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THE PASTOR'S PEN

This year, Advent was a simple but meaningful time for our church. Each Sunday we gathered after worship for fellowship and a homemade soup (tomato basil and spinach soup; cream of potato soup; Moroccan sweet potato, carrot, and chickpea soup; and apple-butternut squash soup); and fresh-baked homemade bread. Candles on the Advent wreath were lit, and a brief candle-lighting litany was shared. Then we closed with a prayer/reflection written on an index card and attached to the Advent wreath. As we enter into the New Year, I thought it might be good to be well-armed with the hopes, dreams, and joys that were shared during those weeks:

[Click here to read more.](#)

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.
- **Writers Workshop** (1601 Clay Ave.) on Wednesdays, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 5 – Women's HIV Support Group will take place at 11AM in the church's Social Hall. Following the meeting, they enjoy a volunteer-prepared home-cooked lunch.

Sunday, January 6 – Accessibility Sunday. Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

Sunday, January 6 – After-Worship Meet-and-Greet Social. Stick around after worship for a Meet-and-Greet Social with the Court of the Central Texas Empire. Enjoy a reception of beans, rice, and cornbread, while meeting the candidates for next year's reign.

Sunday, January 13 – Monthly Potluck Social will take place after worship the Social Hall. Good food, good fellowship

Tuesday, January 15 – HIV Support Group at 6PM in the Social Hall begins with a home-cooked meal and continues with connection and conversation.

Saturday, January 19 – Transgender Support Group. Everyone is invited to offer input into what a new transgender support group will look like. The meeting will take place at 6PM in the church's Social Hall.

Sunday, January 20 – Accessibility Sunday. Worship will take place downstairs in the Social Hall.

Sunday, January 20 – Annual Chili Cook-Off. Enter the fun with your own chili recipe! Prizes given for the hottest and for the best-tasting chili. Suggested donation of \$10 to taste and judge.

Sunday, January 27 – Membership Class, Part 1. Stick around for a sandwich lunch and membership class facilitated by Pastor Charley. (Part 2 will take place on Sunday, Feb. 3)

Sunday, January 27 – World Religion Day. Interfaith panel and audience discussion on evil will take place at the Providence Hospital Pavilion at 3PM.

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.

Anise Schmidt – January 2

Bob Webb – January 6

David Cathey – January 7

Brandy Springer – January 16

Darren Metting – January 28

Richard Youngerman – January 28

Ronnie Johnson – January 30

Shawna Joiner – January 31

Meet-and-Greet Social



Stick around after worship this coming Sunday (**Sunday, January 6**) for a Meet-and-Greet Social with the Central Texas Empire. Enjoy a reception of rice, beans, and cornbread, while meeting the candidates for next year's reign.

Writers' Workshop



New writing and critique workshop in Waco: The Waco DFW Writers' Workshop will launch its first meeting **Wednesday, January 9, 2019** at 7pm until 10pm at Central Texas MCC in the Social Hall and will take place each week. This unique professional writing group will be for all genres with an eye toward publishing individual works. Writers will sign up to read a portion of their writing for 10 minutes and then will be critiqued by the members for 5 minutes. No arguments are allowed regarding critiques, although you may ask questions for clarification. If the critique applies use it, and if not let it go. Dues required for membership and participation. Officers to be elected.

We are affiliating with the Dallas-Fort Worth Writers Workshop, a longstanding, very successful writing critique group which will provide us with a wealth of additional resources, contacts and workshops/seminars. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join to give us the best possible critique and writing experience. LGBTQ friendly.

The Written Word



We are grateful to Linda Prichard for her contributions to "The Written Word," a new column in our newsletter. If you would like to improve your writing skills, consider attending the Writers' Workshop which takes place each Wednesday evening at 7PM in the church's Social Hall (see above article).

This month's contribution is reminiscent of the opening verses of Psalm 22, where the psalmist cries out to God, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest."

On Transient Gods and Emergency Rooms

Where are You,
my God, with no face?

I looked for You last night
when that little girl was dying
while her brother was bleeding
all over his father's guilt,
but the night was dark,
and the fog was thick,
and I guess that's why
I could not see your face...

but where were your hands?

You know, the ones
they told me about
when I was small—
lifting up hands,
guiding, comforting hands,
golden, godly hands.
Were they hands only meant
for framed-in scenes
in life-like oils,
without real bloodstains
or dirtied nails?
Are they hands without feeling
for all the many lives
left longing to be touched?

Am I expecting too much—

to reach out and find You reaching back?
Where are you, my god, of nothing real?

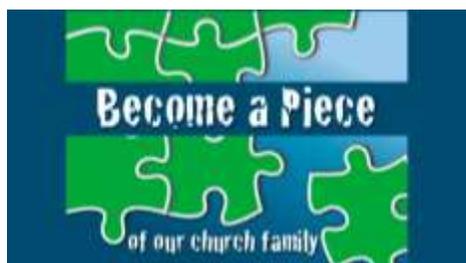
*Linda Miller Prichard 12/01/1987, R 10/24/2018
Published in Flow Memorial Hospital Newsletter
Dec. 1987.*

Chili Cook-Off



It's time, once again, for our church's annual chili cook-off! Everyone is welcome to bring a pot of your best homemade chili on **Sunday, January 20**. After worship, people will sample the entries and vote for the best-tasting chili and the hottest chili, with prizes given out to the winners. Then everyone is welcome to return for as much chili as you can eat! A \$10 donation is suggested to sample and vote. But if you can't afford it, don't let that stop you. We want you to join us for the fun and fellowship more than we want your money!

Membership Class



Join the Pastor after worship in the Social Hall for a sandwich lunch and the first of a two-part membership class on **Sunday, January 27** (the second class will take place on Sunday, February 3). 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.

World Religion Day



Check out the panel and audience discussion about the different religions' perspectives of evil, sponsored by Greater Waco Interfaith Conference at the Providence Hospital Pavilion on **Sunday, January 27** at 3PM.

Immigrant and Refugee Forum



Join us after worship on **Sunday, February 17** for a conversation that will explore how we as individuals and/or a church can minister to refugees and immigrants. Special guest, Hope Mustakim, Director of the Waco Immigrants Alliance will join us in the discussion which will take place after worship along with a sandwich lunch.