

City to get gay church, pastor says

By CHARLENE WARREN
Post Religion Writer

Houston soon will have its first gay church, the founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, the Rev. Troy Perry, has announced.

Perry visited Houston last week to help organize the Houston Metropolitan Community study group into a mission. It will be only a short time before the mission becomes a church, Perry said.

"We establish a mission when we have 25 committed persons — and a church when we have 35," Perry explained. "Most of our churches have close to 100 members."

Sixty three Metropolitan Community churches with more than 15,000 members

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have been started in 28 states, Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

Perry founded the first Metropolitan Community Church, known as the "Mother Church," in Los Angeles in 1968. Although aimed primarily at homosexuals, Perry said 15 per cent of its members are heterosexuals.

An admitted homosexual himself, Perry is the author of the book, "The Lord is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay." He was granted his first license to preach at age 15 by a Baptist church in Winter Haven, Fla.

Perry later left the Baptist church, married and fathered two sons. After five years of

marriage, Perry admitted his homosexuality to himself and to his wife and the couple separated. His wife has since remarried.

In his book, Perry writes about the decision to separate.

"We knew that we were tearing up five years of our lives together. And we were dissolving our family. My oldest boy, 'little Punkin' we called him, kept asking why we were doing this, why we were moving, and most agonizing, why we were crying . . . packed them up in the car and took them to the terminal so they could take a bus back to the Midwest . . . There was to be no more future for us together . . . I kissed both of my boys goodbye . . . I went back to my car and got in and just went all to pieces. I had closed a chapter in my life that is, even now, painful to recall."

Since that time, the husky "patron saint" of the gay lib movement has helped establish not only gay churches, but gay synagogues as well.

"There now are three Jewish gay temples in the nation," Perry reported. "One is in Los Angeles, one in New York and one in Boston."

A seminary for gays also has been founded, the Samaritan Bible Seminary in Los Angeles, which has 40 students. And, despite its name of "Metropolitan," the Metropolitan Community Church has opened new churches in several smaller towns.

"The Bible belt has been a great area for us because of



REV. TROY PERRY

the oppression of our people there," Perry said. "Our church started as the result of a need. Your church says you cannot love me because I am gay."

"We are a Christian church," Perry, 33, emphasized. "One third of our members nationally are from a Roman Catholic background, but we are a Protestant group movement in the mainstream of Christianity."

"We believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit — and have many charismatics in our congregations. We are the third largest Protestant church in the city of Los Angeles, where we have four MCC churches."

MCC churches have opened in Dallas and Fort Worth, and soon may open in El Paso and Corpus Christi, Perry reported.

"We are aiming for 20,000 membership nationally, so that we can join the National Council of Churches," he said. "Two of our pastors have been named to the Council's National Gay Task Force."

Although four MCC churches have been burned to the ground, Perry is encouraged by several recent developments in mainline denominations.

"The Catholic church has come out with new confession guidelines for homosexuals," he explained. "The bishop of Boston has named a priest to work with homosexuals — and in Los Angeles, gays have been given the use of the Newman Center on a week to week basis."

"The United Church of Christ knowingly has ordained a homosexual in California. Unitarian Universalists have made a statement accepting both homosexuals and bisexuals."

"United Presbyterians and United Methodists are studying the issue. And the Episcopal diocese of Michigan has made the most progressive report I have seen, calling for the admission of gays to the ministry and other areas of church life."

The Metropolitan Community Church has established its own board of evangelism and world missions — and receives 51 per cent of the tithing in local churches. It also has begun a radio program in Los Angeles and soon will branch into television, according to Perry.

"We used to sit around and hope that someday we would

be accepted as gays by churches, but that day will never happen," Perry mused.

"MCC says two things to the dying churches of America. We are a stench to the nostrils of God, who sees the white church, the black church and the gay church all separated. And we are a testimony to other churches, because we take the words of Christ literally, 'Come unto me all ye who labor and I will give you rest.' Christ didn't say, 'Come unto me, all ye heterosexuals.'"

"The established churches have become country clubs for saints, not churches for sinners. You may own a million dollar church, but be on the wrong track."

Perry's mother, who reared five children (Perry is the oldest), admits in his book that she once had a "traditional reaction" to homosexuality, but now is "with him all the way."

"The real sins are hate and being inhuman to each other," she wrote in her foreword to the autobiography. "That's how we all sin against the homosexuals."

Of his own two sons, whom he still visits, Perry said:

"I want my children to be happy. It is irrelevant to me whether they are heterosexual or homosexual. If one of them should be a homosexual, I hope I will have done something to help so he won't have to suffer the things I have."

Houston's Metropolitan Community Mission meets at 7 p.m. Wednesdays and 1 p.m. Sundays at 2020 Waugh Drive.

You are cordially invited to a brunch to be held by

INTEGRITY/Houston

on
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1973

12 noon to 2 pm
at

Just MARION & LYNN's a great new bar

Corner of Fairview Street and Converse

A buffet will be served and dancing and fellowship will be the order of the day.

This social is being held to acquaint members of our community with INTEGRITY/HOUSTON and we urge you to bring your friends.

Drinks will be available at the following reduced prices:

Premium beer	45¢	Wine cooler or other	50¢
Other beer	40¢	Champagne	60¢
Set ups	40¢	Bottle champagne	\$5.00

The Board and Membership of Integrity/Houston extends our best wishes for the Holiday Season and hopes to see you December 9.

Integrity/Houston
P. O. Box 16041
Houston, Texas 77022

Meetings:
Each Sunday at 12 noon
3512 Travis - Houston

urgent!

On April 29, the Assad campaign distributed different versions of a political "newspaper" in the Heights and Montrose areas. The Heights version attacked RON WATERS for his support of Gay Rights, leaving the clear impression that Gays do not deserve representation with "decent folks." The Montrose version carefully avoided any mention of the issue.

In view of the Corll impact on the Heights, this constitutes inflammatory pandering at its worst. The fact that Mr. Assad withholds his views from the Montrose community is shameful duplicity.

An excerpt from the Assad propaganda is reproduced below.

Mr. Assad poses the question: "Does this (Ron Waters) represent you?" Our reply is an emphatic YES.

Mr. Assad clearly cannot.

Do You Support the Homosexual Cause?

Waters said, "If I'm elected, I'll represent ALL the people."

Waters also said, "There are lots of gays who are conservative, who voted for me, who worked for me. Because I'm committed to the gay cause, I can be open and public about it—to say in an official capacity that there's nothing wrong with gay love. To admit that I have gay friends, gay people on my staff, and to introduce them as such, should have a radicalizing influence."

DOES THIS REPRESENT YOU?

The above quote was made by Ron Waters and was published in the Texas Monthly, April, 1973, Volume 1, Issue 3.

PLEASE TELL A FRIEND!

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Viewpoints

Entitled 'The Outrage' --And It Certainly Was

From Dale Carter, P.O. Box 16041.

Imagine the following:

It is 1924. Leopold and Loeb are being tried for the kidnap-murder of Bobby Franks. Anti-Semitism is widespread. Then a national radio network airs a primetime drama in which a Jew kidnaps a gentile and tortures him in a bizarre ritual. Inflammatory? Prejudicial? Of course.

Now it is 1974: David Brooks is to be tried for the Houston mass murders. Homophobia is rampant. Then a national television network airs a primetime drama in which a male high school teacher forcibly rapes a young male student. Inflammatory? Prejudicial? ABC and its local affiliate, Channel 13, don't seem to think so.

This program was protested nationally by the American Psychiatric Association, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Gay Task Force. Four major sponsors withdrew support. ABC affiliates in Boston, Philadelphia, Corpus Christi, Springfield and Lafayette refused to broadcast it. Nevertheless, ABC and KTRK exercised the poor taste and poor judgment to present it in Houston Oct. 8 as a segment of the "Marcus Welby, M.D." series.

If, as ABC claims, it was only concerned with a portrayal of child molestation, it could easily have featured a female student. Instead ABC chose to reinforce the unfortunate and inaccurate stereotype of homosexuals as child molesters.

The segment was entitled "The Outrage." It certainly was.

Youth agency responds to 'Gay Caucus'

The Texas Methodist - Jan. 18, 1974

ATLANTA (RNS) — A proposal that homosexuals be accepted as candidates for the United Methodist ministry was issued here at the semi-annual meeting of the national United Methodist Council on Youth Ministry.

Adopting a resolution submitted by its Task Force on Life Styles, the Youth Council asked that homosexuality "not be a bar to the ministry" and that "homosexuality in itself not be in any way synonymous with immorality."

Two members of an unofficial "Gay Caucus" within the denomination will attend the Youth Council's August 1974 meeting to help draft proposals on homosexual concerns for the Church's 1976 General Conference.

The Youth Council also endorsed a "U.S. Coalition for Population Year" in 1974, designed to involve young Americans in the planning of U.S. population policies, and pledged not to discriminate in hiring staff members on the basis of "sex, marital status, sexual orientation, personal appearance or matriculation."

The Council rejected a request for funds for a junior-high ministry but assigned one staff member to work part-time with such young people.

Criminal justice provided a heavy emphasis for activities at the meeting.