

FAITH UMC – ST. PAUL UMC  
*UNION/MERGER QUESTIONS & ANSWERS*  
(2008 Book of Discipline paragraph 2545)

1. Recent History of Faith UMC & St. Paul UMC

A small group of leaders from Faith UMC and St. Paul UMC began discussing our commonalities-- structure, worship and mission. Dreams were shared of increasing our service to God, each other, Fairmont, and the world. We have had joint participation for worship, study and fellowship involving both congregations: Holy Week services, group studies, and Vacation Bible Schools. Pastor Aslam Barkat and Pastor Larry Buckland exchanged venues for delivering the sermon. The group was encouraged and it was the decision of the Faith/St. Paul Vision Team to recommend Union of the churches. On September 11<sup>th</sup> we will have one picnic together.

2. Why consider a Union/Merger?

As United Methodists we believe our primary mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We further believe that as ONE Body, a union of St. Paul UMC and Faith UMC will strengthen the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ with more resources, both human and financial. As ONE congregation, we can make a greater impact on the Fairmont community and beyond. Union/Merger will bring renewed life and energy for reaching new generations with the Gospel.

The physical property is also a consideration, but not the primary reason for the Union. Faith UMC's limitation is not size, rather the facility's condition. St. Paul's building has a size issue, which limits growth of its second worship celebration.

3. How would things be different if the vote is for Union/Merger?

We will consider ourselves as ONE congregation of The United Methodist Church. However, officially we will not be recognized as one congregation until January 1, 2012. Worship and other ministries will continue at Faith campus and St. Paul campus. The partnering of studies and resources will continue. We will worship together for Holy Week and Sunrise Services, and other fellowship activities will be planned for 2012. In the meantime we will form united teams (mission, ministry, property, and new facilities) that will plan for our future together.

4. How would things be the same after a vote for Union/Merger?

Pastor Aslam and Pastor Larry will continue in their current appointments as co-pastors of the newly united congregation acknowledging the appointive responsibility of the Bishop and Cabinet. The Sunday school classes and small groups you participate in will continue, but you will likely see some new faces!

5. How will this affect our finances?

There will be a united budget for 2012. Equal representation from the previous congregations will plan this budget. All money, endowments and property currently owned by each individual congregation will subsequently become the sole ownership of the new united church.

6. How would this affect our staff and future staffing?

Our current staff will continue to serve. Following the union/merger, leadership will evaluate future needs and opportunities that will most effectively fulfill the mission of our church.

7. How will this affect our ministries?

All ministries will be evaluated on the basis of each church's mission statement. Any ministries planned will have both campuses in mind while striving to increase unity. Our goal is to be ONE with God and ONE with each other to transform the world.

8. What does this mean for current properties and future?

There will be ONE congregation with two campuses seeking the best fit for future properties that will allow the mission of our church to be fulfilled. As in a marriage, housing is an important issue. Where will the married couple live? This is a major decision. A new facility will ultimately be necessary and a new name for the united congregation is essential. We have been investigating options and if Union/Merger is approved, a team will continue to work in planning for our new physical location. If the current Faith UMC property is sold and has to be vacated before new properties/structures are ready for worship, then the St. Paul campus will conduct three or more worship celebrations. The united/merged church will also keep and maintain the parsonages for the foreseeable future.

9. When will the vote take place?

A Church Conference will take place at each church Sunday, September 25, 2011, between the first and second worship services of each church. Faith UMC and St. Paul UMC will vote YES or NO to UNITE/MERGE as ONE congregation. The decision will be based on the simple majority vote at St. Paul and Faith individually, not a combined total. The name of the united church will be discussed and voted on at a later date.

10. Who can vote?

Members of St. Paul United Methodist Church can vote at the St. Paul UMC Church Conference. Members of Faith United Methodist Church can vote at the Faith UMC Church Conference. Anyone who has completed Confirmation (no matter what age) and is on the membership register at that church may vote. In accordance with The United Methodist Book of Discipline paragraph 248, "the charge conference, may be convened as the church conference extending the vote to all professing members of the local church **present** at such meetings." Voting will be done by private ballot, although you will need to "sign in," much like you would at a regular polling place, so that your church membership can be verified before you vote. No absentee voting or "voting by proxy" is allowed under the Discipline.

**RESOLUTION**  
**For Union/Merger**  
**(2008 Book of Discipline paragraph 2545)**  
**of**  
**St. Paul United Methodist Church**  
**and**  
**Faith United Methodist Church**

**WHEREAS**, in honor and recognition of the witnesses that have preceded us, the congregations of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church do now recognize that by uniting/merging together as one serving congregation that the Great Commission of Christ may be more fully realized and

**WHEREAS**, the congregation of St. Paul United Methodist Church has met, discussed, deliberated, and agreed by majority vote to unite/merge with the congregation of Faith United Methodist Church

and

**WHEREAS**, the congregation of Faith United Methodist Church has similarly agreed, by majority vote, to unite/merge with the congregation of St. Paul United Methodist Church.

**NOW, THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY**

**RESOLVED**, that by said mutual consent, the congregations of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church shall unite/merge as one congregation of The United Methodist Church effective January 1, 2012.

The separate congregations of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church will cease to exist effective January 1, 2012.

**RESOLVED**, that the name of the newly united/merged church,  
comprised of the former congregations  
of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church  
shall be named and voted on a later date.

**RESOLVED**, that the pastoral leadership of the newly united/merged church will be  
Reverend Larry D. Buckland Jr. and Reverend Aslam Barkat as co-pastors acknowledging the  
appointive responsibility of the Bishop and Cabinet.

**RESOLVED**, that pursuant to said union/merger, the congregations  
of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church  
shall unite/merge and combine all banking and financial accounts as part of their  
union/merger.

**RESOLVED**, that the assets of St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United  
Methodist Church shall be transferred to the newly named Church as part of their union/merger.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the undersigned, as the authorized representatives of  
St. Paul United Methodist Church and Faith United Methodist Church have executed this  
Resolution on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2011.

On Behalf of: