

Moderator's Report April and May 2022

Submitted to Governing Board Meeting 7th June 2022

We are now less than a month from MCC's General Conference Transformational Weekend and six weeks or so until the Business Meeting, so this is where I am focussing most of my attention. I am incredibly grateful for the wisdom, experience and guidance from Mike Haase and Rev. Lauren Bennett, as they guide me through all that needs to be done. Rev. Elder Don Eastman, Rev. Onetta Brookes and Barb Crabtree have also been great sources of knowledge. Tammy Rabon-Noyce has worked tirelessly with me on the Business Pack and Rev. Elder Hector Gutierrez has overseen all the translators, - Léo Rossetti, Rev. Cristiano Valerio, Enrique Zenteno and Fr. Manuel Zamora, as well doing a great deal of the work himself. The Procedures Committee, which I co-chair with Huey Lee, has written an in-depth procedures manual for the Business Meeting. There is a Tech Team, a Worship team and a Programming team all working flat out too, to make this first ever fully online General Conference a great success. Rev. Colleen Darragh is ensuring that all communications go out as quickly as possible. It is uplifting to see how individuals, congregations and networks are preparing to participate in the Transformational Weekend, especially those who have never been to a General Conference before. Huge thanks to everyone involved.

Another major event happening this year is the World Council of Churches General Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, which I plan to attend. MCC has already been working in partnership with Rainbow Pilgrims of Faith, an international coalition of LGBT+ faith groups, to plan for this event. I am grateful to Rev. Dr Axel Schwaigert for being the MCC representative on this group. I met with Axel, and Rev. Paul Whiting to talk about the WCC event and the recent European Forum of LGBT+ faith groups and how MCC might be more involved.

As part of my own personal commitment to deepen my understanding of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, I have participated in workshops, along with other MCCers, which have helped me to focus on areas of greater awareness personally and also on aspects of our ministry as MCC that could be improved. In the training, it was emphasised that Diversity needs to be part of an organisation's strategic plan. The Governing Board, Council of Elders and MCC staff have all contributed to our strategic plan, which does include Diversity as one of its five aims. I will be focusing on moving forward with the strategic plan after General Conference. As well as this training, I attended a session on microaggressions, along with my colleagues on staff. We were given some helpful tools for challenging or pausing the conversation when someone makes a comment that could be unthinking or harmful to another person.

Other areas of work include:

Connection with MCC churches and Networks

- Recorded sermon for the Sunday after Easter to be used in churches
- Recorded video greetings for church anniversaries
- Offered time of prayer and reflection on Facebook Live
- Individual conversations with MCCers around the world
- Providing pastoral support where needed

Diversity and Inclusion

- Worked with General Conference Worship team to ensure that our many different voices of MCC are represented in the Transformational Weekend worship services
- Co-chaired the Commission on Pathways of Healing and Reconciliation monthly meetings

Outreach

- Met with Rev. Dr Kharma Amos and Global Justice Institute members, Rev. Elder Pat Bumgardner and Rev. Dr Jim Merritt, to discuss co-ordinated response to the crisis in Ukraine
- Worked with James Hartman on press releases related to recent shootings in USA, abortion rights, the Church of Scotland's vote to recognise and perform same gender marriages, and other issues

Governing Board

- Participated in Endowment Committee meeting with Henderson Financial Group
- Participated in monthly Finance Committee meeting
- Chaired meeting of the Procedures Committee, which is working on the processes for the General Conference online business meeting. Ms Huey Lee, MCC Lubbock, USA co-chairs this committee with me
- Chaired working group of Council of Elders and Governing Board to discuss judiciary policy and procedures.

Staff

- Regular meetings to plan General Conference 2022
- Regular meetings with Rev. Elder Hector Gutierrez and Rev. Dr Kharma Amos as Senior Leadership Team
- Met with staff to discuss challenging situations in individual churches
- Participated in regular staff briefings and facilitated monthly staff meeting

Council of Elders

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