

be MCC



**Metropolitan Community Churches**

TRANSFORMING OURSELVES AS WE TRANSFORM THE WORLD.

*A newsletter from Central Texas MCC*

*August 2017*

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### ***THE PASTOR'S PEN***

Two years and one month ago, LGBTQ people in the U.S. celebrated the Supreme Court's ruling in favor of marriage equality. But now, more than ever before, I find myself responding to people who are anxious, fearful, and immersed in despair. Most of us knew there would be a backlash. There always is. But some didn't expect it to be so blatant and vicious. On both the Federal and State level, the basic human rights of LGBTQ people (emphasis on the "T") are being challenged.

But the overwhelming sense of hopelessness isn't confined to the LGBTQ community. Women, people of color, immigrants, non-Christian religions, and the millions who will die without affordable healthcare feel as if they are under attack. And quite frankly, they are.

So how do I respond to those who reach out to me? Well, I think there are several things we all can do to empower ourselves during these troubled times. And over the next several months, I want to highlight some of those things in "The Pastor's Pen."

But the first tool of empowerment I would suggest is prayer. "But I do, Pastor! I've been praying that God would change the hearts of the politicians who seem so intent on passing oppressive and discriminatory laws!"

Although I think it may not hurt to ask God to fix life by fixing others, we might do better to ask God to fix us. The real issue is the overwhelming state of fear and despair which seems to be controlling our lives. And although we may feel the solution is to simply remove the cause of that fear and despair, maybe a better solution (a better prayer, if you will) is to trust in God. Or maybe our prayer should be that God grant us courage in place of fear and peace in place of chaos. Maybe our prayer should be that God remind us of a better, happier time: a time when we enjoyed coffee on the patio, lunch with a good friend, or spending quality time with a loved one. And then maybe we might see what we can do to return to those better, happier times. With God's help, we can change our own outlook on life. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

(Philippians 4:8)

And another thing: pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5:17). When you find yourself slipping into familiar feelings of despair, pray! Pray for a change of heart and a change of mind. Then take a deep breath. And look about you: look at the sky, look at nature, and look at the reflection of God you see in the faces of other people. And know that it will all be okay. God's got this! I believe it with all my heart!

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. 27<sup>th</sup> St.) on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.

**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!

**Saturday, August 5 – Women's HIV Support Group.** This week, the women are planning an outing. Maybe a picnic and zoo outing! Call the church for details (254-752-5331).

**Thursday, August 10 – Book Discussion Group** meets at 6:00 p.m. for a sandwich dinner and an informal discussion of "My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry" by Fredrick Backman.

**Sunday, August 13 – Festival of Faiths** at St. Jerome Catholic Church from 3:00 p.m to 5:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, August 15 – LGBT Pride Planning Meeting** at 7:00 p.m. in the church Social Hall.

**Thursday, August 17 – 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, August 20 – Monthly Potluck Social** after worship. The potluck will take place on the third Sunday, this month instead of the second Sunday. Good food, good fellowship!

**Sunday, August 27 – Lay Delegate's Report** about the PAD Conference after worship in the Social Hall.

## **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](mailto:centexmcc@earthlink.net).*

**Mark Reeves – August 7**

**Kiki Smith – August 7**

**Jenn Demoss – August 12**

**Cat Grider – August 19**

**Tomas Lopez – August 22**

**Sue Williams – August 27**

**Delores Maddux – August 31**

## ***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!

## ***Festival of Faiths***



"One Song, Many Melodies." That's the theme of this year's Festival of Faiths, sponsored by the Greater Waco Interfaith Conference, and taking place on **Sunday, August 13** at 3:00 p.m. at St. Jerome Catholic Church's Mother Teresa Center (9820 Chapel Rd.). The afternoon will include informational displays of different religions (MCC will have a Progressive Christianity exhibit), food samples from those religious cultures (Mark Barnett has committed to baking cookies), and music from faith groups (Pastor Charley will be teaching the audience a Taizé chant). Join us for an afternoon of music and fellowship.

## ***Lay Delegate Report of PAD Conference***



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

The 2017 MCC Conference for People of African Descent, Friends, and Advocates will take place August 3-5 in St. Louis, MO. There will be speakers, worship, and workshops designed for people to share and experience the richness of African-American culture. Our Lay Delegate, CJ Myers, who will be attending the Conference, will share with our congregation her experiences on **Sunday, August 27** after worship in the Social Hall. Please plan to stick around for a light lunch and CJ's report of the PAD Conference.

**Learn more about the work of Central Texas MCC online at [www.centexmcc.com](http://www.centexmcc.com)**

**Central Texas MCC from the Heart  
Rev. Charley Garrison, Pastor  
P.O. Box 1722  
Waco, TX 76703  
Phone: 254-752-5331**