

Dear Members of Wilmington Island UMC,

This **Sunday, January 8, 2023**, following the combined 10:00 am worship service, District Superintendent David Thompson will preside over the Called Church Conference vote on disaffiliation from the UMC. We hope you have given prayerful consideration to the information the discernment committee has shared with you over the past several months and we ask that you continue to be in prayer for wisdom and guidance for our church through this process.

A few final reminders before Sunday:

- You must be a church member to receive a ballot. If you want to confirm your membership status, please contact the church office at 912-897-2835.
- **There will be no absentee, proxy, or early voting.** Those who show up to vote will make the decision for the congregation.
- A “yes” vote is a vote in favor of leaving the UMC. A “no” vote is a vote to stay with the UMC.
- The decision to disaffiliate must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church **present** at the church conference. **If you sign in and receive a ballot but then choose to abstain, that action is not included in the required 67% majority and is therefore counted as a “no” vote.**
- The ballot wording can be found below. Remember, it does not mention the bigger issue of the theological division between traditionalists and progressives. The Conference wrote the wording for this ballot and while congregations have asked for the language to include the larger “theological divide,” the Conference chose to include only the presenting issue of human sexuality.
- If the congregation votes to disaffiliate, we will remain WIUMC until 30 days after the May 21, 2023, South Georgia Conference Special Called Session. We will spend the next four months researching other theologically traditional, Methodist denominations and weighing the pros and cons of joining one of them. Input from the congregation is welcome and a congregational vote will be required for any future denominational affiliations.

Information compiled by the discernment committee may be found on our website using the following link: <https://www.islandmethodist.com/affiliation-discernment>

May the Peace of Christ be with you,

WIUMC Discernment Committee

Sample Ballot

South Georgia Church Conference of the United Methodist Church
Chatham County, Coastal District
January 2023

Shall Wilmington Island UMC disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church for reasons of conscience over disagreements related to human sexuality, or the actions or inactions of its annual conference related to these issues, and following disaffiliation, shall Wilmington Island UMC be known as (Name to be decided) and all real and personal property of Wilmington Island UMC be titled in (Name to be decided)?

_____ YES

_____ NO