23 November 2016

Dear MCC friends,

During this time of dynamic and dramatic change around the world, as we begin this Interim journey together, we can explore two realities of MCC: we are a Church, and we are a Movement. We are a movement that worships, organizes, listens, learns, teaches, and gathers in many languages, many places and ways. MCC is needed more than ever in a time such as what we have seen in 2016.

Over the previous 30 days, conversations have started and will continue to unfold. In the spirit of openness, you will receive updates about my progress—our progress. Please read and share these messages. Over the next weeks and months, invitations to holy listening and discussions will be extended. It is my desire, and that of MCC leadership, to engage with you in person and through video-conferencing so that everyone can be included in the conversation.

Times of transition create a space for deep listening, fresh voices, and new ideas. Each person within MCC is invited to explore your own communities to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

As we continue through this season of transition, it is my fervent prayer that, together, MCC will expand our understandings of what it means to be a movement as people of faith and seekers in a 21st century reality.

Pray with me. Live into our values.
May we all be blessed.

Rev. Rachelle Brown, Interim Moderator
MCC Governing Board
MCC Council of Elders
MCC Senior Leadership Team

First Month of Transition
In Rev. Rachelle Brown’s first 30 days as Interim Moderator, MCC hosted historic meetings, gathered for a Blessing, engaged the world around the U.S. Presidential elections, and focused on the work of transition.

MCC’s Historic Blessing Ceremony and Joint Meetings with New Interim Moderator
The Governing Board’s October appointment of Rev. Rachelle Brown as Interim Moderator was the latest step of MCC’s transition of leadership following the retirement of Rev. Dr. Nancy Wilson as Moderator.
Many watched the Blessing of the Interim Moderator through live stream, recorded videos, and candid photos following the 13 October 2016 ceremony at MCC of Washington D.C., USA.

During the days before and after the blessing, MCC global leadership bodies met in Washington D.C. Rev. Brown met with the newly elected Governing Board and led a joint meeting of the Governing Board and Senior Leadership Team on the second day. On the third day, for the first time ever, the Council of Elders, Governing Board, and Senior Leadership Team met for diversity training and to discuss denominational approaches for this and other topics.

“MCC’s Governing Board is excited to have been able to meet together with Rev Rachelle Brown, the Senior Leadership Team, and the Council of Elders. This unique time of extended joint meetings has created an opportunity for us to change the way we work together as the Leadership of MCC and to collaborate from the beginning as we begin to address the challenges facing the denomination. We are committed to continue the openness we began in our communications around the process of appointing the Interim Moderator,” Sarah-Jane Ramage said, Governing Board Vice Chair.

Following the Blessing Ceremony, the Council of Elders convened with Rev. Brown for an afternoon of dialogue and to learn more about one another. The week of meetings concluded with intentional sharing and visioning by the Senior Leadership Team and Rev. Brown as they developed their strategy for 2017.

Over six-days, each of the MCC leadership bodies discussed a variety of topics which included:

- Declaring a time of healing and spiritual renewal
- Improving relationships between churches, networks, and the denomination
- Importance of intentional listening
- A spirit and practice of collaboration
- Acknowledging the need for change during this season of transition
- A call to live into MCC’s values of community, inclusion, social action, and spiritual transformation

The leadership groups acknowledged many events during the first part of 2016 were difficult, and even harmful, to some. To initiate healing and repair relationships, Rev. Brown has called upon the entire leadership of MCC to a practice openness in communication.

**Responding to the U.S. Presidential Election**

The recent U.S. Presidential election demonstrated a shift in leadership that exposed deep divisions. In response, Rev. Brown posted an early-morning prayer video after Donald Trump was named the winner, a second video message on the day following the election, and hosted a webinar for dialogue and prayer with Rev. Elder Dwayne Johnson and Elder Prof. Nancy Maxwell. Within a week of the election, two MCC churches were vandalized and reports of discrimination have been received. MCC response is to educate, report, and stand in solidarity.