A Resolution of the Huntsville First United Methodist Church Discernment Team

February 27, 2023

Resolution 1

Whereas, on August 8, 2022, the Church Leadership Team voted to enter discernment by a vote of 15 yeas and 12 nays, with 6 abstentions and 6 not voting;

Whereas, the clergy and lay leadership selected and recruited a 12-member Discernment Team (which was reduced to 11 through one resignation) tasked leading our congregation through a process to discern God’s will for our church and making a recommendation to the Church Leadership Team regarding whether our congregation should disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church;

Whereas, the Discernment Team first met on September 27th for an organizational session and formally entered the Discernment process by notifying the District Superintendent on October 17th;

Whereas, the Discernment Team met 25 times over the ensuing months and prepared two paper mailers which were each sent to over 1,500 physical addresses, as well as numerous e-mail messages and verbal announcements delivered during the worship services;

Whereas, the Discernment Team held three congregational meetings with a combined attendance of 365 attendees to answer questions and provide information;

Whereas, the Discernment Team met with 24 small groups and Sunday School classes to receive their feedback and provide opportunities for members to share with and listen to each other;

Whereas, the Discernment Team led opportunities to pray, including: inviting the entire congregation to participate in daily fixed-hour prayer at 3:56 based on Proverbs 3:5-6, the prayer

team providing weekly scripture to guide prayer for the months of November and December with a different focus each week; organizing four Chapel prayer times for congregational prayer,

and Stephen Ministers staffing a prayer room during each of the congregational sessions;

Whereas, the Discernment Team provided content that was posted with the help of FUMC Staff including: Team Information and photos to help church members identify the team, the exact wording of Paragraph 2553, a Letter from our Bishop with North Alabama Conference Discernment Process requirements, supplemental information and FAQs (25 pages), November letter to the congregation, December letter to the congregation, Glossary and FAQs as of December 19, 2022 (27 pages), Resource Library of articles and videos emailed by members to Discernment Team, CLT video from Johnnie Hargrove, 6 informational videos from Pastor Byron Vance about the current situation and process;

Whereas, the Discernment Team conducted a survey of the congregation to advise our recommendation. 364 surveys were completed with 174 being in favor of remaining in the United Methodist Church, 16 desiring to wait, 65 in favor of a church-wide vote to disaffiliate, 34 in favor of voting, and 75 unspecified.

Whereas, the full metrics collected by the Discernment Team will be attached to this resolution;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Discernment Team recommends to the Church Leadership Team that Huntsville First United Methodist Church **NOT** disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church at this time.

Signed:

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