



Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford

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Newsletter of MCC Hartford

2007-III

*For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice
but rather a spirit of power and of love.
2 Timothy 1:7*

LIVING IN OUR NEW HOME

We have now been in our new space for a month. Praise be to God! It's a beautiful space that looks and feels better than we had imagined it would. But there is still much work to be done.

Floor repairs

The Church of the Good Shepherd has received several bids to repair the floor. They are trying to schedule the work so that it will be completed late June or early July. Once that is done, we will have the floor refinished throughout the entire level.

Painting

Marty DiCosimo and Marilyn Pacella have taken on the task of painting our new church home.

Church Office

Voice, fax and Internet service have been restored. Since we left Broad Street, we had been operating with only the pastor's cell phone because the cost of installing telephone service in our temporary office was prohibitive. The church office will not be fully set up until the repairs to the floor are completed but we do have one small office on our level that is being used for multiple purposes.

Library

Work on the library is ongoing. Several bookcases have been repaired. We received a computer donation and cataloguing is in process.

Wish List

Mary Young coordinates in-kind giving. She is working with the pastors on updating our 'wish-list' to reflect the church's needs in our new home. Please speak to Mary if you are interested in making in-kind donations.

Hospitality

Setoria Jackson and Mary Young coordinate hospitality. We always need volunteers to help provide the food and drink we share after worship, which is a very important part of our church life.

Future Programming

We are working on developing additional programming. Be on the lookout for announcements in the new church program year beginning in September.

NEW WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Starting July 1st and the first Sunday of each month going forward, we will be holding an evening praise service. This will be a different format from our weekly morning service. It will focus on praise music and will be an opportunity for our musicians and all who enjoy praise music to celebrate and praise God for our many blessings. Pastor Gary and KC Redmon will be leading the service.

DEDICATION AND HOMECOMING CELEBRATION

We will dedicate our new church home at a special celebration on Sunday, September 9. Please note the date on your calendars and invite your friends. The Church of the Good Shepherd will join is in worship on that date and their clergy will be participating in the liturgy. After worship, we will gather on the back lawn for a celebration picnic.

This a great opportunity to invite friends and family to join us for worship, praise and thanksgiving and to see our beautiful new home.

EVANGELISM

Richard Stillson is heading up the Evangelism Committee. Its primary goal is to grow our congregation. One of its objectives is to spread the word about MCC Hartford and make the church better known. Another is to develop more ways to welcome newcomers and integrate them into the church community. Please speak to Richard if you are interested in working on this important ministry. The committee had an information table at the 20th Hartford Gay & Lesbian Film Festival and at New Haven Pride.

TRANSITIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

New Members: We received three new members on Easter Sunday: Randy Goodrow, Mary McQuarrie, and Susie Villalobos. The next membership class will be held in August for presentation to the congregation in September. Please speak to Pastor Julio for more information.

Dr. Richard Stillson has been appointed to serve on the MCC Hartford of Directors to fill a vacant seat. His name will be presented to the Congregational Meeting in the fall for confirmation. Dr. Stillson is a clinical psychologist and an adjunct professor at Capital Community College. He is also known in our community by his drag name – Mucha Mucha Placer.

Paul Cooke has been commissioned by the Pastor to serve as Lay Minister. Lay ministers assist the pastors in the worship liturgy in with congregational care.

Susie Villalobos was elected Teacher of the Year at the school where she teaches.

Paul Yankowski has joined the MCC Hartford staff as Office Manager. We are very grateful to Paul who has agreed to take on this job as a volunteer.

Brianna Johnston was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of Center City Churches. Brianna also serves on MCC Hartford's board and is our lay delegate to the General Conference.

VISIT TO THE SHILOH CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

On Sunday, June 3, Cheri 'KC' Redmon preached at the Women's Day celebration at the Shiloh Church of God in Christ in Springfield, where brother Tony Daniels' father is the pastor. KC has been an important part of our music ministry for the past two years.

Pastor George, Pastor Gary and the MCC Hartford choir accompanied KC. Our choir sang during the service and our pastors were received as visiting clergy.

As a denomination, the Church of God in Christ considers that the practice homosexuality goes against Scripture. Establishing a relationship with this congregation is a huge and healing step.

We praise God for this great blessing. We are grateful to KC for her ministry and to all those who supported her. We are grateful to Tony Daniels and his partner, Richard Stillson, for continuing to nourish the relationship with the Shiloh Church of God in Christ.

ORDINATION OF THE REV. JOSÉ MARTÍNEZ

José Martínez, Associate Pastor of the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, was ordained a deacon on June 9 at Christ Church Cathedral. Several members of our congregation attended the ordination. Pastor George and Pastor Julio were part of the clergy procession at the service.

The Episcopal Church has a two-step ordination process whereby candidates to the priesthood serve as deacons, usually for a year, before being ordained priests. Deacons in the Episcopal Church are members of the clergy.

We were very glad that MCC Hartford was able to share this milestone event in Pastor José's life and in the life of our host church.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

The struggle for marriage equality in Connecticut continues on various fronts.

A bill to offer marriage equality to same-gender couples was introduced into the State Legislature during this past legislative season but was withdrawn because the sponsors did not think they had enough votes to get it through. Similar bills have been introduced in other legislative sessions but this was the first time that it made past committee and with a strong majority. Governor Rell had said she would veto the bill if passed.

Connecticut Clergy for Marriage Equality held a press conference at the Capitol in support of the legislation.

In the meantime, there is a case pending in the Connecticut Supreme Court in which 8 same-gender couples have sued the State of Connecticut for the right to marry. For more information on this movement visit Love Makes A Family at www.lmfct.org or GLAD at www.glad.org

UFMCC GENERAL CONFERENCE

General Conference XXIII will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, July 2 through July 6. Pastor George, Pastor Julio and Lay Delegate Brianna Johnston will be in attendance. General Conference is the legislative body of our denomination. It is also a wonderful opportunity for people from MCC congregations all around the world to gather to worship, pray, study and share fellowship together. For more information, please visit the UFMCC website:
http://www.mcccchurch.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=General_Conference_2007

ONGOING EVENTS

Music Ministry

The *choir* rehearses every Saturday at 1:00 PM in the church sanctuary. All who enjoy singing are welcome. Please speak to Pastor Gary if you'd like more information.

MCC Hartford's music ministry continues to grow. Approximately two years ago, KC, a professional DJ, began using her electronic equipment to play hymns and songs of praise during worship. Last year, Tony Daniels and his keyboard joined our music ministry. This year, David Waterman has added drums to our music experience. Randy Goodrow and his ukulele have graced us with special music on several occasions. If you have a musical talent you would like to offer, please speak to Pastor George or Pastor Gary.

Bible Study

We continue to share Bible study with the Good Shepherd Church each Tuesday at 8:00 AM. We sing, reflect on the Scriptures, celebrate the Eucharist and share breakfast. The clergy from both congregations alternate in leading the services each week.

Church Family Picnics

Our church family got off to a late start this year. The energy dedicated to preparing the church home and moving into it combined with the unusual weather pattern this spring led us to not have picnics in May or June. The July picnic will be held at the home of Clyde and Scott on July 29. Setoria and Seja will host the August picnic on August 19. The September picnic will be held on the church grounds in conjunction with our homecoming celebration on September 9. We have traditionally held our last picnic in October. That date is open if you are interested in hosting.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Hartford Pride

This year's Pride Festival will be held in Bushnell Park on June 30. MCC Hartford will have an information table and our choir has been invited to sing. Please speak to Richard Stillson if you are interested in helping staff MCC's table.

Community Event

Also on June 30, the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd is hosting a community gathering sponsored by the Coalition to Strengthen the Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood (CSS/CON). The event will take place from 4:00 to 7:00 PM. This will be an opportunity for neighbors and community leaders to come together. There will be food and entertainment as well as information from various community organizations. Pastor George has been working with Pastor José, from Good Shepherd, on planning the event.

MCC Hartford 35th Anniversary

MCC Hartford will be celebrating its 35th anniversary in October 2008. This will be a major celebration as was our 30th anniversary in 2003. We would like to have a series of events leading up to the big one in October. Please speak one of the pastors or one of the board members if you are interested in being part of a team that will work on this.