



Monarch Messenger

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[Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 2--6 pm]

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JULY 2008

NEWS FROM OUR ELDER REV. DIANE FISHER OF JUNE 2008



Rev. Diane Fisher

MCC continues Tearing Down Walls and Building Up Hope as we move into new countries and cultures. I have been touched and changed forever by the courage and faithfulness of the communities in Moldova. Here, too, we walk with Christ to bring about the fullness of life that God intends for all.

Moldova

"I am battle weary, bone tired, emotionally wasted and I could cry so easily. Not for myself but for those who must exist in this place of so much fear and hatred. I am profoundly sad."

I wrote this statement moments after I had finished with the police department and returned to the apartment Florin and I had rented for our stay in Moldova. Even now, weeks later, I read it and am back in that bus. I had no idea it would continue to be so present for me or that it had shaken me this deeply. I think it is important for me to share this experience and try to make it real for MCC and for myself.

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Our Mission Statement

New Creation MCC
founded in and reaching
beyond the GLBT
community showing
Christian love to all

HOROSCOPES GONE GREEN

Cancer (June 21 to July 22)

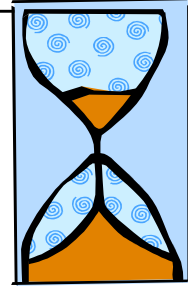
You love to eat, Cancer, so get away from industrialized foods that destroy your body and the environment. Shop at farmer's markets, grow a little backyard vegetable garden or start a family farm. Recycle by setting a good example. Green your home with a low-flush toilet or compact florescent light bulbs. And, keep it pesticide-free -- halt ant traffic with a line of cayenne pepper, and polish your furniture with a blend of olive oil and lemon juice.

By Simone Butler

MARGARET'S MINUTE:

Old roots, and new shoots. That's what I found the other day as Shirley tried to help me prepare a small plot of soil for planting. It got me thinking, and I knew there was a

Margaret's Minute in the situation. Let me explain a little background.



The plot in question is the burial site for a large dog who belonged to a friend who lives in Columbus. When the hound died, our friend asked if she could be buried at the house rather than have the vet dispose of the body. We agreed. We buried the dog in the shade of a mulberry tree. Alas, in the years since, nothing much has grown there. Everything we planted did well the first year, but then didn't come back. It was becoming a weedy, overgrown eyesore rather than a calm, shady place of peace.

This summer, having helped plant some ground cover here at church, Shirley and I wondered if a shade loving ground cover would work on the doggy gravesite. Shirley was helping me prepare the soil for planting and we quickly got aggravated at the large number of tree roots we had to contend with. Just trying to turn over a spade full of soil was nearly impossible. As we tried to lift out the shovel, we kept coming up underneath a network of roots growing close to the surface. Sometimes it was like hitting a bungy chord, and others like a net. We were glad the tree and its nearby companions were so healthy, but it was frustrating work, and we chopped through more than one ropery offender! No wonder nothing was growing – surely they were being strangled by the tree roots!

Just about the time we began to wonder if we should give up and let the roots and weeds have their way, we found some bulbs from a previous planting. They were just sprouting. It's late June as I write this, and they should have either been up or rotten by now, but there they were, about eight lone survivors, sprouting as if the calendar didn't matter any more than the tree roots did!

Old roots and new shoots... How often do our old roots get in the way of our new growth? Some of our old thought patterns, beliefs and behaviors don't serve any really useful purpose anymore, but we may have a hard time letting them go. These roots, old though they may be, cling to the surface where they can be irritated and dug at over and over. They're annoying to us and to others. The good news is two-fold! First of all, they can be gotten rid of if we're willing to put in the effort. Support groups, therapists, prayer work and more can help pull up the whole web of lies and dis-ease. We can choose to cut off that which hurts more than helps, and we can nurture that which helps more than it hurts.

Secondly, even amidst the seeming chaos of entanglements and distractions, the new really can survive and bring beauty and joy to our lives. Old roots and new shoots – you have the power choose the best of both. So bloom where you're planted and have a great life!

These Days

These Days with Our Fellowship, *lay delegate, Carol Dhwgosh*

Many of you have read the church newsletter, 'The Monarch Messenger' over the years past and are excited as I am to have our newsletter again up and running now. This column is brand new, and will focus on bringing you information from the UFMCC Fellowship and Region V offices. So please feel welcome to *These Days*. It is my goal to continually provide you with the most recent & relevant info from the Fellowship and Region, to provide references for those of you with access to the web and to those of you who do not, and to respond to your comments & inquiries.

Our Universal Fellowship will be celebrating its 40th anniversary this fall. (Our own New Creation celebrated its 30th anniversary this past March!) While much more information about this anniversary celebration will be forthcoming, here is a bit of information about our Fellowship today:

We are an international Fellowship: all Asian, African, Middle Eastern and European nations, Canadian provinces and US states are divided into 7 Regions. Each Region has a ruling elder. We are in region V; our Ruling Elder is Rev. Diane Fisher. While Ohio has 3 MCC churches the other states in our region are Connecticut with 2 churches, Indiana with 2 churches, Kentucky with 3 churches, Maine has 1, Massachusetts has 1, that state up north has 6 churches, New Hampshire & Rhode Island, & Vermont currently have no MCC churches, and West Virginia has 1 church. Our Canadian provinces are home to 7 churches, 6 in Ontario and 1 in Nova Scotia. Our Region has nations from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (including Russia) and presently only one such nation has an MCC church. It is in Bucharest, Romania.

My best description of our governing structure, in my everyday terminology, is this: our religious leader is Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson (a brilliant mind who has been involved with this fellowship from the early days, and took over from our founder, Rev. Troy Perry who retired last autumn), our managing CEO is Rev. Dr. Cindi Love, and our governing council is the group of ruling elders - each one manages one of the seven regions. I promise I will do a better job of describing our governing structure, it's process, and the people involved as each newsletter comes along.

While UFMCC has many things going on, this month I want to draw attention to two of them. First is the work of Rev. Elder Diane Fisher, who has been in Eastern Europe, working with groups of people who have invited MCC to come and assist with their Pride events and Human Rights efforts. I have placed reports of her work, along with some photos of these Pride events, on the room dividers as you enter the church. Secondly, as part of our international outreach, the Fellowship has asked for our support of GLBT folks specifically in Gambia and Uganda. There are UFMCC petitions to sign on the entry table, along with a specific petition to sign regarding the safe future of one Lesbian from Uganda. Her story and photo are also in this area.

I have so much joyful information to share with you. To begin, you can go to UFMCC home page at www.mccchurch.org and read about our beginnings, and search out info on Rev. Troy Perry. You can Google 'Pride in Eastern Europe', specifically Latvia & Moldova. Also you can Google Rev. Dr. Cindi Love, and Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson. For non-web people, I'll be compiling a notebook with this info, which will be in the church library. My e-mail is laydelegate@newcreationmcc.org.

Till next month, *Carol*

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

September 2008 starts the training classes for working Nationwide events. Please contact Renee by calling the church office. They can get you in contact with her.

Wanted by New Creation Crafters:

old bead jewelry	discarded CDs or DVDs
glass beads	fishing line
sequins	yarn
seed beads	wig stands
any jewelry making supplies	craft kits, especially Christmas themed
any gift cards from Michaels, Hobby Lobby, JoAnn's or any other type of craft stores	

The Crafters meet at the church the third Saturday of each month from 2 to 4 p.m. [or later]. You are encouraged to come help us prepare items for the Holiday Bazaar and enjoy the fellowship as we work on various crafts.

Fund Raising Committee at Work!

We continue to collect money for the Quarters for Our New Quarters Fund. This is to reimburse the expenses of preparing the building for us to move into it last year. We are about half way to our goal of \$2225. Remember to add your pocket change to the canisters provided in a basket by the door or to marked containers at the door and in the fellowship area.

Planning is underway for the Holiday Bazaar to be held on December 6th at the South Side Settlement House. This event is to benefit the General Fund. The crafters group has made many items for the sale and this past meeting helped prepare stained glass for the making of crosses that will be sold at the Bazaar and, if possible, at Gallery Hop. The money from the sale of all these hand-made items will go to support the presence and programs of New Creation MCC.

Our energies at the moment are primarily focused on the success of an Online Auction this fall. Bidding will be open from Oct. 1 through Nov. 2. The website is up: <http://NewCreationMCC.cmarket.com>. Check it out! The Sponsorship Development Team is pursuing sponsors to defray the cost of the auction and lend support to our event. We are looking for people to serve on the Catalog Development Team to begin pursuing desirable items for the auction catalog. We will be asking everyone to help in some way or another to make our goal of \$9000 for this event. The money from this event will be used to reduce the principle on our mortgage and save us interest costs.

The committee asks for your prayers and your support in reaching our goals for the church. We can't do it without you!

Blanketeers:

The first Sunday of every month we finish no-sew fleece blankets to donate to Project Linus. These blanket, and crocheted afghans from congregants, are given to children who are dealing with difficult times – life-threatening illness, victimization, homelessness, etc.

The fleece is purchased solely with your designated donations. The children who receive them find comfort in your generosity and in your loving hands and hearts. We hope you will join us in tying knots to finish blankets after the next pot-luck and in blessing the lives of these little ones. This is truly a ministry of love.

RECIPES

IT'S GRILLING TIME!

STEAK AND POTATO KABOBS:

- 1 boneless beef sirloin steak, cut 1 inch thick
 - 1/4 cup bottled red wine vinegar and oil salad dressing
 - 2 tablespoons snipped fresh thyme or 2 teaspoons dried thyme, crushed
 - 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
 - 2 medium yellow and/or green sweet peppers, cut into 1-inch pieces
 - 1 medium red onion, cut into wedges
 - 1/2 of a 20-ounce package refrigerated potato wedges (about 32 wedges)
1. Trim fat from steak. Cut steak into 1-inch cubes. Place steak cubes in a resealable plastic bag set in a shallow dish. For marinade, in a bowl combine salad dressing, thyme, Worcestershire sauce, and garlic powder. Pour over steak; seal bag. Marinate in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 hours turning bag occasionally.
 2. Drain steak, reserving marinade. On eight 10-inch metal skewers, alternately thread steak, sweet pepper, red onion, and potato, leaving a 1/4 inch space between pieces.
 3. Grill kabobs over medium coals for 12 to 14 minutes for medium doneness. Brushing occasionally with reserved marinade up to the last 5 minutes of grilling.



Skewer Secrets:

- Cut pieces of food into uniform sizes to ensure even cooking.
- Leave 1/4 inch spaces between food pieces on skewers
- Soak wooden skewers in water for 30 minutes.
- Thread large food pieces on two parallel skewers to stabilize the food.

Recipe from Better Homes and Garden

FIVE LAYER PIE:

First Layer:

- 1 1/3 cup plain flour
- 1 stick margarine
- 1/3 cup chopped nuts (any kind)

Second Layer:

- 1 8 oz. Pkg. cream cheese (room temp.)
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup whipping topping

Third Layer:

- 2 large pkgs. of Jello instant chocolate pudding

Fourth Layer:

- 6 cups milk
- 1 container of Cool Whip

Fifth Layer:

Chopped pecans

First layer - melt margarine in 13x9 inch pan. Add flour and press until layer covers bottom of pan. Sprinkle chopped nuts on top. Bake at 300, until brown about 20 min. Set aside until cool.

Second layer - cream together cream cheese, powdered sugar and whipping topping. Place on top of first layer when cooled.

Third layer - mix accordingly the package directions for Jello and spread over first two layers.

Fourth layer - cover first 3 layers with cool whip.

Fifth layer top layers with chopped pecans. Best when refrigerated overnight.

Recipe from A Rainbow of Heavenly Delights HL W

If you have a recipe that you would like to share please e-mail to bod_shirley@newcreationmcc.org or mail to New Creation, PO Box 163173

With 4th of July festivities invite friends over, enjoy good music and great food.

Cont. from page 1...

The morning of the planned demonstration was clear and sunny. As we arrived at the Gender-doc offices, people were milling around outside. There was a nervous excitement as we gathered around a table upstairs. We talked about how to keep safe, and we tied red ribbons to our arms so that we could see each other easily. A message arrived from the mayor's office stating that the police would be there to protect us; people were ecstatic. Forty of us moved downstairs to get on the bus that would take us to our starting place. Six security guards, hired by Gender-doc, followed in a van. The mood on the bus was less panicked since we knew the police would be there.

We pulled up beside a restaurant in Chisinau where we would disembark and begin the walk to the front of the parliament. The security guards had parked their van and were outside the bus waiting. Balloons arrived for people to carry and there was general excitement about how we could finally be legally on the streets. No one was around and all looked safe. Two minutes later we saw crowds of people running toward us from every direction. These were the protestors. Someone had told them where we were; they arrived in mass and were visibly angry.

The security guards were pushed further and further away from the bus, and the bus had begun to rock from the press of the people outside. I was sitting at the back of the bus and heard noises coming from the rear. I looked out the rear window and saw people ripping pieces out of the engine of the bus. I passed the information forward, and the bus driver got out to investigate. As he got to the back of the bus, the protestors began hitting him and pushing him away. People were raising crosses and icons, and they were yelling; anger and hate made them look less than human. A group of young men, who had decided that I was particularly evil, were waving crosses and moved to the back of the bus with lighters raised, passing the flame closer and closer to the engine, taunting me and laughing.

On the bus people were trying to stay calm, and those of us with phones were calling embassies and the police. A couple of people panicked, wanting off the bus to take their chances with the crowd. We talked calmly to them, trying to ease their anxiety. Nine times we contacted the police, and nothing. We could see they were in the crowd in plain clothes but doing nothing. We had observers in the crowd who told us there were armed police officers between buildings, leaning against their cars, talking on cell phones but not responding. We could see the chief of police in the crowd, and we were told that he was telling the protestors what to do, colluding with the crowd. The Swedish embassy had spoken with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who contacted the police and was told that they would not respond even if there was violence. The mayor's office had set us up.

I was on my phone the entire time, calling the embassy and emailing back and forth with Jim Birkitt, who had stayed up into the wee hours of the morning in LA so that he could be available if anything happened. I sent hurried messages back and forth. I wanted there to be some record of what was happening on the bus. I know that Jim would get word out quickly and that he understood what it could be like. He had travelled to Bucharest for pride two years ago and had seen what hate-filled crowds were like. Jim became my lifeline. I know that sounds dramatic, but I knew that he was there at the other end of the phone and it helped. It was a light in the midst of darkness, a tether to everything that was whole. I don't know if I will ever be able to convey just how much that tenuous connection meant to me, but it was MCC at its best. Nancy sent me a quick note saying that she was praying, and I felt it and knew, "Okay, MCC is here with us".

The tension was thick, we had been sitting like this, being shaken and taunted for 30 minutes. The crowd had grown, and they were getting more and more riled up. Two protestors broke onto the bus. They were religious leaders who said they could keep the crowd from killing us if we handed over all of our banners and the Moldovan Flag and destroy the balloons. Hand over hand, the banners moved forward. "Tolerance", "Would Jesus discriminate?", "Would God hate?", "For God so loved the world", "Love your neighbor as you love yourself", "Stop Discrimination", "Human Rights for ALL" - each banner was lovingly passed forward and taken by the religious leaders who threw them to the crowd, as you would throw meat to a pack of hungry dogs. The crowd fell on them and shredded them. The driver was allowed back onto the bus, and we edged our way forward.

As we gained speed, the crowd surged after us - older women running with icons raised and fists clenched, young people running, yelling and pounding on the sides of the bus. The bus driver was supposed to take us out of town but instead took us back to the Gender-doc offices, exactly where the crowd would look for us. He was too traumatized to take us from the city. People from the bus scattered; only ten of us remained, trying to decide what we should do next. Police cars were at the corner. Then security people arrived; they said the crowd was on its way. They had received a message from the police telling them where we were. We had brought the van, which had rainbow banners painted on the side. All ten of us loaded into the van and headed for the Flowers Hotel. Moments later we received a call from the security saying that masked protestors had arrived at Gender-doc offices and were ripping it apart. The police were still parked there and allowed them to destroy the offices.

At Hotel Flowers we were gathered in a small room trying to write press releases and contact authorities. We got a call from the desk downstairs saying we needed to move the van or the crowd would know that we were there. Florin and I went out to the van and eased it out onto the street. There were two police cars, one marked and the other not. As I drove down the street, protestors pulled up beside us and were yelling and reaching out to pound on the van. We surged ahead and in my anxiousness to get away from them, I turned left onto a street that apparently allows only right turns, although it is not marked. Three police cars, sirens on, pulled me over and said I needed to follow them to the police station. I was ushered inside, and they began questioning me. They did not provide an interpreter, but Florin translated for me. They asked us many questions - nothing about the driving, only about the demonstration.

Florin had managed to get a message sent to Leah, the leader of our worshipping community in Chisinau, who arrived twenty minutes later with Amnesty International. By that point, my driver's license had been taken from me, and we had been questioned by every police officer in the station.

Amnesty began taking pictures and asking for clarification about why we were being detained. They were both lawyers with official clearance. The police got very nervous and after repeated interventions by Amnesty had me sign a document that I could not read and released us. They said I needed to report back the next morning. Amnesty stayed and got the names of the officers. As we left, we were followed by the secret police. Amnesty took more photos, and we pulled over to see what they would do. They also pulled over and waited for us to leave. They continued to follow us. We decided to leave the van in a secure parking lot and walk back to the apartment. As we left, the secret police began following us on foot. It became a cat and mouse game of losing them in the crowd. We made our way back to the apartment, where they were waiting for us outside in an unmarked car. We had a bible study scheduled for that evening in the apartment, and I was determined not to be intimidated into cancelling.

Ten people braved the police presence and gathered to study together. It took such courage for them to arrive and participate. There is such a hunger for God and for understanding, and I wonder what would happen if we had to fight in North America, Western Europe, and Australia to express our faith. I hope that we would be just as courageous. It made me think of what the early Christians had to do to come together. This is the "why," the reason our work around the world is so important. It is in these gatherings that we are "Tearing down walls, building up hope". It is here the teachings of Jesus and the work of MCC is so critically important.

The next morning, Florin and I packed and headed for the police station once again. Leah and Natalia went with us to ensure we had witnesses who could contact Amnesty if necessary. Amnesty had been extremely reluctant to have Florin and I return to the apartment the night before, saying it was not safe. We had the group coming to meet with us, so we said it was not an option for us not to be there. The police were ready for us at the station. Over the next hour, we were interviewed by the Chief of Police, the Major in charge of the secret police, and numerous other officers. The point was clearly to frighten us, which worked, but eventually because of Amnesty's threats, they had me pay a fine and released us and my driver's license. The fine was a lofty 60 Moldovan Lei, or about \$6.00 USD. I was never so glad to be out of a place as I was in that moment.

We had one more press interview, a meeting with representatives of Gender-doc to talk about responding to religious extremists, and we left Chisinau. As we crossed into Romania, I felt such a sense of joy and a release of tension that I did not realize I had been carrying. It lasted only for a moment as the faces of our friends in Chisinau reminded me of the need to keep doing this. They have to stay, to live in this oppressive society, and continue to struggle for their freedom. We are partners in this battle, and we will continue to stand with them and work together for liberation. **Tearing down walls; Building up hope. MCC at work in the world.**

July 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4 Holiday	5
6 Potluck	7	8	9	10	11	12 Aids Walk
13 Straight Talk Metz 4:30 Recycling Sunday	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 BOD Mtg Burrito Breakfast Metz 4:30	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Metz 4:30	28	29	30	31		

SPECIAL EVENTS: 2008 Aids Walk July 12th starting 12 noon at Franklin Park Conservatory contact Brian E. for more information.

Burrito breakfast Sunday July 20th donations of \$2.00 will give you one Burrito and a cup of coffee, tea or glass of juice. Serving starts at 9:00 am until 10:15 am.