

# Metropolitan Community Churches

## Reach

October 2008



*Welcome! To the first issue of Reach; a glimpse into faith, international, federal, secular and advocacy observances. Our reach encompasses the action and the impact of much of the work that we are called to do - We reach out to the world with the hope that lives are transformed and communities come together because of the reach of our missions and ministries.*

*It is our prayer that as we endeavor to tear down walls and build up hope together that we not only extend our reach into the world; we reach one another as well. From the north, south, east and west; we come, and as we reach the points where our journeys converge and experiences overlap in the cross walks of our living, it is in these moments and places that we are our very best selves.*

*As we take one step at a time through traditions, observances and moments of remembrance old, new and emerging; we invite you to join us on this journey through the month of October 2008.*

Namaste

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**A Free Resource for You  
from Sunshine Cathedral**

*When I think about  
resourcing, I always tend to  
believe that the best*

## October 2008 Observances

### October 2008 is GLBT History Month & Diversity Month



The Month of October is designated as **GLBT History Month**. Each day of the month is dedicated to celebrating the life and contribution of specific individuals who have made notable contributions to the GLBT movement. Beginning October 1st, there will be a video, biographical information and resources developed to connect us to the lives and journeys of these GLBT icons available at: <http://www.glbthistorymonth.com/glbthistorymonth/2008/>.

October is also celebrated as **Diversity Month** - a time to celebrate the unique things about cultures, faith and each other to foster a sense of greater and deeper mutual understanding. It is our prayer that the 31 days in October of this year will mark a great coming together in new and exciting ways to celebrate the spirit of unity.

### October 2008 - Liturgical Calendar

October falls within the period on the Liturgical Calendar designated as "**Ordinary Time**". Ordinary Time is the liturgical period outside of the distinctive liturgical seasons, and runs 33 to 34 weeks. It is called "ordinary" because it is derived from the word ordinal or "numbered." The liturgical color for the season is green and this period covers Pentecost to Advent.

#### Prayer for Ordinary Time

*Almighty and Loving God,  
We are your people and you have called us by name  
may everything we do  
be drawn from your inspiration through to its completion  
and thrive by your saving grace.*

*Let the deeds of our hearts and hands always find their origin in You  
and may we take time to experience the light of your presence in one  
another.*

*We ask these blessings in your many names,  
May it be so. Amen.*

Adapted from *The Liturgy of the Hours*

### October 4, 2008

The **Feast of St Francis of Assisi** is celebrated by many communities on October 4 each year. This celebration commemorates the life of St Francis, who was born in the 12th century and is known as patron saint of animals and the environment. This observance is often marked with special services and celebrations that involve the blessing of pets.



### October 5, 2008

During the month of October, our MCC congregations around the world will set aside one Sunday to observe "**Fellowship Sunday**" -- marking the 40th anniversary of MCC's founding. (MCC's actual founding date is October 6, 1968 -- but many will celebrate this anniversary on Sunday, October 5 this year; others, depending on local church schedules, will select another Sunday in October.) **Happy 40th Anniversary!**

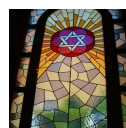


Fellowship Sunday is observed each year on the anniversary of MCC's founding, local congregations around the world join together to receive a special offering to support the important work of MCC's Strategic Plan and our "Tearing Down Walls, Building Up Hope" commitment. The 2008 special offering is designated for MCC's growing youth, teen and young adult ministries.



**World Communion Sunday** is a part of the Christian experience which offers congregations an opportunity to experience Holy Communion in the context of the global community of faith.

### October 8, 2008



The Evening of October 8, 2008 begins the observance of **Yom Kippur**, The Jewish Day of Atonement. This is the holiest day of the Jewish year and is observed with fasting, prayer, and repentance. In the Jewish calendar year, the observance begins at sunset on the previous day and for some a large feast that is held the afternoon before Yom Kippur officially begins.

*resourcing in the world happens when churches share resources with each other. I hope you will take advantage of this resource and others as we work toward building a network of resources between churches.*

**The Rev. Elder Lillie Brock**

Coordinating Ministry in Region 7  
Nebraska, Colorado, Oklahoma,  
Northern Texas, Florida and Western  
Canada

### Spirit and Truth

A Free Resource for You  
from Sunshine Cathedral

At Sunshine Cathedral we publish a monthly magazine called Spirit & Truth. S&T includes a short essay, an inspirational reflection and short prayer for every day of the month, quotations from scripture and other inspiring sources, fun facts about each month (such as the anniversary of the day one of Marilyn Monroe's dresses was sold, when Yom Kippur begins, the anniversary of the founding of MCC, or the date that is World Egg Day), a discussion guide for small groups, and brief services of morning and evening prayer.

You are free to use the content in whatever way you feel appropriate. We only ask that you always cite the author of the text you use and that you include in your citation that Spirit & Truth is a resource provided by Sunshine Cathedral MCC.

I hope you find this resource useful in your local ministries. At least the price is right.

To view the October 2008 edition of Spirit and Truth, ([Click Here](#)).

Best wishes,

Durrell+

Rev. Durrell Watkins, M.A.,  
M.Div.  
Sunshine Cathedral - Senior  
Pastor

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During The Day of Atonement, the faithful individually, and as a religious community, confess their wrongdoings and ask for God's forgiveness. The Scripture reference is found in Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 23:27-31, 25:9; and Numbers 29:7-11.

Yom Kippur is observed with solemn ritual in the synagogues and in the home, with fasting and prayer. In the synagogue, the observance begins with an evening service where the men wear their tallits, or prayer shawls and a morning service is held the next day and the blowing of the Shofar, or ram's horn bugle, brings the observance to a close.



### October 11, 2008

National Coming Out Day is an internationally-observed civil awareness day that encourages and supports the coming out discussion and acknowledgement of the journeys of LGBTQI individuals. The first National Coming Out Day was held on October 11, 1988. This date was chosen for the annual event in commemoration of the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.



National Coming Out Day is an observance that increases the visibility of LGBTQI people around the world and encourages those previously silent to make their voices heard. In the United States, the day is facilitated by the Human Rights Campaign's National Coming Out Project ([Read more](#)).

#### A Coming Out Prayer

*Loving God of truth and justice,*

*We take these moments of truth in community with one another to stand united before you.*

*We come, just as we are; just as we are created to be. We come out from among the crowd to stand upon the solid rock to not just be counted, but to be counted on by those who need us the most.*

*As we speak out for justice, let the words of our mouths and meditations of our hearts be holy and acceptable as they rise up to greet you.*

*May our journeys and lives which are fueled by a thirst for justice serve as the continued strength that tears down walls and builds up hope.*

*In this life may all who seek liberation and transformation find their place at your table of peace.*

*In the name of all that is good and just.  
Amen*

### October 12, 2008



#### October 12th marks the 10th anniversary of the death of Matthew Shepard

Matthew Shepard died on October 12 at 12:53 am at a hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado. This tragic event has served as a wake up call that reminds us that the reach of discrimination and hate still extends to our communities and our schools. Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard, will mark the 10th anniversary of Matthew's death by attending a candlelight vigil in Minneapolis, MN. ([Read more](#)) Although his life was cut short, the impact of his spirit is still known among us.

*"Matt's gift was people. He loved being with people, helping people, and making others feel good. The hope of a better world, free of harassment and discrimination because a person was different, kept him motivated."*- Dennis Shepard

**National Clergy Appreciation Day** is the day set aside in the US to acknowledge and celebrate their efforts and presence in our lives. Take a few moments to: write a thank you note or send an E-card to brighten their day and thank them for all that they do.

### October 13, 2008

Columbus Day is a US Federal Holiday that is marked by celebration that pays tribute to the 1st journey to America in 1492 by Christopher Columbus and is always celebrated on the second Monday in October. ([2008 US Federal Holiday Schedule](#))

### October 13-19, 2008

The Festival of Sukkot begins on the fifth day following Yom Kippur, a Jewish observance. The word Sukkot means booths and refers to the temporary dwellings that are inhabited during the observance. The name of the observance is frequently translated "The Feast of Tabernacles".



Sukkot shares a historical and agricultural connection. The historical connection commemorates the forty-year period during which the children of Israel wandered in the desert and dwelled in temporary shelters. The agricultural connection refers to a harvest festival, and is sometimes referred to as the Festival of Ingathering.

The sukkah should have at least three walls covered with a sturdy material that will not blow away. The roof should be made of material referred to as sekhakh (which means covering). To fulfill the commandment, sekhakh should be something that grew or drew its life from the ground and was cut off, i.e. tree branches, corn stalks, bamboo reeds, sticks, or 2 x 4 wooden planks. The sekhakh should be placed sparsely enough to allow

rain to enter, and allow the stars to be seen and must be set in place last.

#### October 20, 2008



**The birth of Bab Ba** (1819-1850) is celebrated on October 20th. He was the Prophet-Herald of the Baha'i Faith, whose mission was to proclaim the imminent arrival of "Him Whom God shall make manifest," namely Baha'u'llah

(1817-1892), the Founder of the Baha'i Faith. (The title Bab means "the Gate" in Arabic.)

On Oct. 20, Baha'is celebrate the birth of Bab Ba and observe this Holy Day by abstaining from work and holding joyous meetings open to all. There are no prescribed ceremonies, but gatherings usually involve prayers, devotional readings, music and fellowship.

#### **Baha'i Prayer**

*"Help us to bear witness, O my God, that Thou hast created me to know Thee and to worship Thee. I testify, at this moment, to my powerlessness and to Thy might, to my poverty and to Thy wealth. There is none other God but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting."*

#### **The Installation of the Guru Granth Sahib as Eternal Guru**

commemorates the installation of the Sikh scriptures by Guru Gobind Sing; these scriptures were installed as the perpetual guru.



#### October 21, 2008



**Shemini Atzeret** is a Jewish observance which means "the eighth day of assembly," follows the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Shemini Atzeret also marks the beginning of the rainy season following the harvest in Israel.

#### October 22, 2008

**Simchat Torah**, Hebrew for "rejoicing in the Law", celebrates the completion of the annual reading of the Torah. Simchat Torah is a Jewish observance consisting of a joyous festival, which affirms the view of the Torah as a tree of life and demonstrate a living example of never-ending, lifelong study.



#### October 24, 2008



The anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter on 24 October 1945 has been celebrated as **United Nations Day** since 1948. It has traditionally been marked throughout the world by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the achievements and goals of the Organization.

#### October 28, 2008



**Diwali Festival** is the abbreviation of the Sanskrit word 'Deepavali', which means 'rows of lights'. One of the major Hindu festivals, it is celebrated to commemorate the returning of Rama and Sita to their kingdom Ayodhya after fourteen years of exile. The festival symbolizes the victory of righteousness and the lifting of spiritual darkness. It is the celebration of victory of good over evil - and the glory of light.

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