

Moderator's Report April 2021

Submitted to Governing Board Meeting 4th May 2021

The Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation continues its work to make MCC a more racially equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation. I met with one of the members of a similar commission on organisational change around racism from the Unitarian Universalist Association, to learn more about their process for receiving testimonies from individuals who have experienced racism within their organisation. The Commission, which I co-chair with Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow, is working on our process for hearing the stories of those around the world who were impacted by the events at the 2016 General Conference and experiences of racism within MCC. The Commission will be announcing its process in the next couple of months.
<https://www.mccchurch.org/commission-on-pathways-of-healing/>

I am working with the Governing Board and the Senior Leadership Team to see which of the recommendations from MCC diversity and inclusion reports produced in the last 10 years, such as the International Task Force report, the PAD Program Officer end of year summary (People of African Descent) and the Task Force on Race and Gender report, are still relevant and can be acted upon. There is much wisdom in these reports, and it is heartening to see that many of the recommendations have been or are in the process of being fulfilled.

The work to establish an MCC endowment fund took another significant step forward this month. The Governing Board Finance Committee, on which I serve, met with our financial advisors, the Henderson Financial Group, to discuss potential investment opportunities. HFG has found a fund management company which will manage our investment, based on environmental, social and sound governance principles, in line with MCC core values. I am very grateful for the wisdom, experience and faithfulness of the members of this committee, Tammy Erwin and Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos from MCC staff, Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey and Chad Hobbs (MCC Treasurer) from the Governing Board and volunteer members Doug Berger and Rev. Marsha Warren. Their diligence, excellent stewardship and a sense of deep gratitude for God's generosity through the faithful giving of MCC congregations and individuals makes managing the finances of the denomination a real joy.

I chaired the first joint meeting of the Governing Board and the new Council of Elders to discuss the MCC judicial process. This process has been in place since 2012 and was implemented when MCC had a very different structure. It now needs to be brought up to date and both leadership bodies have a part to play in carrying out this review to ensure that MCC has a robust, fair and transparent disciplinary process for ministry leaders, that is responsive to those individuals who have a legitimate concern.

Around the world there are MCCers who support their local church and also make a regular financial contribution to the denomination. These are our "Partners in Hope" and I am so grateful for the faithful, faithfilled generosity that these individuals share. I am working with Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos and Marina Laws to improve our connection and communication with these supporters, so that they can learn more about what a difference their generosity makes around the world.

Other areas of work include:

Connection with MCC churches and Networks

- Participated in General Conference 2022 core team meetings
- Regular meetings with Mike Haase and Rev. Lauren Bennett to discuss General Conference 2022
- Recorded Pentecost sermon to be shared with churches
- Recorded video greetings for church anniversaries and ordinations

- Offered weekly time of prayer and reflection on Facebook Live
- Individual conversations with MCCers around the world

Diversity and Inclusion

- Completed a 4 session anti-racism training programme for white faith/spiritual leaders and arranged follow-up meetings with MCC colleagues who also completed the training
- Reviewed diversity and inclusion reports with Senior Leadership Team to see where staff can take action from the recommendations made in the reports
- Recommendations for action by the Governing Board from these diversity and inclusion reports to come to May Board meeting
- Met with MCC staff to discuss appropriate ways to gather data to learn more about diversity within MCC congregations

Governing Board

- Participated in the Governing Executive Team planning meeting
- Met with Governing Board Governance Committee to discuss the process for recruiting the Governing Board Nominating Committee and other matters related to General Conference
- Participated in meeting with Henderson Financial Group to discuss next steps for development of MCC endowment fund

Staff

- Regular meetings with Rev. Elder Hector Gutierrez and Rev. Dr Kharma Amos as Senior Leadership Team
- Met with staff to discuss situations in different churches
- Led weekly staff briefings and monthly staff meeting

Council of Elders

- Participated in Council of Elders planning team meeting
- Participated in Council of Elders meeting
- Participated in Council of Elders pastoral and spiritual support meeting
- Discussed potential areas of ministry with individual Elders

Commissions

- Participated in Commission on General Conferences meetings
- Co-chaired Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation (CPHR)
- Participated in CPHR sub group to develop personal pathways for healing
- Co-facilitated consultation meeting on proposal for personal pathways for healing
- Met with Prof. Elias Ortega, President Meadville Lombard Theological School, to discuss UUA Commission for Organisational Change methodology for collecting testimonies
- Participated in CPHR sub group to develop process for receiving individual testimonies
- Co-led induction session for recently appointed Commissioners
- Met with Co-chairs of Commission on Rites and Sacraments to discuss potential Commissioners