

A Comparison of Denominations

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	United Methodist Church	Global Methodist Church (per Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline)**	Free Methodist Church#	Evangelical Methodist Church##
History	The United Methodist Church was created in 1968, but Methodism dates back to John and Charles Wesley who sought to spread the Methodist movement they began as a small group of students at Oxford.	Launched May 1, 2022	Founded 1860 from a dispute between members. Holiness Movement-influenced, differed from Methodist church about “entire sanctification.” Fought slavery, still fighting human trafficking.	Formed in 1946 “to preserve the distinctive doctrines of primitive Methodism, founded upon the inspiration and authenticity of the Bible and upon the Articles of Religion as set forth by John Wesley.” (par. 11)
Mission Statement	“The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”	“The mission of the Global Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.”	“Love God, love people and make disciples.”	“The Evangelical Methodist Church is convinced that Jesus Christ can radically transform a life resulting in a vital, personal relationship with God and a transformed relationship with people from all cultures and ethnicities.”
General Conference	Meets every 4 years (except 2020)	GC will meet every 2 years while church is organizing and every 6 years thereafter.	13 in the world, 3 in the US; World Conference also	Annual Church Conferences District Conferences Mission Conferences General Conference for the international church (Division 2, par. 81-84)
Annual Conference	54 in the US, 75 in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines	“Annual conferences shall be formed for the purpose of connecting clergy and laity for shared ministry and accountability across	“Annual conferences are the normative Free Methodist organization at the regional level that provides for reasonable spans of care for ministers	

		a geographical region.” (par. 612)	and congregations, as well as the structure for effective kingdom expansion.” (par. 200)	
Boards and Agencies	13 councils, boards, and commissions	Par. 613 defines 6 committees and allows for ACs to create additional committees.		Departments include: Prayer, Stewardship, Pensions, Publications and Multicultural Ministries. Auxiliaries of the denomination include Men, Women and Youth organizations.
Connectional	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, but churches choose pastors from recommendations. “Congregational- connectional”
Trust Clause on Local Church Properties	Yes, local church property is held by each annual conference under a common trust.	No	Yes	Yes
Geographic Reach	Global	Global	95% outside the USA, 828 U.S. churches, U.S. membership 67,000; 1,172,000 globally; large number of US congregations are Hispanic	82 congregations in 25 states; 399 worldwide
Theology	While stated theology is based on scripture and Wesley’s teaching, pluralism and “big tent” thinking have allowed for a wide range of theological beliefs.	Wesleyan, based on Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church, Wesley’s sermons, and The Confession of Faith of the EUB Church (par. 202)	“...committed to the Wesleyan-Arminian affirmation of the saving love of God in Christ. Through prevenient grace He seeks to bring every individual to himself but grants to each the	“...conservative, evangelical church, orthodox in belief, pre-millennial regarding the second coming, missionary in outlook, evangelistic in endeavor, cooperative in spirit, and Wesleyan in doctrine.”

			responsibility of accepting or rejecting that salvation... universal offer of salvation... the witness of the Holy Spirit.”	
Bishops	Yes, not term limited	Yes – to be term limited	Council of Bishops meets every 4 years.	Called General Superintendents
District Superintendents	Yes	Yes, “Presiding Elders,” may also serve a local church. Districts will be smaller.		General Superintendents elected quadrennially, Conference Superintendents
Clergy Appointments	One year at a time	Open ended (par. 513), no guaranteed appointments (par. 512)		Clergy chosen by congregations from recommendations of the connectional organization.
Local Pastors	Yes, with no voting rights in Annual Conference	Will transition to Deacon with “full voice and vote on all matters except the ordination and conference relation of elders” as long as actively serving (par. 409)		“Lay exhorters” licensed by Annual Church Conference or Special Church Conference (par. 242) Local Preachers (par. 853-856)
Apportionments/ Connectional Funding	Yes, variable, about 10% of a church’s budget	Expected to be about 6½% (defined in par. 349)		Information not available but they emphasize the independence of their congregations, so possibly low to none?
Pensions for Clergy	Yes, administered by Wespath	Yes, administered by Wespath	Provided (par. 4380)	
Scripture	“Primary source and criterion for Christian doctrine” In practice, can be modified or reinterpreted by other sources.*	“The canonical books of the Old and New Testaments (as specified in the Articles of Religion) are the primary rule and	“The Bible is God’s written Word, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit. It bears unerring witness to Jesus Christ, the living Word. As attested by the early church and subsequent	“We accept and believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We receive it as the revealed will and way of God for our daily life.”

		authority for faith, morals, and service, against which all other authorities must be measured.” Par. 104	councils, it is the trustworthy record of God’s revelation, completely truthful in all it affirms. It has been faithfully preserved and proves itself true in human experience.”	
Doctrine	Many things in the Book of Discipline are solid, but interpretation is subjective, inconsistent, and often unenforced.	Wesleyan Standards (par. 107), creeds (Apostles’ & Nicene Creed, Definition of Chalcedon) Par. 105	Seeks to build the church on the basis of Scripture.	
Position on sanctity of life	Balances sanctity of unborn life with life and well-being of mother and child; rejects abortion as means of birth control or gender selection (likely to be changed in a post-separation UMC).*	“We believe that life is a holy gift of God whose beginnings and endings are set by God, and that it is the particular duty of believers to protect those who may be powerless to protect themselves, including the unborn, those with disabilities or serious illness, and the aged (Genesis 2:7, Leviticus 19:32, Jeremiah 1:5, Luke 1:41-44).” (par. 202)	“God is sovereign: the world and all that is in it belongs to God. Though God’s eternal purposes may never be thwarted by human action we are still free and responsible to make God-consistent choices in matters of life and death... Our convictions about the inherent worth of human life form the foundation of our approach to bioethics.” (par. 3222)	See below
Abortion specifically	See above	“The sacredness of all life compels us to resist the practice of abortion except in the cases of tragic conflicts of life against life when the wellbeing of the mother	“The intentional abortion of a person’s life, from conception on, must be judged to be a violation of God’s command, ‘You shall not commit murder,’ except when extreme	“Whereas the Holy Scriptures clearly teach that life begins at conception and that the taking of that life is clearly repugnant to God, the

		and the child are at stake. We do not accept abortion as a means of birth control or gender selection, and we call upon all Christians as disciples of the Lord of Life to prayerfully consider how we can support those women facing unintended pregnancies without adequate care, counsel, or resources (Exodus 22:23-23, Psalm 139:13-16, James 1:27).” (par. 202)	circumstances require the termination of a pregnancy to save the life of the pregnant woman” (par. 3222).	Evangelical Methodist Church does not sanction nor condone abortion.” (par. 1171)
Women in ministry	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Racism, sexism, inclusiveness	Much focus on these areas and efforts to dismantle racism, welcome LGBTQ people and cross international boundaries. Our local AC voted in a resolution in 2022 calling for affirmation, full acceptance, and welcome of transgendered persons and those in transition.	Racism & sexism explicitly denounced (par. 202), call to inclusiveness: “Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the spiritual life of the Church and its service to the community and the world. Therefore, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or gender (defined	“Racism represents a particularly egregious affront to the dignity and worth of persons and its presence is manifest in the life, history and institutions of all nations. Racial oppression in all its forms continues to exact harm throughout the world, distorting the dignity of persons and God’s love for the great multitude of all nations. The Free Methodist Church was itself born out of a desire to stand	

		throughout this Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline by a person’s immutable biological traits identified by or before birth).” (par. 3)	against the evil of slavery and we continue to recognize the sin of racism and oppose it in all its forms.” (par. 3221)	
Definition of marriage	Affirms marriage covenant expressed in love, support, commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman (Likely to be changed in a post-separation UMC).*	“We believe that human sexuality is a gift of God that is to be affirmed as it is exercised within the legal and spiritual covenant of a loving and monogamous marriage between one man and one woman (Exodus 20:14, Matthew 19:3-9, Ephesians 5:22-33).” (par. 202)	“The sanctity of marriage between one man and one woman is to be protected against all manner of immoral conduct (Exodus 22:16-17; Deuteronomy 22:23-28; Leviticus 20:10-16)” Extra-marital intimacy=adultery (par.3219, more detail in par. 3311)	“We hold that the full behavioral expression of sexuality is to take place within the context of a marriage covenant between a man and a woman and that individuals remain celibate outside of the bond of marriage. (par. 1178)
Human sexuality	God's gift to all persons; affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage (Likely to be changed in a post-separation UMC).* Affirms sacred worth of all, God’s grace available to all. Does not condone practice of homosexuality; considers the practice incompatible with Christian teaching. (Likely to be changed in a post-separation UMC).*	“We are saddened by all expressions of sexual behavior, including pornography, polygamy, and promiscuity, that do not recognize the sacred worth of each individual or that seek to exploit, abuse, objectify, or degrade others, or that represent less than God’s intentional design for His children. While affirming a scriptural view of sexuality and gender, we welcome all to experience the	“Homosexual intimacy is regarded by the Scriptures as immoral because it is a distortion of God’s created order. The Scriptures speak explicitly against homosexual intimacy (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26, 27; 1 Timothy 1:8-10).” (par. 3219) “With deep compassion for persons who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, and especially those who	“...by the authority of the Holy Scriptures, we, the Evangelical Methodist Church, believe homosexual practices to be sin leading to spiritual death and eternal punishment. Moreover, we agree that no individual who practices homosexual acts shall be permitted to be an official member of any Evangelical Methodist Church; nor shall any known practicing homosexual be a candidate

		<p>redemptive grace of Jesus and are committed to being a safe place of refuge, hospitality, and healing for any who may have experienced brokenness in their sexual lives (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 6:9-20).” (par. 202)</p>	<p>have been mistreated and marginalized in various settings, the FMC encourages its congregations to practice welcoming hospitality and embracing lovingkindness toward all who desire to worship among us. We will be a people who offer ourselves as agents of Jesus’ grace and love to others – all others. We will trust the Holy Spirit to convince people of their sin, to enliven hope of transforming possibilities, and then to lead people to God’s best for their lives” (par. 3311)</p>	<p>for the licensed ministry of the Evangelical Methodist Church... Whereas we recognize that the Bible verifies that homosexuality is no greater sin than adultery, murder, stealing, etc., we, therefore, affirm that homosexuals are redeemable according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, we encourage all Evangelical Methodists to present God’s plan of salvation and deliverance from sin to all homosexuals. Moreover, all homosexuals who seek faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and cease to practice homosexual acts the Evangelical Methodist Church welcomes into the fellowship of the Church. (par. 1172)</p>
<p>Ordination of homosexual individuals</p>	<p>The verbiage in the Book of Discipline is solid, but disobedience to the Discipline and lack of enforcement is the problem.</p>	<p>Basic Qualifications of the Ordained, 2. “...fidelity in a Christian marriage between one man and one woman, chastity in singleness...” (par. 405)</p>		<p>Not permitted</p>

*Wording is from “A Comprehensive Comparison Chart” by Thomas Lambrecht, published September 1, 2021

**Quotes are from The Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline, The Global Methodist Church

#Quotes are from the Book of Discipline of the Free Methodist Church USA, 2019

##Quotes are from the Discipline of the Evangelical Methodist Church, 2018