

## Moderator's Report

It has been a privilege to serve as moderator of our Association this past year. I am especially grateful to have had a front-row seat to witness the faithful ways our Association ministers and staff, our churches, our authorized ministers and lay members have risen to the challenges presented by the novel coronavirus and the bitter plague of racism. From taking worship online, to online meetings, to pastoral care from a distance, to continuing food ministries and services to those in need, to keeping the various settings of the church functioning administratively, to participating in socially distanced protests and vigils, new dimensions of our being the church of Jesus Christ in this time and place have come into fuller view. God is still speaking, and God is speaking to the world through you.

Working with Nayiri Karjian and Michael Howard has left me feeling a little dizzy at times as I've tried to wrap my mind around all of the demands on their time. We are blessed to have them as spiritual guides in their respective capacities of Association General Minister and Minister of Faith in Action. Their passion for the ministries to which they are called is inspiring and I am mindful of the many ways they have had to adjust to meet the demands of Association ministry in a time of pandemic and necessary resistance to oppressive social powers. Nayiri's vision for our Association and the many ways she represents us at the conference and national settings builds on the strong foundation laid during the merger process that formed the Living Water Association. I am equally grateful to the staff in the Association office whose support of our mutual ministry is so vital.

The Association Council played an active role in discerning and supporting our Association ministers and the vision of the Association. Through the executive team, we contributed to moving the deliberations about restructuring the Heartland Conference forward. Drawing on a streamlined process we designed and recommended, a "One Heart Working Group" was formed. Under the leadership of our treasurer, Cheryl Lyndsay, who was chosen as facilitator, this group made swift progress toward a collaborative model of conference ministry that does not lead to administrative or financial centralization but celebrates the identities and gifts of each of the settings of the church. Cheryl will report on this at Annual Meeting. My thanks to Cheryl, Rachel McDonald (vice-moderator), Kelly Fuhrmann (Secretary), and Nayiri for the time and effort they dedicated to this. My thanks, too, to each of the members of the Association Council for their dedicated attention to the vision and work of the Association and for their prayerful support of our churches.

My prayer for this coming year is that together we may continue to bear witness in vital ways to the unfailing love of God in this broken yet so-loved world.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Savides  
Association Moderator