

Why the time to consider the ¶2553 disaffiliation process is now

- 1 General Conference passed ¶2553 as an official exit option which a local church shall have for a limited time. It must be completed by December 31, 2023.
- 2 Our North Georgia bishop and cabinet have decided to facilitate ¶2553 starting March 1, 2023. On that date they will begin allowing local churches the right to vote on ¶2553 disaffiliation. This effectively ends ¶2553 in North Georgia on February 28, 2023, unless the local church has made the request for a ¶2553 vote between January 1 and February 28, 2023.
- 3 At this time the legitimate question is being asked “What’s the rush since we will have another exit process in place and available after December 31, 2023?” The right to request a ¶2553 disaffiliation vote ends in North Georgia on February 28, 2023. Any other exit process will result in the local church having to pay the annual conference significantly larger exit fees.
- 4 The question “What’s the hurry?” has a direct answer. In the opening sentence of ¶2553.1 the General Conference said, “Because of the current deep conflict within The UMC around issues of human sexuality, a local church shall have a limited right, under the provisions of this paragraph, to disaffiliate from the denomination”. That right goes away in six months unless the local church follows the process set out by the conference board of trustees and has made the request for a Church Conference vote by February 28, 2023.
- 5 These are the reasons ¶2553 is important to a local church and the reason the local church should begin the process now to determine if it wishes to disaffiliate. February 28, 2023, is the last day the local church can request a church conference to vote on whether to disaffiliate in North Georgia under ¶2553.