

April 26, 2023

To all Clergy in Full Connection of the Alabama-West Florida Conference,

On April 25, the Judicial Council issued Decision 1482 concerning Two Questions of Law in the Wisconsin Annual Conference. The Decision stated that an annual conference cannot make clergy intentions a condition of a local church's disaffiliation. This has never been a requirement of the Alabama-West Florida Conference in approving local churches for disaffiliation by the cabinet or by the Trustees. Decision 1482 also states that "Clergy who withdraw from their annual conference membership by written request or by simply leaving their appointment have not surrendered their credentials unless action is taken against them under ¶¶ 327.6, 362, 2707 or 2711."

In accordance with this decision, moving forward the return of Ordination Certificates will not be required for those seeking to remain with their disaffiliating churches and serve in the GMC or another denomination. Clergy in Full Connection will still be required to return their Conference Membership Certificate or Substitute Form and the Intent to Withdraw Form. A new "Notification of Intent to Withdraw to Unite with Another Denomination" Form will be posted on the conference website and may be used. Clergy who have already submitted an Intent To Withdraw Form under paragraph 360.2 do not need to submit a new form. A note will be made on the forms and will be listed under 360.1 in this year's Business of the Annual Conference (BAC). For those clergy who have already turned in their Ordination Certificate, it will be mailed back to you.

Provisional Members who discontinue will return their credentials as directed by paragraph 327.6. This ruling does not affect the process already put in place for Licensed Local Pastors or Associate Members. They will continue to use paragraph 320.1. This also does not affect the process in our annual conference for churches that are disaffiliating.

Rev. Jenni Hendrix  
Director of Ministerial Services  
Alabama-West Florida Conference

Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson  
Dean of the Cabinet  
Alabama-West Florida Conference

