

## **Moderator's Report August 2021**

### **Submitted to Governing Board Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

This month I was invited to an online gathering of People of African Descent – the next generation. I welcomed the opportunity to hear the questions and concerns of individuals, mainly based in the USA, learn more about how racism within MCC impacts and gain further insight about what organisational changes need to be made. I followed up from the meeting to share information on the Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation and its important work to make MCC more racially equitable, diverse and inclusive, as well as reminding people that they can access these Moderator reports and the Governing Board minutes online, to follow what actions are being taken. I look forward to meeting with other groups in the coming months to learn more about the needs and opportunities that there are for MCC to live more fully into its core value of inclusion.

<https://www.mccchurch.org/commission-on-pathways-of-healing/>

MCC has always worked with other churches, locally and at a denominational level, and has sent a delegation to the World Council of Churches Assemblies over the years. The next WCC Assembly will be in Germany in September 2022. This month I met with the WCC Programme Executive for Church Relations, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Simon, to learn more about the WCC and to learn more about what MCC's role might be if we send a delegation to the Assembly. I also had a meeting with Rev. Elder Maxwell Reay, who has close links with the United Reformed Church in the UK and sees possibilities for joint justice work between the two denominations. I will meet the Moderator of the URC in the coming months.

I am now focussing more of my time on General Conference 2022 and I have regular meetings with Rev. Lauren Bennett and Mike Haase, our two General Conference co-ordinators, as well as participating in the GC Core Team meetings, which is where the overall planning for the conference takes place. It is heartening to hear the generally very positive response to our plan for a multi-site hybrid General Conference and online business meeting. Where there are questions or misunderstandings, this is a great opportunity to improve our communications and explain our vision for the conference more clearly.

Our MCC staff are constantly looking for ways to resource and support local church leaders and congregations. A resource pack for Fellowship Sunday in October has been sent out. I prepared and recorded Fellowship Sunday sermon as part of this to be used by local churches, should they wish to. It is a source of joy to me to think that I am being present in so many of our local churches in this way and also providing an opportunity for local church pastors to have a Sunday where they do not have to preach.

Other areas of work include:

#### **Connection with MCC churches and Networks**

- Recorded video greetings for church anniversaries and Network gatherings
- Offered weekly time of prayer and reflection on Facebook Live
- Individual conversations with MCCers around the world
- Providing pastoral support where needed

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

- Participated in coaching circle on anti-racism for white faith leaders, third of 3 sessions

### **Outreach**

- Sent congratulatory email to Rev. Fiona Bennett on her election as Moderator of United Reformed Church in UK

### **Governing Board**

- Participated in Finance Committee meeting with Henderson Financial Group to establish MCC Endowment fund
- Chaired working group of Council of Elders and Governing Board to discuss judiciary policy and procedures
- Met with Rev. Paul Whiting (in person! ) to discuss governance matters, relationships with LGBTQI Christian organisations in Europe and the WCC Assembly in 2022
- Drafted updated sick leave policy – to be approved by Governing Board

### **Staff**

- Regular meetings with Rev. Elder Hector Gutierrez and Rev. Dr Kharma Amos as Senior Leadership Team
- Monthly meeting with Rev. Dr Kharma Amos and Marina Laws to discuss ideas for connecting with our Partners in Hope supporters
- Met with staff to discuss challenging situations in individual churches
- Participated in weekly staff briefings and facilitated monthly staff meeting
- With SLT, led a time of worship and lament with staff, to acknowledge the many challenges that are impacting our ministry at this time

### **Council of Elders**

- Participated in Council of Elders planning team meeting
- Participated in Council of Elders meeting

### **Commissions**

- Co-chaired Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation (CPHR)
- Participated in Commission on General Conferences meetings