

January 3, 2020

Dear United Methodist friends,

Grace and peace to you in this new year.

I write to encourage your gracious and prayerful attention to [the proposal for the future of the United Methodist Church](#) released today by a diverse group of United Methodist leaders. The proposal is the outcome of a skillfully mediated process in which these leaders came to a unanimous sense of possibility for our future. The proposal is offered to the church in humility and hope. I urge you to [read the proposal](#) and [accompanying resources](#).

Styled by some media as a split, all the participants understand this to be a continuity of the UMC with provisions for separation for those who desire to do so.

As the year unfolds, there will be continued discussion and discernment relative to this proposal across the church as we move toward the General Conference in May.

We are thankful for the way we work together allowing this proposal to be considered along with other proposals and petitions that were submitted through our legislative process. As with all proposals and petitions, General Conference is the place where any decision will be made.

Thank you for your prayers for our church in this time and for your patience and perseverance. Together let us share strong hope for ministry configurations of our shared life that offer space for all to worship, grow in grace, and serve with faithfulness and joy.

With the shared confidence we have in God's providence, power, and grace,

Bishop Hope Morgan Ward