Newsletter - Texas

the CHANNEL
January
Volume 4
Number 1
The Official Newspaper of the Metropolitan Community Church of Dallas



The Sin Of Being 'Queep'

Page 4

From The Pastor's Pen

Rev. Jim Harris

Praise the Lord, Christmas has past, and we are exhausted, along with our bank account!

Let us take this opportunity to wish you the greatest year of your life yet, in 1975.

We look forward to 1975 with great thoughts about how God is going to bless His work through MCC in Dallas.

A good start in that direction was the arrival of our new assistant pastor, the Rev. Ms. C. Shawn Farrell, and her other half of 10 years, Kathy. They come to us from the Long Beach (California) church.

Rev. Farrell, in addition to her other duties there, also serves as Director of Christian Education for the U.F.M.C.C.

We give a great big "Texas Wecome Home" to Rev. Farrell and Kathy; both, incidentally, are native Texans.

If you've noticed a new "sweet" voice on the phone when you've called the church lately, it is the voice of Ms. Georgia Bowen, our new church secretary. We welcome Georgia to the staff. If you haven't met her yet, come by the office and say hello to her and her son, Jimmy.

We sincerely hope you like our new format for the *Channel*. We are happy with it and want you to share the happiness with us. So much so, that we plan to be on state-wide distribution by March of 1975.

If you have an article you would like to see published, send it to Mr. Roy Hall, Editor - The *Channel*, 3834 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75204, if it is in keeping with a church publication. We also invite articles concerning our community, all over this area, for news of the area.

It is our hope to see you with us in worship in 1975, and the Lord will bless you, "Real, Real Good!"

In Love,
Rev. Jim

THE CHANNEL is the official newsletter of the Metropolitan Community Church of Dallas, Texas, located at 3834 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75204. The telephone number is (214) 826-0291

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MCC DALLAS

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Assistant Pastor Rev. Shawn Farrell

EDITORIAL POLICY:

The Channel is dedicated to providing material of a spiritual and uplifting nature to our readers around the world. News of interest to our special outreach community will also be printed at the discretion of the staff. We welcome and encourage submissions and letters (for publication or otherwise); submissions are subject in all cases to editing for length, grammar and suitability. The Channel assumes no responsibility for the return of articles or photographs, although we will make every effort. When submitting material for publication, please give your name, the source if not original, and the name under which it should be printed.

The appearance of the name of any individual, group or business in these pages should not be taken to indicate the religious beliefs or sexual orientation of such individual, group or business except as explicity stated in these pages. We ask readers to correct any errors we may unintentionally print and to keep us advised of any news as far in advance as possible. The editor may be contacted at any service of MCC-Dallas, or a telephone message may be left at the church phone, 826-0291.

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Holy Communion--What It Means At MCC

Holy communion is a phrase that frightens some people. They immediately think of any number of things. Usually they have only a vague idea of the real meaning.

Perhaps the roots of the words "holy communion" come closest to the explanation of the practice. It has in times past been called "the Lord's Supper", "the Eucharist", and other names. At MCC-Dallas it is indicated on our programs as "holy communion".

The word "communion" comes from the root word "commune", which in turn comes from the word "common". They are all in the same family of words and shed light on the meaning. At Metropolitan Community Church, we have in common, for all members, friends, and whoever wishes to partake, a meal of bread and wine where all may commune and draw nearer to their God. It is, therefore, indeed a Holy Communion. Here worldly thoughts are set aside and cares forgotten as we join in the celebration of Christ's love and sacrifice.

To some of our members, we partake of the literal, transsubstantiated body and blood of the Savior's crucifixion; to others, the bread and wine represent these elements. Whatever they are, whatever they represent, they are very real and very meaningful. It is a moment for awesome silence and earnest meditation, for growing closer to one's Maker as the lights dim at MCC and the celebrant (the one who is consecrating or giving the blessing) approaches the altar and uncovers the chalice and the bread. Wine and blessed water mingle in the chalice as a hymn prepares our minds for the solemn nature of the occasion.

As the hymn ends and soft organ music continues to hold the mood, the celebrant recounts the history of the Last Supper, when Jesus of Nazareth sat at feast with twelve men chosen personally to follow Him, knowing that one had already made the arrangements to betray Him. But Jesus was not sitting in judgment; He was communing with these men in brotherhood and fellowship. Likewise, the celebrant blesses the bread and wine as the story is told, and, when it ends, offers them to God and to the people.

At the altar rail of MCC, all are welcome. Yes, all; even Judas Iscariot, guilty of the most heinous sin in the history of humanity, ate at the table of the Master. Who are we to judge or turn away where Christ did not? To this altar rail come the faithful, the prodigal, visitors from other denominations, straights, gays, women, men, blacks, whites, solitary figures, couples wanting to share a blessing together.

To each is given a wafer of bread, dipped in the sacramental wine, as a blessing is pronounced by the pastor, the associate pastor, the deacon or exhorter distributing there. As the ushers guide row after row to avoid confusion, saint and sinner kneel side by side in humility and adoration.

The waiting line thins and returns to their seats as the remainder of the wine is consumed by the celebrant, and a song fills the air. Usually, the last verse ends with the congregation rising and joining hands in communion with one another. The lights come up, and the moment lingers on in the love that is shared.

Join with us in the love and celebration of our Lord. It is an experience which can mean much to you. Come, and commune with God and His people.

Associate Pastor's Corner

Rev. Crouch

At a retreat I once attended for ministers and their spouses, we were asked to introduce ourselves by supplying the following information:

Name
Present pastorate
Pet peeve, and
Hobby...

I have always suspected that in divulging these facts we revealed a great deal about ourselves.

Probably to no one's surprise, the matter of pet peeves in the presence of one another is pretty good proof of that.

Was there a single peeve that was cited more often than others? Yes, by a wide margin. Was it being underpaid? No. Was it criticism? No. Was it overcrowded schedules? No. In fact, I don't recall any of these mentioned a single time.

Although voiced in different ways and always very graciously, again and again we heard it said that the greatest irritation was the failure of others to be faithful. "You work hard to plan a service, and people don't show up." "Someone says they will do a job and then they don't show up to carry through." "People claim they love the Lord, but anything and everything comes before His service." Those who mentioned that last one came down the hardest. On one or two occasions we came close to saying that those who mouth more loyalty than they live are hypocritical.

Jesus told a parable about two sons, one of whom told his father he would not work for him but later changed his mind and did, and the other who promised his father he would do the job but never did. It was pretty plain which Christ respected and which He did not. Evidently Jesus had a pet peeve, too.

Now bear in mind, these pastors and their spouses were asked to voice their pet peeves. They were not spewing out idle words or carnal attitudes. They all loved their churches and were happy to be in the ministry. But think about it next time you are tempted to let your pastors down.

Love you,
Rev. Frank

New Assistant Pastor Joins Ministerial Staff

The forces for good are assembling. Six months ago, MCC-Dallas had an acting pastor only. With the election of Rev. Jim Harris as pastor, however, the ministerial staff of MCC-Dallas has jumped. In addition to Rev. Frank Crouch, who joined Rev. Harris in the capacity of associate pastor not so very long ago, we now have the Rev. Ms. C. Shawn Ferrell, a native of Odessa, served in the Waves during World War II and now works as a machinist. She became associated with MCC in November of 1970 in Los Angeles and worked with the newly formed Crisis Intervention Committee. She was ordained as a deacon a year later, and in February of 1972 she moved to the newly formed Long Beach MCC, where she served on the Board of Directors until April of 1973.

Rev. Farrell received her ministerial training under the Rev. Jon C. Bullock, an ordained Presbyterian minister who was the first pastor of the Long Beach church. While there, the Rev. Ms. Farrell taught membership, deacon and exhorter training classes, as well as classes in Christian education. In April of 1973, she took on the responsibilities of associate pastor under Rev. Robert Cunningham, in which capacity she served until August of 1973, at which time she resigned to take a position as minister-at-large for the Southwestern District and to serve as Interim Pastor of MCC-Santa Barbara.



In April of 1974, the Board of Elders assigned her to do research and study for the Christian Education Committee for the 1974 General Conference. She was reappointed as Chairperson of the same committee for the 1975 General Conference in Dallas.

Coming to Dallas with Rev. Farrell is her companion of 9 years, Kathy; the two were married July 7, 1973, under a marriage license issued by the state of California. Both of these women are very pleasant people to meet, and we look forward to working with them. Drop by and say hello; you'll be glad you did!

What MCC Really Is

Metropolitan Community Church is just what the name says--a church for our community. We welcome you, whoever you are. Everyone is welcome at our door. Come with an open mind and heart, and you cannot go away empty.

The special outreach of this denomination is to the outcasts rejected by other churches--to the gay community. Here is a Christian church that stands ready to offer them a way to be a practicing homosexual and a practicing Christian at the same time.

We are not a "play church"--we are very real; we are very sincere. MCC is not the place to look for a one-night stand; it is the place to find God.

MCC is a Christian church made up of members from different religious origins, so we blend many different traditions harmoniously into our services so that the Spirit of God may be manifest. Not all have the same feelings and beliefs, but our love for our Lord and for our fellow Christians binds us together with an unbreakable chain.

We feel that our work is uplifting to the community at large, that we are helping to educate the straight world and to build up the self-respect of the gay world. We have a mission of incredible importance. Those whose religious beliefs may prohibit their becoming members are welcome as friends. The moral support and the financial support of our members, our friends and our community are always needed and always appreciated.

Metropolitan Community Church, wheresoever you may find it, is a home for the prodigal. Your father, your brothers and your sisters are all waiting to welcome you to MCC. Please address any questions to us or to the church nearest you. May God bless you.

Who Are You

Are you an active member,
The kind that would be missed,
Or are you just contented that
Your name is on the list?

Do you ever work on committees
To see there is no trick,
Or leave the work to just a
Few and talk about the clique?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock,
Or do you stay at home,
And criticize and knock?

So come to church more often
And help with hand and heart,
Don't be just a member, but
Take an *active* part!

A MEMBER

Letting "Jim Do It"

The Perfect Pastor

[as seen by Rev. Crouch]

Attention MCC Dallas: I have just found a formula for the "Perfect Pastor"--looks to me like neither our pastor nor our associate pastor fits the formula, which is:

He preaches exactly twenty minutes, then sits down. He condemns sin but never hurts anyone's feelings.

He works from 8 am to 10 pm in every type of work, from preaching to custodial service. He makes $60.00 a week, wears good clothes, buys good books regularly, has a nice lover who has no opinions, drives a good car, and gives $30.00 a week to the church. He also stands ready to contribute to every good work that comes along.

He is 26-years old and has been preaching for 30 years. He is tall and short, thin and heavy-set, handsome. He has one brown eye and one blue; hair parted in the middle, left side, dark and straight (please excuse the word), the right brown and wavy.

He has a burning desire to work with young people and spends all his time with older folks. He spends all his time with a straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his work.

He makes fifteen calls a day on church members, spends all his time evangelizing the unchurched, and is never out of the office.

Sounds like we could be settling for less than perfect. But, we do have one point on our side, though it doesn't fit the formula, exactly: Our Associate is only 29 years old and has been ordained for 25 years. Perhaps if we look close enough at Pastor Jim we could find other parallels to help. Or should we just pray about it instead???

(The editor refused to yield to temptation by commenting on the above article; please cherish that as a historic moment.)

New Altar Donated to MCC

Members of MCC-Dallas were treated to a pleasure surprise on November 24th when they showed up for services. Frank Caven, of the Old Plantation, had made his mark on the church by donating a beautiful altar rail to replace the kneelers which had been a familiar sight for so long here. The new altar rail offers an opportunity for those partaking of holy communion to kneel and contemplate as they wait to be served, and we appreciate Mr. Caven's generosity very much.

Those having deaf friends will be pleased to learn that we will once more have an interpreter for them. The interpreter should be present at both morning and evening services, according to our information, and is also planning to resume sign language classes for those interested in sharing the ministry to our deaf brothers and sisters.

We have been fortunate lately to have a very good turnout to our morning services. It is difficult to say whether this is because the morning sermons from our exhorters and deacons have been getting better, or whether the deacons and exhorters have been doing better because of the larger crowds, or if the community has some way of knowing when the editor of the *Channel* will *not* be giving the sermon...

Letters To The Editor

Letters to the Editor should be addressed to Editor, The Channel, MCC-Dallas, 3834 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75204, and should be signed. Please advise if you wish your name withheld.

Dear Editor:

Fantastic! The *Channel* has always been an outstanding publication, and now you've outdone yourselves. What's next?

Keep up the good work!

Name Withheld

Our legal columnist, Thomas More, will be back in February. We are presently in the process of contacting a medical columnist. We are widening our scope due to increased space, and our paper will be jumping from the old 2000 copy run and last month's 3000 copy run to a new 5000 copy run. And I wouldn't be surprised to see it go further.

We need desparately for people in other cities in Texas--or anywhere--to keep up in touch. We need letters from our readers; we can't print those kind words whispered to us around an embrace at services. Think of this as your paper, because we are here to serve you. If you don't get us the news, we may not have it!

Dear Editor:

Is your paper limited just to what goes on at church? It seems to me you're missing a bet by not printing community news.

Name Withheld

Right! We want community news. But somebody needs to call in and let us know. The next time you learn something will happen or has happened, leave a message for me at the church. Or even better, write it up yourself...

Dear Editor:

Aren't you ashamed of yourself for writing all these phony letters to fill up space in your paper?

Name Withheld

No! Now, aren't you ashamed for not writing so we could put in your comments for other readers to share? Perhaps we could turn this into a forum of ideas to exchange. Certainly, it couldn't be like Penthouse or Playboy, but who knows how interesting it could get, within the limitations of a respectable church paper?

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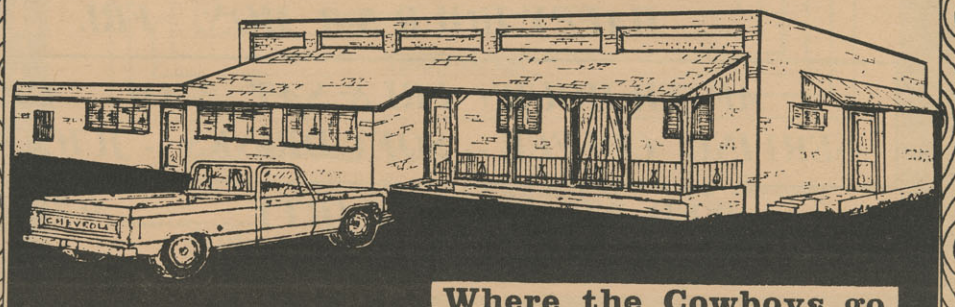
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The Sin Of Being "Queer"

It has often been said that I have a way with words, especially titles. I am the one who most often says this. Those who know me also know that my titles do not necessarily mean what they say. Read on!

While roaming aimlessly through Wynnwood Village recently I wandered into a religious book store and picked up what promised to be a really fun pamphlet, entitled "The Gay Blade." To save some poor soul who might be misled by this pamphlet, I invested six cents and slipped one out of the store with the cover and title hidden when I paid for it, telling the cashier I did not need a sack.

It was horrifying! Such stories of perversion as I found in that tract. There were pictures of angry, disagreeable people identified by the text as being homosexuals. I don't remember seeing a single happy face among those identified as gays. It refers to "Satan's shadowy world", "defiance against society," "endless lusting" and other shocking commentary. To the writer of the tract, may I say boldly that the only reason, he says, that "there isn't anything gay about being gay" and that homosexuals "suffer the agony of rejection" is because of people like him who are unwilling to sit down and read their Bibles to learn what God really says about homosexuality.

You, dear reader, may take a look with me at the Holy Words and see what they really tell us. Check you own Bible; do not take my word for it.

To begin at the begining, God created the heavens and the earth. I bet you already knew that. And furthermore, there were just two people. If they had been two gays of the same sex, they could not have followed God's command to multiply and replenish the earth. Underpopulation was the problem then; overpopulation is the problem now. God told Adam and Eve to multiply in the same way He told Noah to build an ark because of a coming flood. How many of you are taking up carpentry? You understand that the ark was a situation of the moment, a specialized command. So was multiplying! It follows to logic.

Aha! But how will we escape that terrible, nasty old story about the destruction of Sodom? Remember that story? Well, that's when (according to a lot of people who didn't look where they were reading) the Lord God got mad at a bunch of mad, lusting queens in a couple of towns and destroyed them. The Bible states that the two angels were in Lot's house and that the men of the city demanded that they be sent out "that we may know them." That gives us two choices: (1) The Sodomites wanted to have sex with the angels, or (2) the Sodomites wanted them for some other reason. The key is in the word *know*. The use of the word *know* in the Old Testment is almost always used in the sense of *to recognize or be acquainted with. Know* as a word referring to *sexual relations* is the exception to the rule. Now consider this: In a book written about elephants in the jungle, if you find a reference to seeing "a trunk being waved in the air", would you conclude that (1) an elephant was waving his nose, or (2) the native porters were being careless with the luggage? The use of "trunks" as elephant noses would be the widely accepted usage, right? Figure it out!

Now hold on. I think that the men of Sodom did intend to have sexual relations with the visitors. But let me ask you a question: If the angels had been females and the men had demanded to "know" them, would God have approved? Or could it have been the sins of rape, lust and inhospitality?

The simple truth of the matter is that Sodom, like so many cities of Canaan, practiced idolatry. Rather than worship the true God, they went into a sexual religion which involved sexual activities as acts of worship, something which was truly abominable. For this reason, God smote them and struck out against the practice of the Mosaic law. All Old Testment laws referring to homosexuality stem from this "religion". (It is interesting to note that Babylon was also struck by God and is now an abandoned area where nobody will even spend the night, cursed by the Lord; Babylon had a religion which advocated and demanded that every woman present herself at the temple of the "goddess" once during her lifetime and give herself to the first man who tossed a coin to her! Coincidence? Does God create coincidences? Was it homosexuality or false worship? Is it following one's natural, unchangeable drives or is it denial of the true God? It seems crystal clear to me...

The reference in Romans 1:26, 27 is also to false worship and follows logically to the Sodom story! Read the entire chapter and you will see that Paul is clearly speking throughout of idolatry, giving up the worship of God for the creature and then taking in sexual actions as part of their worship. And Rome was notorious for her variety of pagan idolatrous religions! It is no wonder Paul wrote to them of this.

The connotation of the original Greek found in I Corintians 6 also refers to prostitution, according to people in the know on the language.

I wonder if the straight man who wrote the pamphlet to which I took such strong exception has read his own Bible lately. In the pamphlet, for example, he has a sketch of a man taking the name of the Lord in vain. This is not supposedly a gay man; it is an anti-gay man. And this is the kind of words he puts in the man's mouth. My Bible says that is a no-no.

I also wonder, if Mr. Chick insists on using the old law to condemn us, whether he has checked on the use he makes of the Sabbath, which in the Old Testament is Saturday. Does he

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exceed the legal travel then? Does his wife cook or does he work? I wonder whether he eats bacon or sausage, or lobster, shrimp, catfish. Does his wardrobe encorporate any wool and linen combinations? If so, he is violating the old law. However, my Bible says that the old law was against us and has been taken away, so I cannot use it to condemn him; neither can he use it against me!

If he sticks to the New Testament, I must ask him whether his wife always wears a head covering to church, whether she wears jewelry, how long his son's hair is and how short his daughter's hair is, because the Bible speaks of this. I must ask him whether he has ever been divorced, how many children he has, whether all his children are faithful members of his church, and other strict regulations contained in Paul's letters as being requirements for the leaders of the church.

I challenge you, Mr. Jack T. Chick, to weigh yourself in the balances and to reread the scriptures. Have I spoken anything that is not true? Or am I anything short of right?

When I first left my old life, a life which had abandoned God and accepted condemnation, one of my first thoughts was whether I was scripturally sound. The last thing I would want to do is to mislead anyone, or to cause any soul to continue as a homosexual if it was contrary to God's divine will. I could never live with myself; it would be too much. My friends, I am positive. I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've commited unto Him against that day."

The sin in being queer is self-rejection. God loves you. Give Him His Just dues.

In Service To Our Community

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Contact *(newspaper)*
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Movie Review

The Man With The Golden Gun

You may be wondering what on earth a review of the movie in question is doing here. Is it gay? No. Is it religious? No.

Well, do you give up? Okay. I think Roger Moore is cuter than Sean Connery. That's good enough for me.

I think but won't swear that I have seen every James Bond movie ever made, with the exception of the *Casino Royale* spoof. And I have to say that I have enjoyed each and every one of them. *The Man* etc. was no exception.

As usual, as expected, the producers have thrown out the original Ian Fleming book. Having read and enjoyed the book, it was nice to get such a totally different approach. After all, that way I get my money's worth and no reruns. About the only thing in common between the movie and the book was the name of the villian, Francisco Scramanga, the man with the golden gun.

The big problem with going to see a James Bond movie is that you can't buy refreshments. Is that confusing? What I mean is, where can you possibly leave the plot long enough to visit the men's room?

The Man etc. has all the familiar elaborate buildup the public has come to expect of 007. From the initial arrival of a solid gold bullet made exclusively by a private manufacturer for Scaramanga, engraved with the letters 007, and from the first glimpse of Scaramanga, private shooting gallery, operated and made deadlier by the greedy midget who anticipates the inheritance he will get with Scaramanga's assassination, the viewer knows good things are in store. Surely a man who has an audioanimatronic statue of Bond in his home is a villain worthy of Bond's attention. A friend of mine is still drooling over Scaramanga's elaborate home and the money it must have taken to build it.

It was a bit disappointing to see Scaramanga go into the old gun-disguised-as-a- cigarette lighter routine. However, we did find the edge of the seat the place to be as Bond, in a "borrowed" car from a dealer's window, along with prospective buyer Sheriff J.W. Pepper, take the publicized leap across the canal during the chase scene. (We preferred the chase in *Diamonds are Forever*, personally. Jill St. John is much cuter than Sheriff Pepper.)

We heard kind words for the music by John Barry, an old friend of the series, and we like the words of the theme, sung by Lulu. They fitted in so much better than the lyrics of some other Bond movies.

If you like excitement, steady action, spy stories, elaborate sets, and all that goes with that, then you should have already seen this movie. If you haven't, then go.

(Theatre managers please note: Free passes cheerfully accepted.)

Food Stamps: Are They For You ?

When you think of food stamps, do you automatically think of poor people? Or do you think of yourself as poor people?

You may be cheating yourself out of this valuable government service, the *Channel* has learned. Contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary to be unemployed, on welfare, or married to obtain food stamps. You owe it to yourself to investigate further.

If your income is low or if you have large medical bills, if you have dependent children living with you, or if you are living with a roommate or lover, you may qualify. The first step is to call. The main office is 630-3755. They will advise you which office serves your Zip Code. You may ask to have an application mailed to you; the application is self-explanatory. You may apply as the head of household (which is something you and your roommate, if any, may decide between yourself, and may just be the one of you who can make it over for the personal interview), or you may apply as an individual. However, in applying as an individual, remember that they will expect you to keep your food separate and prepare it seperately from your roommate. But this may be helpful in some cases.

Don't be afraid to tell them that you are sharing expenses with another person of the same sex at the same address. They couldn't care less. Records are, furthermore, confidential.

After you return the application, you will receive a letter asking you to come in for an interview, to which you should take proof of your income and applicable expenses--stubs of your paychecks, copys of medical bills, telephone bills, tax receipts, rent or house payments, hospitalization and life insurance, and any other bills which might be applicable. Don't forget to bring them in; they will be required.

Remember, your eligibility is based on how much you have after expenses, not on your gross income. This means that one person who may not qualify can apply together with a roommate who doesn't work and together they can get aid.

Once you are approved, you will receive through the mail a form which you must take during that month to the Post Office between 10 and 3 during the weekday. There, for a reduced amount, you may buy coupons which are not dated and are good anytime for food. For example, one person might have to pay $100.00 for $150.00 in stamps, while another might have to pay only $50.00 for $150.00, depending on net income.

If you don't agree with the findings of your caseworker, you can appeal the decision. Should you have any questions about this program, you may write or call this paper; be sure to give your phone number so we can have someone contact you to answer your questions.

Making God Real

by Rev. Arthur Green, Pastor/MCC-Chicago

Christians often miss the real joy, the real treasure of God because they miss the point of where God is, where God lives. We seek God in ourselves, or in nature, or from TV preachers. We then wonder why we know so little of God, why He seems so far away.

Where is it that God dwells? He dwells in Jesus Christ. And where is Christ? christ is alive in His body, the church. Jesus lives in us as we are drawn together in the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit is sent to the body, the church, and not as "many" Holy Spirits to individual upon individual. We know, we find real, we experience the Lord Jesus best as we know Him through His body.

We each possess individual bodies--His body is corporate. His body is composed of all who trust and believe Him. You and I will never know optimal oneness with Him in this life unless we know oneness with Him through others--our brothers and sisters in His church.

When we stay away from worship and from study and social opportunities with our brothers and sisters we are missing fellowship with Christ Himself.

When we look at the early church we see what we can be. God was so real in their midst, that becoming a part of their fellowship was tantamount to receiving Jesus, and receiving Him meant a new identity with God's people. So, all who received Him were a part, not just of the first century church, but a part of Christ Jesus.

Where were you the last time the body of Christ, your church, met together to make real your own loving God?



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January Calendar

Metropolitan Community Church — *3834 Ross Ave., Dallas*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 WORSHIP SERVICES 7:30 p.m.	4 WORK PARTY
5 MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 a.m. EVENING WORSHIP 7:30 p.m.	6	7	8	9	10 WORSHIP SERVICES 7:30 p.m.	11 WORK PARTY
12 MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 EVENING WORSHIP 7:30	13	14 DEACONS & EXHORTERS 7:30 p.m.	15	16	17 WORSHIP SERVICES 7:30 p.m.	18 WORK PARTY
19 MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 a.m. EVENING WORSHIP 7:30 p.m.	20	21 BOARD MEETING 7:30 p.m.	22	23	24 WORSHIP SERVICES 7:30 p.m.	25 WORK PARTY
26 MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 a.m. EVENING WORSHIP 7:30 p.m.	27	28	29	30	31 WORSHIP SERVICES 7:30 p.m.	

Board of Evangelism and World Missions
Report to the Fellowship

DATELINE AUSTRALIA

We are happy to report increased growth and activity among the Australian congregations. Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne recently met together to celebrate the first anniversary of the Christ Community Church (now MCC) in Melbourne. The words of Adelaide pastor, Rev. Stan Harris, in summing up the conclave are so descriptive of our Fellowship throughout: "Sydney, a bit high but Pentecostal; Melbourne, very Protestant; Adalaide, well, sort of the Ecclesiastical cocktail!" These very phrases have often been applied to various member churches within the great Universal Fellowship. I think that it is beautiful to see such ecumenical spirit exists and is developing in the Australian churches as well.

News comes to us also that a new study group is in formation in the queen city of the North, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, under the direction of Worship Coordinator, Ken Goodenough. Ken has worked ardently during the past year with an ecumenical fellowship group known as "Cross Section". This group, now being dissolved, will become a part of the Metropolitan Community Church of Brisbane.

In Perth, Rev. Mario Schoenmaker has suffered a heart attack and is presently in the hospital. Please remember him in your prayers. The congregation church there is still anticipating his arrival in Dallas for General Conference '75.

Gary Pye, Graham Donkin, and Gary's mother, Ms. Pye, of Sydney are presently visiting fellowship churches and Dignity (a Roman Catholic Gay Group) meetings, in the US and Canada. Please extend to them a loving welcome.

Having just returned from a visit to Europe and Africa, I want to share the following information: The real purpose of my visit to Nigeria was to learn exactly the situation of the sisters and brothers who have been corresponding with us now for some two years. Believe me—it was a personal and spiritual experience which I shall never forget: I saw Christ in the face of a wrinkled old black woman, begging for something to eat. I saw Christ again in the face of a little five-year old boy with no legs, seen begging as he crossed the road in front of the American Embassy in Kaduna.

Despite all of the circumstances which exist in Third World countries, where poverty is an everyday experience, low income is a thing which one excepts and the cost of living continues to soar; Nigeria is rapidly becoming a progressive country. However, progress will not be immediate for the general population. The average income is about one #1.00 (63c in US money) a day. Nigerians pay for most items such as clothing, shoes, transportation and gasoline, equivalent prices to West Germany and France. Inflation is a major concern because most products are imported. Population control is also a matter of concern-official figures list Nigeria as having the largest population in Africa. Some 83 million are crowded into an area about the size of Georgia, North & South Carolina, and Alabama. Add to this the fact that Nigeria has four major languages, extreme poverty in the North, and depriving living conditions in the South; then one has a little view of conditions in Nigeria.

Nigerian history is not to be envied. Chattel slavery existed there as late as 1906 under British law. Nigeria became an independent country in the early sixties and was plunged immediately into a civil war lasting from 1966-1971. The results of which are still evident everywhere. I saw hundreds of people with missing limbs and other physical impairments. The most saddening aspect was the almost total lack of rehabilitation programs for these unfortunate sisters and brothers.

WHY IS MCC IN NIGERIA? All the way over on the plane, all thru the difficulties I encountered in Lagos, I kept asking myself this same question.

The Nigerian Christian community had historically lived only in the East and South; now, following the war, most are as (displaced persons) living in otherwise Moslem areas and without identifiable churches to minister to their needs.

It seems that two gay brothers who had read of Metropolitan Community Church thru a Jehovah's Witness publication, "Awake", sought out the Rev. Sylvanus Maduka, a former Methodist clergyman, and encouraged him to establish an Ecumenical Christian Church to be open to all people. When I arrived at the airport in Kaduna, I was deeply moved and touched by the Nigerians' welcome with neatly printed name tags and a sign which read, "For the son of man has come to seek and save that which was lost, Metropolitan Community Church-Nigeria".

Zaria is a Moslem city compassing a large 800,000 population with less than 10% Christians. When I first learned this, again I asked: Why is MCC here? After traveling 55 miles from Kaduna to Zaria and witnessing the dedication and the work of the Christians of the Metropolitan Community Church in Nigeria, I knew why. As it has always been the position of Metropolitan Community Church not only to take Christ to the unloved and often unwanted people of the world but to meet Christ there in the faces of those lovely black people.

Most all the members travel on foot (the pastor walks 10 miles to church and 10 miles home) to services and there are services!

services!—a special Bible class or worship every day of the week. Saturdays are given to cleaning the church. When I arrived at the small mud brick building, with its red and white sign over the door, reading "Metropolitan Communtiy Church-Zaria" and the fellowship flag (made by the Nigerians) flapping over the tin roof; I couldn't help but weep. The members were inside scrubbing the hard packed floor with water they had carried over a mile.

I was deeply touched by Sister Maduka's sacrifice: she had sold one of her three sewing machines with which she supplements the family income (60c for making a complete dress) in order to assure enough money for my hotel bill.

Despite a severe lack of medical attention (1 hospital and 6 doctors for 800,000 people), Rev. Maduka visits the sick and offers prayers for his members, regardless of how far away they live. Brother Felix Macleree, the secretary, teaches nightly courses of typing, reading and writing. The treasurer, Brother Friday Okonowo, conducts the choir and teaches also at prayer meetings and Sunday School.

Sunday the 17th of November was the dedication of the church. I preached to over 150 people as Brother Felix interpreted. The same beautiful spirit we feel in other MCC's was everywhere present. Such singing as I've never heard; and the quietness of Holy Communion, interrupted only by the goats across the street; the offeratory, where everyone danced down the aisle to leave their small offerings on the altar: all these were deeply moving and in my heart once again, I praise God for the Universal Fellowship in Nigeria where out of 150 people two gay brothers sat, worshipped and shared with all God's children unafraid and loved because we are there with Christ.

I've encouraged the Nigerian church to write to each of you—explaining their local needs and circumstances. One word of caution however, is that you should re-read the letters several times—understanding that the language meaning may be lost in the translation from Ibo into English. Please call if you can help in World Church Extension.

I've prepared slides and some of the recorded music from the worship services in Zaria and hope to present these to you at the Eastern and Western ministers conferences.

DATELINE CANADA

Just received word from Rev. Bob Wolf, coordinator of church extension in Eastern Canada, that the Ottawa church under the direction of Worship Coordinator Phil Speranza has reached the required number of members and financial stability to obtain Mission status. Congratulations

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MCC Ottawa.

From Montreal we also learn that the Study Group there has been reactivated under the direction of Worship Coordinator Riener Lauferf. The Toronto congregation is maintaining a steady growth rate. By the way, have you heard that the Canadian churches contribute 8% to the ministry of Church Extension?

DATELINE BREAT BRITAIN

London–Metropolitan Community Church in London has reached standing room only in the Pemlico Aid Center since the arrival of the Rev. Thomas Bigelow who was confirmed unanimously by the congregation as their pastor. In one of these strange coincidences with which we credit God: I was there to do the official installation service for him and witness the fantastic numerical and financial growth which the London church is currently experiencing.

The Birmingham Study Group has officially joined the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches and brother Joe McVay Abbott, exhorter of the London MCC, is going there as Worship Coordinator.

In Edinburgh, Scotland, I met with brother Graham Cameron and discussed the feasability of Metropolitan Community Church being established in that city following a letter of applications to UFMCC, received here in Los Angeles in the month of October. We have granted Study Group recognition to the group there and earnestly solicit your prayers for the MCC in Scotland and for the upcoming International Conference on Gay Rights, which was held in Edinburgh, December the 18th thru the 20th.

DATELINE DENMARK

My visit to Copenhagen was a very exciting portion of this recent trip. I was greeted warmly by the Board of Directors and the Rev. Bjorn Marcussen of the Open Church Group, who are presently studying the By-Laws of the Universal Fellowship in consideration towards further association with the total outreach of the Metropolitan Community Churches.

I was happy to be on hand when the Open Church Group applied for acceptance into the Copenhagen Ecumenical Church Council, and spent one evening discussing with the Board Members of the council the needs of Gay people religiously and in society at large. I am happy to report that the Board of the Ecumenical Church Council voted overwhelmingly to accept the Open Church Group into full fellowship. They have also agreed to sell MCC and Open Church Group publications in the Ecumenical's Center's book store. The church in Copenhagen continues to make progress and I believe with continued work will become a leading force in the Scandinavian countries, promoting change within the established state/church structures.

Remember also the sisters and brothers in Latin America, Spain, Italy and the Phillipines who are earnestly seeking Christ through the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

Peace, the Lord is with you!

Rev. Lee J. Carlton

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The Woman's View

By Helen Margaret

As the New Year approaches each of us has hopes and dreams of a prosperous and rewarding '75. We at the Dallas Daughters of Bilitis have many such aspirations that we as a Lesbian/Feminist organization would like to share with you, our sisters and brothers.

Many of you in the community are not familiar with the purpose or working of the DOB, so first I would like to tell you something about our organization. Dallas DOB is an organization of women to aid the lesbian in discovering her place in society and in educating society to understand and accept her, without prejudice. Activities are provided where she can communicate with others and expand her social world outside the bar scene. Our multi-facted program is limited only by the interests of the women involved –yet each woman is free to choose whether or not she wishes to participate in any activity. DOB is a "home for the lesbian." A place to socialize, meet other women, relax and be comfortable in a congenial atmosphere. Membership is limited to biological females without regard to sexual orientation.

This tells you our purpose but not what we do. WE DO A LOT!! We have bi-monthly meetings the first and third Friday of each month at 8 pm in the Woemn for Change Center, Suite 290 at 3220 Lemmon West. We have many exciting, active meetings planned for this year, among a few are: A Bingo party with MCC-Dallas, Ft. Worth AURA and DOB to raise money for the travelling expenses of Rev. Shawn Ferrell from California. The tentative date is Feb. 7. Supper will be served and prizes to be awared. WASP speaker Debbie Spray will speak at an upcoming meeting, along with a well-known Dallas psychic reader and advisor. Also Dallas author and astrologer, Doctor of Psychology of women, plus boxstoppers, parties, and a host of other activities.

In the past year the DOB has hosted a 24-hour telephone service called Gay Line. For problems big and small, referrals, counseling and information. Each woman has gone thru a crisis line training session to fully prepare her for the needs of all who may call. This coming year we would like to have men who are interested in handling the line with us to please call, for many of our calls are from men.,

We sponsor a speakers bureau of women who go out into the area giving talks as individuals and panelists to churches, universities, classrooms, etc., on the homosexual and his/her lifestyle. Call Gay Line for information: 742-1947.

At present we have a library Resource center without a home. It was located in a small house that was a center open to women as a drop-in center. Hopefully, in the near future we will have another location so that women will be able to drop in for rap sessions, coffee, games, counseling and use of the library.

The new officers and members of the DOB are looking forward to a good year in '75. We hope that those of you who have not heard of us or who have and didn't know what we were all about will come and join in our fun and undertakings. The more we band together and fight for our rights as human beings, the easier our struggle will be. We need the support of the community, and we hope we can be of help to you...

MCC: Woman And Their Places

By Pat McCormick

Metropolitan Community opens its doors to all people–especially women.

Women in the church have always had a unique position, depending upon the denomination. Many churches only allow women to sing, teach Sunday school and have socials. Others allow women to preach, but not to serve as directors on the governing board. Still others allow women the right and privilege of serving wherever they feel their calling, talents and desires lead them to serve.

Metropolitan Community Church is one of the latter churches. Women can serve wherever they want to and in the case of elected positions, are elected to serve.

The positions of service in the church are widespread, from just being a member (that's important, too) to being on the board of directors. This could include being a minister, a deacon, songleader, pianist, organist, committee chairman, usher or many other functions.

Whatever you want from a church you can probably find at MCC. But you can rely on this–you will find love and acceptance from your sisters and brothers and you will be allowed to serve God.

Come and see.

(Editor's note: For those of you who do not attend and do not know, the writer is a female who serves as a director and an exhorter, as well as being our associate editor.)

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The Woman Who Became Mother of Nations

Sarah, Sarai, Sara

(Editor's note: This is the second woman to be discussed in a series on "Women of the Bible", written by Rev. J. C. Harris, pastor of MCC-Dallas.)

Among the classified names of the Bible are those known as sacramental names, and are so-called because they are names give by God Himself, or under His inspiration in association with a particular promise, convenant or declaration of His, as to the character, destiny or mission of those distinctly named. Thus a sacramental name became a sign and seal of an established convenant between God and the recipient of such a name. Two Bible chracters bearing character names are Abraham and Sarah, both of which signify the gracious purposes and promises of God.

The wife of the patriarch was originally known as Sarai, meaning "princely" or "a princess". Elsdon C. Smith suggests it may signify "contentious" or "quarrelsome", but was changed, not accidentally, or by the whim of the bearer, buy by God Himself that it might be a sign of His purpose, into Sarah, implying the princess, a princess or princesses, the source of nations and kings. Sarah or "Chieftainess", the feminine of Sar, meaning a "captain or commander" is repeatedly used in this sense as a noun as, for example, by Isaiah who renders it "queen" (49:23). It has been observed among ancient Jews there was a sort of a cabalistic translation that "the Hebrew letter yod signifies the creative power of God in nature, while the letter hay symbolizes the state of grace–that state into which Sarah had entered after receiving the covenant promises." The promise of ancestorship of many nations came with the change of the name of Sarai to Sarah. "I will bless her and she will become nations." She was thus associated with her husband in the great blessing of the covenant, whose name was changed from Abram to Abraham. The former, original name means "high or honored father," the latter, "a father of many nations." The Apocrypha speaks of Abraham as "a great father of a multitude of nations" (Ecclesiasticus 44:20).

The root idea of Sarah means "to rule," and fits the personality of the bearer. It was a name intended as a seal of the promise given to Abraham, "Kings of people shall be of her." Paul has an allegorical reference to Sarah as one who typified the gospel dispensation, "Jerusalem which is above...which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26). Thus, Sarah was to be the princess, not only "because she was to be the ancestress of a great national literally, of many nations spiritually, but also because the rank and power were to be possessed by her descendents, or rather because the people descended from her were to be ruled over by regal dynasty, by a succession of kings of their own race and lineage, is derived from her." In the genealogy of the descendents of Esau, Sarah's grandson we read, "These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." The line of kings descended from Sarah terminated in God's Annointed One, the Messiah, Whose "kingdom is not of this world." The sacramental name of Sarah, therefore, also symbolizes the spiritual seed, the whole multitude of believers of all nations who are "kings and priests unto God."

Then the personal application of the changed name must not be forgotten. Called Sarah by God and the angels (Genesis 17:15, 18:9), she exhibited the traits of a princess, "wielding a sceptre by the magic of which she could lord it over men's hearts after her own will, even bring kings to her feet. If she came into the world with a will as of her own as her dowry, nature further assisted her in developing it by the great beauty of her face and the grace of her stature. By these gifts she made her wish a command and disarmed opposition." Both in bearing and character she illustrated the significance of her name. Through the long, long years of the quiet and steadfast devotion of Abraham to Sarah, peace reigned in the matrimonial tent more because of Abraham's gentleness, kindness and forebearance, even though he lived so long with the more expressive and possessive ways of Sarah. Twice over in the King James Version of the New Testament she is referred to as Sara, but the American Standard Version uniformly gives us Sarah (Hebrews 11:11; 1 Peter 3:6).

Sarah came from Ur of the Chaldees, Babylonia, and her former name Sarai, "Princely," indentifies her as coming from an honored family. She was the daughter of Terah and was therefore half-sister to Abram, her senior by ten years (Genesis 17:17), whom she married in the Ur of the Chaldees. While Abram and Sarai had the same father, they had different mothers (Genesis 20:12). Marriages between near relatives were coutenanced in those days and were sometimes common for religious reasons (Genesis 24:3, 4; 28:1, 2), but not marriages between those actually by the same mother. Sarai was well past middle life and childless when with Abram she left her own country and with him went out "not knowing whither they went" (Genesis 11:29, 30).

There are various ways of looking at this remarkable woman who through a long span of life was the faithful wife of a prophet known as "the friend of God"

(The syory of Sarah will continue in the February issue of the Channel.)

"I Honestly Love You"

BY DEACON STEVE CHILDERS

In the beginning, God created MCC through Rev. Troy Perry. Most people think we started out at the first service of twelve people at Rev. Perry's home. Actually, we are the direct result of the prison ministry. Carlos, a young Chicano, was arrested at a gay bar for lewd conduct. He was handcuffed, frisked and hauled off to jail. It was a heavy trip for Carlos. After all, at 26 years of age, he was being arrested for the first time. That was bad enough, but the police also threatened him by telling him that they would call him employer and tell him. Carlos felt that no one cared about him. Rev. Perry told Carlos that God loved him, but Carlos answered that even the police officer had preached to him by telling him that he couldn't be gay and Christian. Carlos felt that everyone, even God, hated him.

We all know that was a lie of the devil. Not everyone hates gay people. As Rev. Perry says in "One God," "The One that counts doesn't hate us." The incident with Carlos happened six years ago. And now in 1975 there are many gay inmates that feel the same way that Carlos did. My job is to tell our sisters and brothers in prison that they are not alone, that they are a part of a universal family that loves as a family should. I don't work alone. I thought I might have to, but I was greatly mistaken. Many of you already write to and visit someone you know that is in prison. You have come to me, and together we both let your friend know that some people care for her or him. Then you who don't even know anyone in prison also come to me and say, "Hey, Steve, I want to go visit an inmate with you." You also put items such as envelopes, postage stamps, and stationery in the box for inmates at church. You also give our treasurer money for the prison ministry. I never said you had to do any of this. I have told you of my work, and you became interested. You are getting involved! You had to first become "aware". For those of you that haven't become "aware", let's take a mental trip back to the jail. I want to again share with you an actual experience of my best friend and myself.

I called Danny one Saturday morning to "rap", and before the conversation was over, he wanted me to come get him to go visit the jail. Danny had never been before. He had read my article, "Behind Closed Doors", (December's *Channel*) so he was aware of what to expect. Still he had to experience it for himself. He was nervous, just as I had been the first time.

Danny asked me, "What do you say to a gay brother that received a 10-year sentence for sodomy?" I found that to be a bit perplexing, but I knew that an inmate isn't any harder to talk to than anyone else, regardless of the circumstances. I told Danny that he would discover that our brother behind bars is just like any new person we could meet and become friends with in a gay bar. I introduced them to each other, and Danny didn't feel uncomfortable at all. As I was talking to the inmate, Danny discovered someone he knew in the same tank, so Danny went and talked to him.

Our friend in prison has served 24 months and has only seen the light of day one time—and that was the day he went to the infirmary. All in all, he has a beautifully positive spirit about being in jail, and I thank God for that. Even in his prison environment, he can overcome a great many hardships that a lot of my friends on the outside world couldn't even begin to handle. He's a strong person, and I'm proud of him. Danny is proud of him, too. Now he has two people that have visited him who are his brothers. Soon I expect a sister at MCC to go with me to meet him. We are non-sexist at MCC. We will overcome the battle of the sexes, even if the "straight" world can't. Perhaps we can help them by showing them our example. After all, talk is meaningless to me, unless you accompany the talk with action. I hope to reach out to my gay sisters in prison, too.

There is a lot of work to do. I need a secretary and also a lot of people to become penpals to inmates. It's not easy to be accepted as a penpal for an inmate, because as a "professional" penpal myself, I know how harmful people can be who develop an interest then drop it. I have applications for penpals, and only those that are serious about becoming a penpal need apply. Strict, perhaps, but when it comes to my people in prison, yes, I will be. I won't permit them to be hurt anymore; they have and are suffering enough.

At this point, I want to preach my sermon that many of you to have already heard from me. For those of you that have heard it, I want you to hear it again! As a Christian, you should think and act as you feel that Christ would. Jesus always took care of the physical needs of His people *first*, then He taught them in a "spiritual education" course. Think about it! Jesus fed the multitude, healed the sick, and visited the lonely and oppressed people in prison, among many things. Jesus was not a man who preached constantly, without any action. His action often came before His words. Quite honestly, I am so tired and weary of the multitude of preaching people that hardly even put any of their positive words into positive action. Instead, they want to preach negative things. As "my man" commented from his recent trip to San Diego, Donald said in a letter to me: "There are soul hustlers on every corner using the Bible as a baseball bat." Hey, I thought, that's sad, but I knew it was true.

When Danny and I walked out of jail, I turned to him and said, "Now, don't ever question why I am a gay activist; you have just met one of the reasons why." Danny, who is an honest closet case, got my message as he never had before. In fact, I even heard him take two steps forward closer to opening that closet door. We will soon be going on a group visit to the inmates, or we will go visit in shifts on weekends. When the officials see all of us coming to visit our poeple in the homosexual tanks, then they will know that we are quite serious when we can say to someone behind bars, "I honestly love you!"

God bless you!

(Editor's note: Steve, the above writer, can be contacted at MCC or by writing to him in care of this paper at 3834 Ross Avenue, Dallas.)

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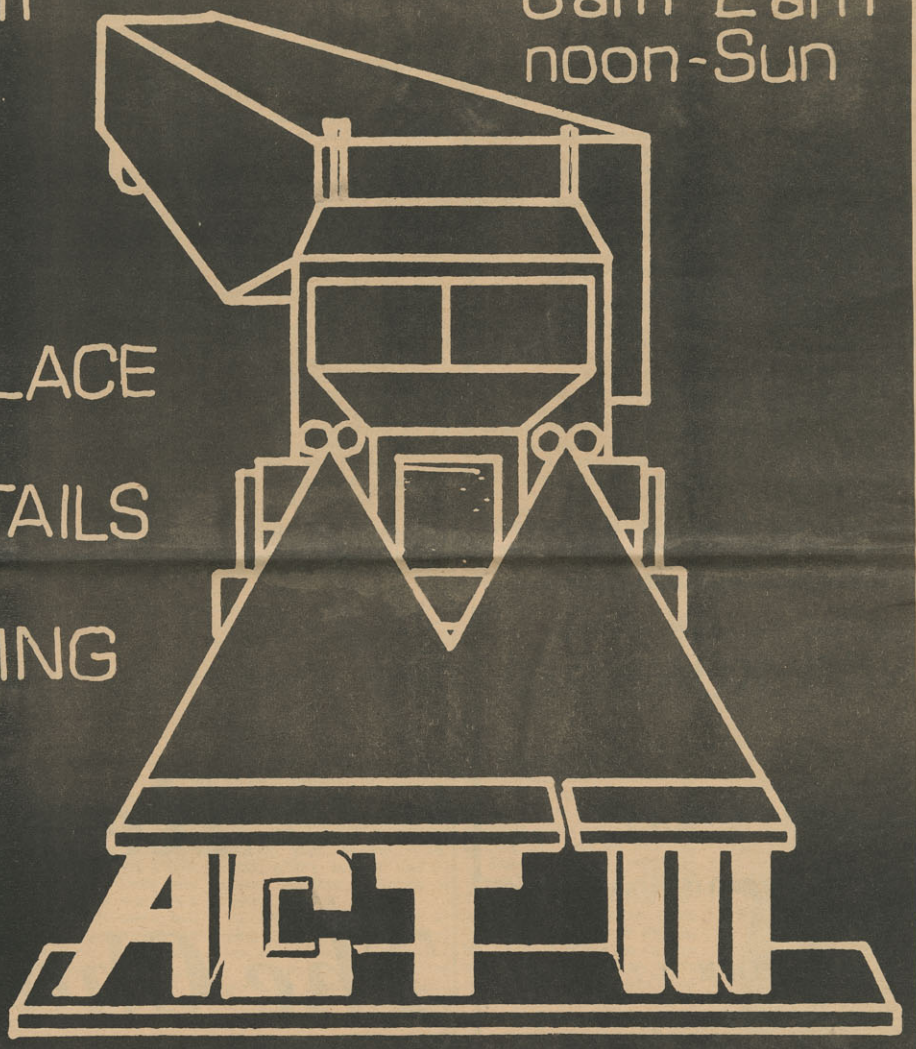
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