



MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL of CHURCHES

Monday October 24, 2016

Dear Church,

Grace and peace in the name of Jesus Christ, who always presses us in new directions for the sake of the Gospel.

I write to tell you that our building is being sold and it is likely that the Massachusetts Council of Churches office will be moving. This change presents enormous opportunities to think intentionally and strategically about our office space. I want you, our friends, members, donors and supporters, to join us in this process.

The Massachusetts Council of Churches strives to “make the vibrant Church visible.” For a number of years now, we have been making more visits to local churches and holding more events offsite. We are indeed a network of individuals, congregations and denominations convinced that what binds us together in Christ is stronger than anything that divides us. Place matters. God revealed God’s self in Jesus Christ to a particular people at a particular time in a particular place. God is invested in our particular location. And yet, we do not want to confuse our building with our mission of full, visible unity of the Church in Massachusetts.

*“Simon Peter said to them ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him,
‘We will go with you.’”*

JOHN 21:3

We’ve been meditating on the post-resurrection fishing trip in John 21 at our staff and board meetings over the past few months. We see in the disciples a model of accompaniment into uncharted waters, with Jesus always at the helm. We hope you will accompany us on this process.

I believe there is great possibility for furthering our mission as we consider where to move our office. At the same time, there is also loss. I’ve worked at 14 Beacon Street for 12 years, walking past the monuments to American Congregationalists, arriving at our frosted glass door. I’ve looked out our window to the Granary Burial ground below, the graves of our ecclesial ancestors reminding us of the long witness to Jesus Christ in this place. Church, I

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promise we will gather to remember and grieve what is lost. But I believe something new will also be found.

Many churches in the Commonwealth and other religious institutions are asking how their buildings serve their mission. We are no different. We trust our colleagues at the Congregational Library and Archives as they made the hard decision to sell the Congregational House at 14 Beacon Street in order to focus their own mission. I hope MCC can model a non-anxious and faithful process as we ask what office space we need to fulfill our mission.

This is why we need you. We need your thoughts and memories of 14 Beacon, and wisdom about where God might be calling us next.

PROCESS

We are designing what we intend to be a clear, concise, and values-driven process. The Working Board will meet on Thursday November 3, to name their values. Staff (Rev. Meagan, Rev. Daryl, and I, with contract bookkeeper Chelea Turgeon), will also name our values in this process. A small Task Force is being gathered to weight the input and help guide our process.

The impact of this process and ultimately, a decision about where we move our office is wider than just our staff or Working Board. We want to hear from you. Please click on the link to fill out the following form. Please respond by Monday November 7, 2016.

<https://goo.gl/forms/bMAjKY70FwdAxyiu2>

THIS IS OUR HOPE

The Church is One and the Church is eternal. These are our bedrock convictions. The Massachusetts Council of Churches is more than a building. We invite you to accompany the staff and Working Board in this process to listen carefully. Please keep us in your prayers and join us on this adventure.

Finally, we will gather for our Advent Open House on Thursday December 8, 2016 from 4-8pm, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Please join us at 14 Beacon Street, office #416.

In the hope of the One who makes all things new,

Rev. Laura

Rev. Laura Everett

Executive Director, Massachusetts Council of Churches