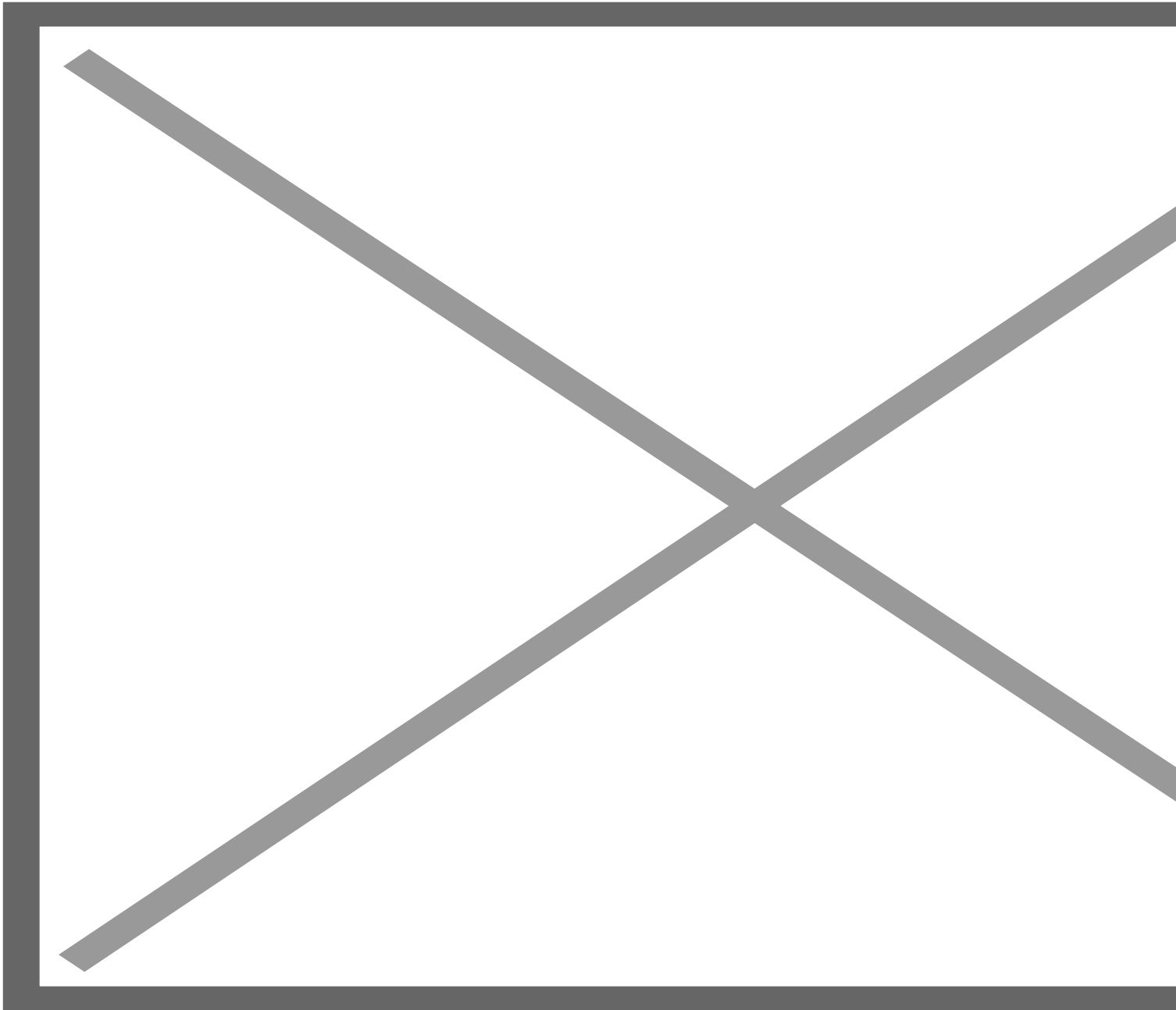


Probe ends of UMC pastor who worked for Epstein

by [Heather Hahn](#)

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Little Saint James Island in 2013, when it was owned by Jeffrey Epstein. Stephanie Remington, a United Methodist Elder, worked as Epstein's property manager on the island in 2019. (Photo by Navin75 via Creative Commons)

An ordained United Methodist elder who briefly worked for Jeffrey Epstein is no longer under suspension but will not be able to serve as pastor of a UMC congregation for the time being.

Stephanie Remington is not accused of any crime. She faced a complaint under church law that she had not kept the Missouri Conference—her home conference—adequately informed of where she was serving, including when she worked for the convicted sex offender.

The Missouri Conference announced the conclusion of the complaint process [in an update late July 9](#). According to the update, Robert Farr, the conference's bishop, determined that “under the current provisions of The Book of Discipline and based on the available information, the matter would not proceed to disciplinary action.

As things stand, Remington retains her clergy credentials but can only be appointed to a United Methodist church again after following another process and receiving approval under church law.

“This is not a punitive block but an approved exit with good standing following findings of no misconduct and no evidence linking me to Mr. Epstein’s criminal conduct,” Remington said.

At her request and with the conference's approval, Remington is on what church law calls “honorable location.” That means she is no longer part of the United Methodist itinerant appointment system, where the bishop appoints her to a ministry setting each year.

While she keeps “the Rev.” title, she also is no longer a member of the Missouri Conference—meaning she loses guaranteed appointment, voting privileges, and eligibility to be elected as a clergy delegate to jurisdictional or general conference.

Farr suspended Remington and launched an investigation in March [after learning that she had worked for Epstein](#) without first informing the conference.

“This matter raised serious concerns about judgment and public witness,” Farr said in the July 9 announcement. Farr is also board president of United Methodist Communications, which includes United Methodist News.

“Clergy are entrusted with a visible and accountable ministry, and employment with a company connected to Jeffrey Epstein is deeply troubling given what is now known about the scope of his crimes and the harm done to his victims.”

Remington first worked for Epstein as an administrative assistant from August to December 2018 and then as a temporary property manager of his private island from January until May 2019.

That was when he was already a convicted sex offender, but before his second arrest in July 2019 on charges of sex trafficking minors. In August of that year, Epstein was found dead in his jail cell in what authorities ruled a suicide.

In March, Remington said in an interview that she never saw Epstein or anyone else on the island abuse anyone. During her time working with him, many of the island’s facilities were closed for repairs after damage by Hurricane Irma in 2017.

[In the Epstein files released by the US Department of Justice](#), her name appears in more than 1,800 records. Many of her emails deal with the day-to-day running of facilities on the island, including travel arrangements for guests and the kitchen renovations she was overseeing.

“I never saw anything,” Remington said in March. “I knew him for the last nine months of his life, well after he served time for the things that he was accused of doing.”

Still, she acknowledged that she knew Epstein was a registered sex offender when she accepted a job in his employ. At the time, [Epstein had already completed an 18-month sentence](#) after pleading guilty a decade earlier to one count of soliciting prostitution and one count of soliciting prostitution from someone under the age of 18.

In [a July 2025 memo](#), the Department of Justice said it has identified more than 1,000 victims of Epstein's sex trafficking.

Remington said she did not know about these crimes.

Before coming to the US Virgin Islands, Remington had previously served as a pastor at a series of United Methodist churches in Missouri for more than 15 years. She took leave in 2016 from pastoral ministry after she and her husband, a fellow United Methodist pastor, divorced.

In 2017 and 2018, during part of the time she lived in the US Virgin Islands, she worked remotely as a research manager for the Lewis Center for Church Leadership—part of United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. In subsequent years, she continued to do some contract work with the center.

But she explained that her work with the center was a part-time position, which is why she needed to apply for another job on the Virgin Islands. She left her job with Epstein, months before his second arrest, to care for her father after he had received a cancer diagnosis.

The Book of Discipline, the UMC's policy book, details the rules guiding ministry beyond church walls—what the denomination calls extension ministries.

Under the UMC's connectional system, conference leaders and clergy in extension ministries are supposed to stay in regular contact. Clergy, no matter where they are serving, are supposed to file reports at least annually about their activities.

That did not happen in Remington's case. She said in March that for years, she did not file any reports, and conference leaders did no follow-up.

Remington said she did file a report in 2025 and later told her district superintendent through Zoom about her time in the Virgin Islands, including her work with Epstein. But she said she was unsure if the district superintendent fully understood her mention of Epstein.

"Bottom line is that I did not misrepresent nor did I fail to disclose all the facts about my vocational and nonvocational work," she said on June 10.

In its announcement, the conference acknowledged that it needs to improve its supervision of clergy in extension-ministry appointments.

The conference said it is reviewing its internal procedures to ensure clearer expectations and accountability, including for bivocational clergy who hold jobs in both church and secular settings as Remington did.

"The Missouri Conference recognizes the seriousness of the concerns raised and the pain associated with the exploitation and abuse connected to Epstein's criminal conduct," the conference said in its announcement.

"Nothing in this decision should be understood as minimizing that harm or weakening the Church's commitment to the protection of vulnerable persons." —United Methodist News