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## Bishop Nominee

*Keith Cowart*

### *Vision*

Over the past four years, my colleagues Linda Adams, Matt Whitehead and I have devoted ourselves to clarifying what it means to be Free Methodists through The Free Methodist Way. We have also reminded ourselves and every leader at the denominational level that the local church is and always has been the front line of Kingdom work while the role of the denomination is to serve the local church – not the other way around. To that end we have crafted a new vision frame that begins with the following mission statement:

*Igniting a Spirit-fueled movement that catalyzes the multiplication of leaders and churches.*

We believe God wants to make the Free Methodist Church a movement again! Movements are always a work of the Spirit, but there are things we can do to ignite the Spirit's work among us. We have challenged ourselves as leaders to always *Show up Dependent*, recognizing that apart from Jesus we can do nothing; to *Lead with Courage* as we abide in Him; to *Make it Simple* because institutional excess hinders movement; and to *Live it Together* by creating an environment of leadership collaboration and 100% ownership of the mission.

Likewise, we are calling on every congregation to pursue greater Spirit Aliveness (hungering after God's presence in worship, committing to personal and corporate prayer, and expecting to see tangible evidence of the Lord's work), to intentionally develop both an *Evangelistic-Discipleship System* and a *Mentoring Pipeline* for multiplying disciples and leaders, and finally, to prayerfully discern and devote itself to pursuing its Next Breakthrough to greater spiritual health and fruitfulness.

If I am asked to serve another term as bishop, I will devote myself to seeing the values of *The Free Methodist Way* embedded at every level of our denominational culture and to implementing the vision of "Igniting a Spirit-fueled movement that catalyzes the multiplication of leaders and churches." May God give us the grace and faith to make this vision a reality!

### *Experience*

- Bishop, FMCUSA (2019-Present)
- Superintendent, Southeast Region Conference (2019)
- FM World Missions Area Director, Southern Europe (volunteer part-time, 2014-2015)
- Church Planter/Founding Pastor, Christ Community FMC, Columbus, GA (1997-2018)
- Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Missions, St. Mark UMC, Columbus, GA (1992-1996)
- Solo Pastor, Lumber City UMC, Lumber City, GA (1991-1992)

### *Education*

- Doctor of Ministry, Asbury Theological Seminary
- Beeson Pastor Residency, Asbury Theological Seminary
- Master of Divinity, Asbury Theological Seminary
- Bachelor of Business, Georgia Southern University

### *Family*

**Wife:** Pam

**Children:** Andrew, Aaron (Hannah Mae)

**Grandchildren:** Asaph, Akala (Foster), Bethel (Deceased), and Shiloh (arriving early June 2023)