

Dozens More Churches Leave United Methodists Over LGBTQ Agenda

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The United Methodist Church (UMC) is accelerating its moves to become more accepting of LGBTQ people, leading to more divisions within the denomination and more departures from the group.

Each of the church's five U.S. jurisdictions met separately this month to approve measures where "LGBTQIA people will be protected, affirmed and empowered."

Also, the church's second openly gay bishop was elected.

Conservatives say the developments will only accelerate their exit from one of the nation's largest Protestant denominations.

At least 300 U.S. congregations have already left the UMC this year, according to United Methodist News Service.

Hundreds more are in the process of leaving, and that number could reach the low thousands by the end of next year.

Overseas, congregations in Bulgaria and Slovakia have ended their affiliation with the denomination, and churches in Africa are considering it.

Many are heading for the newly formed conservative denomination known as the Global Methodist Church. The new denomination was established by former conservative leaders from the UMC. It follows a biblical New Testament doctrine that does not recognize same-sex marriage.

As CBN News reported in May, conservative congregations have been officially parting ways with the UMC after years of debate on same-sex marriage and the ordination of openly gay pastors.

Earlier this month, another Texas megachurch voted to leave the UMC. The White's Chapel congregation located in Southlake, Texas voted to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. According to a statement from the church, 2,505 members voted: 2,338 for disaffiliation and 160 against (with seven abstaining).

In a statement, the church's co-pastors John McKellar and Todd Renner acknowledged that some members of their church family may be hurting over the congregation's decision to leave the UMC.

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