

As a licensed local pastor, I have a unique calling and perspective in the UMC. Part of the calling of an LLP is to serve the local congregation, and I plan to continue serving at KUMC regardless of which direction the vote goes. Ultimately, I was not called to serve the UMC or GMC but to serve Jesus, and my church home is where I begin sharing the message that Jesus conquered sin and death through the cross. We do not have to agree on everything, but we must agree on the blood of Jesus as our common bond. From this common ground, we can move forward following September 25th. It will require our congregation to demonstrate mercy and to heal through God's grace. It will require us to rely on God's provision and love to focus on the things that have defined KUMC for the past 50 years. We will then move forward through the power of the Holy Spirit to continue making disciples and sharing the love of Christ with a Kingdom mindset.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (NIV)." Boasting is something that takes place after a game or competition is won. After the September vote, there will be no winner or loser. There will be a church, our church, that will need to find a way forward to continue worshipping together and sharing God's love with everyone, inside and outside of the building walls. I believe that it will be important that the outcome is not viewed as the result of anyone's work. We must continue moving forward through the gift of God's grace and remember that it is by grace we are saved through faith. That must continue to be the message and mission of our church.

When people ask about my calling, my short answer is, "I just want to tell people about Jesus!" The Jesus I want to tell them about loves everyone, invites everyone into relationship with Him, and meets everyone amid their brokenness and sin to offer them new life in Him. I believe this new life is only possible because Jesus was fully God and fully human, suffered and died on the cross, was dead and buried for three days, and rose from the dead. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to experience new life, eternal life, in Him.

Currently, I am finishing my last year in seminary. My education and experience at Asbury Seminary have deepened my faith and understanding of scripture. I have read, studied, and discussed scripture and theology. My first thought is if I devoted every minute of the remainder of my life to studying, there would still be more to learn. Through this time, I have grown to understand the Bible as the complete story and revelation of God's plan of redemption for all of creation. All scripture tells us the story of how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have interacted with mankind throughout the creation of time and history to reveal a Holy God who desires a relationship with His creation. God's Word shapes and transforms our hearts and minds so that we can share the Word for the transformation of the world. Scripture is the foundation of my faith and the litmus test and lens through which I view the world. The Wesleyan theology taught at Asbury has provided a language and way to describe and understand the Trinity in new and profound ways for me. The God I love and serve is more righteous, loving, wise, and omnipotent than I can ever fully comprehend while I live on earth. Every class I take has a moment where God reveals Himself to me. In that moment, I realize how small my understanding of His ways is and how unending His love is. I want to share that with everyone.

My beliefs most closely align with those of the GMC and the current UMC, but I feel my immediate calling is to serve our church through this time of discernment and beyond as we continue with a Kingdom mindset.