

The General Conference of the UMC in 2019 is providing a “gracious exit” for those churches who feel they can no longer associate with the UMC based on the decisions regarding human sexuality. The gracious exit period is limited and provided the means to allow a local congregation to keep their assets (buildings and properties).

Pleasant Chapel is currently exploring this option. But why? Why would we consider leaving the denomination? Several possibilities can be considered to help determine *why we would disaffiliate*.

- The UMC is deviating from long held truths
- The UMC is diminishing the authority of Scripture
- The UMC’s decades long debate over human sexuality has polarized the church rendering it impotent. Both sides have the issue wrong. Progressives offer little or no boundaries on sexual practice while conservatives negatively target merely homosexual sex rather than promote what is deemed good and right regarding sexual expression. What results is a church who is perceived as either judgmental or uncaring toward specific people or approving of things that God said not to approve of. (There is a better way!)
- The general trajectory of the UMC is away from traditional or conservative worldviews contrary to Pleasant Chapel’s congregation and community.
- There is a *brand* about being UMC. There is an assumed perception about what the church believes and how it operates. (is this a positive or negative?)
- Pleasant Chapel can be a more effective church disaffiliated from the UMC
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However the above considerations may be used to determine reasons *why affiliation is best*:

- The networking of the UMC provides PC with optimal benefits
- The UMC maintains the heritage of the church
- There is an accountability structure built into the UMC
- There is a rich diversity in the UMC which stretches PC into the world (we are all kind of alike at PC)
- The progressive trajectory of the UMC may reach more people in our church’s radius
- There is some built-in pastoral protection for full-time local pastors and elders. The Conference is required to provide a job for full-time pastors that are itinerate (Pleasant Chapel has not had a full-time itinerate pastor for quite some time).
- There is a *brand* about being UMC. There is an assumed perception about what the church believes and how it operates. (is this a positive or negative?)
- Pleasant Chapel can be a more effective church deeply committed to the UMC
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