



Centenary United Methodist Church
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April 23, 2023

Dear Centenary Church,

This afternoon, our church voted with a strong consensus of 81% to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding for an Amicable Separation which allows for Centenary to close as a United Methodist Church and reopen as two separate churches: one as a new UMC and one as an independent congregation. The independent congregation will remain at the historic home of Centenary and further the ministry that has blessed this community for over a century. The new UMC will begin formation in the coming months.

Throughout this process we have sought to maintain unity in our congregation and so our hope is that as many people as possible will stay at Centenary to continue the fellowship, family, and faith you have shared for so long. But for those for whom it is a matter of conscience or who feel called to be a part of something new, another UMC option will be an exciting next step. Both churches will need committed volunteers and leaders as we begin organizing. Please join us for informational/organizational meetings about both churches:

- New UMC led by Pastor Jennifer Tues. May 9, 7pm, Centenary Sanctuary
- New Independent Centenary Church Thurs. May 11, 7pm, Centenary Sanctuary

We know this process has not been without grief, disappointment, frustration, and even harm. Relationships have been strained and as we work toward reconciliation we will have a special service of healing and forgiveness at a date to be determined. It has been hard, but in this movement toward wholeness, we will continue to worship as one church through June 30. My final sermon series is on Paul and Barnabas and I believe it will help us all move into this next chapter with grace and hope.

While this is an “amicable separation” and we strongly believe Christ’s call is unity, we also know that in God’s divine math what starts as division can actually become multiplication! And it will take each of us making a commitment to see that multiplication happens. This is an opportunity for both churches to be energized and focused on being the church in two contexts, supporting one another in living out the gospel in different ways, each with the goal of being transformed by the Holy Spirit and being made more like Jesus. Let’s work together to see the gospel spread to even more people in Cape Girardeau and beyond!

On the journey with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Jennifer".

Pastor Jennifer