

*(Stover, continued)*

Waiting does not mean “doing nothing.” There is much we can do as we wait.

**Pray** --- Prayer attunes us to the Lord’s timing and purpose, and prepares us to act in harmony with the Spirit.

**Stay informed** --- Read the Protocol. The Confessing Movement supplies articles and materials through *We Confess and Pulse*. The websites of the Wesleyan Covenant Association, the Global Methodist Church, Good News, IRD, and Chris Ritter’s “peopleneedjesus.net” are filled with information to keep you up to date.

**Connect with your annual conference renewal group.**

**Do all you can to share information with your church and its members.** Encourage your local congregation’s leadership to openly discuss the challenges in the UMC, the alternatives and decisions your congregation will need to make.

**Encourage your bishop and district superintendent to give permission to pastors to discuss these matters with the congregation.** Encourage open forums where various people and groups can ask questions and express differing opinions.

**Act and respond with mature Christian love.** Personal attacks and name calling are not helpful. Even if we cannot remain one denomination, we can act with what Wesley called, “catholic spirit.”

**Keep your eye on the prize.** The prize is not separation. Decisions born of anger or frustration often miss God’s purposes. The Protocol is desirable as a gracious step toward the real prize. We pray and long for a Methodism grounded in Scripture, in step with the faith once delivered to the saints, filled with a passion to spread scriptural holiness across the globe. That prize is worthy of waiting a little longer.



# Pulse

## *Confessing Jesus Christ as Son, Savior and Lord!*

A Memorial Tribute

**Dr. William J. Abraham**

1947 --- 2021

**He Confessed Jesus Christ:  
God’s Son, Savior, Lord!**

The news of the sudden death of Dr. William J. “Billy” Abraham on October 8, 2021, stunned and saddened the leaders and members of the Confessing Movement. We are not alone. The tributes



and reminisces of many around the world reveal the magnitude of his impact on students, colleagues, and friends, as well as the church in the United States and around the world. Our hearts and prayers are with his family in their time of loss.

Dr. Abraham was an enthusiastic disciple of Jesus Christ, a lover of the United Methodist Church, and defender of classical Christian doctrine. He brought his towering intellect to the academy, providing a rich and

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prodigious body of academic and popular writing. As a warm-hearted evangelist, he preached around the globe, and labored to start new churches, always with the longing to make the redeeming power of Jesus known.

The Confessing Movement owes Dr. Abraham a debt of gratitude. In 1994, he joined other clergy and laity to ardently support the birth of the Confessing Movement. He served on the Board of Directors and, for over twenty-five years, gave wise spiritual and strategic counsel to Confessing Movement leadership.

At the first national gathering of the Confessing Movement in 1995, Dr. Abraham delivered a powerful keynote address entitled, *Doctrinal Confession and the Renewal of the Church*. He offered a cogent rationale for the Confessing Movement. He defined the doctrinal drift within the UMC and its detrimental impact. He raised a clarion call for the UMC to re-engage its own historic doctrinal standards. And, with his customary clarity of thought, he set out practical steps toward fulfilling the mission of the Confessing Movement. Dr. Abraham stated, ***“The aim is to confess the faith clearly and boldly at a time when it has been called into question; the aim is to work for reform in our doctrinal self-understanding at a time when there is much confusion about United Methodist doctrinal identity; the aim is to pursue doctrinal renewal of the church at a time when much of the internal life of***

***the church has been secularized.”*** Those words spoken over twenty-five years ago still speak with powerful relevance today. He closed that address with these dramatic sentences:

***Our concern is with doctrine. Without adequate attention to this crucial dimension of our life together we will become antinomians, Pharisees, and intellectual anarchist. Worse still we will become emotionalist, frenetic activists, and even apostates from the faith once delivered to the saints. With proper attention to doctrine we will continue to be part of that great succession of evangelists, saints, and martyrs who, in the church catholic across the ages, have borne a faithful testimony to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.***

Billy Abraham confessed Jesus Christ as God’s Son, Savior, and Lord! His death leaves a great void for us. Yet, we rejoice that now he praises God with saints above. So, with the church we sing ---

***For all the saints, who from their labors rest,  
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy name O Jesus, be forever blest,  
Alleluia, Alleluia.***

A full obituary for Dr. Abraham including and extensive list of his teaching and writings can be found at: <https://www.ariacremation.com/obituary/23980>.

## Waiting ... Waiting...Waiting...

By Rev. Gregory D. Stover

Waiting can be hard, frustrating and disappointing. These words reflect emotions many United Methodist feel as we await the passing of the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*, and the birth of the anticipated *Global Methodist Church*. As much as we might like to ignore the reality, Biblical and spiritual history shows that often God’s greatest movements come only after a long wait.

The Hebrews groaned in slavery for nearly four hundred years and wandered in the wilderness forty more before God led them to the Promised Land. Isaiah prophesied, “Unto us a child is born, a son is given... (Isaiah 9).” Yet, Jesus was not born in Bethlehem until about seven hundred years later. The New Testament writings took about seventy-five years after Jesus’ resurrection to complete. More than two hundred years then passed before the church came to a consensus that these twenty-seven books would form the authoritative canon (rule of faith) we call the New Testament.

Waiting calls for patience, faithk and perseverance. God does not waste this waiting. As we wait, the Holy Spirit builds character, deepens hope, and strengthens faith. While waiting, the vision and preparation for the Global Methodist Church has developed and matured.

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