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**SPST Mission Statement:** *Rooted in the Wesleyan tradition and committed to inspiring passion for ministry in diverse Christian bodies, Saint Paul School of theology educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the church, and transform the world.*

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A). *Wesleyan Tradition and its commitment to Diverse (Cultural) Christian bodies:* The center of my argument deals with the role and function of Abraham as spiritual ancestor of “all” who claim Abraham as a faith ancestor. In this instance, the Wesleyan tradition with its passion on spreading the gospel to all nations would find Abraham to be an appealing faith model to all Christian peoples. Wesleyan spirit is about unifying Christians around the world and this does not take place in a vacuum, but in a context where people can still accept faith within the bounds of their cultural, historical, political, religious and political settings.

B) *Renewing and Transforming the Church* – The spring board for my research is Paul’s letter to the Romans – an epistle that has inspired prophets such as Calvin, Augustine, Luther, and John Wesley the founder of Methodism. At the center of this epistle is the role and function of Abraham as a faith model. In Romans 3: 21 - 4: 1 – 25, we encounter Abraham serving as a model not of the believer’s saving faith but rather of how God brings to pass his promises by founding lineages that incorporate whole peoples into the blessings made possible by the founding ancestors. It is at this point that 21<sup>st</sup> century Church should find a model for real transformation. Especially the Western Church with its belief as the mother Church, there need for ‘First World’ Christianity to realize that other nations have something to bring to the world Christian table. This realization is the birth of true transformation – a transformation born out of mutual discipleship. I have confidence that my research will bring tremendous transformation and an intriguing debate to the world of Christianity.

The construction of ancestors/founding fathers has been in the history of Christianity ever since the time of Paul. What this means is that ethnic groups are compelled to redefine their identities ever time they convert to a religion. In the case of Christianity, Abraham is not only a model of faith but a spiritual ancestor of “all” who have faith in Jesus Christ. Thus, it is the responsibility of seminary professors to equip students with classical knowledge on the making of ancestors, especially during the early years of Christianity. The job of making disciples for Jesus Christ requires clergy to have a firm grasp on what constitutes discipleship. In other words, discipleship is not only right of those in power but a privilege and open door to all cultures of the world. If the Church is to be renewed and transformed the notion of spiritual ancestors, family and identity needs to be an agenda in every facet of seminary learning.

In any case, passion begins with understanding others world views, and listening to other people’s stories, and consequently inspiring each other with our stories. In my research as well as teaching, my goal will be to create a forum where people have opportunity to see in others the common identity of which we are called to embrace when we accept Jesus Christ. Second, my project will permit people to raise cultural, spiritual, political and social questions for purposes of self-evaluation and respect for other cultures who have embraced Christian faith.

Therefore, the goal of my research is to expose readers to the cross-cultural nature of the gospel – the gospel that must be authentically come alive in the language and culture of its audience, while challenging cultures at their deepest religio – cultural level.