

Traverse Bay & Central UMC Merger FAQs

Why is Traverse Bay UMC seeking a merger with Central UMC?

- Traverse Bay UMC has operating expenses that are not met by the current level of attendance and giving.
- Traverse Bay UMC is seeking a way to continue ministry in the Traverse City area and in the world.
- By merging with Central UMC, Traverse Bay UMC is able to keep ministry assets local.
- By merging with Central UMC, Traverse Bay will cease operations as an independent congregation and will be resurrected within the new merged Central UMC

Will the merger of the two congregations bring debt from Traverse Bay UMC?

- Traverse Bay is not carrying debt and will transfer assets to the merged congregation.

What will happen to the real estate owned by Traverse Bay UMC?

- Real estate will transfer to Central UMC.
- Decisions on the parsonage will be decided after the merger.
- The church building will transfer to Central UMC or, if sold ahead of the merger, the proceeds will go to Central UMC as outlined in the merger document.

Will worship continue at Traverse Bay UMC after the merger?

- Worship will be consolidated into the Central UMC schedule at Central UMC and Worship in the Park.

Will the merger change clergy appointments?

- UMC clergy are itinerant. Pastor Linda and Pastor Joan will continue with their current appointments to CUMC. Pastor Matthew will not be appointed to the combined congregation.

Will Central UMC continue as a Reconciling Congregation (fully including LGBTQ+ siblings)?

- Yes.

What will happen with Traverse Bay missions?

- Key missions of Traverse Bay will receive generous one-time financial gifts should the Traverse Bay church building sell as part of the merger (in the first year).
- The combined congregation will continue to support Habitat for Humanity.
- Central Missions has committed to continued support for New Life School in Mizak, Haiti.

Who is allowed to vote on the merger?

- Each congregation will hold a special charge conference to vote on the proposal for merger.
- The Discipline states that members of the congregation who are present are allowed to vote.

When is the vote?

- Traverse Bay UMC will vote at 10:00 AM on Sunday, April 27, 2025
- Central UMC will vote at 12:00 noon on Sunday April 27, 2025