

# MCC Governing Board Envisioning Webinar

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## What Will MCC Look Like Culturally in 2025 if We Knew We Could Not Fail?

Good day everyone. Appreciate the invitation to participate on this panel. Before speaking about MCC's culture in 2025, I should say that in setting the context, I echo the assumptions expressed by my fellow panelist Rev. Aaron Miller. (See Rev. Aaron's statement for assumptions). I believe these assumptions will be a reality to deal with in 2025. I will add that another key assumption for the future will be that culture and all things that impact culture will be even more critical. I say this because, innovation and technology will continue to influence our world. Simply put, the world will continue to grow smaller. The peoples of the world (faith and non-faith) will have even more access to one another and more opportunity for exposure to diversity and difference. Cultural implications left unexamined and not threaded in a more macro/global faith expression will diminish dreams for 2025. Therefore, culture will be central to our faith community.

When I ponder the question: "What will MCC look like culturally in 2025 if we could not fail?" I dream an amazing dream where MCC's culture is infused with living into and embodying our values, and not just striving for them.

I dream that MCC will have shifted to align our culture with a more global vision of love for all people regardless of who they are or where they live. I believe MCC will be uniquely positioned to be culturally a space where all are loved, respected, and are "a part" of God's tapestry, versus being a place where "others" are simply welcomed to our table. For MCC "Welcoming" language will be passé in 2025, because our faith expression will demonstrate that God's table "belongs" to all.

In 2025, MCC will have openness around being global and will celebrate being global in heart and action. Our celebration will not be just because we have a footprint in various countries, but because our expressed faith culture will reflect and support a global vision for respect and love for difference and diversity.

To help drive my points home and to outline them more clearly, I will use the "MCC" acronym to express what I mean.

**M** – I imagine MCC being **meaningful**. By this I mean -- that MCC will be truly relevant to people. In 2025, MCC will be creating and providing space for real, passionate, and healthy expressions, such as responding to: those who are hungry for spiritual relevance; those who seek to be in MCC because they want to be transformed and want to transform the world

versus colonizing it; those who want to partner with MCC because they align with MCC's values and culture of inclusion, and are not just those who are LGBT; those who are from various faith traditions (including fundamentalism) and those of no faith who will have questions about a radically loving God; those who have questions about the interwoven gifts of spirituality, sexuality, and gender expression; those who are marginalized and disenfranchised because of who they are; and the list goes on. **Meaning and relevancy** will be our mantra. And because of our roots and all the roads we have trod, I believe MCC will forever have as part of our DNA that elixir of prophetic inspiration that will speak and touch people across all boundaries.

**C** - I dream an amazing dream where **Community** is core to MCC. Whether community building or community action -- we will be about lifting up the individual and need not be carbon copy to be a part of community. We won't keep the world or ourselves in a box, but see the world and MCC as continuous interconnectness. We will create a community faith frame for multiculturalism that is authentic and embraced. For this to be true, the face of MCC will be different in 2025. The face of MCC will reflect our changing culture. Our culture will be distinct because we will be a faith community of the world and for the world, where radical inclusion and love will be priority. I will tag on here that I believe technology will be "one" of our central avenues for creating innovative ways to reach people and for them to reach us. This is happening now in some ways, but I dream that MCC will be inspired to continue at the water's edge of community and will use innovation and technology to keep pushing to **connect**.

**C** — Lastly, I dream a dream around MCC **Caring**. **Caring** is how MCC will express radical love in 2025. Caring in experiential ways. Caring that translates into Actions of love breaking out everywhere. Much like in the Book of Acts and the early days of the Jesus Way - where each cared about the cares of the other. I dream of a caring that calls forth and creates paths for the youth to be nourished, mentored, and to grow into leaders. I refer to youth as those below 40, below 30, and yes even in their 20's. A caring that honors and provides space for those who have paved the way, who are aging, and upon whose shoulders we stand. A caring that manifests that we all matter – the young and the old, and all the ways we are different. A caring that creates a spiritual presence that when someone experiences a MCC'er or MCC church they are transformed just because of that encounter.

I dream a dream where MCC is unafraid to collectively dream of a big God and to create a faith culture just as big -- where, "Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope." My thanks to Dr. Maya Angelou for this quote.