

**Mt. Bethel—Short Answers to Tough Questions**  
**Oct. 2021**

**What's happened with Mt. Bethel Church since April?**

- Current church leadership lost trust in the Bishop when she would not consult at all on a major pastoral reappointment.
- Admin Council weighed the options, the intractable position of the Bishop and the uncertainty of The Protocol, and unanimously voted to request disaffiliation (a process that lets each member vote).
- Since then, Mt. Bethel's lay leadership has only endeavored to lead the church well—to seek consultation, compromise, prayer, mediation and ultimately the opportunity for every member of Mt. Bethel to vote on whether to remain United Methodist.
- If some members disagree with disaffiliation, or even with the Admin Council's request for a vote on disaffiliation, then actually convening a church conference would quickly enable all voices to be heard, an outcome to be reached, and reconciliation to ensue.
- Mt. Bethel just wants members to have a say in the future of their church:
  - The Bishop did not and would not consult.
  - She has changed her story multiple times.
  - She appears to deny the schism within the UMC denomination.
  - Now the Conference Trustees have retaliated against Mt. Bethel in court for asking to vote.
  - Some members may want to remain in the UMC, so we simply ask to LET US VOTE.

**Why not vote and reconcile?**

- The United Methodist Church in 2019 created and approved a process for churches to disaffiliate with their property. They did so to avoid painful and costly litigation that has beset other Christian denominations.
- Mt. Bethel simply requested to avail itself of this approved process that has been successfully engaged in other conferences.
- Asserting ownership of all Mt. Bethel assets (by declaring exigent circumstances), and suing Mt. Bethel is part of a deliberate effort to intimidate and dry up Mt. Bethel's resources.
- The Bishop seeks to "run out the clock" on disaffiliation, which has a 2023 deadline that could expire if The Protocol is delayed any further.
- If our church could vote, then each member would have a say and we can begin the process of reconciliation.