



# **FIRST CHURCH** Siloam Springs

*A United Methodist Congregation*

Greetings in the Name of Our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

I am writing to update you on the discernment process of our church and next steps.

On Sunday, September 18, 2022, our church meeting in Church Conference voted to disaffiliate from The United Methodist Church according to the provisions of paragraph 2553 of the 2016 Book of Discipline by a vote of 78% in favor of disaffiliation.

I know that this decision will be celebrated by some and grieved by others, but please know that as a church body throughout this process we have exhibited hearts of peace and have been a good witness for how the church can discuss and debate difficult decisions and do so with Christian charity. This witness has not gone unnoticed. Rev. Jim Polk, who presided over our church conference, commended this church on how well we have conducted ourselves and shown compassion for one another even in our disagreement.

As Rev. Polk shared at our church conference, disaffiliation is subject to ratification by the Arkansas Annual Conference meeting in special session on November 19, 2022. In the coming days we will be reaching out to members of this church on whether you wish to remain a member of the local church following disaffiliation.

As to next steps, I would like to share that over the past two months as this church has been discerning whether to remain United Methodist it has also been discerning what it might become next should the church vote to disaffiliate as it has now done. The Church Council appointed a Next Methodism Task Force to consider various options and then make a recommendation to the Church Council. You can read their report [here](#). The Church Council accepted their report and are recommending the church affiliate with the Global Methodist Church (GMC) upon its disaffiliation from the UMC. Over the next three Sundays following our morning worship service we will be sharing information about these Next Steps.

- Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>                      Next Steps Overview
- Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>                      Information Meeting about the GMC with Q&A
- Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>                      Congregational Meeting

May God continue to guide our next steps in the weeks and months to come and may we continue to love one another in Christian charity and live into our vision to be a Christ centered church—a caring community growing deeper in faith, reaching out in love, and making a difference in the lives of our neighbors near and far.

