist Church, the Council believes that safeguarding TLUMC's financial assets is the right course of action at this time. We hope for more clarification about the way forward after the UMC General Conference in May 2020.

What are the potential consequences of this resolution?

Apportionments are due annually and while the Annual Conference prefers that churches pay their obligations monthly it is not a requirement. Our apportionments for 2020 will be due in January of 2021 and local churches have the option to schedule payment at their discretion. This resolution buys TLUMC some time to weigh the outcomes of the 2020 General Conference and respond accordingly while still retaining our assets for future use as the situation warrants.

The last line of the resolution states, “Disbursements from either of these two designated funds may be directed by the Church Council.” What are the criteria for those disbursements?

There are multiple scenarios that could emerge out of the 2020 General Conference. These range from a negotiated denominational separation, to the Mountain Sky Annual Conference separating from the UMC on its own, to TLUMC having the opportunity to join a new denomination or stay with a realigned United Methodist Church, to the status quo being maintained. One possibility is that local churches may be able to disaffiliate with the UMC on their own but may need to pay a certain amount of apportioned funds as an exit fee. These are just a few of the potential scenarios. The practical reality is that disbursement of these funds will likely be tied to decisions made by the whole TLUMC membership regarding its future. In other words, where TLUMC ultimately chooses to go, the money will go as well. The TLUMC Church Council, along with the Next Steps Task Force, will send frequent communication and hold information sessions prior to any decisions or congregational votes regarding the future of TLUMC and these designated funds.

What was the result of the vote on this resolution at the December 1, 2019, Church Conference?

The vote was 41 for the resolution, 13 against. The resolution passed and was submitted to the District Superintendent for information.