

Moderator's Report September 2021

Submitted to Governing Board Meeting 5th October 2021

It is a real joy to work with the Governing Board and the Council of Elders. Everyone who serves on these leadership bodies, apart from me, is a volunteer. As well as serving at a denominational level, individuals serve at a local church level. Many also have paid work outside of MCC. This month I facilitated a joint online retreat, so that Governing Board and Council of Elders could meet, share their faith journeys and spend time together in prayer. We shared our perspectives from our different experiences and named those voices that still need to be heard more at a denominational level, including young people and voices from areas of the world, such as Africa and Asia, who are not currently represented on the Council of Elders and Governing Board. As we seek to raise up present and future leaders for MCC, it is important to make sure these voices are included.

The Senior Leadership Team (Rev. Elder Hector Gutierrez, Rev. Dr Kharma Amos and I) met to complete our review of all the recommendations from the various Diversity and Inclusion reports that MCC has produced in the past 10 years. Our next task is to allocate responsibility for action in the MCC staff team on those many recommendations which are still relevant.

Along with other members of the Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation, I have been reading the written testimonies and transcripts of the individual conversations with listeners of those who have been willing to share their experience of racism and other issues within MCC. I am grateful to all those who have been willing share these difficult and painful experiences with the Commission. We are now drawing out the themes from these experiences, in order to make recommendations for change going forward. There will be a further opportunity for individuals to share in the new year.

MCC as a denomination, and through its local churches, has so much to share. I met with our Communications team to review how best MCC can get its lifechanging message out to the world and also continue to communicate well with our congregations and church leaders. Rev. Colleen Darraugh is responsible for our internal communications. MCC is working with James Hartman & Associates on our externally facing communications, such as press releases, so that, as Moderator, I can publicly comment on issues of justice and concern around the world. I am grateful to Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos and the whole Communications team for all that they do in guiding me in this work.

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

- Attended training webinar on "Integrating Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Into Your Non-profit" with members of the Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation

Outreach

- Had meeting with the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Rev. Susan Frederick-Grey
- Met with Rev. Elder Dr. Nancy Wilson to discuss MCC's experience of working with the World Council of Churches

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
- Drafted updated sick leave policy – 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 regular staff briefings and facilitated monthly staff meeting
- Regular meetings to plan General Conference 2022

Council of Elders

- Participated in Council of Elders planning team meeting
- Participated in Council of Elders meeting
- Facilitated joint working group of Governing and Council of Elders on updating the Judiciary process
- Met with working group to plan online global vigil in late November

Commissions

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