

Middle Tennessee Council, BSA
Talking Points for Unit Leaders and Staff on Methodist Church Charters

Overview

- I. The talking points listed below were developed to be used by council and unit level volunteers, as well as staff, in discussions regarding the future of unit charters with individual United Methodist Churches. All documents referenced can be found in the “Toolkit” found at the following link. These documents are numbered. <https://www.mtcbsa.org/umccharterinformation>
- II. Note- Don’t forget to thank the church leadership for the years of ministry to youth through the Scouting program. Information on number of Scouts served over the years, service projects at the church, religious awards, life changing events for Scouts, etc. will let them know that they have made an impact in the lives of young people. We hope they will continue this ministry.
- III. The goal of the Middle Tennessee Council is to make any possible transition of the unit’s charter as seamless as possible, so it doesn’t disrupt the units program.

Options for Current United Methodist Chartered Organizations – Determine Which Option Your UMC Church is Going to Use

- I. Church continues as a traditional chartered organization. – **Preferred Option**
 - A. Nothing changes in the current relationship and responsibilities of the church, unit and council.
- II. Church will not remain as a traditional chartered organization but will allow the Scouts to meet at the church with a signed facilities use agreement. - **Second Preferred Option**
 - A. Unit will need to work with the Council to find a new chartered partner. Timeline is by recharter date of the unit.
 - B. If a new charter can’t be found, the unit will become a council registered unit.
- III. Church will not remain as a traditional charter and will not allow the unit to continue to meet at the church.
 - A. Unit will need to find a new charter and meeting location.
 - B. The unit can become a council registered unit but will still need to find a meeting location.
- IV. Church will only sign an Affiliation Agreement
 - A. This is not the best option for the church, unit or council (see FAQ’s below for why this isn’t the best option).
 - B. If this is the case, please contact Larry Brown at lbrown@bsamail.org or 615- 383-9701.

NOTE: The MTC will work with your unit to transition to any of the options above.

Key points to cover in discussions with your UMC Church decision maker(s)

- I. **Question from unit leader or staff to UMC Church decision maker(s) – Are their concerns the church has regarding continuing with the traditional charter (same as what they have now)?**
 - **#1 Possible answer (question above) by church:** We are concerned about liability exposure for the church.
Answer by unit leader or staff: The liability insurance is the same whether the church uses a Traditional Charter, Affiliation Agreement (means the unit will be a council registered unit) or a Facilities Use Agreement. The insurance coverage can be found in document #11 in the toolkit.
 - **#2 Possible answer by church:** We don’t want to own any of the units’ assets or equipment?
Answer by unit leader or staff: We can provide you with a form that releases you of any ownership of unit assets (trailers, equipment, etc.). See document #9 in toolkit.
 - **#3 Possible answer by church:** We have been advised by our Bishop to use the Affiliation Agreement that was released by the church.

Answer by unit leader or staff: The UMC leadership also supports using the Facilities Use Agreement (document #3 in toolkit) as an alternative to the Affiliation Agreement. We would like to use this option since this option would allow us to continue to meet here at the church and find a new traditional charter or become a council registered unit.

II. Additional possible follow up question by church: Why don't you use the Affiliation Agreement and you don't have to find a new chartered partner and you can still meet here at the church?

- **Answer by unit leader or staff:** : By signing the Affiliation Agreement we will become a Council Registered Unit and would also have some additional new responsibilities as parents and leaders. With the way the Affiliation Agreement is worded, we as Unit Leaders would have new responsibilities not required currently by the other options. Additionally, the council will be responsible for all our assets and will have additional legal and National BSA compliance responsibilities. This might seem reasonable on the surface, but the way the Affiliation Agreement is worded we are concerned that our local council doesn't have the staff to monitor and keep up with over 118 Methodist Units checking accounts, trailers, and other unit assets. If the church will continue with a traditional charter, we as leaders can continue to monitor and control our assets.
- **Possible additional answer by church:** Our church leadership has made the decision to move forward with the recommended Affiliation Agreement. You are welcome to meet here but the Affiliation Agreement is the only option for us.
- **Answer by unit leader or staff:** (The unit leadership should decide before meeting with the church leadership if this is a viable option for the group) Thank you for your willingness to continue your Scouting ministry here at the church. We will discuss this with MTC Leadership and schedule a follow up meeting with all parties to plan our transition to a Council registered unit.