

May 4, 2023

Dear Church,

I thank God for your faithfulness and prayers for our church as we've discerned God's call during these times of transition. I believe we have seen fruit from the serious, loving, and prayerful way we've navigated this season. We are nearly through, but we have some important work left to do. Namely, I call on all full, professing members of our congregation to be present at our Called Church Conference on May 9th at 6:00 PM in the Sanctuary. At that gathering, we will vote on the Church Council's unanimous recommendation to align with the Global Methodist Church.

Our Discernment Team has spent the last year researching Wesleyan/Methodist denominations. Our Church Council received their report and prayerfully discussed our options throughout the month of April. We have continued our practice of prayerful deliberation which has led us to this opportunity.

You can find more information about the Global Methodist Church, including the video of our recent presentation by Rev. Brett Maddocks, on our website at www.firstmethodistalbany.com/discernment.

I, along with Revs. Griffith and Miller, am in full agreement with the Church Council's recommendation of the Global Methodist Church. Here are a few of my reasons.

1. The Global Methodist Church is a new, fully functional, and exciting denomination based on the best of the Methodist-Christian tradition. It is built upon classic Christian teaching, scripture, and an emphasis on the Methodist way of following Christ. It is clear in its doctrine, fair in its accountable structure, and poised to empower local churches and regions to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
2. The GMC is the best of what we have known about being Methodist, having learned from things that have and haven't worked through the past few years. By making this change, we will be able to continue engaging ministry as we've been accustomed. In a way, it is a change to remain the same. We will be able to chart our future with the support of the GMC while helping to shape the GMC in its formative years. We have a tradition of being a flagship church with strong leadership in our connection. We will be able to live in that role in a fresh way.
3. We want to be a part of a Wesleyan/Methodist Connection and have no desire to become an independent church. We can seamlessly transition into the Global Methodist Church with no period of independence. At the same time, we will be joining with friends and churches with whom we have shared in ministry for many years. We will have fellow GMC members and churches all around us!

4. The GMC is a global church with churches and annual conferences around the world. We will be able to learn from, minister with, and mutually submit to the church around the world where God is powerfully at work.

Again, thank you for who you are in Jesus Christ! I look forward to seeing you on May 9th at 6:00 PM.

With joy in Christ,

Rev. Jim Morrow
Senior Pastor