

Dr. Colin Phillips

Layperson

Nominated by Toronto South East Presbytery (Toronto)

Question: “What priorities would you name for your time as Moderator and how do you envision offering leadership in these areas?”

Statement About Priorities and Leadership

There are three priorities that I would like to address as Moderator.

First, the Moderator must create space for the decisions that we make at General Council to be lived into. We need to remember that expressions of ministry will be ending and we will be interacting with each other differently in the future. The most important thing that I can do is to simply listen to the unease, and remind us all that the Spirit is moving among us. However, I also come with experience in governance and a PhD in Policy Studies, which will enable me to offer concrete and practical leadership.

Second, again, I believe that we must reclaim evangelicalism. This work would be a major focus for me, and I’m eager to share my ideas about it at General Council.

Finally, we must decolonize the church. Right relations can never truly happen until the assumptions, structures, and ethos that underpin the colonial project are dismantled. Decolonization is an opportunity to start anew and build a Body of Christ that authentically reflects all of God’s children. Decolonization is not something that can be achieved through committees and reports alone. Rather, we must further the relationships that have been built over the decades and explore questions of power, privilege, and favouring one way of knowing over another. As Moderator, my role will be to ensure that these conversations happen constantly. Decolonization is not easy work, but, as with all of the possibilities that await this church in transition, the results will be life-giving in ways we don’t yet know.