



DAVID W. GRAVES, RESIDENT BISHOP

March 2, 2026

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Currently the TWK Cabinet, pastors, staff-parish committees, and churches are working on the upcoming appointment year: July 2026 to June 2027. Your prayers during this time are appreciated.

The Cabinet will be working to make many appointments between now and annual conference, scheduled for June 7-10.

There are many factors that go into this process which include retirements; churches open by the death of a pastor; pastors leaving our annual conference; local church needs and concerns; pastors' needs and concerns; and family considerations, to name a few. Some of our local churches have also reduced clergy salaries due to fewer incoming resources. The combination of these circumstances leads to many emotions during the appointment season. Our United Methodist appointment process is like no other mainline denomination.

With our recent focus on discipleship priorities, the Cabinet will give significant time and effort to prioritize appointments that help us live into these priorities. For example, when we make appointments that involve new experiences, such as cross-cultural appointments, or perhaps when a female clergy person is appointed to a church that has not previously had a female clergy person as its senior/lead pastor, we will provide resources to assist both the church and congregation in doing these transitions well. Recently the cabinet identified a "filtering question" to consider when projecting an appointment:

"How does this projected appointment help this church, pastor, and community live faithfully into the discipleship priorities that God has revealed through the people of the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference?" [Click here for the Discipleship Priorities.](#)

Questions like this guide us into new insights and hold us accountable to keep moving forward in the way God is inviting. Our focus on living deeper into these discipleship priorities is very clear. It impacts everything, including the appointment season.

The appointment-making time is sacred work in which the Holy Spirit is felt. The Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference has a faithful Cabinet that truly seeks to honor God and follow where the Spirit leads. Our shared spiritual practices in team meetings and between team meetings are the grounding place for our work. Please keep those involved in this process in your prayers. This is a strength and help to all of us.

To help guide your time of prayer, please note the following timeline:

Jan-Feb: As consultations took place, the district superintendent marked each pastor as remain, must move, should move, could move, or retiring. As appointment projections begin, they may or may not be communicated beyond the cabinet.

March: The cabinet will project most of the full-time appointments during these sessions. Those pastors who will be moving will receive a phone call from their District Superintendent to arrange a meeting to go over their projected appointment and pastor-parish chairs will be called and told of the projected appointment. The full SPRC will be informed and instructed to keep the appointment confidential, because circumstances can often change and it impacts others.

April: The cabinet meets to review all projections and to make any adjustments.

April 19: Pastors and churches may publicly communicate new appointments unless otherwise directed by the District Superintendent.

April-June: The cabinet will continue to work on filling part-time appointments and other situations that might arise as pastoral introductions are made.

Please remember that appointments are not final until they are set at Annual Conference.

For a full timeline regarding announcements and move dates for 2026, [click here](#):

With Peace and Grace,



David W. Graves
Resident Bishop
Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference