

PO Box 305  
Washington Grove, MD 20880  
November 11, 2024

Dear Mayor Compton and Members of the Washington Grove Town Council,

I write today to comment on item 6 on the agenda for tonight's meeting of the Town Council. I have three comments with respect to this item, ["A Resolution Acknowledging Methodism's Racially Exclusionary Past and Committing to an Equitable and Inclusive Future"](#).

First, I am not clear why this item is even on the agenda. This is the resolution of two private organizations — the Emory Grove UMC and the Washington Grove UMC — unrelated to the Town's government. There is no reason for the Council to discuss it, much less recognize it.

Second, why is the Council discussing this item NOW, if, as tonight's agenda states, it was "received from the Emory Grove United Methodist Church on August 13, 2023"? That date is over a year ago, and the Council has chosen to put it on *tonight's* agenda? And why does this notation on the agenda not mention that it was also received from the Washington Grove UMC, when that church co-authored the document?

Last, I am dumbfounded at what seems to be utter hypocrisy on the part of the unnamed authors of this resolution (I assume the authors include members of both churches). The document acknowledges the pro-slavery, anti-abolition stance of John Emory, for whom both the Emory Grove community and the Emory Grove church are named. (Keep in mind that among Methodist bishops at the time, Emory was an outlier; most bishops supported the abolition of slavery.) And yet, despite at least some members of both churches supporting a past proposal among Town residents to rename McCathran Hall, the churches are evidently unwilling to put effort into renaming the Emory Grove community or church; any such effort is not mentioned in the document.

The document thankfully includes a resolution to "work together towards the re-establishment of authentic [whatever that means] relationships with our neighbors from other communities, and prayerfully consider how our ministries will impact them". That work starts at home; both the Emory Grove UMC and the Emory Grove community as a whole should have been renamed before the neighboring community of Washington Grove was asked to take a similar step.

Sincerely,

Christine Dibble