

# Former Methodist leader, facing charges of sexual misconduct and abuse, no longer ordained

News in the [July 29, 2020](#) issue



(RNS)

Donald Heckman, who goes by Bud, withdrew from West Ohio Conference membership June 10 under complaint, the conference announced. That means he surrendered his credentials as an ordained elder.

This development comes nearly six months after Heckman and conference leadership reached a resolution of an earlier complaint of sexual harassment, misconduct, and abuse brought by four women. Neither the women nor their two advocates were involved in the settlement, which avoided a church trial.

The *Century* reported in its January 29 issue that, following this resolution, Heckman was allowed to retain his clergy credentials, although he agreed to retire “under complaint” and to no longer perform ministerial activities in the name of the United Methodist Church. At the time, the women who accused Heckman of abuse expressed their dismay that he was still clergy and that they had been excluded from the resolution process.

This was the first public sexual abuse complaint in the UMC since the repopularization of the #MeToo movement in 2017. —United Methodist News Service, *Christian Century* staff