

SENATE BILL 586

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HB 1382/24 – ECM

5lr3020

By: **Senator Muse**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2025

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Corporations and Associations – Methodist Church Trust Requirement – Repeal

FOR the purpose of repealing a requirement that the assets of any Methodist Church be held in trust for the United Methodist Church and be subject to the control of the United Methodist Church; repealing a certain provision of law providing that the absence of a trust clause in any deed or conveyance executed before a certain date does not exclude certain local churches from certain provisions of law or responsibilities related to the United Methodist Church; and generally relating to Methodist churches.

BY repealing

Article – Corporations and Associations
Section 5–326 and 5–327
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2014 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY renumbering

Article – Corporations and Associations
Section 5–328
to be Section 5–326
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2014 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Corporations and Associations

[5–326.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



All assets owned by any Methodist Church, including any former Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Protestant Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Washington Methodist Conference, or Evangelical United Brethren Church, whether incorporated, unincorporated, or abandoned:

(1) Shall be held by the trustees of the church in trust for the United Methodist Church; and

(2) Are subject to the discipline, usage, and ministerial appointments of the United Methodist Church, as from time to time authorized and declared by the general conference of that church.]

[5–327.

The absence of a trust clause in any deed or other conveyance executed before June 1, 1953, does not relieve or exclude a local church in any way from its Methodist connectional responsibilities or from the provisions of this part and does not absolve a local congregation or board of trustees of its responsibility to the United Methodist Church, if such an intent of the founders or the later congregations and boards of trustees is indicated by:

(1) The conveyance of the assets to the trustees of the local church or any of its predecessors;

(2) The use of the name, customs, and polity of the United Methodist Church in such a way as to be known to the community as part of this denomination; or

(3) The acceptance of the pastorate of ministers appointed by a bishop of the United Methodist Church or employed by the superintendent of the district in which the local church is located.]

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section(s) 5–328 of Article – Corporations and Associations of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 5–326.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.