

Woman to succeed Perry as head of MCC: Nancy Wilson will be moderator of Metropolitan Community Churches

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A longtime leader in the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) has been nominated as the moderator to succeed Troy Perry, who founded the worldwide, predominantly gay Christian denomination 37 years ago and is now retiring.

Nancy Wilson, currently pastor of Church of the Trinity MCC in Sarasota, Florida, was the lone nominee to lead the 44,000-member church body based in West Hollywood, California, with congregations in 23 countries.

From 1979 to 1999, Wilson was the church's ecumenical officer, and she also served as vice moderator from 1993 to 2003. Nearly all her service as pastor or administrator has been in California, including 14 years as pastor at the "mother church" of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, as the denomination is formally named.

The MCC lost battles early in its history to become a member of the National Council of Churches, but the MCC or its churches have been accepted as members of some state and regional church councils and interfaith groups. It has been an official observer at the World Council of Churches.

Wilson, 54, is expected to be confirmed by the church's general conference in Calgary, Alberta, in July and to be installed in October at the Washington National Cathedral. A former United Methodist, she holds a divinity degree from SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary, a Catholic seminary in Michigan. She has lived with her partner, Paula Schoenwether, for 27 years.