

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

5 Things to Know About the Full Communion Proposal

1. **We Can Benefit Each Other's Mission:**

There are around 22,000 United Methodist Churches in the United States in every diocese of The Episcopal Church. We can quickly enter deeper forms of shared ministry, especially in areas where we encounter similar demographics and ministry needs. Our churches have been in dialogue since 2002, and the UMC approved the full communion agreement at their General Conference in 2024.

2. **We Retain our Distinct Identities:**

Full communion enables closer collaboration and interchanging of clergy without merging or alter our churches. Each diocesan bishop decides the right level of engagement for their diocese and must approve any exchanged clergy. Exchanged clergy follow the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the receiving denomination and keep to its scope of ministry. Clergy can only be exchanged within orders that both churches recognize, and they cannot function outside the framework of their order as set by their sending church. Therefore, licensed local pastors in the UMC will not be eligible for clergy exchange in The Episcopal Church. Likewise, neither a UMC nor TEC deacon can preside at an Episcopal Eucharist, and an Episcopal deacon cannot preside at a UMC Eucharist.

3. **We Both Celebrate LGBTQ+ People:**

At the 2024 UMC General Conference, all previous barriers to ministry and marriage for LGBTQ+ persons were permanently removed. In addition, the United States has been made its own "Central Conference," so it may now set its own discipline.

4. **We Both Believe in the Real Presence:**

"[This Holy Mystery](#)," the official statement of Eucharistic theology for the UMC, states that "United Methodists, along with other Christian traditions, have tried to provide clear and faithful interpretations of Christ's presence in the Holy Meal. Our tradition asserts the real, personal, living presence of Jesus Christ."

5. **We Can Reconcile Our Understandings of Episcopacy:**

As part of the agreement, Episcopal bishops will take part in all future UMC bishop consecrations, ensuring the sharing of the historic episcopate across our churches.



The Episcopal Diocese Of Western New York

For more info, visit www.tec-umc.org and www.episcopalchurch.org/eir
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