

# Around The Fellowship

T e a r i n g   d o w n   w a l l s !   B u i l d i n g   u p   h o p e !

September 21, 2007 Edition

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Editor

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## MCC AND THE FELLOWSHIP JOIN HANDS TO PROMOTE "RADICAL INCLUSION"

History was made earlier this month when MCC entered into a ministry partnership with The Fellowship, a cross-denominational group of African-American churches, led by Bishop Yvette Flunder, to promote "radical inclusion" within denominations, churches, and seminaries.

To learn more about this joint ministry, visit [www.MCCchurch.org](http://www.MCCchurch.org). On the opening page, scroll to MCC News.

## SPOTLIGHT ON MCC PEOPLE AND CHURCHES

**Rev. Axel Schwaigert** and several members of **Salz der Erde MCC** (Stuttgart, Germany) joined **Rev. Elder Diane Fisher**, **Rev. Mark Bidwell** from **MCC Detroit** (Michigan), and **Florin Buhuceanu**, pastoral leader for **MCC Bucharest** (Romania) for this year's Pride events in Romania. Pride marchers were pelted with stones by hostile onlookers.

Here are the recent changes to Elders portfolios: **Rev. Elder Ken Martin** is assuming the HIV/AIDS portfolio from **Rev. Elder Jim Mitulski**. **Rev. Elder Glenna Shepherd** will be working with the **Lay Ministry Council**, including development of a Lay Certification program.

**MCC Windsor** (Canada) has received a \$39,000 (CND) grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, to determine the needs of the LBG T community in Windsor and Essex County. They know the youth and seniors are underserved, but are eager to pinpoint all the services needed. **Rev. Martha Daniels** anticipates finishing the project by January and will report the findings to all levels of government.

MCC member **Susie Villalobos** was selected as Teacher of the Year at her school in Hartford, Connecticut.

**Rev. Elder Troy Perry** was the Grand Marshal for this year's New York City Pride Parade along with Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, whose Temple did a joint float with **MCC New York** (New York). The theme for the float was "United for Equality" and their choirs led the parade along with the Grand Marshals. Due to the uniqueness of having religious Grand Marshals and faith groups leading the parade, the

**CHECK OUT THESE  
UPCOMING  
CONFERENCES!**

**MCC's 2008 Women  
in Ministry  
Conference will take  
place in Sarasota,  
Florida during  
January 31 -  
February 3, 2008. For  
details, schedule and  
registration  
information, [CLICK  
HERE](#).**

**Rev. Elder Don  
Eastman and Rev.  
Grant Lynn Ford  
invite you to the  
Quest for Excellence  
Conference on the  
campus of Sunshine  
Cathedral MCC in  
Fort Lauderdale,  
Florida, during  
November 8-11, 2007.  
The theme is  
"Building A Culture of  
Generosity." For full  
information, [CLICK  
HERE](#).**

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**CHECK OUT MCC'S  
ONLINE AUCTION  
NOW!**

**MCC's online auction  
will benefit children  
and youth through  
MCC's programs for  
HIV/AIDS and school  
discrimination, the  
Rainbow Endowment  
Fund, and MCC New  
York's shelter for  
homeless queer  
youth.**

**To visit the auction**

news release prepared by **Rev. Jim Birkitt** and Cathy Renna was picked up by the Associated Press and Reuters. Within hours it began appearing in *seven different countries* in at least 16 newspapers, more than *50 papers in the US*, and the websites of more than 35 TV and radio stations.

MCC member **Dal Miranda** was featured in a *San Jose (California) Mercury News* article about LGBT veterans.

At the Sparkle Celebrations for transfolks in Manchester, England, **Jenny-Anne** and **Elen** staffed a stall for **MCC Manchester**, which hosted a special service that weekend with a Sparkle theme

Ride 'em cowgirl! Proceeds from the Heartland Gay Rodeo Association's Rodeo Playday went to **MCC Omaha** (Nebraska). The event included seminars followed by various rodeo events.

**Rev. Sharon Bezner** was the guest preacher for WTSAW at **MCC Lubbock** (Texas). That's the annual West Texas Spiritual Awareness Weekend complete with worship services, workshops, children's activities, and plenty of good food and fellowship!

**MCC United** (Tulsa, Oklahoma) entered MCC's CRI (Church Revitalization Initiative) project with a kick-off weekend, including a workshop on the Change Cycle, a fellowship dinner, and a special worship service with **Rev. Margaret Walker** preaching. As an outreach project, they take part in Friday Night Movies at the Dennis R. Neil Equality Center downtown.

Worship at **MCC Albuquerque** (New Mexico) can be viewed locally on Comcast channel 27 every Sunday evening at 7 pm.

The Fort Lauderdale Gay Men's Chorus did a benefit concert for **MCC Naples** (Florida). Their building was packed!

**Connie Meadows**, Assistant to the Moderator, preached at the first worship service of **Appalachian MCC** (St. Albans, West Virginia) in their new building. Their mortgage payments are less than their former rental cost! One member is preparing to obtain a bus driver's license so she can bring 50 Job Corps participants who want to attend the church's services.

On the road again! **Rev. Steve Taylor**, who has been serving in Moscow, Russia, with the U.S. State Department, has been appointed Human Resources Director of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China. He and **Artur** are moving there this month.

**Rev. Elder Diane Fisher** and her spouse **Judi Hirsch** were featured in a picture and article in the *Wilmington Advocate* about the defeat of the petition against same-sex marriage in Massachusetts.

<http://www.townonline.com/wilmington/news/x398632420>

site and place your bids, [CLICK HERE](#).

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**PACESETTER  
CHURCHES TAKING  
PART IN  
FELLOWSHIP  
SUNDAY OFFERINGS  
FOR LATIN AMERICA**

- October 7, 2007 -

**1. Trinity MCC**  
(Gainesville, Florida),  
*Rev. Joe McMurray,*  
*Pastor, Region 7*

**2. Exodus MCC**  
(Abilene, Texas), *Rev.*  
*Margaret Walker,*  
*Pastor, Region 7*

**3. Cornerstone MCC**  
(Mobile,  
Alabama), *Rev. Lee*  
*Carlton, Pastor, Region*  
*2*

**4. Water of Life MCC**  
(Tucson,  
Arizona), *Rev. Gale*  
*Rawson, Pastor,*  
*Region 6*

**5. First MCC of  
Atlanta** (Atlanta,  
Georgia), *Rev. Paul*  
*Graetz, Pastor, Region*  
*2*

**6. All God's Children  
MCC** (Minneapolis,  
Minnesota), *Rev. Paul*  
*Eknes-Tucker, Pastor,*  
*Region 2*

**7. Angels of Hope  
MCC** (Green Bay and  
Appleton, Wisconsin),  
*Rev. Elaine Thomas,*  
*Pastor, Region 2*

**Rev. Marion Harrison**, who turns 75 in November, is a member of the Pride Gay Men's Chorus in Palm Beach, Florida.

15! Wow! **MCC North London** (England) recently baptized 15 people!

On Pride Sunday, **Rev. Dr. Penny Nixon** was the guest preacher at New York City's Riverside Church, world renowned for its commitment to social justice and inclusivity.

**Milwaukee MCC** (Wisconsin) received an award for 20 years of service to the LGBT community in the Milwaukee area.

**Rev. Steve Torrence** offered the final prayer at the closing ceremony of the U.S. National Police Memorial in Washington, DC, which was attended by over 5000 people from around the world, including U.S. President Bush and Attorney General Gonzales.



**FOCUS ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULTS**

A record number of children and teens attended MCC's General Conference this year! Not only did they enjoy their own activities, they blessed us in their worship participation.

In2Faith is the Young Adult group that meets twice a month at **MCC Melbourne** (Australia).

**Agape MCC** (Fort Worth, Texas) has added a class for 5-9 year olds. They participate in worship through the Children's Sermon, then leave for their new class.

The teens at **Agape MCC** made a worship banner which they presented to the Delegates from ICM Nuevo Espiritu (Santiago, Chile) at General Conference. The youth were assisted in the project by **Rev. Lou Jordan**.

**Jesus MCC** (Indianapolis, Indiana) held a successful, well-attended annual Vacation Bible School.

**MCC San Diego** (California) provided the food for those attending the Youth Prom.

**First MCC** (Atlanta, Georgia) offers a Children's Sunday School hour for kids 5-12. Their recent theme was *Avalanche Ranch, a Wild Ride through God's Word*.

The children and youth of **MCC of Greater Dallas** (Texas) and their families enjoyed a swimming party and picnic.

It's a FAD! A Family Activity Day, that is! The Children's Ministry at **MCC Omaha** (Nebraska) hosted a picnic and family time at a local park.

**Rev. Kevin Downer** spoke to the Transgender Youth at the

**8. Brightwaves MCC**  
(Brighton, England),  
Rev. Debbie Gaston,  
Pastor, Region 4

**9. Christ Chapel MCC**  
(Santa Ana, California),  
Rev. Robin White,  
Pastor, Region 6

**10. Church of the  
Trinity MCC** (Sarasota,  
Florida), Rev. Dr. Mona  
West, Pastor, Reg. 7

**11. Circle of Light  
MCC** (Miami, Florida),  
Rev. Carlos Cruz,  
Pastor, Region 7

**12. Divine Peace MCC**  
(Pontiac, Michigan),  
Rev. Tyrone Sweeting,  
Interim Pastor, Region  
5

**13. Emmanuel MCC**  
(Spokane,  
Washington), Wayne  
Shull, Interim Pastoral  
Leader, Reg. 1

**14. FirstCoast MCC**  
(St. Augustine,  
Florida), Rev. Ruth  
Jensen-Forbell, Pastor,  
Region 7

**15. Gentle Shepherd  
MCC** (Phoenix,  
Arizona), Rev. Brad  
Wishon and Rev.  
Bonnie Ott, Co-Pastors,  
Region 6

**16. Harbor MCC**  
(Galveston, Texas),  
Rev. Pat Farnan,  
Pastor, Region 6

**17. Healing Spirit  
MCC** (Rochester,  
Minnesota), Rev.  
Nancy Horvath-Zurn,  
Pastor, Region 2

**18. Heartland MCC**  
(San Bernardino,

Broadway Youth Center in Chicago (Illinois), addressing questions of faith and spirituality.



## GERMAN MCCs PARTICIPATED IN KIRCHENTAG

### By Rev. Thomas Friedhoff

How to describe the Kirchentag to the non-German world? Let's try it this way: Imagine a huge fair. But this fair is not about computers or machines or something like that, this fair is about church. Usually Germans do not care about church at all. But for some strange reason they care about Kirchentag.

Every other year, the Lutheran Church turns a German city for four days into a great, colorful and exciting church fair. About 100,000 people take part as participants and about 1 million come along as guests. This year's event took place in Cologne.

The core of a Kirchentag usually is the "Market of Opportunities," four or five huge exhibition halls filled with hundreds of booths run by church-initiatives, groups, parties, religious orders -- and MCC!

Since 1991, MCC has taken part at Kirchentag. Some people from **MCC Hamburg** began this outreach, but now is a wonderful joint venture of **MCC Köln**, **MCC Hamburg**, and **Salz der Erde MCC** in Stuttgart, coordinated by **Rev. Thomas Friedhoff**, the German development worker for Region 4.

**Frank Wolf** from Stuttgart did a brilliant job doing the overall organization. Others from Salz der Erde MCC planned and created the decoration of the booth. Some people from MCC Köln set up a coffee bar at the booth. Many people stopped by for a coffee break and homemade cake, which had been baked the night before.

The Kirchentag's worship service and the morning devotions were produced in Hamburg. The German Network Meeting (delegates of the German MCCs) had just finished a new all-German MCC leaflet to use it for the first time for Kirchentag.

As soon as the exhibition halls open their gates for the "market of opportunities" they are overcrowded with people strolling around, discussing with those at the booths and with each other. In the middle of everything for three days: 14 MCCers in three shifts at our booth, discussing questions like: why LBGT people are running "something like their own church", how you can be gay and Christian, giving advice to

California), *Rev. Nori Zelif, Pastor, Region 6*

**19. Heartland MCC** (Springfield, Illinois), *Allan Cook, Interim Pastoral Leader, Reg. 2*

**20. Holy Covenant MCC** (Brookfield, Illinois), *Rev. Danny Spears, Pastor, Reg. 2*

**21. Holy Cross MCC** (Pensacola, Florida), *Rev. Sandy O'Steen, Pastor, Region 7*

**22. Imago Dei MCC** (Glen Mills, Pennsylvania), *Rev. Karla Fleshman, Pastor, Region 3*

**23. King of Peace MCC** (St. Petersburg, Florida), *Rev. Nathan Meckley, Interim Pastor, Region 7*

**24. MCC Austin at Freedom Oaks** (Austin, Texas), *Rev. Robyn Provis, Interim Pastor, Region 6*

**25. MCC Detroit** (Detroit, Michigan), *Rev. Mark Bidwell, Pastor, Region 5*

**26. MCC Good Shepherd** (Sydney, Australia), *Rev. Robert Clark, Pastor, Region 1*

**27. MCC Hartford** (Connecticut), *Rev. George Chien, Pastor, Region 5*

**28. MCC Illiana** (Lake Station, Indiana), *Rev. Angie Thinnis, Pastor, Region 5*

**29. MCC in the Valley**

coming out, selling coffee and cake, and distributing leaflets.

One of the Kirchentag's highlights is always the Kirchentag's-worship service. On Friday night when all churches of the Kirchentag's city have a service; MCC is invited to worship, too. This time it was for a very moving and intense service at MCC Cologne.

Each Kirchentag's year the German MCCs wonder if we really should take part, take up the tremendous workload again. But as soon as we are there, we know that it is worth the effort. It just makes sense to take part where "church" is presenting itself as exciting and interesting and to show Germany how exciting and interesting our MCC is!



#### CREATIVE MINISTRY IDEAS YOU CAN USE!

Folks at **MCC Melbourne** (Australia) boarded the Love Boat for a South Pacific Islands Cruise Trivia Night. Everyone wore their most colorful Pacific attire!

Does your church have mice? Well, **Christ Covenant MCC** (Decatur, Georgia) does! The "Church Mice" are the folks who volunteer to clean the building!

**New Creation MCC** (Columbus, Ohio) has created a weekly online chat group to share prayer concerns and praises and to study Scripture together. This technology will soon include classes, chats with the Pastor, book discussions, and groups such as "Young, Queer, and Spiritual."

Folks at **MCC Manchester** (England) have added the church's website address to their personal emails, Internet discussion lists, and their MySpace or similar pages, inviting others to check out the site or even to come to church with them.

Can you be BUTCH? Well, if you are a member of **MCC Omaha** (Nebraska) you can! All you have to do is join the *Building Up The Church Home* ministry team. **Cindy Klenda** leads the BUTCH Team in caring for and maintaining the church's property.

**MCC Rehoboth** (Delaware) selects items from *Around the Fellowship* and press releases/statements from MCC to include in their church newsletter. **Angels of Hope MCC** (Green Bay and Appleton, Wisconsin) does likewise. **MCC Corpus Christi** (Texas), **Divine Peace MCC** (Pontiac, Michigan), **Gentle Shepherd MCC** (Tallahassee, Florida), **MCC Hartford** (Connecticut), and **MCC Louisville** (Kentucky) are among the churches who forward items in their entirety to their email lists. **MCC Los Angeles** posts MCC news items on the church bulletin board. How does your church share the exciting news of what is

(North Hollywood, California), *Rev. Dr. Bob Goss, Pastor, Region 6*

**30. MCC Key West** (Key West, Florida), *Rev. Charles Tigard, Interim Pastor, Reg. 7*

**31. MCC Lehigh Valley** (Allentown, Pennsylvania), *Rev. Elizabeth Goudy, Pastor, Region 3*

**32. MCC Louisville** (Louisville, Kentucky), *Rev. Dee Dale, Pastor, Region 5*

**33. MCC Melbourne** (Melbourne, Australia), *Rev. Heather Creighton, Pastor, Region 1*

**34. MCC Montana** (Great Falls, Montana), *Rev. Gina Hartung, Pastor, Region 1*

**35. MCC Naples** (Naples, Florida), *Rev. Rick Sosbe, Pastor, Region 7*

**36. MCC New York** (NYC, New York), *Rev. Pat Bumgardner, Pastor, Region 3*

**37. MCC of Elizabethtown** (Elizabethtown, Kentucky), *Rev. Cathy Porter, Pastor, Region 5*

**38. MCC of Greater Dallas** (Dallas, Texas), *Rev. Colleen Darraugh, Pastor, Region 7*

**39. MCC of Greater St. Louis** (Missouri), *Rev. Dr. Carol Trissell, Pastor, Region 2*

happening in the MCC world?

As part of the Rainbow Nights at Trinity series **Church of the Trinity MCC** (Sarasota, Florida) hosted "Jennie McNulty: Comedian, Fitness Expert and Professional Football Player" for a night of laughter and entertainment. Peterson Tuscano appeared doing his new show -- and on September 29 Vickie Shaw will be performing. Advance sale tickets are \$20 (USD). Call 941-355-0847 to reserve yours!

**MCC Montana** (Great Falls, Montana) has established a new Parish Care Health Team, consisting of **Irene Crawford**, a Registered Nurse; **Law Koemstedt**, a certified massage and Reiki therapist; and **Dr. Rick Reynolds**, a licensed Chiropractor.

Wanna learn to two-step? **Agape MCC** (Ft. Worth, Texas) offers the class!

The Open Arms Odyssey Players at **Open Arms MCC** (Rochester, New York) performed for the first time. The troupe presented a playlet in place of the first reading during worship.

**MCC of the Palm Beaches** (Palm Beach Gardens, Florida) initiated *The Next Level*, a new service in a casual, contemporary Christian praise/worship setting incorporating drama, dance/movement, singing, praise team, skits, multi-media, guest speakers, and Communion. The adopted Bible verse for the service is John 6:37, so the service is at 6:37 pm on the second Sunday of each month.

**MCC Los Angeles** (West Hollywood, California) has instituted a *Trauma Survivors Group* for those who have endured hate crimes, rape, incest, abuse, or other traumas. Another group, *Breaking Up is Hard to Do*, provides support for those experiencing the end of a relationship or other major life transition.

Affirming one another! **Water of Life MCC** (Tucson, Arizona) used an idea from the National Black Justice Coalition to welcome and affirm LGBT people in their midst. As the name of each person in attendance was read, the congregation responded "May you find God's love in this place." In so doing, they were able to highlight the freedom to worship and that everyone was welcome and safe in this church.

At a recent monthly *Quorum*, folks at **MCC Sydney** (Australia) broadened their understanding of transgender people and how they experience life. The conversation was led by **Angela Williams** and **Paula Kaye**.

Church on the Road! **MCC Illiana** (Lake Station, Indiana) had their worship service one Sunday at Hidden Lake Park before their annual church picnic.

**40. MCC of Northern Virginia** (Fairfax, Virginia), *Rev. Kharma Amos, Pastor, Region 3*

The Mixed Blessings, a group from **Trinity MCC** (Gainesville, Florida), staffs a concession booth at University of Florida games. For the 2006-7 season, they made almost \$10,000 (USD) for the church.

**41. MCC Paducah** (Kentucky), *Rev. Lillian Ferguson, Pastor, Region 5*

**MCC Hartford** (Connecticut) has added a monthly evening Praise Service, focusing on praise music and utilizing different musicians. **Gary Collier**, who served over 20 years as clergy in the Church of God in Christ and now is volunteer staff at MCC Hartford, and **KC Redmon** are facilitating the service.

**42. MCC of San Antonio** (San Antonio, Texas), *Rev. Mick Hinson, Pastor, Reg. 6*

Each month congregants at **Sunshine Cathedral MCC** (Fort Lauderdale, Florida) collect packages of dried fruit, jerky, nuts, and other snacks to send to the troops in Iraq.

**43. MCC of South London** (London, England), *Rev. Elder Jean White, Pastor, Region 4*

Twice a month the folks at **Good Hope MCC** (Cape Town, South Africa) have a Happy Hour. This month they discussed Communion one evening and will enjoy a Movie Night on the other.

**44. MCC of the Blue Ridge** (Roanoke, Virginia), *Rev. Catherine Houchins, Pastor, Region 3*

For the sixth year, **MCC Lubbock** (Texas) had a float in their city's 4th on Broadway Parade, which celebrates Independence Day in the U.S.

**45. MCC of the Coachella Valley** (Palm Springs, California), *Rev. David Pelletier, Pastor, Reg. 6*

A member of the emerging congregation of **achurch4me MCC** (Chicago, Illinois) is organizing a Seniors Ministry. The group will host and participate in social, spiritual growth, service, and pastoral care discussions and activities for those in their mid-50s and older. They will also do hospital and home visits, serve Communion to the sick and home bound, and visit with seniors in the community.

**46. MCC of the Hudson Valley** (Albany, New York), *Rev. Janet Avery, Interim Pastor, Reg. 3*

The Bike and Hike group led by Jim Day at **Imago Dei MCC** (Glen Mills, Pennsylvania) goes on a weekly outing, not only for physical exercise, but also for spiritual exercise as they talk to one another about personal faith issues.

**47. MCC of the Quad Cities** (Davenport, Iowa), *Rev. Rich Hendricks, Pastor, Region 2*

On *Break the Barrier* Sundays the folks at **Wichita Falls MCC** (Texas) take an extra offering for their fund which will provide the resources needed to hire a full-time director of music and worship. The goal is \$36,000 (USD).

**48. MCC Philippines** (Quezon City, Philippines), *Cjay Agbayani, Pastor, Region 3*

A group from **FirstCoast MCC** (St. Augustine, Florida) gathered to play Bunko, a lively dice game, and enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship and snacks.

**49. MCC San Francisco** (California), *Rev. Chris Glaser, Interim Pastor, Reg. 1*

Let's go on a picnic! Each month the folks at **MCC and ICM Los Angeles** (West Hollywood, California) are enjoying a Sunday afternoon picnic at WeHo Park. The church's picnics are sponsored by various groups, including Azania, Men's Spirituality Group, and ICM LA.

**50. MCC Seattle**

(Seattle, Washington),  
*Rev. Anne Hulse,*  
*Interim Pastor, Reg. 1*

**51. MCC Sydney**  
(Sydney, Australia),  
*Rev. Karl Hand, Interim*  
*Pastor, Region 1*

**52. MCC United**  
(Tulsa, Oklahoma),  
*Rev. Carolyn Mobley,*  
*Interim Pastor,*  
*Region 7*

**53. New Coast MCC**  
(New South Wales,  
Australia), *Rev.*  
*Shelagh Zinke, Pastor,*  
*Region 1*

**54. New Life MCC**  
(Norfolk, Virginia),  
*Pulpit Open, Region 3*

**55. Open Arms MCC**  
(Pahoa, Hawaii), *Rev.*  
*Elder Debbie Martin,*  
*Pastor, Region 1*

**56. Open Door MCC**  
(Boyd's, Maryland),  
*Rev. Robert Appar-*  
*Taylor, Pastor, Region*  
*3*

**57. Peninsula MCC**  
(San Mateo, California),  
*Rev. Terri Echelbarger,*  
*Pastor, Region 1*

**58. Pikes Peak MCC**  
(Colorado Springs,  
Colorado), *Rev. Dan*  
*Koeshall, Interim*  
*Pastor, Region 7*

**59. Resurrection**  
**Beach MCC** (Costa  
Mesa, California), *Open*  
*Pulpit, Region 6*

**60. Spirit of Hope**  
**MCC** (Kansas City,  
Missouri), *Rev. John*  
*Barbone, Pastor,*  
*Reg. 2*

**61. St. Jude's MCC**

The Golden Girls Review was again a huge success and benefited the ministries of **Central Texas MCC from the Heart** (Waco).

The folks at **'Ohana MCC** (Honolulu, Hawai'i) viewed and discussed the documentary *Queer Asian Americans in Christian Churches*.

Write those grants! Having already secured financial grants, **Stephe** and the fundraising team at **Journey MCC** (Birmingham, England) are currently writing submissions for a two-day-a-week LGBT Older Person's Worker, a one-day-a-week Trans Community Worker, and a two-day-a-week LGBT Families Coordinator.

**MCC of the Quad Cities** (Davenport, Iowa) invites members to pick up boxes of small envelopes on sale and then the church uses them for offering envelopes, instead of purchasing the preprinted ones.

Doing it right! The folks at **Jesus MCC** (Indianapolis, Indiana) held their first Prom -- the way they all wish their high school proms had been!

**MCC in the Valley** (North Hollywood, California) had a Healing Visualization Service led by pharmacist Jim Avedikian, owner of the Phoenix Wellness Center in Pasadena.

**MCC Omaha** (Nebraska) put their Congregational Meeting packets online for folks to download and print, saving the church significantly in printing and postage costs. Wonder where they got that great idea?

A Heritage Dinner! Friends gathered at **Harbor MCC** (Galveston, Texas) with everyone bringing a dish representing their heritage. There was an amazing array of interesting food!

A couple from **FirstCoast MCC** (St. Augustine, Florida) had major work done on their property as a fundraiser for the church. They paid the church per hour for each worker -- and they furnished lunch and a pool for swimming after the work was completed!



MCC's congregation in Montana has taken creative steps to increase the effectiveness of their outreach. The former **MCC Shepherd of the Plains** officially changed their name to **MCC Montana** to reflect their mission to the entire state. They sold their previous property, which they had outgrown, and purchased a former Unity Church building in Great Falls. The facility has

(Wilmington, North Carolina), *Rev. Amanda McCullough, Pastor, Region 3*

**62. SunCoast Cathedral MCC** (Venice, Florida), *Rev. Dr. Sherry Kennedy, Pastor, Region 7*

**63. Sweet Spirit MCC** (Salem, Oregon), *Rev. Jill Nelson, Pastor, Region 1*

**64. Treasure Valley MCC** (Boise, Idaho), *Renee McCall, Interim Pastoral Pastor, Reg. 1*

**65. Tree of Life MCC** (Ann Arbor, Michigan), *Rev. Fran Mayes, Pastor, Region 5*

**66. Trinity MCC** (Arlington, Texas), *Curtis Smith, Interim Pastoral Leader, Reg. 7*

**67. Valley Ministries MCC** (Stockton, California), *Rev. Terri Miller, Senior Pastor, Region 1*

**68. Wichita Falls MCC** (Wichita Falls, Texas), *Rev. Lea Brown, Senior Pastor, Region 7*

4800 square feet and is two stories with a basement on a corner lot in the central south side of town. It is a well-known and easily accessible building, abounding with possibilities for the LGBT community state-wide. They now have multiple class and meeting rooms, offices, a sanctuary which seats 200, a fellowship hall and a kitchen. **Rev. Gina Hartung** is the pastor.

**Rev. Elder Jean White** is retiring from the Moderator's Nominating Committee and **Stephen Harte** has completed five years of service on the Board of Administration. Our thanks to both for their faithful service to God through these ministries of MCC.

**Rev. Danny Spears** resigned his position with **MCC of Corpus Christi** (Texas) and has started his new ministry as pastor of **Holy Covenant MCC** (Brookfield, Illinois). [RevDan58@aol.com](mailto:RevDan58@aol.com)

**Rev. Lu Johnson** was ordained at **Open Arms MCC** (Rochester, New York). The church had a barbeque the evening before in honor of her Texas roots. [oamcc@frontiernet.net](mailto:oamcc@frontiernet.net)

**Good Shepherd Parish MCC** (Chicago, Illinois), the first MCC east of the Mississippi River in the U.S., had its final worship service on July 8. Former pastors and worship leaders participated. Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley proclaimed the day as *Good Shepherd Parish MCC Day in the City of Chicago* to recognize the congregation's 37 years of ministry in the community.

**Harbor MCC** (Galveston, Texas) has moved their Sunday morning worship service to 5:30 pm.

Congratulations to the following who were approved for clergy ordination in Region 3. **Marilyn Bowens, Carlton Rutherford,** and **Terri Steed, St. Johns MCC** (Raleigh, North Carolina); **B. K. Hipsher, MCC of Northern Virginia** (Fairfax); **Lu Johnson, Open Arms MCC** (Rochester, New York); and **Jane Nelson, MCC Richmond** (Virginia).

**Harvest MCC** (Denton, Texas) has received approval to begin building their new sanctuary!



**Rosemary Gray**, a Board member at **Harvest MCC** (Denton, Texas), passed away recently. She leaves her spouse **Teresa** and daughters. [Hmcc1@verizon.net](mailto:Hmcc1@verizon.net)

**Rev. Dwayne Johnson** was sitting in the office at **Resurrection MCC** (Houston, Texas) on a Thursday evening when suddenly water was pouring in the windows and falling from above -- along

with ceiling tiles! The rain storm had entered the building. Damage was primarily to the office suite and the music area above, although some water seeped into the sanctuary. People quickly gathered to move and secure items and begin the cleanup. Professionals worked through the night to extract the water and repair the damage. MCCR folks mobilized, worked during the weekend, and by Sunday had things back in place and were ready for worship! [revdj@resurrectionmcc.org](mailto:revdj@resurrectionmcc.org)

Our condolences go to **Adrian Buganey**, the spouse for almost 40 years of **Rev. Ivor Holmans**, who transitioned to Heaven earlier this year. He served as Pastor of **MCC Brisbane (Australia)** from 1978 until his retirement at age 70 in May 2003. He was a staunch advocate for LGBT rights. He stood on the steps of Parliament House, wearing clergy vestments and a rainbow stole, to draw attention to the government's discrimination. As a result, his three children ceased all contact with him. He was a volunteer with the Queensland AIDS Council from its inception, cooked for Queensland Positive People on a regular basis, and served as a visiting chaplain to gay men in the Queensland Prison system. **Rev. John Fowler** officiated at the Celebration of Life Service for Rev. Holmans. Cards may be sent to Adrian Buganey, PO Box 282, Annerley QLD 4103, Australia.

Thanks to all who held **Connie Meadows**, Assistant to the Moderator, in your prayers during her recovery from an injury to her foot. She fell on her first day as a Masters of Arts in Theological Studies student at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. [ConnieMeadows@MCCchurch.net](mailto:ConnieMeadows@MCCchurch.net)

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