

## FACT SHEET – METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

Since its founding in 1968 by Rev. Troy Perry, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC, commonly known as MCC) has been at the vanguard of civil and human rights movements by addressing important issues such as racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of oppression. MCC has been on the forefront in service to and advocacy for people living with HIV/AIDS, in the struggle towards marriage equality in the US and other countries worldwide, and continues to be a powerful voice in the LGBT equality and other human rights movements.

- The MCC Moderator is Reverend Doctor Nancy L. Wilson. She is only the second person to serve as Moderator and one of the few women to lead an international Christian denomination. She has served in this position since October 2005. Wilson founded the Free Spirit MCC, an outreach to women incarcerated at California Institute for Women, and sponsored the first three Conferences for “MCC Women in Ministry.” Her published works include: *Our Tribe: Queer Folks, God, Jesus and the Bible* (Alamo Press) and *Amazing Grace*, with Fr. Malcolm Boyd; her prayers and poems are included in *Race and Prayer* edited by Malcolm Boyd and Chester Talton (Morehouse Press). Appointed by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2010, she is a member of the President’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Wilson is a popular preacher and speaker, has been honored with the first “Lazarus Award” from the Presbyterian Church, and was invited to preach at the Earl Lectures at Pacific School of Religion in January 2002.
- MCC Founder, Reverend Troy D. Perry, is an internationally recognized human rights activist and has received honors from many human rights organizations, including honorary doctorates from Episcopal Divinity School, Samaritan College and Sierra University along with awards from the American Civil Liberties Union, the Human Rights Campaign, the Lazarus Project, and the Gay and Lesbian Press Association.
- MCC is the largest international organization for public education about homosexuality and Christianity.
- MCC congregations have an aggregate annual operating budget in excess of \$20 million USD.
- MCC Headquarters has an annual operating budget of approximately \$2 million USD.
- More than fifty percent (51.6%) of MCC clergy are women.
- MCC has members in every state in the United States and congregations in 38 states.
- The largest MCC churches are Resurrection MCC (Houston, TX), Sunshine Cathedral MCC (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), and MCC Toronto (Toronto, Canada), each with a membership exceeding 600.
- MCC holds non-member church observer status in the World Council of Churches, is a full member of the Danish National Council of Churches, participates in the programs of the National Council of Churches (U.S.), and has full membership in four U.S. state councils: California, Colorado, Hawaii, and North Carolina.
- AIDS has dramatically affected MCC churches. Since 1982, an estimated 6,000 MCC members have died of AIDS and related diseases, yet the epidemic has also brought many new members who are facing questions of life and death.
- MCC clergy are trained by more than 20 seminaries of mainline Christian denominations that accept MCC students.
- An increasing number of the children of lesbian or gay parents are active in MCC, and many congregations offer specialized ministries to meet the spiritual needs of these children.
- MCC clergy have offered Holy Unions, Marriage, and other commitment ceremonies to bless same-sex couples since 1969.
- Elected leadership of the denomination consists of the Moderator and eight Governing Board members.
- MCC follows a congregational form of church government with self-governing local congregations. Local churches are represented in an international General Conference that meets once every three years.
- Twenty-one MCC congregations have been victimized by the antigay hates crimes of arson or firebombing.

## **MCC VISION STATEMENT**

Metropolitan Community Churches are on a bold mission to transform hearts, lives, and history. We are a movement that faithfully proclaims God's inclusive love for all people and proudly bears witness to the holy integration of spirituality and sexuality. Just as Jesus did, we are called to:

**Do justice**, show kindness, and live humbly with God. (Micah 6:8)

**Explore** life's questions with open hearts and minds.

**Raise our voices** in sacred defiance against religious (and political or systemic) exclusion.

**Reach out** to those with no hope.

**Lift up** new generations of remarkable, far-reaching spiritual activists.

## **MCC STATEMENT OF DIRECTION**

MCC has staked its claim. As one of the world's emerging churches, we are proclaiming a spirituality that is liberating and sufficiently profound to address the issues of our chaotic and complicated world. We live out our belief that in the margins we are blessed and we are offering multiple ways for people to access our message of liberation and inclusion. Through church planting, church revitalization, alliances, the internet, and our work in acts of compassion and justice, we will expand our reach substantially over the next few years. MCC will become a name known to an increasing number of people as a place where all are welcomed and our service to those who are excluded is a primary focus of our ministry. We will be leaders in the world about the union of spirituality and sexuality by articulating our message and spreading it effectively.

## **MCC CORE VALUES**

### **Inclusion**

Love is our greatest moral value and resisting exclusion is a primary focus of our ministry. We want to continue to be the conduits of a faith where everyone is included in the family of God, and where all parts of our being are welcomed at God's table.

### **Community**

Offering a safe and open community for people to worship, learn and grow in their faith is our deep desire. We are committed to equipping ourselves and each other to do the work that God has called us to do in the world.

### **Spiritual Transformation**

Providing a message of liberation from the oppressive religious environment of our day or to those experiencing God for the first time is what guides our ministry. We believe that when people are invited to experience God through the life and ministry of Christ, lives will be transformed.

### **Social Action**

Working to talk less and do more, we are committed to resisting the structures that oppress people and standing with to those who suffer under the weight of oppressive systems, being guided always by our commitment to global human rights.

## **LOCATIONS OF MCC CONGREGATIONS TODAY**

MCC's ministry is provided primarily through 222 local congregations located in 37 countries worldwide, including:

### **Africa**

- Kenya
- Nigeria
- South Africa
- Zimbabwe

### **Asia Pacific**

- Australia
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- The Philippines
- South Korea

### **Caribbean**

- Dominican Republic
- Jamaica
- Puerto Rico

### **Central & South America**

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Honduras
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

### **Europe**

- Denmark
- England
- France
- Germany
- Ireland
- Scotland
- Spain

### **North America**

- Canada
- Mexico
- United States