

July 5, 2007

WFMCC Weekly Superhero Simon Peter



From our music director Karen, direct from MCC General Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona:

Dear Friends,

Wow! The sounds of celebration, clapping and singing with excitement are everywhere...all you hear are the sounds of joyful praise as you enter the huge hotel conference room for worship services. Before you are four multi-media screens, a live band and over 100 choir members - a choir that would be larger if only there was more room on stage!

There are almost 1,300 people here at General Conference from all over the world, including places like Jamaica, Australia, Latin America, England, and yes, even Wichita Falls. Everyone is excited to see familiar faces and to meet new faces. We enjoyed the first worship service Monday night which was led by our Moderator Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson. She taught us about "Pressing On in Faith," which is what MCC has been doing for nearly 40 years. We are reaching more and more in our community around the world, and we will continue pressing on for many years to come to extend God's grace and inclusive love to everyone.

Tuesday night we were doubly blessed by Rev. Lynice Pinkard who shared with us a message from the book of Isaiah. We learned that people in that time were oppressing and exploiting others, and there was quarreling and strife among them. They had forgotten the importance of love in their lives. Rev. Pinkard compared the fighting and exclusion in today's church to that of Isaiah's time, and she asked numerous times throughout her message, "What's love got to do with it?" We discovered through her sermon that love has "everything to do with it" where God and God's people are involved.

This means you and I have work to do because love is our motivator. Our God is a God of love, and as Isaiah said, "God's people will rebuild the ancient ruins and we will raise up the age-old foundations; we will be called the Repairer of Broken Walls." May we labor together to bring freedom to those who are oppressed, and be the Jesus of Justice we are learning about here at General Conference to our community in Wichita Falls and beyond!

See you Sunday....love and many blessings,

Karen

In This Issue:

- 1. Summer Cinema Sermon Series Continues
- 2. "What WFMCC Means To Me"
- 3. Donations for Flood Victims
- 4. 20th Anniversary T-Shirts Are Here
- 5. Parking at WFMCC
- 6. Upcoming WFMCC Men's Retreat
- 7. Staff Whereabouts
- 8. Save the Date for Pride!
- 9. Thanksgivings and Prayer Requests

1. Summer Cinema Sermon Series Continues

As we look ahead to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender film series the church will be hosting in August for Pride Week, we will also be exploring a different kind of "cinema" in sermons throughout the summer. What kind of movies do you like best during the summer? Romances? Superhero flicks? Blockbusters? Did you know you can find all three in the Bible?



From May 27 - August 26 the sermons on Sunday mornings will highlight some of the great romances and superheroes of the Bible, plus that great biblical blockbuster, the Book of Revelation. This week we will conclude our superhero portion of the series by taking a closer look at Simon Peter; next Sunday we will move onto the book of Revelation.

2. "What WFMCC Means To Me" by Raudel Gonzalez

Many thanks to Raudel "Rowdy" Gonzalez for sharing with us this week all that our church means to him. Rowdy joined WFMCC last year, and he recently ran for the position of mayor in Wichita Falls as an out gay man as well. He is truly dedicated to the value of "community," and is certainly a wonderful part of ours. Thank you, Rowdy!



"In October of 2006, a good friend of mine asked me a very simple question: 'Do you go to church?' I was caught by surprise, and my reply to him was that I had not been to church in over five years. I couldn't be a part of a church that condemned me instead of loving me as a child of God. He then went on to talk to me about a church that was for all of God's children, no matter who you are or who you love.

That first Sunday that I walked into WFMCC I was scared, as most new people would be. The first person I saw was our pastor, Lea Brown. She welcomed me and embraced me with the same love that God embraced me

with that day. You could feel the warmth and love from everyone who was there whether you knew them or not. I finally had found a church that loved me, welcomed me, and accepted me as a child of God.

Since then, I have embraced religion as my way of life and WFMCC has helped me accomplish this. To serve our Lord at WFMCC is what inspires me to move forward bringing God's word and love to all of God's children."

3. Donations for Flood Victims

As we all know, many people throughout Wichita Falls are suffering greatly because of rising flood waters throughout our city. This Sunday we will begin collecting donations of things many of these people and families need to begin recovering from the damage.

At this time we have been told that donations of canned and non-perishable food are needed. By this Sunday we will have more information about other things we can provide as well to help out our brothers and sisters, many of whom live on the East Side.

Please bring as much non-perishable and canned food as you can this Sunday, July 8th, and we will make sure it is delivered on Monday to the organizations that are helping distribute supplies. Please help us spread the word about what we are doing so that we can collect as much as possible. Thank you!

4. 20th Anniversary T-Shirts Are Here

If you ordered a t-shirt at our 20th Anniversary Revival, it has finally come in. Please talk with Hallie at church about picking yours up.

5. Parking at WFMCC

On Sunday mornings, please leave the spaces in front of the church building open for those with mobility issues and our first-time visitors. Thank you!

6. Upcoming WFMCC Men's Retreat

Mark your calendars now! Joshua Love, HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator for our denomination, will be leading a men's retreat starting the evening of

Friday, August 10th through Saturday, August 11th. This will be a time for the men of our church to get to know one another, and to talk about the issues and challenges of being gay and bisexual men in Wichita Falls. Stay tuned for more details soon.

7. Staff Whereabouts

Rev. Lea Brown will be in Scottsdale, Arizona attending the Clergy and General Conferences of our denomination from Tuesday, June 26th through Saturday, July 7th. She will be back in worship on the 8th.

If you have a pastoral care need while she is gone, please leave a message at the church at (940) 322-4100. Messages will be checked daily during her absence by someone from our Board of Trustees.

8. Save the Date for Pride!

Wichita Falls Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Weeks is coming up August 13th - 19th. We are making plans now to host a series of GLBT-themed films August 16th - 18th at the church, followed by a fabulous Pride worship service on Sunday and a celebration at Odds in the afternoon. A flyer with all the information will be available at our worship service on July 15th.



9. Thanksgivings and Prayer Requests

Thanksgivings for my parents and their unconditional love...for the WFMCC Worship and Praise Band...for Namesake...for my family and God's grace...for this church and chosen family...**Prayer requests** for healing for Betty Wintersteen...for healing for Kelly's dad...for comfort for Shay and Keri following the sudden death of Shay's dad...for healing for Toni, and strength for Hallie and Becky...for healing for Al Preston and strength for Ron...for healing for Laretta...for Jan's health...for Taylor while we are separated...for encouragement for Grant...for Debbie as her mom passes over...for prayers for all my family and friends.

Wichita Falls MCC
1401 Travis Street
Wichita Falls, TX 76301

(940) 322-4100
www.wichitafallsmcc.org

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Wichita Falls Metropolitan Community Church | 1401 Travis Street | Wichita Falls | TX | 76301