

## **A Resolution Endorsing the Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation**

*Whereas* a group of sixteen diverse and leading United Methodists, including eight bishops among whom are the immediate past president, the current president, and the president designate of the Council of Bishops, seven leaders representing centrist, progressive, and traditionalist advocacy groups, and one Filipino clergyperson negotiated and endorsed the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*, a plan calling for the separation of The United Methodist Church that is amicable and orderly;

*Whereas* United Methodist annual conferences around the world voted to ensure the implementing legislation for the *Protocol* was added to the 2020 General Conference agenda;

*Whereas* centrist, progressive, and traditionalist General Conference delegates have endorsed the *Protocol* as a good and peaceful way to resolve a debate that threatens the health and viability of the UM Church at every level;

*Whereas* the increasingly bitter dispute in the UM Church undermines the witness of the UM Church and the church universal in the wider culture;

*And whereas* centrist, progressive, and traditionalist UM Church clergy and laity have all made substantial progress in preparing for the separation of the UM Church;

*Be it resolved* that the Wesleyan Covenant Association's 2021 Global Legislative Assembly adds its endorsement for the adoption of the *Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation*. Furthermore, the assembly encourages the Council of Bishops to call a special General Conference to meet at the earliest possible time to enable adoption of the *Protocol's* implementing legislation permitting The United Methodist Church and the Methodist denominations that will emerge from it to move forward amicably and orderly. If the conference occurs virtually, we urge the Council of Bishops and Commission on General Conference to deploy all means necessary to enable each General Conference delegate to participate in the meeting. Finally, if the General Conference does not happen or otherwise fails to implement the Protocol in 2022, the Assembly encourages the Global Methodist Church to move forward without the *Protocol*, and we urge central and annual conferences to establish their own gracious arrangements for disaffiliation and transfers to new denominations. In any case, we call on UM Church bishops, district superintendents, and others to respect the right of self-determination for conferences, campus ministries, congregations, and clergy around the world. Conferences, campus ministries, congregations, and clergy must be allowed to make their own fair, free, and informed choices of which denomination to continue their ministries within, without facing any bullying, harassment, or mistreatment to punish or manipulate their actual or expected choices.