

MCC Virtual Forum

11 January 2021

Elder affirmation for

**Rev. Alejandro Escoto, Ms Velma Garcia, Rev. Goudy,
Rev. Karl Hand, Rev. Miller Hoffman, Rev. Carolyn Mobley-Bowie,
Rev. Maxwell Reay, Rev. Troy Treash**



Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston
Moderator
Chair, Governing Board



Rev. Paul Whiting
Chair, Governance Committee
Member, Governing Board



Business Forum Agenda

Co-facilitated by MCC Moderator, Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston
and Rev. Paul Whiting

- 1. Opening Prayer - Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**
- 2. Opening Forum Comments & Review of Process - Rev. Paul Whiting**
- 3. Presentation of the Elder appointees - Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**
- 4. Questions for Elder appointees - Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**
- 5. Voting Process - Rev. Paul Whiting**
- 6. Closing Prayer - Rev. Paul Whiting**



Business Forum

- **This webinar is intended to last for 90 minutes.**
- **It is an opportunity for you to hear from all the Elder appointees and to ask questions in preparation for the Special General Conference on Tuesday 26th January 2021.**
- **As we progress, write your questions in the Question Box on the left side of the screen. We will answer as many as time permits.**
- **Only those who have voice will be allowed to ask a question.**
- **Both webinar sessions on 11th January in English and on 16th January in Spanish and English will be recorded and posted on the MCC Website, MCC YouTube and Vimeo channels.**



The Elder Selection Process

UFMCC bylaws state:

COUNCIL OF ELDERS: The Council of Elders of the UFMCC is that body authorized by the General Conference to serve in a pastoral role and direct the spiritual life of the Fellowship. This Council shall consist of a Moderator and Elders appointed by the Moderator, subject to approval by the Governing Board and affirmation by General Conference. All UFMCC Elders are deemed professional ministers and are authorized to perform all of the Rites and Sacraments of the church.

(UFMCC Bylaws Article V.E.3.a and b) *(excerpt)*



Council of Elders

- **All Elders are volunteers.**
- **Other than the Moderator, a member of the Council of Elders shall not serve simultaneously as a member of the MCC staff or, (according to UFMCC Bylaws), serve on the Governing Board.**
- **The current Council of Elders will complete its term of office on 31st January 2021.**
- **None of the current members of the Council, apart from the Moderator, will serve on the next Council.**
- **The new Council of Elders will begin its term on 1st February 2021 and serve until 31st December 2023.**



The Elder Selection Process

In November 2020, the application process for Elders opened.

As well as the requirements set out in the UFMCC bylaws, the following criteria were also applied:

- **Be loyal to MCC and to MCC's mission, vision and values.**
- **Have demonstrated giftedness in pastoral and spiritual leadership.**
- **Be sensitive to cultural difference.**
- **Be able and willing to embrace racial equity and diversity.**
- **Be MCC clergy or a graduate of the MCC L.E.A.D programme (Leadership Empowered for Active Discipleship) or have similar experience and qualifications.**
- **Possess demonstrable theological depth.**
- **Be committed to global justice.**
- **Model excellence and high standards in ministry.**
- **Be capable in ecumenical and interfaith ministry settings.**
- **Have a reasonable ability to understand and speak English.**



The Elder Selection Process

In the application process, as well as setting out their experience and relevant skills, individuals were invited to share:

- **their theological background.**
- **some of their spiritual practices.**
- **their international experience.**
- **their current efforts to make MCC more racially equitable, diverse and inclusive.**
- **their thoughts on the role of Elder.**

All applicants had to give the names of two people who could provide a reference.

22 applications were received from 5 different countries.

19 applications were from clergy, 3 from laity.

Nine individuals were appointed by the Moderator and were approved by the Governing Board at its meeting on 5th January 2021.

You will meet eight Elder appointees in this forum.



The Elder Selection Process

Elder Applicant - Inclusion & Diversity Monitoring Form

Age Bracket		Primary Racial / Ethnic Identity		Sexual Orientation		Gender Identity	
Under 30	1	African Descent	6	Asexual		Female	5
30-40	2	Asian / Pacific Island		Bisexual/Pansexual	1	FTM	
41-50	2	European Descent	8	Gay	9	Gender Non Conforming	2
51-60	11	First Nations	2	Heterosexual/Straight	1	GenderQueer	5
61-70	5	Hispanic / Latinx	5	Lesbian	5	Intersex	
71+	1	Other	2	Queer	6	Male	9
		Not Answered		Questioning		MTF	
				Other	3	Transgender	3
				Not Answered		Other	2
						Not Answered	

***Some applicants chose more than one option in some categories.**



Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow

Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow, Pastor of MCC Detroit and Co-Chair of the Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation was appointed and approved to serve as an Elder.

However, since entering into the Elder selection process, his circumstances have shifted. He has, with integrity, decided that he cannot take on the additional responsibilities of serving as an Elder at this time.

We thank him for being willing to offer himself in service.



The Elder Selection Process

MCC rightly expects its leadership to reflect our rich diversity and this was an important consideration in the selection process, as well as character, competence and experience.

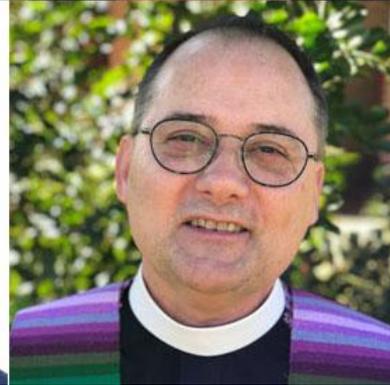
Among those appointed, we have:

- **pastors of different size churches, a lay person and a chaplain.**
- **representation from 4 different countries and five time zones.**
- **those who identify as genderqueer, bisexual, non-binary, lesbian, gay.**
- **Latinx, Native American, African-American.**
- **who are differently abled, are HIV+, have children, are trans and cis gendered.**
- **a range of both age and years of service within MCC.**

The Moderator is committed to working to build leadership capacity, so that in the future, even more diversity is reflected in denominational leadership.



Meet the Elder Appointees



Elder Appointees – Order of Speaking

Rev. Alejandro Escoto

Ms Velma Garcia

Rev. Goudy

Rev. Karl Hand

Rev. Miller Hoffman

Rev. Carolyn Mobley-Bowie

Rev. Maxwell Reay

Rev. Troy Treash



Presentation Format

- **Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston will briefly introduce each Elder appointee.**
- **Moderator will ask a question: “What are your hopes for serving as an Elder in MCC?”**
- **Each Elder Appointee will respond and have 3 minutes to speak.**
- **Questions received in the Question Box on the left side of your screen will be answered as time permits.**
- **Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston will moderate the Question / Answer time.**



Rev. Alejandro Escoto

**Rev. Alejandro Escoto - Associate Pastor,
responsible for Hispanic/Latinx Outreach,
Spanish Speaking Ministry at Founders MCC, Los
Angeles, USA, former HIV/AIDS chaplain.**



“I tune into my healing presence and have learned over the years to simply listen. I rely heavily on the guidance of the Holy Spirit and at times, I can see a little bit farther than what the human eye can see.”

“I have been blessed with the spiritual gift of joy and laughter”



Ms. Velma Garcia

Ms Velma Garcia - Network Facilitator, Laity Empowered for Active Discipleship (L.E.A.D.) faculty member UpRising MCC, Austin, USA.



“When I first came to MCC in 1992, I didn’t see anyone that looked like me participating in the church, including as staff members or worship leaders. That is when and why I decided that it was important for me to get involved with the ministries of the church, so that those who came after me could see me and they would feel welcomed, accepted, and included.”



Rev. Goudy

**Rev. Goudy - Pastor, MCC of Lehigh Valley,
Bethlehem USA and community activist.**



“MCC has a unique approach to spirituality due to being a minority community church. In my mid-20s I attended and experienced God’s salvation through African American churches in both the Catholic and Baptist traditions. In these minority community churches, I learned truths I never would have grasped had I remained in a majority white church.”



Rev. Karl Hand

Rev. Karl Hand - Pastor, Crave MCC, Sydney Australia. Served as a member of the Commission on the MCC Statement of Faith.



“Overwhelmingly, the pastoral concerns they (Chinese students) brought to MCC were related to the loss of family honour entailed in being LGBTQIA. This narrative is nuanced differently from the experiences of white MCCers. I have tried to educate myselfhelping me be a more understanding pastor.”

“Perhaps we need to explore unhooking the idea of ‘inclusion’ from our own agenda of getting certain groups to join us.”



Rev. Miller Hoffman

Rev. Miller Hoffman - Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, USA. Formerly served as MCC pastor and staff clergy.



“Without inclusion, community is a fractal, just a larger-scale reproduction of the self. Inclusion resists sameness and invites (and celebrates) difference.”

“Finding creative solutions to problems or conflicts that bring the most dignity and concord.”



Rev. Carolyn Mobley-Bowie

**Rev. Carolyn Mobley-Bowie - Breath of Life
Spiritual Center MCC, Saginaw USA, Network
co-leader, North Central US Network.**



***“Authentic relationships are mutual, respectful, and more loving,
shifting the universe toward transformation.”***

***“I also have learned it is better to ask honest questions
than to offer false or uncertain answers.”***



Rev. Maxwell Reay

Rev. Maxwell Reay - Pastor, Our Tribe at Augustine United Church, Edinburgh, Scotland, Healthcare chaplain.



“Taking time to listen and share a coffee with someone is just as important as preaching or leading a worship service. Paying attention to the small things is sometimes what saves a life.”



Rev. Troy Treash

Rev. Troy Treash - Senior Pastor, Resurrection MCC, Houston USA and former Director of Reconciling Ministries Network.



“...we switched out “Christian” for “Christ-like” for multiple reasons, but primarily to move from static identity to active service.”

“It is natural to me to listen to and to hear another’s heart, to name differences and to find a mutual path when possible.”



Questions for Elder Appointees

If you still have questions about the Elders, type your questions in the Question Box on the left side of your screen.

If we do not have time to answer them in this forum they will be considered for inclusion in the FAQs posted to www.MCCchurch.org prior to the Special General Conference.



The Role of General Conference

Elders occupy a special and historic place in the hearts of MCCers worldwide and provide spiritual and pastoral leadership to a global MCC.

Because the Elder Appointees will serve on the Council of Elders, which is a discernment body for the Moderator, MCC Bylaws require that the General Conference affirm the decision of the Moderator.

This is not an election; rather, it is an opportunity for clergy and lay delegates to voice their support on behalf of MCCers around the world.



Virtual Voting Process

Register to Vote

- **Eligible Clergy and Lay Delegates must register to vote.**
- **Registration will be open from 11 - 17 January 2021. Late registrations will not be accepted.**
- **Each individual must have a unique email address which is where the ballot will be sent.**
- **Go to the MCC church website for the link to register to vote.**
www.MCCchurch.org
- **An email will also be sent from our communications team with the registration link.**



Virtual Voting Process

Who is Eligible to Vote

The votes for this Special General Conference are votes of affirmation.

Voting for this Special General Conference will be open to all clergy who are eligible and lay delegates, regardless of whether a church is fully in compliance with their assessments or, in the US Board of Pensions payments.

Governing Board policy states that withholding of the vote is a "possible measure" that may be taken and the Governing Board has decided not to act on this measure for this vote of affirmation.

This decision relates only to this Special General Conference.



Virtual Voting Process

Who is Eligible to Vote

COMPOSITION: The General Conference of the UFMCC is that body consisting of a Clergy House and a Lay House.

a. CLERGY HOUSE: Members of the Clergy House are ordained clergy with a License to Practice and honorably retired clergy.

b. LAY HOUSE: Members of the Lay House are Lay Delegates; the Interim Pastoral Leader of each affiliated church when that Interim Pastoral Leader is a member of UFMCC; and the members of the Council of Elders and of the Governing Board who are not clergy or Lay Delegates and are members of UFMCC.



Virtual Voting Process

VOTING IN SEPARATE HOUSES: The transaction of all business except procedural matters must be approved by a separate majority vote of the votes carried by the Lay House and a separate majority vote of the votes carried by the Clergy House.

QUORUM: A quorum shall consist of twenty percent (20%) of the number of lay people eligible to vote at General Conference and twenty percent (20%) of the number of licensed credentialed clergy eligible to vote at General Conference.

UFMCC bylaws Article VIII



Virtual Voting Process

- **Voting will open at 8:00 AM ET on Tuesday, 26 January and will close at 8:00 AM ET on Wednesday, 27 January 2021.**
- **An email will be sent on Friday, 22 January 2021 from MikeHaase@MCCchurch.net with instructions on how to vote.**
- **The email will include a link to access the ballot. You may only access the ballot once. If an attempt is made to access it more than once the ballot will be deemed invalid.**
- **The email will include unique passwords which will validate your eligibility and keep your voting anonymous.**



Virtual Voting Process

- **On the first question of the ballot individuals will indicate whether they are voting with the Lay House or Clergy House. Voting in the wrong house will invalidate the ballot.**
- **Votes will be cast for each Elder Appointee individually. Not as a slate or group.**
- **Once the ballot has been submitted you will not be allowed to redo or re-enter the ballot.**
- **Once voting closes at 8:00 AM ET on Wednesday, 27 January 2021 no more ballots will be accepted.**



Virtual Voting Process

Tabulating the Ballots

- **Tabulation: Simple majority =**
 - **greater than 50% of votes cast of Lay House (PLUS)**
 - **greater than 50% of votes cast of Clergy House**
- **Ballots will be verified and tabulated independently by the appointed Special General Conference Election Judges.**
- **Results will be published on the MCC Website by 1 February 2021.**

If you have any difficulties or questions about the ballot, please contact MikeHaase@MCCchurch.net before voting closes.



Virtual Voting Process

Sample Ballot Question



MCC[®]
METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY CHURCHES

2021 Special General Conference Ballot

* Required

Rev. Alejandro Escoto



A portrait of Rev. Alejandro Escoto, a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a blue jacket over a white shirt, smiling. He is positioned in front of a Christmas tree with lights.

I vote to affirm the appointment of Rev. Alejandro Escoto to the Council of Elders. *

Yes
 No
 Abstain



Virtual Voting Process

Sample Ballot Question



2021 Special General Conference Ballot

* Required

Rev. Carolyn J. Mobley-Bowie



I vote to affirm the appointment of Rev. Carolyn J. Mobley-Bowie to the Council of Elders. *

- Yes
- No
- Abstain



Questions About Virtual Voting

If you still have questions about Virtual Voting, type your questions in the Question Box on the left side of your screen.

If we do not have time to answer them in this forum they will be considered for inclusion in the FAQs posted to www.MCCchurch.org prior to the Special General Conference.



Closing Prayer

Thank you for your participation in the MCC Virtual Forum.

**If you have additional questions, please email:
GoverningBoard@MCCchurch.net**

