

Denominational Comparison Chart created by our Transition Team in early 2022

	United Methodist	Free Methodist	Global Methodist	Wesleyan
Founded in	1968	1860	2022	1843
Mission Statement	To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.	Love God. Love People. Make Disciples.	To make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.	Transforming lives, churches, and communities through the hope and holiness of Jesus Christ.
Size in USA	6.4M members 30k churches 46 bishops (2018)	68k members 850 churches 3 bishops (2018)	TBD	141k members 1607 churches 1 general superintendent (2017)
Size outside USA	6.5M members 13k churches 20 bishops (2018)	1.1M members (2018)	TBD	850k members 5k churches (2015)
Marriage & Sexuality	Affirms marriage covenant between a man and a woman. Any sexual activity outside that covenant is considered contrary to God’s Word. (Expected to be changed in a post-separation UMC: Marriage between two consenting adults; Same sex sexual activity not considered sinful within the bounds of legal marriage.)	“Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman into a lifelong relationship of mutual love and service.” “Homosexual intimacy is regarded by the Scriptures as immoral because it is a distortion of God’s created order.”	Affirms marriage covenant between a man and a woman. Any sexual activity outside that covenant is considered contrary to God’s Word.	“God’s plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage.” “Sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful.”
Same Sex Weddings	No (Not allowed according to Discipline, but allowed in practice in some places;	No	No	No

	expected to be affirmed in post-separation UMC)			
Ordination of Sexually Practicing LGBTQ+ persons	No (Not allowed according to Discipline, but allowed in practice in some places; expected to be affirmed in post-separation UMC)	No	No	No
Doctrinal Standards	Must be verbally affirmed at ordination, but “non-judicial” to maintain	Mandatory for all clergy to preach and maintain. Formal charges are enforced by DS and bishop	Mandatory for all clergy to preach and maintain	Mandatory for all clergy to preach and maintain. Can be removed by regional/district board if gone astray.
Guaranteed Appointment for Ordained Clergy	Yes	No	No	No
Ordination of Women	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Apportionments	~12-13% of non-missions local church budget	3.7% of general (non-missions) income to denomination 2-8% to regional conference	1.5% of general (non-missions) income to denomination 5% to regional conference	10% of general (non-missions) income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1% church planting • 3% region/district • 3% denomination • 3% universities Capped at \$135,000
Property	Held in “trust” by denomination	Can be held in “trust” by denomination or owned by local church – church chooses	Owned by local church	Held in “trust” by denomination after affiliate time period
Appointment Process	Bishop and cabinet appoint, after consultation with clergy and P/SPR Committee.	Regional District Superintendent appoints with approval from conference Ministry Appointment Committee, after consultation with clergy and local church.	Church council decides whether to do its own search or request candidates from the bishop. Transition team (larger than P/SPRC) manages transition, interviews candidates, makes final	Church determines search team and criteria, selects top candidate, then gets approval from district superintendent.

			<p>recommendation. Approval of bishop, presiding elder, transition team, and clergy needed to set appointment. Candidates interviewed must include at least one female and one cross-cultural clergy.</p>	
Sacraments of the Church	Baptism & Communion; infant/child baptism practiced	Baptism & Communion; infant/child baptism practiced	Baptism & Communion; infant/child baptism practiced	Baptism & Communion; infant/child baptism practiced, but child dedication is the norm
Confirmation	Yes	No	Yes	No
Denomination Organization	<p>Episcopacy: Bishops elected for lifetime service from ordained clergy – oversee the leadership of conferences. District Superintendents appointed by bishops as extension of bishop’s office and serve up to 12 years within the Annual Conference.</p> <p>Conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Conference – legislative body creates Book of Discipline (BOD) • Jurisdictions in USA – elect and appoint bishops • Central Conferences outside the USA – elect and appoint bishops & modify BOD 	<p>Episcopacy: Bishops are elected to serve a 4-year term and must be re-elected to serve additional terms. District Superintendents are elected by conferences to lead conferences for 4-year terms.</p> <p>Conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Conferences – legislative body creates Book of Discipline (BOD) – The USA is a General Conference; There are 20+ General Conferences outside the USA • Annual Conferences – organize and support local churches for mission 	<p>Episcopacy: Bishops elected for up to 12 years of service from ordained clergy – oversee the leadership of conferences. District Superintendents selected by bishops from 3 candidates affirmed by district. May serve up to 12 years. Could be retired pastor. Could simultaneously serve in a local church.</p> <p>Conferences – legislative voting bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Conference – legislative body creates Book of Discipline (BOD). Also elects bishops • Regional Conferences 	<p>Episcopacy: General Superintendents are elected from ordained clergy by the General Conference to serve for a 4-year term of service (which can be renewed) – They oversee the leadership of the entire General Conference. District Superintendents are elected from ordained clergy by the district conferences and serve 2-4 year terms (which can be renewed). District Superintendents oversee the ministry of the district conference.</p> <p>Conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Conferences – legislative body creates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Conferences – organize and support local churches for mission • Local Church Judicial Council: Lay and clergy elected by the General Conference to Interpret Book of Discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Church National Board of Administration: Elected by the General Conference and serve 4-year terms. Has the authority to act on behalf of the General Conference between quadrennial gatherings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Conferences – organize and support local churches for mission • Local Church Judicial Council: Lay and clergy elected by the General Conference to Interpret Book of Discipline 	<p>Book of Discipline (BOD) – North America is a General Conference; There are 4 General Conferences outside the USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Conferences – organize and support local churches for mission • Local Church General Board of Administration: Elected by the General Conference and serve 4-year terms. Has the authority to act on behalf of the General Conference between quadrennial gatherings.
Local Church Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge/Church Conference • Church Council • Nominations and Leadership Development Committee • Pastor-Parish Relations Committee • Committee on Finance • Board of Trustees • Other committees as desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society Meeting • Board of Administration • Board of Trustees • Pastor’s Cabinet (like a PPRC) • Other committees as desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge/Church Conference • Church Council <p>Flexible Structure for all areas below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations and Leadership Development Committee • Pastor-Parish Relations Committee • Committee on Finance • Board of Trustees • Other committees as desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Church Conference • Local Board of Administration <p>Flexible Structure for all areas below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations • Personnel Committee • Board of Trustees • Other committees as desired