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THE PASTOR'S PEN

One of the core values of MCC is inclusion. We value our diversity. But diversity can be both a strength and a challenge. It's just too easy to go about business as usual, oblivious to any colors of the rainbow coalition other than our own. And so I want to use three words – "celebrate," "educate," and "advocate" – to guide me in an approach to highlighting MCC diversity.

February is Black History Month; March is Women's History Month; April is Immigration Awareness Month; May is Asian Pacific Heritage Month; June is LGBTQ Pride Month; September 15 through October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month; October is National Disability Awareness Month; November is National American Indian Month; and November 14-20 is Transgender Awareness Week.

I need your help as we approach Hispanic Heritage Month. How can we celebrate it, both within our weekly worship celebration, in after-worship socials, and in the community-at-large? What are some ways to educate ourselves about Hispanic Heritage? Did you know Waco has a Hispanic Museum? Might there be videos available that we could watch after worship to help in our education and appreciation of Hispanic heritage? And how might we advocate for our Hispanic sisters and brother?

If you are bilingual, speaking both Spanish and English and are willing to assist me in making Hispanic Heritage Month more than just a token gesture at Central Texas MCC, please contact me or the church. Even if you don't speak Spanish, but have ideas for Hispanic Heritage Month at our church, let me know! Let's think of some ways to celebrate our Hispanic sisters and brother, some ways to educate ourselves about Hispanic heritage, and some ways to advocate for the Hispanic community.

Peace and blessings,
Charley

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The following is a tentative list of upcoming church activities and community events. Contact the church for a confirmation of the calendar.

Weekly Events:

- **Central Texas MCC Worship** (1601 Clay Ave.) on Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
- **Live and Let Live AA Group** (4209 N. 27th St.) on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 1 – Women’s HIV Support Group at 11:00 a.m. in the church office, followed by a delicious home-cooked lunch!

Sunday, July 2 – Join us after worship in the social hall for a screening of **“For the Bible Tells Me So.”** A light lunch will be provided.

Sunday, July 9 – Monthly Potluck Social after worship. Good food, good fellowship!

Thursday, July 13 – Book Discussion Group meets at 6:00 p.m. for a sandwich dinner and an informal discussion of “The Boston Girl” by Anita Diamant.

Sunday, July 16 – Guest Preacher, Carla Pratt Keyes, will bring the message.

Sunday, July 16 – Join us after worship in the social hall for a screening of **“Transfigurations: Transgressing Gender in the Bible.”** A light lunch will be provided.

Tuesday, July 18 – LGBT Pride Planning Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the church Social Hall.

Thursday, July 20 – HIV Support Group begins with a delicious home-cooked dinner at 6:00 p.m. in the church social hall, followed by conversation and connection.

Sunday, July 30 – Ice Cream Social immediately following worship in the Social Hall. Bring your favorite ice cream to share with others, and the church will provide the toppings!

BIRTHDAYS

The following people have birthdays this month. If you have corrections or additions to the birthday list, please call the office at 752-5331 or email us at centexmcc@earthlink.net.

Susan DeSoto – July 10

Anne Lornson – July 15

Donna Johnson – July 15

Diane Greenwaldt – July 22

Roland Russell – July 22

Curtis Cannon – July 23

Sam Cathey – July 28

From Your Lay Delegate



Thank you so much for your financial support for my trip to St. Louis for the MCC People of African Descent, Friends and Advocates Conference (PAD) in August. Your assistance came first with the Board approving and sharing half of the monies raised at our church spaghetti dinner fundraiser, and then by taking up a love offering. Funds are enough to just about cover my airline ticket to get there and back. So thank you so much! This is an opportunity to see what this conference is about, share and show support for others. I gladly will represent you.

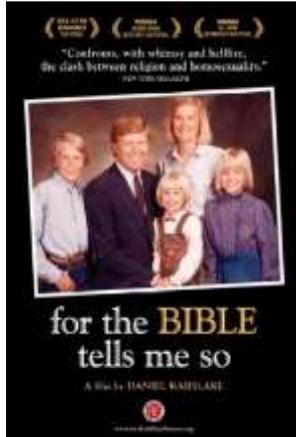
Please remember that there will be a weekly prayer that is offered by all MCC’s on each Wednesday 9AM each local time. It will be the same prayer all MCC will say that day at 9AM their time. Be a part of this global prayer. Each week, it will be shared on our church’s Facebook page and as a worship bulletin insert on the following Sunday.

I want to share with you the results of a recent General Conference virtual vote. The motion to increase rates for contributions to the UFMCC USA Pension Plan passed, with 41 out of 53 clergy and 64 out of 74 lay delegates voting in favor of the motion. There were no abstentions. This will bring the Pension Plan more in line to today’s market. It will increase

next year from 75 cents per church member per month to \$1.00, with 25 cent increases each year until it reaches \$1.75 per church member per month. If you would like more information on the plan, email the MCC Board of Pensions at BOP@mccchurch.net To learn more about the rate increase online, go to <http://mccchurch.org/how-we-work/board-of-pensions/#Rates>

Blessings,
CJ Myers

"For the Bible Tells Me So"



Can the love between two people ever be an abomination? Is the chasm separating gays and lesbians and Christianity too wide to cross? Is the Bible an excuse to hate? Through the experiences of five very normal, very Christian, very American families – including those of former House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson – we discover how insightful people of faith handle the realization of having a gay child. Informed by such respected voices as Bishop Desmond Tutu, Harvard's Peter Gomes, Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg and Reverend Jimmy Creech, "For the Bible Tells Me So" offers healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of scripture and sexual identity.

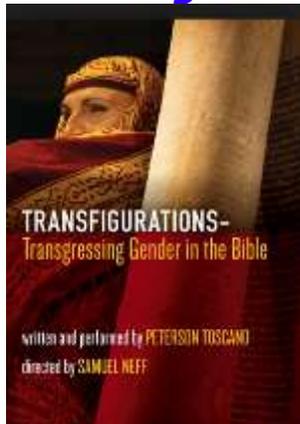
Join us after worship on **Sunday, July 2** for a light lunch and the award-winning documentary, "For the Bible Tells Me So."

Guest Preacher



Join us on **Sunday, July 16** for a video sermon by Carla Pratt Keyes. Carla, Pastor of Ginter Park Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia, will preach the parable of the Sower from Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 in a sermon called "All Ground Is Holy." She asks, "What if we were to trust that God has made holy all the ground – that even in this time and this place, God knows what God is doing, God's Word is powerful, and God's harvest is abundant?" How would that increase the harvest?

"Transfigurations"



Peterson Toscano has shaken up Bible scholarship and received high praise for his groundbreaking, genre-bending, gender-blending Bible interpretations. By unearthing the gender stories of people in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, Toscano's one-person performance deepens well-known (and lesser-known) Bible stories and presents an array of Bible characters with an array of genders.

Join us after worship on **Sunday, July 16** for a light lunch and a screening of "Transfigurations: Transgressing Gender in the Bible."

Ice Cream Social



Beat the heat with a good old-fashioned ice cream social following worship on **Sunday, July 30**. Bring your favorite ice cream to share with others, and the church will provide an assortment of toppings to add to the ice cream!

PAD Conference`



**MCC Conference for
People of African Descent
Friends & Advocates**

**3-5 August 2017
Crowne Plaza
200 N. 4th Street
St. Louis, Missouri**

www.PADconference.MCCchurch.org



Join others for the 9th MCC People of African Descent, Friends and Advocates Conference (PAD), in St. Louis! At the PAD Conference, you will share in the richness of African American culture, lift your heart in powerful worship and explore what it means to be Grounded in Love. **The MCC PAD Conference really is a welcoming space to everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality.**

This year's theme **GROUNDED IN LOVE** reflects the commitment to stand together and firmly upon the foundation of God's love for us – a love that compels us to live with a holy boldness, honors who we are, where we have come from, and that frees us to embrace the deeper places God is calling us to go.

So plan to come, hear, and enjoy all that is the MCC PAD Conference! And take home tools and insights that will make a difference for you, your family, your church, and your communities.

Learn more by about MCC's PAD Conference by going to <http://mccchurch.org/event/2017-mcc-conference-for-people-of-african-descent-friends-and-advocates/>

Learn more about the work of Central Texas MCC online at www.centexmcc.com

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