

## Q & A: Postponement of General Conference to 2024

**Q: What changes will occur at Alpharetta Methodist because of the postponement of General Conference to 2024?**

A: This postponement does not change anything for Alpharetta Methodist. Our mission remains the same: Make disciples of Jesus Christ! Our methods for accomplishing the mission remain the same. Our ministers are expected to remain for the next appointment year.

This postponement does not change anything for the United Methodist Church. Decisions about the theology, doctrine, and polity of the UMC can only be made at General Conference, which meets every 4 years. The last General Conference convened in February 2019 but was a called session meeting. The 2020 General Conference was cancelled due to COVID. At this time, it is unknown if a General Conference will be held before 2024. No changes can occur before the next General Conference.

**Q: Will Alpharetta Methodist and our pastors uphold the Book of Discipline?**

A: Yes. Our pastors took a vow at ordination that we view the Book of Discipline as being aligned with Scripture and will uphold the Book of Discipline.

**Q: Will the Bishop uphold the Book of Discipline?**

A: She has taken a vow to uphold the Book of Discipline and has stated that she intends to do so.

**Q: What if I agree/disagree with the proposed changes?**

A: You are certainly welcome to state your opinion at any point to one of our pastors. However, because decisions will not occur until the next General Conference, no decisions will be made at a Conference or Local Church level until then or until viable, healthy options become clear.

**Q: Is the church splitting on May 1 when the Global Methodist Church begins?**

A: The Global Methodist Church has stated that it could begin as early as May 1, but this is not certain. Furthermore, there is no direct path for a church to join the Global Methodist Church at this time. It would need to be decided at a General Conference that the Global Methodist Church is a part of Pan-Methodism. Then, a direct path could be taken to join the Global Methodist Church. It is also important to note that churches will not be forced to make a decision on May 1, because there is no decision to be made.

**Q: What will Alpharetta Methodist do if there's a potential split or pathway to choose future alignment?**

A: Again, this potential change is not likely to occur until 2024. Until then, we remain steadfast in accomplishing the mission of Alpharetta Methodist. At the point that a split does occur or a pathway presents itself for future alignment, that will be communicated as quickly as possible. It is likely that the Annual Conference will first make a decision on alignment. Then, churches that oppose the Annual Conference's position will be able to vote and join the other.