



AN OUTREACH TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF FAMILY OF FAITH MCC

MAY 1996



Dear Friends,

One of the questions I am asked most often is, "How am I to read the Bible?" Some of us are unaccustomed to God's Word and we don't know where to start. Others of us, are familiar with the Word but no longer comfortable with it because it has been used as a weapon against us. Where are we to begin (or begin again as the case may be)? Let's begin by remembering that a person who is near starvation, physically, can hardly enjoy a banquet feast. Oh it looks wonderful and he or she might ooh and aah over the possibilities, but one who has not been filled up for some time will only be able to take a few bites at a time. The body simply cannot digest any more until it becomes used to being fed again. The same is true for those who have not been filled with God's word for some time. We have a hunger and even a spiritual starvation. Perhaps it's because we have been overcome by tragedy or crisis, or perhaps we've never been filled with the Word of God. Some of us may have been hit over the head with the Word and we're fearful of more scarring and bruising. Whatever the reason you're not feeding yourself with the Word of God, here's a prescription that just might work!

*(Continued on next page)***WEEKLY CALENDAR**

Sundays	9:15 Adult Education 11:00 Worship Service
Wednesdays	6:30 Praise & Worship 7:30 Choir Rehearsal
Thursdays	7:30 Codependency Support Group

ONE BODY, ONE MIND,  
ONE SPIRIT.



**DISTRICT CONFERENCE  
in Austin, TX  
May 16-19th**

Family of Faith will be sending our lay delegate, Diana; Pastor Nancy; and several others to District Conference this month. Khama & Julie will be singing special music, Pastor Nancy will be appointed to the BOM, and Khama will be leading a workshop about young adult ministry within UFMCC. This is an exciting time for Family of Faith and we will have many representatives of our growing & thriving congregation at this year's conference. Keep all those who will be travelling in your prayers.



*Happy  
Mother's  
Day*

## UPCOMING & ONGOING EVENTS

**MONTHLY**

- 1st Sunday of Month Potluck
- 1st Friday of Month  
SAFE HAVEN (ages 18-30)
- 2nd Sunday of Month Board Meeting  
(open to all)
- 10th of each month..newsletter due.
- 3rd Wednesday of month  
newsletter mailing 5:30 pm

**MAY 1996**

- 5th - Pastor Nancy's 1 year  
Anniversary with Family of Faith
- 6th - Caregiver's Team Mtg 7:00 pm
- 12th - Special Mother's Day Worship  
(Nancy McDonald, Vice President of  
the National PFLAG will be speaking)
- 13th - Stewardship Team Mtg 7:00 pm
- 16 - 19th - South Central District  
Conference in Austin, TX
- 20th - Fundraising Team Mtg 7:00 pm
- 26th - Pentacost Sunday &  
1:00 Assimilation Team Mtg.

**Moving?**

Please advise the church of your new address so you can continue to receive the newsletter.  
You can reach us at 622-1441.

*(Pastor's Pen continued)*

First of all, choose a Bible that is written in a language which is easy for you to read. Please be careful to get a translation (New King James, NIV Study Bible, Revised Standard Version, etc.) as opposed to a paraphrase (The Living Bible, The Way, Good News For Modern Man, etc.) A translation is a translation of the most original text found. A paraphrase is a human being's interpretation of what he/she thinks the Bible means.

Secondly, begin in the Gospels, especially with Mark and Luke. Read these stories about Jesus which are some of the easiest passages to understand and on which to concentrate.

Third, before you ever open your Bible, pray for God to help you understand what you are about to read.

Fourth, when you pick up your Bible to read, set a timer for 5 minutes. Just 5 minutes at a time is good for starters. Remember the starved person at the banquet? If we've been spiritually starved, we will only be able to bite off a little bit at a time! Just 5 minutes at a time as many times during the day as you feel the need for God's Word and/or whenever you are feeling fearful, doubtful, nervous, anxious, angry or frustrated.

Fifth, Don't hesitate to read aloud. It will help you concentrate on and comprehend the meaning of the passage. If you read a verse and don't understand it, read it again! You may find yourself reading and rereading for the entire 5 minutes. That's OK! Let the Living Waters of the Word soak into your parched soul. Let the Bread of Life feed you until you're so full you need to stop for the digestive processes to take over!

Sixth, When your time set for reading the Word is over, pray again, asking God to help you to use what you have read in your daily walk. Then when you leave your house, take your Bible with you. You never know when the 5 minute "craving" to be filled will hit again. May God bless you and fill you as you reach for God's Word!

Pastor Nancy

# WELCOME Kathy

Family of Faith is THRILLED to welcome our new keyboardist, Kathy C. Kathy started her service to God at Family of Faith MCC on Easter Sunday, April 7. The choir has already been blessed beyond expression with Kathy's gifts & talents. Be sure to extend a warm Family of Faith welcome to Kathy the next time you see her.

*(HINT: She's the blonde one behind the piano.)*



## CHOIR NOTES

Choir practices continue to be held on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 pm following worship service. We are blessed to have our new keyboardist, Kathy. I am so very excited about the opportunities we have for growth and for experimentation with new types of music to glorify God.

I'd like to issue a personal invitation to any of you who think you might like to try singing with the choir. Please feel free to come on a Wednesday evening soon. There is no obligation. Appearing at choir practice does not, despite rumors to the contrary, commit you for life.

We are currently working on music for Pride month. We are also accepting requests, within reason, for music anyone in the congregation might like to hear as special music on a Sunday morning. Feedback about music at Family of Faith MCC is encouraged and appreciated.

—Kharma

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Pastor Nancy led a daring and brave group of us through a four month tour on spiritual gifts. She provided scripture, examples and discussion into some two dozen or more gifts. We discussed assets I never thought of as gifts from God, such as mercy, singleness, and suffering. The main focus was to assist us in determining the gifts God gave each of us in order to better do God's work. These gifts allow us to provide service to the Church in a renewed way.

At the end of the class we took an inventory which determined which gifts God has given us. We discovered that gifts can change from time to time and that our present gifts show us how we can be of service to our fellowship now. My gifts were faith, mercy, giving and spiritual music. Most of us were a bit surprised by our gifts, and Pastor Nancy guided us to areas in the Church where we can be most beneficial such as worship, stewardship or the choir.

The spiritual gift of spirit music is especially precious to me, because music and especially singing had always been a great joy for me. I went through many years of spiritual darkness when I thought God didn't and couldn't love me, a homosexual and a substance abuser. I had no joy in my heart, and no desire to sing.

But today, after healing from deep emotional wounds and some acceptance of myself, God has given me back the joy! Singing again is my great pleasure and my commitment to God and myself is to sing for God's glory!

— Marvita M.

**Don't Miss  
the Next Christian  
Education Class.**

See Next Page  
for More Information

**AROUND  
the  
Fellowship**



**UFMCC CELEBRATES LIFE**  
Many elements characteristic of UFMCC worship celebrations can be traced to the first service in 1968: communion open to all, combining of diverse Christian traditions, joyous tears of the congregation, and the message proclaimed. In his first MCC sermon, titled, "Be True To You," the Rev. Troy D. Perry preached a three point gospel empowering people to bring Christian Salvation, Christian Community and Christian Social Action to the world; this vision statement continues to guide the Fellowship today. The UFMCC has two sacraments: baptism and communion. We have six rites: membership, holy union or matrimony, funeral or memorial service, laying on of hands, blessing and ordination. Today the worship styles vary widely among the Fellowship churches based on the background of the pastor and the composition of the local community. The theology of the UFMCC pastors covers the entire spectrum from liberal to conservative, but all agree with modern biblical and theological scholars who find that scripture does not condemn loving, responsible homosexual relationships.

The few Bible passages that are cited as proof that homosexuality is a sin have been misinterpreted or mistranslated. Over-emphasis on a few obscure scriptures can cause people to miss the broad theme of the Bible: God's enduring love for all people, expressed as passion for justice and solidarity with the outcasts, sexual or otherwise.

*\*\* Watch this space as we discover more and more of what our denomination is all about!*

# OUR TRIBE

## QUEER FOLKS, GOD, JESUS, AND THE BIBLE

by Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson

*This book is the theme of our next Adult Sunday School class. The class will begin on April 28th and will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am. The cost is \$20.00 which includes the book; Scholarships are available. Please contact the church as soon as possible so that we might order your book ~~and~~ reserve your place in the class!*

*"Our Tribe will open many hearts to a new hearing of the Gospel."*

*-- John Shelby Sparrow*

*"Nancy Wilson's achievement is ~~undoubtedly~~ important, both for 'our tribe' and for ~~any~~ other person, church, or organization ~~that~~ seeks to be whole."*

*-- Virginia Ramey Mollenkott*

## RECOGNITION SUNDAY

"Hugs of Appreciation" is the theme of our first Recognition Sunday which will be held on April 28th during our regular worship service. Don't miss this opportunity to be thanked and to say Thank You to one another for a wonderful year's work!

## BAGS & SOCKS UPDATE

As you recall, we are working to get 200 sleeping bags and 400 pairs of socks to distribute to the homeless by December 1, 1996. Thus far we have acquired 5 sleeping bags and 30 pairs of socks. Won't you make your donation today??  
*\*Praise the Lord, Debbie E. has offered to store the bags & socks for us, so let's avoid the November rush and begin bringing them in soon!*



For Young Adults 18 - 30  
May 3 ♦ 8 pm - Midnight

## PRAYER LIST



### REQUESTS:

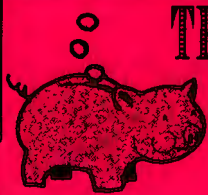
- Dee & Terri (Car Accident—serious, but not hospitalized)
- Pam & Marion (Car Accident—serious, but not hospitalized)
- Carol who has AIDS
- MCC of Greater Tulsa's pastoral search
- The Upcoming Community Center
- Ryan White Funding (has been denied!)
- Ella who has AIDS
- Rev. Ed Paul, our District Coordinator
- Dr. Jeffrey Nytech our liaison from District Committee
- Deb Hardy who has AIDS
- Our House
- Pete & Dick as they move to Florida April 19th
- Sherry & Stephanie as they face difficult times

### PRAISES:

- Pete & Dick's house sold!
- Barb B. has a new job!
- Liz is recovering well from surgery!
- Duck is recovering well from surgery!
- MCC of Greater Tulsa has at least 4 potential applicants for Pastor!

**KEEP THOSE PRAYERS COMING!**

**POT LUCK DINNER**  
1ST SUNDAY EACH MONTH



# TREASURER'S REPORT

MARCH, 1996

BEGINNING BALANCE	2230.69
TOTAL INCOME	6133.74
TOTAL EXPENSES	4752.44
BALANCE	3611.99

### DESIGNATED FUND BALANCES as of 04-12-96

BUILDING FUND	1435.00
CONFERENCE FUND	1352.53
MUSIC FUND	807.00
SOUND SYSTEM	500.00
CHRISTIAN ED	260.00

### TITHES: BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

BUDGET	3956.04
ACTUAL	5022.08

## THERE IS A POWER

by Jody Ravenwolf

Do you have empty places in your soul? Do you have places inside that are covered with the dust of times past, places that you fear to go? Have you, in the stillness of the midnight hour, longed for a light to give warmth and comfort, a light that could wash away the fear and the tears of pain and separation?

Listen Brother, listen Sister, I know a power, a power that can free a soul bound up in the pain of many yesterdays. I know a power that with a loving touch and a gentle reassurance can dry away the tears and bind the wounded heart in a balm of unconditional love. I know a power that brings all to a safe harbor upon the wings of grace. This power, this love, is our risen Lord. How sweet the sound of His name, how strong in this power. How wonderful was that walk to Calvary's bitter tree that brought hope and unity to all God's people.

Brothers and Sisters, let this power of unconditional love rock your soul as the old falls away to make way for the new. Oh praise the power of our risen Lord whose power can roll away the stones deep within the body, mind, and soul of all humanity. Oh glory, the spirit wind blows strong this day. Let all God's people declare a day of jubilee. Let the dance of joy begin, let the spirit praises be heard in the heavens on high. Let all creation celebrate the power of the risen Savior who sets our soul free to walk in the newness of life everlasting. Oh praise the power, oh praise the power that makes us whole.

## Family Recipe

### CANDY CAKE

Cream together 1 cup sugar and ½ cup butter. Blend in 1 egg. Stir together 2 cups flour, 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder, ½ tea spoon salt. Add alternately with ¾ cup buttermilk and 1 teaspoon vanilla to above mixture.

Fold in 1 cup mini-marshmallows, and ½ cup chocolate chips.

Spread into greased and floured 13x9 inch pan. Sprinkle with ½ cup chopped nuts, ¼ cup brown sugar, and 2 tablespoons melted butter

Bake at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes.

## THANKS!

The pastor wishes to thank everyone who helped to make Holy Week such a blessed event! Special thanks goes to Kharma Amos and the choir for the Easter Cantata, Jim Queen and cast for the Lenten Drama, Julie Barrett for our posters/flyers, Cheryl Berry as the one person Altar Guild, Neal for donating the Easter Lillies, and all of those who participated in worship!

-Kathleen & Marvita for donating the answering machine to the church office!

-Mary for donating the can crusher to the church!

-Nancy C. for putting a new lock system on the bathroom door!

-Tony for donating a stove to the church!

-Barb H.Z., Debbie K., Nancy C., Cathy H., Pastor, Zach, Caitlin & Jessica & cousin, for helping clean our church during our Mop & Glow day!

-Pastor Nancy, Barb and Zach for donating the Easter ribbons/bookmarks

## ON RELATIONSHIPS.....

*"Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you will die I will die and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."* -

- Ruth 1: 14-17

"To imply that same-sex (or any other type of) relationships cannot endure is simply wrong. They can and do. For us, we must make sure that we reserve the kinds of vows Ruth made only for people we have known long enough that we are certain it is a vow we can keep. In the end, the part of the vow that includes God is the strongest asset any relationship can have, regardless of sexual orientation.

In two decades of pastoring, I have never had anyone tell me that their partnership failed if they believed God led them together and if they prayed for their relationship every day. If you want your relationship to last forever, then make promises you have every intention of keeping and ask God every day to help you keep them. We are only responsible for our side of the relationship, but when we really take care of our side, the other side usually takes care of itself."

--Rev. Michael S. Piazza, Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas, TX  
*'Holy Homosexuals: the truth about being Gay or Lesbian and Christian.'*

# MAY



## FAMILY OF FAITH MCC

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Praise & Prayer 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	2 Codependency Support Group 7:30 pm	3 SAFE HAVEN 8:00 - Midnight	4
5 11:00am Worship Potluck following church. Pastor Nancy's 1yr Anniversary with FOF MCC	6 Caregiver's Team 7:00 pm	7	8 Praise & Prayer 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	9 Codependency Support Group 7:30 pm	10 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	11
12 11:00 am Worship MOTHER'S DAY Board Meeting 1:00 pm	13 Stewardship Team 7:00 pm	14	15 Praise & Prayer 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	16 Codependency Support Group 7:30 pm	17 18 South Central District Conference in Austin, TX	
19 Dist. Conference  11:00 am Worship	20 Fundraising Team 7:00 pm	21	22 Newsletter Mailing 5:30 Praise & Prayer 6:30 pm Choir - 7:30 pm	23 Codependency Support Group 7:30 pm	24	25
26 11:00 am - Worship PENTACOST SUNDAY Assimilation Team 1:00 pm	27	28	29 Praise & Prayer 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm	30 Codependency Support Group 7:30 pm	31	