

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

RE: United Methodist Change in Relationship

Today the Tennessee Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church voted to approve the attached resolution to release Martin Methodist College to join with the University of Tennessee System. You will also find MMC's last Journal Report attached as well.

We are grateful for the Methodist movement that considers the pursuit of knowledge a divine enterprise, and the church, "the Rock that bore us."

In this new beginning it is time to embrace what the love of mission is bringing. Martin Methodist has always been a private institution with a public mission. It is said that if you truly love something you have to be willing to let it go. Mission, or what the author Simon Sinek refers to as "just cause" must take precedence over identity. It has been inspiring to witness the willingness of our trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and denomination to embrace this monumental change in order to accomplish our just cause, our divine mission, in a much greater way.

Special thanks to trustee, Justice Connie Clark, who served as our primary spokesperson at Annual Conference.

With Gratitude,



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## **Resolution Authorizing Change in Conference Relationship of Martin Methodist College**

**WHEREAS**, Martin Methodist College stands in the long Wesleyan tradition of emphasizing education and the joining of vital piety; and

**WHEREAS**, Martin Methodist College has, for approximately 150 years, provided education for students in southern Middle Tennessee; and

**WHEREAS**, Martin Methodist College has enjoyed an affiliation with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church (and its predecessor organizations) since 1908; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of Martin Methodist College has determined that the best method for fulfilling the educational mission of Martin Methodist College going forward will be through an affiliation with the University of Tennessee, in which Martin Methodist College will be operated as a campus of the University of Tennessee; and

**WHEREAS**, the University of Tennessee has committed to use its best efforts to maintain a college of opportunity in Southern Middle Tennessee similar to what Martin Methodist College has traditionally provided, and to seek to provide additional offerings (such as agricultural and engineering programs) to expand the educational options at the school; and

**WHEREAS**, on the 9th day of December, 2020, at the request of Martin Methodist College, the Trustees of the Tennessee Annual Conference agreed, subject to action of this body and certain conditions outlined below, to release from the trust imposed by the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church all property owned by Martin Methodist College for purposes consistent with an institution of higher learning, with the exception of the current Martin Methodist College endowment, which shall continue to be held in trust for the United Methodist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, on the 11th day of December, 2020, at the request of Martin Methodist College, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry endorsed the action of the Trustees of the Tennessee Annual Conference with regard to Martin Methodist College, subject to the action of this body and the conditions imposed by the Conference Trustees; and

**WHEREAS**, in order for the release of the property from the trust to be effectuated, this body, during its 2021 session, has been requested to approve a change in connectional relationship for Martin Methodist College, allowing Martin Methodist College to be operated as a campus of the University of Tennessee system; and

**WHEREAS**, the Trustees and the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church, after due consideration, believe that the proposed transaction will best serve the educational mission of Martin Methodist College, and understand that release of the property from the trust is a necessary prerequisite to the consummation of such transaction;

**Therefore, be it resolved** by the 2021 Tennessee Annual Conference that:

**NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved**, that the Tennessee Annual Conference, in regular session in June, 2021, approves the change in connectional relationship between Martin Methodist College and the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church, allowing Martin Methodist College to become a part of the University of Tennessee system, such change in connectional relationship to become effective upon the closing of the 2021 Annual Conference session and the closing of the transaction between Martin Methodist College and the University of Tennessee;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Tennessee Annual Conference authorizes the Conference Board of Trustees, its officers, and/or any member designated by the Chair, to execute appropriate documents and take appropriate actions to release the assets of Martin Methodist College held for purposes consistent with an institution of higher learning, with the exception of the endowment referenced above, from the provisions of the trust clause outlined in Paragraph 2501 of the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, such release from the

trust to become effective upon adoption of this resolution and the closing of the transaction between Martin Methodist College and the University of Tennessee and transfer of the property for the purposes outlined herein.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the change in connectional relationship and release of the property from the trust clause is approved subject to the above and in reliance upon the following commitments and undertakings by Martin Methodist College and/or the University of Tennessee: 1. The University of Tennessee's commitment to use its best efforts to maintain a college of opportunity in Southern Middle Tennessee similar to what Martin Methodist College has traditionally provided, and to seek to provide additional offerings (such as agricultural and engineering programs) to expand the educational options at the school; 2. The retention and management of the Martin Methodist College endowment by the existing Martin Methodist College nonprofit corporation, or another United Methodist entity acceptable to the Tennessee Conference Trustees, such endowment funds to be used in accordance with their designated purposes; and 3. Martin Methodist College's agreement to continue a relationship with the Turner Center, and to retain sufficient real property to continue to provide a location for operation of the Turner Center on or near the campus of the college. The parties agree that the current location of the Turner Center, and the location currently utilized as the residence of the college president, are both suitable present and/or future locations for the Turner Center. Should another location be chosen, Martin Methodist College shall seek approval of the Tennessee Annual Conference Board of Trustees, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld; and 4. Martin Methodist College's agreement to establish and maintain a Wesley foundation on or near the campus of the college, the location of same to be determined in consultation with the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry of the Tennessee Annual Conference.

Submitted by: TN Conference Board of Trustees  
05/03/2021

Conference Journal Report 2021  
Martin Methodist College  
The Mission Continues!

Martin Female College was established in 1870 with a significant gift from the estate of Thomas Martin. His gift was made to fulfill the vision of his then deceased daughter Victoria to make education accessible to women in southern Middle Tennessee. Thomas was a successful businessman who served as Pulaski mayor and superintendent of Sunday school at the then Pulaski Methodist Episcopal Church South.

Over the past 151 years Martin Methodist College has expanded to provide an opportunity for higher education for all people in an area that would be a higher education desert without it. This mission has been sustained through the years by the prayers, talents, and treasure of the people called Methodists.

Thousands and thousands of students have discovered and developed their gifts, and those individuals have brought untold benefit to their communities and humankind. What a tremendous legacy!

Now, we have been given the opportunity to advance the mission exponentially by joining The University of Tennessee System as The University of Tennessee Southern. The people of this region will have a more affordable and expansive opportunity to reach their full potential for service in the world. Undergraduate preparation will continue for men and women who are planning to attend seminary and enter church vocations.

The Martin Methodist College Foundation has been established to hold the endowment that has been built in large part by the gifts of individuals and congregations of the United Methodist Church. The income from the endowment will continue to serve the purposes that were designated by the donors for the benefit of the mission including scholarships for United Methodist students and the support of the Turner Center for Thriving Rural Communities.

In addition, a portion of the endowment currently held by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation for Martin Methodist will now be designated to support the Wesley Student Ministry at the University of Tennessee Southern.

Several resolutions have been recently passed and unanimously supported by Martin Methodist College trustees to memorialize the tremendous contributions of United Methodists throughout our history. They include:

**Warren-Wilson Hall** – Honoring the more than 100 year engagement of these families at Martin including the Reverend Fenton Warren and his son, and current MMC Board Chair, Richard Warren.

**The Thomas and Victoria Martin School of Arts and Humanities** – honoring our founders.

**The Grace G. Grissom School of Education**- Honoring Grace Grissom, benefactor, long term trustee and former board chair. Ms. Grissom was a member of Brentwood UMC where she served as Administrative Board Chairperson, Lay Delegate to the Tennessee Annual Conference, and delegate to the World Methodist Conference in 1976, held in Dublin, Ireland.

**Jacquelyn D. Guthrie Student Life Center** - to recognize and honor Ms. Guthrie's extraordinary contributions to the institution. Ms. Guthrie is a member of Springfield FUMC. In addition to supporting Martin Methodist College, she has established an endowed scholarship at Africa University to help further the education of the young people of Africa.

We thank God for what has been and praise God for all that will be. The mission continues!

Respectfully Submitted,

The Reverend Dr. Mark LaBranche  
President  
Martin Methodist College