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

People often ask me what has kept me here in Waco for almost 19 years. The short answer is, "Potential." Years ago, when I arrived in Waco, I was stunned by the potential impact Central Texas MCC could have on the local community. There are so many opportunities for our church to get involved in important things taking place in our city. Here are some of the things that have recently drawn my interest and time.

**Immigration.** It began in late June when I joined other local pastors in signing a letter written by Rev. Jaime McGlothlin to Rep. Bill Flores about the U.S. Zero-Tolerance Policy that resulted in separated families charged with the misdemeanor crime of crossing the border to seek asylum. And it continued earlier this month when I accepted an invitation to join more than 30 religious leaders and community organizers from all over Central Texas to take the first steps in building a network of support for families separated by and affected negatively by the United States' immigration policies. *If you would like to become involved, check out the Waco Immigrants Alliance at <http://www.wacoia.org/>.*

**LGBTQ Pride.** Last year's LGBTQ Pride festival was the first of its kind in about a decade. I was hoping for an attendance of 75, but was amazed by the turnout of about 300 people! And this year's event in October promises to be even better. Out of response to the community's support of the festival, the planning committee has taken the initial steps in becoming its own nonprofit organization. And I am honored to serve on the Board of that organization. *If you want to be a part of the success of this year's Pride event, then join us for the next planning meeting in our church's social hall on Wednesday, August 8 at 6:30 p.m.*

**The Cove.** A couple months ago, our church took steps to become more involved with The Cove, a local after-school drop-in center for homeless youth. Knowing that 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ, I felt it was something in which I wanted to become more involved. So I'm looking forward to the training I will receive later this month to become a member of a CoveCoach team, which will be paired up with a youth to mentor. Also, it was with great pleasure that I recently received an invitation to participate in The Cove's educational program by sharing my personal story one night this fall. *If you're interested in volunteering at The Cove, fill out the application form at <http://www.thecovewaco.org/volunteer/>.*

**Red Door Pantry.** Our church's food and hygiene pantry for the HIV community continues to keep me busy. Most of the activity happens on the first couple weeks of each month. A lot of my office hours during those two weeks are spent making deliveries

to the 15-20 people who are unable to get to the pantry because of health or transportation issues. *If you have a car and some time on your hands between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday during the first two weeks of the month, then consider making deliveries to the guests who depend on our Red Door Pantry.*

**Texas Freedom Network.** Founded in 1995, the Texas Freedom Network (TFN) is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization of more than 130,000 religious and community leaders. Issues on which it focuses include education, textbook censorship, religious freedom, LGBTQ rights, and reproductive rights. I'm looking forward to meeting with Sonja Miller, who coordinates TFN's work with clergy and faith communities, with a special focus on reproductive rights/justice and LGBTQ equality. TFN is an organization our church needs to be supporting. *You can learn more about TFN by going to its website at <http://tfn.org/>.*

As you can see, I have many irons in the fire, and Sunday morning worship is only one of them. I would ask that you to consider how you might also become involved in our community (without overdoing it!). If you are interested in any of the things I've mentioned, then talk to me about them. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities to go around!

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.

**Saturday, July 28 – Court performance** in the Social Hall at 7PM to raise money for school supplies for children and grandchildren of people who use the church's food pantry.

**Sunday, August 5 – Accessibility Sunday.** Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

**Wednesday, August 8 – Pride Planning Meeting** for October's Out on the Brazos Pride Event will take at 6:30PM in the Social Hall

**Sunday, August 12 – Potluck Social** immediately after worship in the Social Hall. Good food, good fellowship!

**Thursday, August 16 – HIV Support Group** at 6PM in the Social Hall begins with a potluck meal and continues with connection and conversation.

**Sunday, August 19 – Accessibility Sunday.** Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

**Sunday, August 19 – Restaurant Sunday.** Join others after worship for food and fellowship at a local restaurant.

**Saturday, August 26 – Festival of Faiths** at Providence Health Center Pavilion (6901 Medical Parkway in the building closest to the Hwy 6 Post Office), 3-5PM.

## **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).

**Hailey Frosch – August 3**

**Mark Reeves – August 7**

**Katie Richard – August 9**

**Phyllis Barham – August 11**

**Tomas Lopez – August 22**

**Sue Williams – August 27**

**Hunter Barton – August 27**

## **Christmas in July**



Central Texas MCC is collecting school supplies for the kids and grandkids of folks who use the church's HIV food and hygiene pantry. We'll continue to collect supplies throughout the month of August. There's no need to buy backpacks; those have already been purchased. But consider the following:

- Crayons
- Glue sticks
- Pencils
- Pens
- Scissors
- Rulers
- Loose leaf paper
- Composition notebooks\*
- Hand sanitizer
- Folders\*

*\* It's helpful if your purchases are gender-neutral.*

You can also support the cause by attending the Court Show at the church on **Saturday, July 28** at 7:00 p.m. Proceeds will be used to purchase school supplies

## **Restaurant Sunday**



Join others after worship on **Sunday, August 19** for lunch at a local restaurant. It's a great way to get to enjoy each other's company while helping yourself to good food!

## ***Festival of Faiths***



Join others on **Sunday, August 26** for a family-friendly celebration of faiths of our Central Texas community, where food, stories, music and more will be shared. The event will take place 3-5PM at Providence Health Center Pavilion (6901 Medical Parkway in the building closest to the Hwy 6 Post Office).

## ***Pre-Order Your Pride T-Shirts!***



This year's Pride T-shirts will feature the beautiful design you see to the left. If you pre-order the T-shirts by September 7, they are only \$10. You can order them by simply going to <http://www.wacopride.org/donations>. After September 7 deadline, you can purchase your T-shirts at the October 13 event for \$15.