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***THE PASTOR'S PEN***

Last week I offered a progressive perspective of the crucifixion of Jesus. It's a perspective I embrace, one which rejects the penal substitutionary atonement doctrine which claims that Jesus was sacrificed by God as a substitute for me and my sins. Instead, I believe the cross is, first, a declaration of how the world will respond to anyone who it sees as a threat. I believe it is the world's "no" to God's love. But I believe the story doesn't end there. I believe there is a second act to the story, one in which God says "yes" to the world's "no." I believe that together, the crucifixion and resurrection reveal to us the power of God's transformative love: a love that transforms lives and transforms the world into a better place. A manuscript of the full sermon can be found at [www.centxmcc.com/PDFs/sermon.18.03.25.pdf](http://www.centxmcc.com/PDFs/sermon.18.03.25.pdf).

This coming Sunday, we will be celebrating that second act. We will celebrate the transformation of life into death: something that has the potential of happening each and every day if we slow down enough to recognize Jesus in the face of our neighbor. Mary encountered Jesus in what appeared to be just a common, ordinary, everyday gardener. We, too, can encounter Jesus within the hospital waiting room or in the sidewalk panhandler. And when we see Jesus in the common, ordinary, everyday stuff of life and respond with compassion, we affirm the resurrection. In fact, we participate in it. We participate in the transformation of life into death.

I hope you will join me on Sunday to hear more about what it means to join with Mary in her five-word sermon: "I have seen the Lord."

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, April 1 – Accessibility Sunday.** Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

**Sunday, April 1 – Easter Celebration.** Join us at 11AM for our worship celebrating the risen Christ!

**Saturday, April 7 – Women’s HIV Support Group.** If you are an HIV+ woman, then join others at 11AM for a support group followed by a home-cooked meal.

**Sunday, April 8 – Potluck Social** immediately after worship in the Social Hall. Good food, good fellowship!

**Sunday, April 8 – Asset Mapping Exercise.** Stick around after the potluck social for an asset mapping exercise. It’s a fun way to discover our strengths and discern the next ministry program for our church.

**Thursday, April 12 – Yom HaShoah.** Community gathering in remembrance of the Holocaust at Temple Rodef Sholom (1717 New Road) at 7PM.

**Sunday, April 15 – Accessibility Sunday.** Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

**Thursday, April 19 – HIV Support Group** at 6PM in the Social Hall begins with a home-cooked meal and continues with connection and conversation.

**Thursday, April 21 – Bake Sale** at the Walmart Supercenter in Hewitt (733 Sun Valley Rd) beginning at 9AM.

**Sunday, April 22 – “What Were You Wearing?” Exhibit.** An exhibit of the clothes and stories of sexual assault victims, with an opportunity for dialogue after worship.

**Sunday, April 29 – Information Forum (Part One).** Join the Pastor after worship for the first of a two-part information forum about what Central Texas MCC is all about.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

*The following people, who join us for worship, 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).*

**Johnnie Carson – April 1**  
**Dana Wheeler – April 10**  
**Ron Densman – April 11**  
**Tammy Stone – April 26**  
**Linda Lueck – April 28**

## ***Easter Lily Donations to Benefit Global Justice Institute***



Proceeds from the cost of Easter lilies for the church's worship spaces have been dedicated to the Global Justice Institute. And we are pleased to report that we have collected almost \$250 for that purpose! Last year, your generous Easter Offerings empowered the Global Justice Institute to :

- publish the first book of spiritual reflections for LGBTQI Christians in China to provide a resource for people worshipping in an "underground" context.
- open a computer lab for children in Mtito Andei, Kenya, and saw its first students and hold the first Lesbian retreat in the area, with 10 women in attendance.
- continue its work in Honduras supporting the work of Ecumenicas, as they hold workshops in local neighborhoods to teach women how to advocate for reproductive justice and health care options.
- sponsor a speaking tour for The Rev. Dr. Boon Lin Ngeo in Taiwan regarding marriage equality.
- provide financial support in the aftermath of the hurricane in Puerto Rico, the earthquake in Mexico, for two gay men in Uganda fleeing violence, for a gay activist's mother in Uganda, and to a group in Chechnya helping gay men who have been targeted by the government get to safer housing

This year's goals include, but are not limited to:

- working with a young man to bring GJI and safe worship space to Zimbabwe;
- drilling a well at our Kenya site, which the East African drought has necessitated, to provide clean and consistent water
- partnering with a group in Mexico around work with Chiapas trans women.

## ***With Gratitude to the RSICCTE***



Without the help of the Royal Sovereign Imperial Court of the Central Texas Empire, our church would not have nearly the impact on our community that it does. The Court puts on performances all year, raising money through tips to its performers, all to benefit other 501(c)3 charities and organizations. On Saturday, March 24, the Court presented \$4000 our church's general fund and \$3000 to our church's Red Door Food Pantry, which serves the HIV population of Waco and the surrounding area. We are very grateful for the Court's support!

Although there will not be a show in April, you can still participate in the Court's "No Show" event taking place all month simply by making your online donation at <http://centraltexasempire.com/donations/>.

## ***Easter Celebration***



Christ is risen indeed! And we'll be celebrating the resurrection on **Sunday, April 1** at 11AM with a musical lineup, including bagpipes, an original song performance, and a brand new Central Texas MCC ensemble! Join us this coming Sunday!

## Asset Mapping Exercise



Stick around after the monthly potluck social on **Sunday, April 8** for a quick and simple congregational asset mapping experience. It's a fun way to discover our strengths and discern the next ministry program for the church.

## Yom HaShoah



The Greater Waco Interfaith Conference, Congregation Agudath Jacob, and Temple Rodef Sholom will co-sponsor a community-wide Holocaust Remembrance on **Thursday, April 12** at 7PM at Temple Rodef Sholom (1717 N. New Road). Keynote speaker will be Rabbi Susan Lippe.

## Bake Sale



Mark your calendar for our church's annual bake schedule scheduled for **Saturday, April 21** from 9AM until 3PM. The event will take place at the Walmart Supercenter in Hewitt (733 Sun Valley). You can help make it a success by donating baked items, volunteering to sell items in either the morning shift or the afternoon shift, or purchasing baked goodies.

## "What Were You Wearing?" Exhibit



"What were you wearing?" It's a question people ask survivors of sexual violence all too often; a question wrought with victim-blaming and an implication that, maybe, the survivor could've prevented their assault if they had worn something less revealing, less sexy.

The exhibit titled "What Were You Wearing?" features stories of sexual violence and representations of what each victim was wearing at the time of their assault. Its opening ceremony will take place at Cultivate 7twelve (712 Austin Ave) on **Friday, April 6** from 6PM to 7PM.

One of the panels from that exhibit will be displayed at Central Texas MCC on **Sunday,**

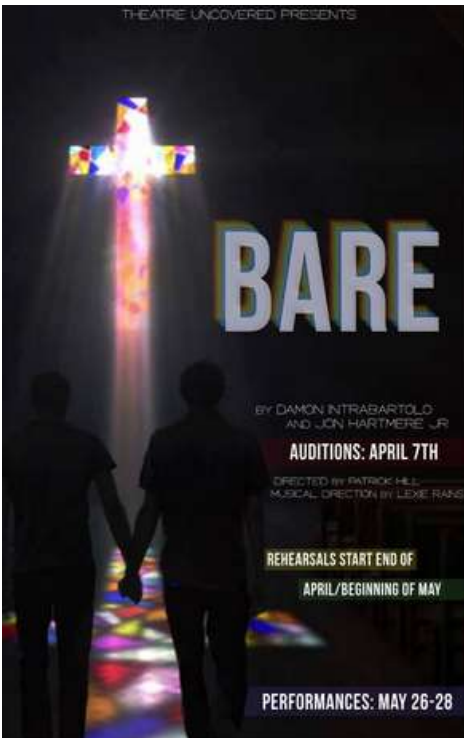
**April 22.** Come check it out and stick around after worship for dialogue around the exhibit. Join with us in promoting awareness and breaking the myths that surround sexual assault and rape, as we empower survivors and combat victim-blaming.

## **Information Forum**



Join the Pastor after worship in the Social Hall for the first of a two-part on **Sunday, April 29**. This is for you...  
if you are interested in becoming a member of Central Texas MCC;  
if you aren't ready to become a member, but are interested in knowing more about Central Texas MCC; or  
if you would like a "refresher course" on who we are and what we are about.

## **"Bare" Auditions**



There will be an audition for "Bare," the musical. The show explores what it's like to grow up gay in the church. The musical is looking for performers from the LGBTQ community audition. More information can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bUhxNXrdhjgmmnzlDTJZWhK-T5kLvXxp/view>. The link to the sign-up can be found at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b084aa5a62daaff2-bare>. And the link to the audition form can be found at [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6gMftgDgfSdditaBMvSsH\\_VhMv2zXp13xlmIMOuZ1tJfzxc/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6gMftgDgfSdditaBMvSsH_VhMv2zXp13xlmIMOuZ1tJfzxc/viewform).

## **Audiobooks for Veterans**



Veterans who are blind or whose arms are amputated can benefit from audiobooks. So Central Texas MCC is currently collecting audiobooks to be given to local veterans. You can purchase the audiobooks at your local bookstore or online. And you can usually find bargains at second-hand bookstores or if the store is having a clearance sale.