

In Memoriam Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery who supported Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon

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Rev. Dr. Joseph Lowery, a tremendous minister, leader, and co-founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), touched the lives of countless people, leaving behind a legacy of peace and love. Born and raised in Alabama, the United Methodist Church pastor ascended March 27, 2020 at the age of 98. From the pulpit to marching in the streets with Martin Luther King, Jr. as the 'Dean of the Civil Rights Movement,' Dr. Lowery preached for the liberties of all people, including Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founders of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) and affectionately known as True Parents.

"When it came to religious freedom and the rights of all people, Dr. Lowery was a most historic Christian leader," said Dr. Michael Jenkins, national co-chairman emeritus of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). "He lived the principles of freedom and justice that he and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. shared, and he was a fearless defender of what he believed was right before God and humanity."

A gifted orator, Dr. Lowery's steadfast commitment to God inspired the masses. For two decades he led the SCLC as its third president, from 1977 to 1997, after forging a weighty civil rights career throughout the 1950s and 60s where he fought for justice and peace. "When I met him in Atlanta in 1997, I quickly discovered he wasn't only a minister," said Dr. Luonne Rouse, national co-chairman of the ACLC. "He was a man committed to civil rights, economic parity, and the respect of human beings. He had a dynamic heart, good sense of humor, and was a leader who wanted everyone to fulfill and achieve their God-given purpose in life."

Dr. Lowery also staunchly supported True Parents during a time rife with religious persecution in America. "He joined Dr. Jerry Falwell to stand up for the innocence of True Father, and from his courage, another 10,000 clergy rose up with him," said Dr. Jenkins. "With his fervor, the church bodies of America rose up and filed amicus briefs -- legal documents articulating their concerns. This inspired political leaders like Senator Orrin Hatch to hold Senate hearings confirming that True Father was a victim of injustice and religious bigotry."



Revered by many, Dr. Lowery received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1997, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009 by former U.S. President Barack Obama, among other honors. He demonstrated unwavering courage to fight for what was right, and amplified this desire in those he met while encouraging them to walk with God. "When I met Dr. Lowery again in 2007 in New York, I asked him about True Parents," said Dr. Rouse. "Dr. Lowery said to stay true to God and everything would be fine. God is our director and will not lead us to places we shouldn't be. God has guided my conscience and heart, and in my own time I discovered True Parents."

Through the SCLC, Dr. Lowery provided enduring support, advocating for True Parents and the Unificationist movement. "This became the basis of the Christian clergy who stood with True Parents," said Dr. Jenkins. "Dr. Lowery's ministry laid the cornerstone for what would later become the ACLC and the World Clergy Leadership Conference (WCLC)."

"True Mother is deeply grateful for his leadership and support of the freedom of all people," said Regional Chairman of FFWPU-North America Dr. Ki Hoon Kim. "We are so appreciative of Dr. Lowery's leadership in America, overcoming all kinds of religious and racial barriers. And we deeply appreciate his lifelong support of True Parents' great ministry, both here in the United States and around the world. Dr. Lowery's historic voice is forever recorded."

His vast impact on humanity lives on as well.