

## Minutes of Governing Board Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Attendees:** Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, Rev. Elder Diane Fisher, Clare Coughlin, Mark Godette, Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey, Rev. Alberto Najera, Chad Hobbs,

**Apologies:** Rev. Paul Whiting

**Staff:** Marina Laws

**Establish Quorum:** Meeting commenced at 5:02 p.m. US Eastern / 10:02 p.m. UK Time / 4:02 pm US Central

**Opening Prayer:** Rev. Elder Troy Treash

**Brief Check In:** Check in from all present

### **Consent Agenda:**

- Minutes of June Meeting
- Moderator's Report

**Move to accept the minutes of the June meeting and the Moderator's Report.**

**Moved:** Rev. Elder Diane Fisher

**Seconded:** Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey

**Passed**

### **Discussion Agenda:**

#### **New Business:**

##### **Review of last 2 years:**

The Governing Board reviewed the last two years, since General Conference 2019 in Orlando.

- The whole board has worked well together
- Financial stability has been achieved
- Our churches have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic
- Some difficult issues have been addressed, including around racism & equality

##### **Dreams, for the next 12 months:**

- Growth
- Confidence
- More Latino participation, at all levels within MCC
- Financial Growth for programming
- Hope for an increased effort into locating the missing First Nations & Native American women, in the more than 500 residential schools still to be searched. Already 1500+ First Nation & Native American children's bodies have been uncovered at 7 residential schools; this is unconscionable that it took so long to find them, and how the church allowed this to happen & countries turned them away because First Nation People were considered as worthless.
- Dreaming of a time when we value all children, all people; for new visions, new ideas, new creations of faith communities that look vastly different, & more varied, than the historical church

### **COVID-19 Update:**

Various states within the USA are lifting restrictions; churches have managed very well considering the challenges with finances. Restrictions are being lifted in the UK on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021. We continue to hold our churches in prayer around the world.

### **General Conference Update: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**

General Conference Core Team meeting coming up; news will be sent out to our members, with updates about General Conference 2022, as soon as possible.

### **Feedback from Judiciary Joint Mtg: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**

**Rationale:** The MCC judiciary process has previously been overseen by a staff member. As the staff team is now much smaller, there is the potential for a conflict of interest and so the position of Judiciary Process Manager has been created in the updated judiciary process, to have a person outside MCC leadership bodies to receive complaints and Reports of Concern and oversee the process for any judicial matter.

**Motion: Move to appoint Rev. Deana Dudley to the position of Judiciary Process Manager, for 18 months commencing 1st August 2021**

**Moved: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**

**Seconded: Clare Coughlin**

**Passed**

### **Process for Revocation of Clergy License to Practice:**

**Rationale:** It is the responsibility of the Governing Board to establish procedures for discipline of clergy under the UFMCC Bylaws (Article IV D. b).

Under most circumstances, the judiciary process is the most appropriate procedure to follow. Very occasionally, there may be a particular circumstance that requires a different procedure.

The current MCC Policy for Discipline of Ministry Leaders states that:

*Metropolitan Community Churches reserves the right to suspend, terminate or otherwise alter the terms of services provided by any Ministry Leader without following the procedures set forth herein when exigent circumstances exist, mandating action be taken. (Page 1)*

and the UFMCC clergy manual (page 7) states:

*Ordained clergy should be aware that Metropolitan Community Churches, as an entity, has the right to suspend, temporarily or permanently, an ordained person's License to Practice.*

In the case of extreme circumstances, when "exigent circumstances" exist and require swift action to address the situation, the following process may be enacted, at the recommendation of the Vocational Leadership Co-ordinator to the Governing Board.

The clerk of the Governing Board will then inform the Council of Elders.

The clergy person will be informed by the Council of Elders that their license will be suspended, stating the reasons why. A hearing with a panel will be convened by the Vocational Leadership Co-ordinator. This will be made up of a member of the Governing Board who will chair, a member of the Council of Elders and a further independent panelist to be selected by the Vocational Leadership Co-ordinator.

The Vocational Leadership Co-ordinator will set time and date of the hearing and inform the clergyperson of the concerns. They will be able to bring a person to support them, but not speak on their behalf

If the clergyperson is serving in a church, the local church Board will be informed that the clergy license has been suspended and therefore the clergyperson may not minister, attend worship, meetings etc until the outcome of the hearing is known.

The panel's decision to remove the license will have to be unanimous.

If the decision is to remove the license, this will be done with immediate effect and the Church Board will be informed.

The clergyperson will have the opportunity to appeal the decision of the panel to the full Council of Elders, minus the person who sat on the panel. There will be no right to appeal the makeup of the panel.

The clergyperson will not be able to minister in MCC whilst the appeal process is active.

The appeal must be submitted within 5 working days of the decision of the panel being sent to the clergyperson via email.

**Motion: Move to adopt the process for revocation of MCC Clergy License to Practice, with further input from Rev. Deana Dudley**

**Moved: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher**

**Seconded: James Chavis**

**Passed**

**Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**

Work is ongoing on reviewing the Diversity & Inclusion reports.

**Financial Report: Chad Hobbs & Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey**

Chad Hobbs & Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey gave an update of current finances & showed the dashboard for May.

**Move to accept the financial update for May 2021**

**Moved: Rev. Alberto Najera**

**Seconded: Mark Godette**

**Passed**

**Update on Meeting with Henderson Financial Group (Endowment Fund): Chad Hobbs**

Chad Hobbs gave an update on progress with the Henderson Financial Group. The team now has a monthly call with Henderson Financial Group (HFG) on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month; they are a great team to work with & MCC is grateful to be in partnership with them.

Certificates will be sent to everyone who gave to the Still Giving Campaign, to celebrate that they were founding members of the Endowment.

**Accounting Manual Update: Chad Hobbs**

Work is ongoing; target date for end of September 2021 to have that completed; thanks to Rev. Marsha Warren for her hard work on that.

**Partners in Hope: Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston**

Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston gave an update on the Partners in Hope program. Many staff, Council of Elders & Governing Board members are already members of Partners in Hope; it would be wonderful to say that 100% of staff, GB & COE are members.

Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston, Rev. Kharma Amos & Marina Laws now have a monthly meeting to work on developing the program, in many different ways – telephone calls, handwritten notes, certificates and much more. It is important to note that MCC encourages new donors to give to their local church first.

**US Staff Based Health Benefits**

***\*\* Rev. Elder Diane Fisher & Marina Laws left the meeting for the discussion on US Based Staff Health Benefits***

**Motion: Move that MCC pay 60% towards the annual premium increase, for the health insurance for US staff; US based staff would then pay the remaining 40%**

**Moved: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey**

**Seconded: Clare Coughlin**

**Passed**

***\*\* Rev. Elder Diane Fisher & Marina Laws rejoined the meeting after the motion & vote had taken place.***

**Property Update: Mark Godette**

No further update this month

**Governance: Rev. Paul Whiting**

The process for the Governing Board Nominating Committee has started; the Governing Board will receive names in due course

**Church Updates, Closures and Disaffiliations: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher**

- Update from the working group (Rev. Elder Diane Fisher, Rev. Wanda Floyd & Rebecca Wilson): Rev. Elder Diane Fisher is working with staff & a procedure, for closures & disaffiliations, is being written up; this will be brought to the Governing Board for approval in due course

### **HR Manual Update: Mark Godette**

An HR Team meeting was held with TriNet (MCC Payroll Company) as to what they can offer to the staff in terms of support etc. No further update at this time

### **Staffing Update: Rev. Cecilia Eggleston**

No update this month

### **Commissions: The Work of the Commissions is ongoing**

- **Commission on Communication: Rev. Alberto Najera Governing Board Liaison**

A draft Terms of Reference has been submitted for the Governing Board for review.

Rev. Alberto Najera would also like to propose Rev. Paul Mokgethi-Heath to be invited to join the commission

#### **Move acceptance of the Communications Commission Terms of Reference**

**Move: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher**

**Second: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey** **Passed**

#### **Move to appoint Rev. Paul Mokgethi-Heath as a member of the Commission on Communication**

**Move: Rev. Alberto Najera**

**Seconded: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey** **Passed**

- **General Conference Commission: Rev. Paul Whiting in his role as Chair of the Governance Team as Governing Board Liaison.**

No update this month

- **Assessments Commission: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher as Governing Board Liaison**

Rev. Elder Diane Fisher gave an update on a meeting she had recently, around the Theology of Giving & the current processes that MCC has in place; Rev. Elder Diane will bring names for approval, by the Governing Board, to the next meeting.

- **Commission on Rites and Sacraments: Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey as Governing Board Liaison & Rev. Dr. Axel Schwaigert – Commission Co-Chair**

Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey gave an update of names of people who have agreed to serve on the commission; she will bring their names & biographies to the next Governing Board for approval.

- **Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation: Clare Coughlin as Governing Board Liaison.**

Clare Coughlin gave an update on the video that Rev. Elder Cecilia Eggleston and Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow created; people are being encouraged to give their stories & testimonies to listeners, as well as complete the 11 question survey.

● **Work Ahead for the Year:**

- Suggested date for joint meeting with Council of Elders: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 at 5pm US Eastern

**Review of Minutes:**

**Future Agenda Items:**

Report from Judiciary Process Working Group  
General Conference 2022  
Move Commissions further up the agenda for next month  
Fellowship Sunday in October

**Dates of future meetings:**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Labor Day Public Holiday on previous day**

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

**Close in Prayer:** Rev. Marie Alford-Harkey closed the meeting in prayer at 7:23 pm US Eastern - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
/ 12:23am UK time - 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 / 6:23pm US Central – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021