

2015-2020 COE End of Term Review

During our 2015-2020 terms, the members of the Council of Elders instituted several initiatives. We implemented the COE's Call to Prayer, inviting MCCers to write a prayer, which the denomination's communications office published in weekly emails. We provided spiritual reflections for the seasons of Advent and Lent, as well as prayers for world events and memorial tributes upon the deaths of important historical or denominational figures. The COE has issued important social justice statements concerning such topics as gun violence, systemic racism, immigration, and international human rights. In addition, the COE will soon be issuing a statement affirming the denomination's spiritual practice of celebrating same gender marriage and advocating for equal application of the rights of marriage, such as protecting the best interests of children through presumed parentage and adoption. The members of the COE also adopted the Point Elder system, in which an Elder was paired with congregations and clergy members, to provide requested pastoral care, spiritual support, perform ceremonial duties, and resource churches and clergy to appropriate denominational staff. As part of our work on Pathways to Healing, representatives of the Council of Elders, the Governing Board and our Moderator met with The Rev. Candy Holmes to begin to address the process of reconciliation. As part of that process, the COE issued an apology to Rev. Holmes, which can be found [here](#). Other projects included hosting "rolling" world-wide worship services and a webinar before the 2019 General Conference to discuss the answers to the question, *"What is the Spirit calling Metropolitan Community Churches to do and be that requires all our churches to work together?"*; proposing a number of amendments to the UFMCC Bylaws such as changing the procedure by which Governing Board membership is made through appointments and the process of recognizing affiliated churches; reviewing the judiciary process; exploring flexibility for pathways to authorized ministries; providing the opening prayer for the Governing Board monthly meetings; hosting a twice monthly live broadcast on spiritual practices called Spiritual Nourishment; as well as providing spiritual support during General Conference, including pastoral care of Moderator and Governing Board candidates.

In Christ,
Rev. Elder Ines-Paul Baumann
Rev. Elder Pat Bumgardner
Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston
Rev. Elder Tony Freeman
Rev. Elder Héctor Gutiérrez
Rev. Elder Dwayne Johnson
Elder Nancy Maxwell