

WE CONFESS

Newsletter of the Confessing Movement within the United Methodist Church

SPRING 2022



TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL GOVERNING AUTHORITY DURING THE INTERIM

BY PATRICIA MILLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“For approximately 12 to 18 months, the Global Methodist Church will be a church in transition as it prepares for its convening General Conference. During the transitional period, the Global Methodist Church will operate under the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline.” — globalmethodist.org

During the interim, the 16-member Transitional Leadership Council (TLC), of which I am a member along with CM Board Member Steve Taylor, bishops, clergy, and laity representing the Central Conferences as well as the US, will be overseeing this transition, including but not limited to:

- Receiving of annual conferences, central conferences, local congregations, and clergy
- The transfer of Bishops into the GMC
- Forming episcopal areas and assigning interim bishops to each area
- Delegate selection methodology for the General Conference of the GMC
- Organization and preparation for the convening General Conference

These and many more responsibilities are listed in ¶703 of the Transitional Discipline, which has been in development since 2019. With hopes of the Protocol passing in 2020, it was important to be prepared with a new denomination for exiting churches.

The postponement of GC 2022 has been the last straw for some churches and several have already disaffiliated or are planning to soon. Others can do the same per ¶ 2553. Disaffiliation of a Local Church over Issues Related to Human Sexuality (effective at the close of the 2019 GC). The exact steps vary by conference, but the process can be started by contacting the Conference Superintendent or District Superintendent. We expect some to join right away while others will need more time in prayer and discernment to make their decisions. There will be a financial cost to disaffiliation that might be prohibitive for many churches.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 >>

IN THIS ISSUE

Transitional Leadership Council
Governing Authority During the
Interim

Revs. Taylor & Stover, two Key
CM Leaders, Witness to the
Importance of the CM and its
Continuing in the UMC

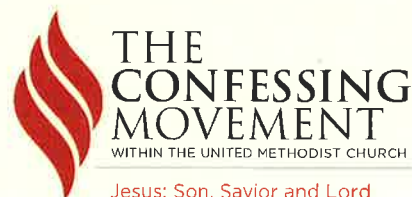
The Council of Bishops on
Paragraph 2553

A Word from John Ed Mathison
Beliefs Matter Podcast

To learn more about The
Confessing Movement follow
us on Facebook or visit our
website at confessingumc.org



GLOBAL
METHODIST CHURCH



REVS. TAYLOR & STOVER, TWO KEY CM LEADERS, WITNESS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CM AND ITS CONTINUING IN THE UMC

REV. STEVEN TAYLOR: To Carry Us Safely Home . . .

One of my favorite contemporary Christian worship songs is My Lighthouse by Rend Collective. When my wife, Stacy, and I travel near any coastline, we love to seek out lighthouses. Not only are they located in beautiful places, but they are highly functional and extremely helpful to save the lives of those who find themselves in a thick fog or battering storm that has no end in sight (literally). The lighthouse carries the weary traveler to safety at their destination. The chorus to the Rend Collective song goes like this:

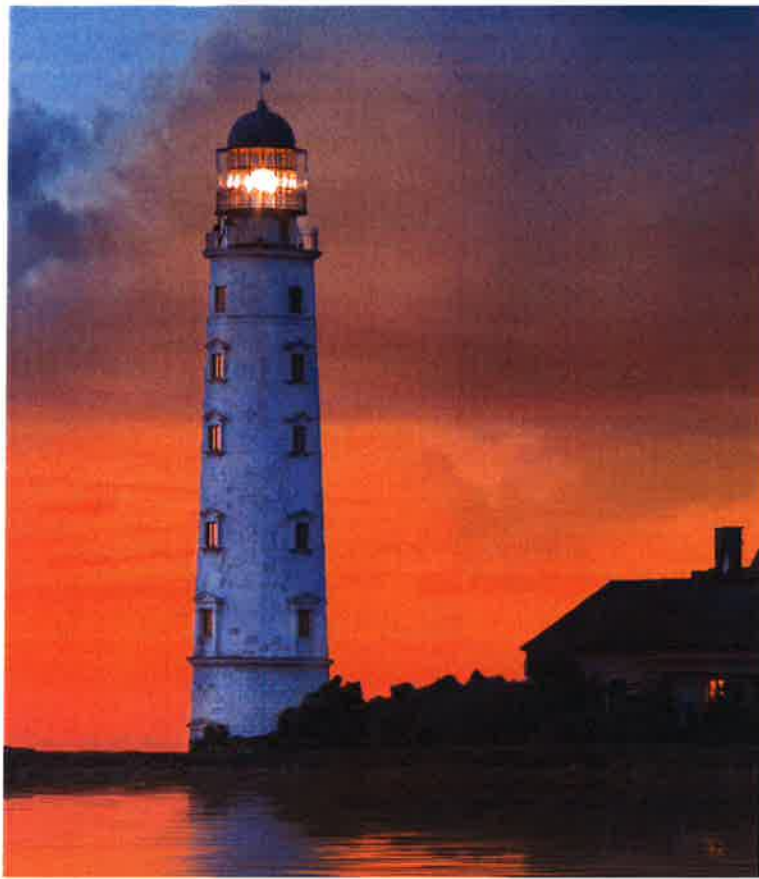
My lighthouse, my lighthouse
Shining in the darkness. I will follow You
My lighthouse, my lighthouse
I will trust the promise
You will carry me safe to shore . . .

That song, of course, is talking about Jesus, The Lighthouse in our lives. It's talking about the Word of God and the truth of Scripture, leading us to God's will as we live in God's Kingdom. Our Lighthouse is there, shining in the darkness and fog of life.

Recently, the United Methodist Church Commission on General Conference made the decision to cancel the postponed General Conference (a third time) and instead hold the next General Conference in 2024. In response to that decision, the Transitional Leadership Council of the Global Methodist Church in formation made the announcement that they will officially launch the GM Church on May 1, 2022.

While that comes to us with some joy and relief to be finally making new pathways to a new expression of Methodism, for many, that creates a fog on the water and a storm at the bow. Because the GM Church could not launch officially through the provisions of the Protocol for Grace and Reconciliation through Separation at this year's planned General Conference, the waters forward have become a little more uncertain. For some, the disaffiliation process and price will be navigable and churches and clergy will begin to move to the GM Church starting in May. For others, however, they will need a lighthouse to vigilantly stand alongside and guide them safely to their destination. The Confessing Movement will continue to be that light in the foggy mess of the UMC.

Confessing faith in Jesus Christ as Son, Savior, and Lord, the Confessing Movement exists to help retrieve and celebrate the Church's classic biblical and doctrinal identity and to live it out together as followers of Jesus Christ. In this season, that means that the Confessing Movement will continue in the uncertainty of the transitional season to resource churches



REV. GREG D. STOVER:

The Confessing Movement Will Be There

The announcement of the May 1, 2022, launch of the Global Methodist Church (GMC) has released a wave of activity across the United Methodist world. We have come to the eve of the separation in the UMC longed for and celebrated by some, yet grieved and resisted by others. The time of decision has arrived. Every UM congregation, member, and pastor will decide what they will do. Some have already intentionally determined to remain in the UMC. Others will do so in the coming months. Still others will simply not address the separation. Not to decide is to choose to remain in the UMC.

Then, there are those who, in the days ahead, after prayer and conversation, will determine to separate from the UMC. Some have already made their decisions. In recent months, well over one hundred congregations have exited to join other denominations, or to become independent. Earlier this year 4000-member Frazer Memorial Church in Montgomery, Alabama exited to the Free Methodist Church. Asbury UMC, the largest congregation in the Oklahoma Annual Conference, recently announced their intention to exit the UMC, and will consider joining the GMC after their exit. Meanwhile, information sessions are being held for congregations and annual conferences across the church. Hundreds of congregations, members, and pastors already are moving forward with their decision-making.

What About Those Who Cannot Leave?

Unfortunately, some congregations where a majority of members desire to separate and join the GMC will find themselves unable to do so. They will fall short of the two-thirds majority vote at a church conference required by the Discipline, or will find themselves unable to meet the very significant financial requirements set by the Discipline or their annual conference. Other pastors and lay persons, preferring their congregation move to the GMC, will remain in the UMC out of their love for their congregation which is remaining, or because they perceive that God is leading them to remain within the UMC for other reasons.

The Confessing Movement believes that as separation plays out, the UMC will move even more strongly in a progressive direction. We expect the UMC to open their doors to complete acceptance of LGBTQAI+ persons, including ordination, and formal acceptance of same-sex marriages. Like promises made in other mainline denominations which have moved to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>



and clergy around the world, gather and encourage those who continue to celebrate the doctrine and Biblical authority on which the church was built, and walk alongside UM churches and pastors who will one day join the Global Methodist Church.

We fully support all those who will decide now to leave the UMC to join with the GM Church. We have been working for years to see this day realized. In this season of change, the Confessing Movement will not only stay vigilant on the shore to see you to that destination, but will also continue to pray and work on behalf of those who will make that decision in the future. In addition, we will continue, in this season, to walk with churches that will remain in the UMC to work for change. We invite all those who are safely home in the GM Church, those who are making that transition for a season, and those who remain in the UMC who seek the same mission as the Confessing Movement, to partner with us until everyone is safely to shore. To find out more, contact us through our website: www.confessingumc.org, through our Beliefs Matter podcast on Podbean, our newsletters, and on Social Media.

The Confessing Movement stands with Jesus on the shore to shine His light to the world, so that His truth and grace, in full measure, will be experienced in this world. Join us!



Council of Bishops

The United Methodist Church



The Council of Bishops has announced that their preferred Disciplinary avenue for disaffiliation is Paragraph 2553 which requires congregations pay their fair share of their annual conference's unfunded pension liability, as well as be current on their apportionments, as well as pay an additional 12 months of apportionments before exit. The unfunded pension liability is calculated on commercial terms at market rates (a figure higher than may be required to secure the pension program, depending on future markets and investment gains). In addition, some annual conferences are imposing additional requirements (e.g. additional apportionment payments and a portion of the value of the church's property and assets). Some bishops and annual conferences are permitting congregations to exit under Paragraph 2548.2, and negotiating lesser apportionment requirements, as well as more flexible means of meeting the obligation to support the unfunded pension liabilities.

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

full inclusion of LGBTQAI+ persons, numerous leaders in the UMC have suggested that no congregation or pastor will need to violate their conscience on matters of human sexuality. Yet, as time has passed, more conservative pastors and congregations in those denominations have experienced increasing intolerance toward their more traditional understandings. The envisioned post-separation UMC will function as a "big tent," with an acceptance of an ever widening variety of theological understandings, some of them distant from the mainstream of historic Christian faith described in the Scripture and given through the apostles.

If these potentialities become realities as anticipated, life in the post-separation UMC will become more frustrating and uncomfortable for traditional Christians who remain. Therefore, the Confessing Movement intends to remain actively in ministry in the UMC throughout a time of transition. The Confessing Movement will:

- Encourage traditionalist pastors and congregations in confessing Jesus Christ as God's Son, Savior, and Lord.
- Support those facing discrimination or persecution because of their traditional doctrine and theology.
- Counsel and assist congregations and pastors who later desire to exit to the GMC; and
- Advocate at the 2024 General Conference for legislation which will provide amicable, just, reasonable, and accessible avenues to those desiring to exit the UMC, as well as policies that align with Biblical values and the faith once delivered to the saints.

As with those who desire to remain in the UMC, those who intend to separate grieve the division before us. Many of us have spent our lives loving, praying for, and serving in the UMC and its predecessor denominations. We have been baptized there, found Jesus as Savior and Lord there, and grown in faith and discipleship in relationship with others in UMC congregations. We pray that an amicable, just, reasonable, and accessible separation will be possible. Our deeply held convictions on all sides have brought us to the place we are no longer better together. We pray that although our minds and convictions are unreconciled, we can go our ways with hearts that are reconciled, blessing one another, and praying for Christ to be honored as we each pursue the mission given us. ■



DEAR FRIENDS,

Maybe you saw recently the picture of a Canadian woman who was driving on a frozen river. Her car broke through the ice and was sinking. This lady stunned everybody by standing on top of the car and taking selfies as it was sinking.

People nearby were trying to help with ropes and kayaks. She continued to take selfies.

When I read about that incident my thoughts immediately went to my beloved United Methodist Church. It used to be a vehicle that carried people to important destinations, especially the final destination to live with God forever.

In recent, years things have frozen over. The vehicle is sinking. I have heard some bishops use the word "implode" to describe what is happening to the church.

The Confessing Movement has been one of the principal groups to help keep the vehicle of the church on the right road. But leaders have led the church to roads that are treacherous. We have a choice. We can take selfies, or we can reach out with ropes and try to help people get to safety.

I believe that every United Methodist church should be given

the choice to remain in the United Methodist Church or disaffiliate and join the Global Methodist Church or a like-minded denomination in the Wesleyan tradition. The Confessing Movement is committed to helping every church get to where God wants it to be.

Please join us with a financial contribution to help make that happen. **Your gift is greatly needed!** We are at a critical time. **The ice is breaking, and the car is slowly submerging.** Will you help?

Paul wrote, "In my opinion whatever we may have to go through now is less than nothing compared with the magnificent future God has planned for us. The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own." (Romans 8:18, 19 Phillips)

Doing nothing is not an option. Helping Methodists see the



John Ed Mathison

magnificent future that God has for His people is a great opportunity!

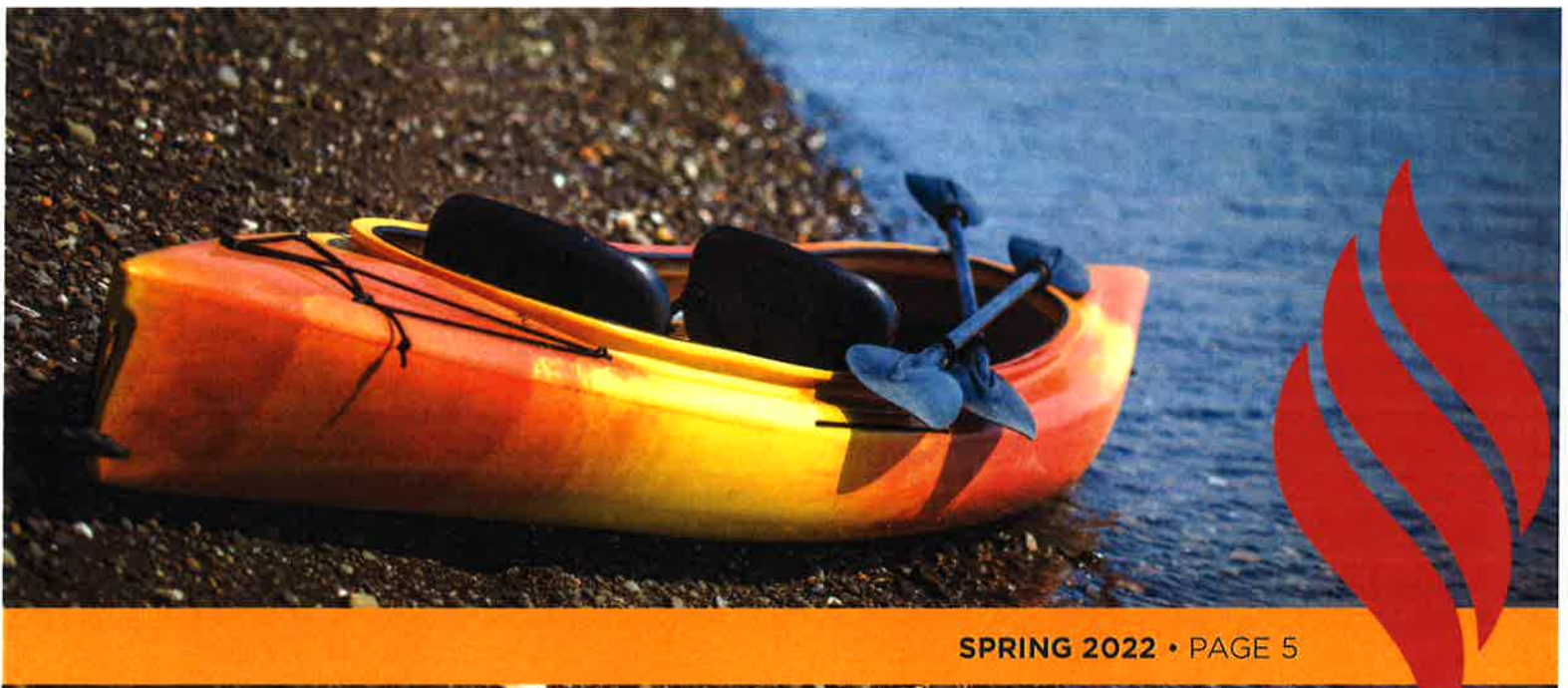
Please give today. Please encourage your church and Sunday school group and small groups and friends to contribute. The time is urgent.

It's easy to take a selfie and sit on the sidelines. Please join us in putting out the kayaks and ropes!

Thanks for your response. ■

DONATE TODAY

1. Online at www.confessingumc.org
2. Make checks payable to:
The Confessing Movement
7995 East 21st Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46219
3. Call the office to make a credit card donation by phone at 317.356.9729.





BELIEFS MATTER

BY REV. GREGORY D. STOVER

Decades ago, Dr. Jerry Mercer taught philosophy at Asbury Theological Seminary. During one lecture, he traced the origins of communism backwards from Vladimir Lenin through Karl Marx, and then further to George Hegel, a German philosopher of the early nineteenth century. Hegel espoused the idea that contradiction is at the center of everything. Truth is found in the “dialectic” (dialogue) between contradictory ideas and the resulting synthesis of new ideas that emerge. Marx wedded Hegel’s “dialectic” with the idea of

materialism, the belief that only the material is real: “dialectic materialism. They also applied this concept to economics, particularly the struggle of laborers against the capitalist ruling class. They concluded that government ownership and

control over all goods and services — we call it communism — would lead to justice for all. Lenin, an activist and politician embracing similar beliefs led the successful Bolshevik revolution in 1917. The first communist government resulted. Our world is still experiencing the oppression and repression that accompanies communism. Dr. Mercer emphasized his point:

Ideas make a difference!
Beliefs Matter!

As Christians, in the tradition of John and Charles Wesley, those of us in the Confessing Movement understand that ideas and convictions make a difference. **Beliefs Matter!** For this reason the Confessing Movement has launched a new podcast named “**Beliefs Matter: What Wesleyan Christians Need to Know.**” (More on that in a moment!)

Think about one of our core beliefs in the Confessing Movement: *Jesus Christ is God’s Son, Savior, and Lord.*

We confess that Jesus is God’s Son!

Jesus is “true God from true God;” fully divine, yet fully human. He “did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself ... being born in human likeness and being found in human form.” We can never be satisfied with pale and inadequate descriptions of Jesus as “a good teacher,” “a good man,” “a prophet,” or even “supreme example.” Beliefs matter!

We confess that Jesus is Savior!

“He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even on a cross.” Jesus’ sacrificial death in our place, and this only, brings us forgiveness and reconciles us to God. We can never be satisfied by self- help programs, therapeutic moral deism, or believing we can somehow “earn our salvation by our own good works.” Beliefs matter!



>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Aligning with the GMC will be much more straightforward. Detailed information can be found on the GMC website. The May 1, 2022, launch is not a deadline but a starting point. I recommend churches not hire an expensive attorney until they have used the process available to them. It is also important that clergy NOT surrender their UMC credentials until they are received into the new GMC or into another denomination. This avoids the need to go through the ordination process from the beginning.

It is important to note that while the TLC will make all the decisions during the transition, the General Conference of the GMC, once legally formed, can adopt or amend the work done by the council or adopt something else. ■

We confess that Jesus is Lord!

Because he humbled himself in obedience to the Father; because he gave all to seek and save the lost “God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” Our belief means that “neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Beliefs matter!

That’s why at the beginning of 2022, the Confessing Movement launched the **Beliefs Matter Podcast**. Moderated by Dr. Maxie Dunnam, **Beliefs Matter** explores a variety of biblical, theological, and practical spiritual topics. Already available online are:

- *Why Beliefs Matter* (David Watson & Bill Arnold)
- *World Evangelism* (Kim Reisman & Jack Jackson)
- *Church Multiplication* (Rurel Ausley & Steve Cordle)
- *Prayer Matters* (Maxie Dunnam)
- *Wesleyan Distinctives Part 1 & 2* (Andrew Thompson & Kevin Watson)
- *Why Scripture Matters* (Greg Stover & Stephen Taylor)
- *Women in Ministry* (Leah Hidde-Gregory & Jessica LaGrone)

Join us to grow in understanding the power and relevance of our Wesleyan beliefs. A new podcast is released every other Friday and can be found on our website at www.confessingumc.org and other podcast platforms. ■





Jesus: Son, Savior and Lord

7995 East 21st Street
Indianapolis, IN 46219

(317) 356-9729
confessingumc.org

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Confessing Jesus Christ as Son, Savior, and Lord. The Confessing Movement exists to enable The United Methodist Church to retrieve its classical doctrinal identity, and to live it out as disciples of Jesus Christ.



OFFICERS

President
Maxie Dunnam

1st Vice President
Joy Moore

2nd Vice President
Steve Taylor

Secretary
Greg McGarvey

Asst. Secretary
David Jenkins

Treasurer
Joe Kilpatrick

**Editor-in-Chief,
We Confess
& Pulse**
Pat Miller

**Editor,
We Confess**
Riley Case

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Larry Baird	Joy Moore
Larry Bryars	Wade Paschal
David Bush	Matt Pennington
Chris Buskirk	David Player
Russell Cheatham	Kim Reisman
Stan Cosby	Chris Ritter
Sam Daffin	Harley Scalf
Maxie Dunnam	Donna Schlitt
Judy Graham	Stephen Sparks
David Jenkins	Gregory Stover
Richard Jones	Jeff Switzer
Joe Kilpatrick	Stephen Taylor
Charles Kyker	Phil Thrailkill
John Ed Mathison	Steve Wood
Gregory McGarvey	Stephen Wende

STAFF

Executive Director
Patricia L. Miller

Associate Director
Riley Case

Secretary
Heather Catlow
Dana Gonzales