

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Worship
December 24, 2010

Executive Team

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Worship | Sunday, 9 & 11 am

Children & Youth Worship | Sunday, 11 am

Nursery | Sunday, 9 & 11 am

Resurrection MCC

2025 West 11th St, Houston, Texas 77008

Phone 713-861-9149 / Fax 713-861-2520

www.ResurrectionMCC.org

Welcome!

If you are attending Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church for the first time, we are glad to have you here! We invite you to join us each week as we worship God and learn more about Christian living in an inclusive way. All are welcome.

Make sure to visit the Concierge Desk, located in our Welcome Area, to receive a gift from us. You will find friendly volunteer hosts waiting to greet you.

Worship Services

Resurrection MCC is proud to offer a variety in our worship services. Our two Sunday services, at 9 & 11 am, are identical in form, however they contain different elements from diverse religious traditions each week.

A Special Welcome to First-Time Families!

Our nursery staff would love to meet you and your infants & children aged one month through three years! The nursery is located to the right of the Sanctuary entrance and is open during both the 9 & 11 am services.

Children and youth aged 4 - 17 years are invited to join our Youth Ministries Program during the 11 am service in the Activities Building (located across the breezeway from our main parking lot). Sign-in begins at 10:45 am. All children must be registered and signed-in to attend. Parents are welcome to join the children for Communion at Noon in the Activities Building. Snack & sign-outs begin at 12:15 pm.

About Us...

Resurrection MCC is a Christian church with a primary outreach to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. Metropolitan Community Churches, founded in 1968, is a human-rights movement and ministry operating as a Christian denomination in 22 countries around the world. MCC is an international advocate for vulnerable people in places where religious orthodoxy, sexism, and homophobia can result in violence and death.

Metropolitan Community Churches are on a bold mission to transform hearts, lives, and history. We are a movement that faithfully proclaims God's inclusive love for all people and proudly bears witness to the holy integration of spirituality and sexuality. Because of our faith we are called to: do justice, show kindness, and live humbly with God (Micah 6:8); explore life's questions with open hearts and minds; raise our voices in sacred defiance against exclusion, whether religious, political or systemic; reach out to those with no hope; equip new generations of remarkable, far-reaching spiritual activists.

The **Mission** of Resurrection MCC is to demonstrate God's unconditional love to all people through Christian action.

The **Vision** of Resurrection MCC is to **ATTRACT** people into a relationship with God through radical **INCLUSION** into God's family, transform them to Christ-like **MATURITY**, and **MOBILIZE** them for their life purpose.

At Resurrection MCC, every member and friend is a minister of the church. We envision a Christian community that values diversity and is as diverse and all-encompassing as creation. Through salvation, service, study, and tithing, each member and friend will live and grow in faith and be spiritually fed. We embrace four core values:

Core Values

Inclusion

Love is our greatest moral value and resisting exclusion is a primary focus of our ministry. We want to continue to be the conduits of a faith where everyone is included in the family of God, and where all parts of our being are welcomed at God's table.

Community

Offering a safe and open community for people to worship, learn and grow in their faith is our deep desire. We are committed to equipping ourselves and each other to do the work that God has called us to do in the world.

Spiritual Transformation

Providing a message of liberation from the oppressive religious environment of our day or to those experiencing God for the first time is what guides our ministry. We believe that when people are invited to experience God through the life and ministry of Christ, lives will be transformed.

Social Action

Working to talk less and do more, we are committed to resisting the structures that oppress people and standing with those who suffer under the weight of oppressive systems, being guided always by our commitment to Global Human Rights.

Prelude

A December to Remember
by John Jacobson and Mac Huff

Children's Choir

We Prepare

As the prelude begins, the congregation is invited to be in an attitude of expectation for the worship of God.

Our Community Gathers

Rev. Harry Knox
Mark Eggleston

+ Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?

And the moun - tains in re - ply Ech - o - back their joy - ous strains.
Say what may the ti - dings be, Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?

Glo - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o,

Glo - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

We Gather

From many places we gather here. This is a high point of our week. We see our friends. We make new friends. And we spend time with The Friend -- the loving Christ who meets us where we are, as we are. In this Sanctuary we worship and through worship the courage within us is kindled to inspire courageous living beyond this place.

We Listen

Even as things do not go as planned, new life breaks forth. Jesus, God-with-us, arrives in the midst of political upheavals and no vacancies. The important message of Christmas is that even when things do not go as planned, God arrives. We forget the unsettled nature of the first Christmas – that it was all about things that were unexpected, in places unsought. Christ arrived in a manger, in a cattle stall. If the Child of God can arrive in such circumstances, so can truth. So can joy. God is with us – no matter what.

~ *Feasting on the Word:*
Commentary on Luke
2:1-14, adapted

Open the Door: Lighting of the Advent Candle & Invocation

Marion Kirby

+ One: Light of All Lights, we open the door of our hearts to You:

**All: Open our minds to remember Your grace.
Open our mouths to speak of Your grace.
Open our hearts to receive Your grace.
Open our hands to embody Your grace.
Open our lives to make real Your grace.**

One: Open our worship as we rejoice in Your grace.
Open the door of our hearts to You.

Response

Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see You
I want to see You

First Reading

Terry Smith

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Response

Come, quick-ly, sha - lom, teach us_ how to pre - pare for a gift that com - pels us with jus-tice to
care. Our spir-its are rest-less re - store us to see, The_ can-dles are lit ex-pect - a-tion we seek.

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Meet Me at the Manger

Special Offering

As the Mass Choir sings, you are invited to bring your gift and place it in the basket in front of our altar.

Anthem

Mass Choir

Christmas Gloria

by Jay Althouse

Spiritual Encouragement

Rev. Harry Knox

*Open the Door:
Through the Door - Lightly*

**We Hear
the Word**

Truly Jesus is born to us and for us. By locating the birth story at the registration under Quirinius, Luke is placing it firmly in the realm of "everyday Joes" and "everyday Marys" who are trying to understand ordinary lives in light of the extraordinary news of the gospel. These people need a savior, and God has provided one.

Though we are the ones who are properly positioned to receive the newborn king, we are not the ones who really understand him or are called upon to announce his arrival. That belongs to the shepherds, to those who have fallen off, or never entered, the economic hamster wheel that so engrosses the rest of us. Because the shepherds have nothing of interest to the emperor, they are free to glorify and praise God fully and without reservation.

Weary like Mary and Joseph, we are longing to learn structures of meaning that reach beyond our daily concerns for survival and compliance with life's many demands and decrees. Unfamiliar teachers, until now marginalized and ignored like the shepherds, will show us the way. But because Jesus himself is the way, we are welcomed not as strangers but as expected guests.

~ Michael S. Bennet, *Feasting on the Word: Christmas Eve*, p 120.

Response



Making Ministry Happen

Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechettini

Offertory

Children's Choir

Believe

by Glenn Ballard and Alan Silvestri arr. by John Higgins

Communion

Rev. Janice Ladd
Rev. Michael Diaz

Communion Songs

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the joys of highest heaven.
No ear may hear Christ's coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets bards foretold,
when with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world send back the song which now the angels sing.

We Receive

All congregations in MCC practice an open communion.

We believe that communion is a visible sign of Christ's presence and God's grace that each one of us, friend or member, may receive. Simply come forward as the ushers direct.

During Communion you will be offered bread and cup with a brief blessing.

We use grape juice for the cup so that all may participate.

If you desire a deeper partnering in prayer (intercessory prayer), prayer ministers are available at the Side Altar during communion. The Fishers Net Prayer Ministry is also available following both services to pray with you.

Emmanuel

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, your name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us; your name is called Emmanuel.

Jesus, Name Above All Names

Jesus, name above all names;
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.
Emmanuel, God is with us;
Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child, Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, loves pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, alleluia to our king;
Christ, the Savior, is born, Christ, the Savior, is born.

+ **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Rev. Michael Diaz

+ **Benediction**

Rev. Harry Knox

We Sing

We sing as a body during the distribution of the elements. If you do not wish to sing, please be in an attitude of prayer for those who wish to meditate during this time.

We Go Forth

God's love cannot be contained within the walls of this Sanctuary. Take the love of Christ from this place into your homes, neighborhoods and communities.

Prayer

If you are in need of prayer support, you can find prayer partners available during our time of communion or after worship in the right wing of the Sanctuary.

The Chalice

opening . . . receiving . . . offering
Life in Fullness

Where Will You Journey?

COMMUNITY GATHERING

6:00 - 7:00 pm | Activities Building
Bring a brown bag and purchase a drink or snack from Inspirations Coffee Cafe while you meet new friends.

ADVENT CONNECTION GROUPS

7:00 - 8:30 pm | Activities Building

OFFERING ONE

6 Weeks - Open to All

ADVENT CONNECTION GROUPS

Wednesdays

December 1 - January 5

OPEN THE DOOR

"The full person God created us to be contains more than we can imagine, but most of us dwell within only a small portion of the superb castle of ourselves. Opening the door of our heart allows us entrance to the vast treasure of who we are and to

the divine presence within us. We have an immeasurable amount of love and tenderness in us if only we open the door to discover it. The same is true with the multitude of our other qualities and virtues. Each door we open helps us grow into the fullness of who we are. Each discovery moves us to contribute love in our world."

~ *Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self* by Joyce Rupp

You are invited to participate in the upcoming 6-week small group study. During the season of Advent, Connection Groups will gather once a week to share their experience with the incredible book entitled: "Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self." In this book beloved author and spiritual guide, Joyce Rupp, explores the rich image of the door as an invitation to growth and awareness and leads readers to search more deeply for their authentic selves in fuller union with God. The book provides a structure of daily reading, scripture, prayer, reflection, and meditation and the Advent Connection Groups will provide encouragement and companionship throughout the journey.

Mark your calendar to meet each Wednesday from December 1 to January 5 when we will have Advent Connection Groups on site in the Activities Building. Sign up today and purchase your book at the Inspirations Coffee Café and Bookstore or download the book to your Kindle through Amazon.

If you need more information, contact
RevMichael@ResurrectionMCC.org or 713-861-9149 x105.

OPEN THE DOOR ADVENT SERMON SERIES

SUNDAYS, 9 & 11 AM

DECEMBER 26 - Closing the Door - Rev. Kristen

JANUARY 2 - Beyond the Door - Rev. Harry

8 Weeks - Open to All

BULLETPROOF FAITH

BULLETPROOF FAITH A Spiritual Survival Study Guide for LGBTQ Christians

Wednesdays | 7 - 8:30 PM | January 12 - March 2

This Life Development offering is especially for those on the **Exploring** and **Deepening** Paths in their Journey of Faith.

As Christians we're told in Ephesians 6:13-17 to put on "the whole armor of God." That armor includes righteousness, truth, peace, salvation, and Spirit. It's no coincidence that faith is our shield to "quench all the flaming arrows" that come our way. It's only when we develop the heart knowledge of God's unconditional and enduring love for us that we can become bulletproof—calm and assured even when arrows are flying and emotions are high.

Join us for this 8-week "Spiritual Survival" book study designed by Rev. Candace Chellew-Hodge to guide us through the minefield of condemnation and persecution faced by many LGBTQ Christians, to an undeniable faith that powerfully proclaims the reality of God's love for one and all!

Contact Rev. Kristen for more information:
RevKristen@ResurrectionMCC.org

9 Weeks - Open to All



FOLLOWING JESUS Discipleship 101

Wednesdays | 7 - 8:30 PM | January 12 - March 2

This Life Development offering is especially for those on the **Exploring** and **Deepening** Paths in their Journey of Faith.

What would happen if I came to experience Christianity as a way of life; something more than a set of understandings or beliefs? What would it really mean for me to grow as a follower of – rather than a believer in – the way of Jesus? These questions form the core of this 9-week study by MCC-based Found Pearl Press

They challenge us to: engage the words of Jesus and other key passages in Scripture directly for ourselves; form our own thoughtful conclusions in exploration and discussion with our siblings; put into practice a living and increasingly authentic faith. That is, to practice discipleship!

Contact Rev. Kristen for more information:
RevKristen@ResurrectionMCC.org



JOURNEY MAPS

MANY PATHS, ONE DESTINATION

"I'm not sure where to begin . . ."
"Is this workshop right for me?"
"I'm looking for something for beginners . . ."
"I need something to challenge me to take the next step . . ."

As we make our way On the Journey of Faith ... we often find that although we frequently travel in one another's company, we step onto the path from individual starting points, we navigate our way by an inner compass unique to our own soul, and we find ourselves drawn in distinctive ways into relationship with God. Beginning this Fall you will find that each of our Life Development offerings is identified by one or more of the following "Path" designations – Seeking, Exploring, Deepening, Serving, Grounding – as a suggestive guide to formulating personal Journey Maps for engaging Life Development offerings which might best "meet you where you are" in your spiritual growth and education journey. Check out the brief descriptions below as guides which you may find helpful in identifying where you are, and planning where you want to go - and grow!

~ Those on the **Seeking Path** are often in motion with their faith! Possibly recovering from faith experiences that no longer fit, possibly rediscovering faith longings buried long ago, discovering whole new possibilities for their life of faith, those on the Seeking Path are often interested in trying this, trying that, letting go of old stuff, trying out new stuff, questioning, experimenting, and just generally enjoying the faith adventure!

~ Those on the **Exploring Path** are often diving into their faith! Possibly alight or "on fire" with new or renewed experiences of the Divine, those on the Exploring Path often desire passionate engagement with the principles and practices of faith, are learning new ways to pray and read Scripture, and are exploring more fully who Jesus is for them and what it might mean for them to get up close and personal with God!

~ Those on the **Deepening Path** are often being called to new depths of practice in their faith! Possibly responding to a challenging or renewed sense of God's Presence or Call in their lives, those on the Deepening Path are often already engaged in regular disciplines of prayer, study and service – but find they are suddenly restless for more: more intimacy with God, more authenticity within themselves, more surrendered love for others ... more deepening into the Way of discipleship!

~ Those on the **Serving Path** are often practicing servant-ministry as the heart of their faith! Possibly also travelers on the Seeking, Exploring or Deepening Paths at times, those on the Serving Path often discover God, come into relationship with God, or experience faithfulness to God most vividly in the practice of serving others, and as such their preferred Path is one of servant-ministry: becoming transparent for the Presence of God in loving service to God's children!

~ Those on the **Grounding Path** are sowing and strengthening the Foundations of their faith! Possibly already traveling on any of the other Paths, or maybe preparing the way before they venture forth, those stepping onto the Grounding Path are often engaging "the basics" of the "God-stuff" (who is God and what does that mean in my life?), the "me-stuff" (what do I believe and how do I live true to that?), and the "we-stuff" (what is MCC all about and how does that shape Resurrection?) as they map their spiritual journey of faith!



Fishers Net Prayer Ministry

A Dialogue with God by Ron Reeser

"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all God's holy people." ~ Ephesians 6:18

Shopping for me is not enjoyable, so when I go to a store, I have a plan. I know exactly what to purchase, so I never have to return an item. Recently though, I purchased a lot of items for a project, but when the project fell through, I had no choice but to return the items for a refund. Upon entering the store, the line was close to 50 people deep! I sighed but took my place in line, repeating to myself, "This line WILL move fast." Then I noticed three overhead signs above me indicating, "Purchases only, this line." I then moved to the customer service area, only to be told that "Returns" were to be made in the same line as "Purchases." Naturally, I wasn't just mad, but fuming! Then, I changed my thoughts as God reminded me that the workers were just enforcing the store's rules and that no matter the rules, they were also children of God. With that, I started to send love to all the employees and customers in front of me. Within minutes, a security guard approached me, guiding me to an open register and moments later, I was out the door!

I give thanks for being reminded to always pray for others and to see the good in them, even when I feel slighted.

Dear Mother-Father-Creator God, I thank you that I am surrounded by your children, even when I cannot see them. Thank you for the constant reminders that ALL people are your children. Thank you for taking me out of my box, so that I may see good in others. Amen.

Join us each Sunday in the Chapel between services or near the Prayer Wall after our 11 am Worship service for one-on-one personal prayer. You can also send your requests to Prayers@ResurrectionMCC.org. Requests are immediately prayed over by the Fishers Net Prayer members and published each week in a Praise and Prayer email (unless your request is to remain anonymous). To sign up for Praise and Prayer alerts, go to our Web site and click on the "In Need of Prayer?" link.

*Growing stronger in Christ and realizing our Prayers together.
 ~ Fishers Net Prayer Ministry ~*

Children's Choir Rehearsal



Sundays
 Activities Building
 Room 104
 10:30 am - 11:00 am
 3rd - 7th grades
 welcome

Please email questions to ChildrensChoir@ResurrectionMCC.org

NEW

TEEN GROUP

13-17 years

Youth Ministry also includes:
 SPROUTS • 4 - 6 years
 FAITH BEGINNINGS • 7 - 9 years
 FAITH EXPLORERS • 10 - 12 years

Sign up in Activities Building starting at 10:45 am

The SUNDAY BASICS SERIES

December 26 • 12:30 - 2 pm • Activities Building



What do people here believe about Jesus?

Why do we stand when we read certain parts of the Bible during worship?

Can I become a member here even if I don't agree with a lot of the Bible?

Got questions? We got ... questions too!

How do we understand, experience, and engage “the basics” – Jesus, Worship, The Bible – in a theologically diverse community of faith which claims “Inclusivity” as its central Core Value? Join Rev. Kristen as we explore together the riches – and challenges – of what it means to be a truly inclusive Christian community of faith!

Un-Deck the HALLS

Christmas Clean-Up

Sunday, December 26

12:30 pm, Sanctuary

Join us for lunch, fellowship, and fun as we put away the Christmas decorations and prepare the Sanctuary for the next season.

Please RSVP at www.ResurrectionMCC.org so that plenty of food is available for all who want to come out and help.

Join us in a
Celebration of Family, Community & Culture

Saturday • January 1 • 6 pm • Activities Building



Saturday • January 1 • 6 pm • Activities Building

Join us for a meal and time of celebration.

RSVP today: Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org

Kwanzaa

A Celebration of Family, Community & Culture

by Elisa Vega-Burns

Kwanzaa is a unique African-American celebration with a focus on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement. Kwanzaa is neither political nor religious and, despite some misconceptions, is not a substitute for Christmas. It is simply a time for African-Americans to reaffirm and reinforce communitarian values and practices that strengthen and celebrate family, community and culture.

The word “Kwanzaa” comes from the phrase “matunda ya kwanza” which means “first fruits of the harvest” in the African language, Swahili.

The “First Fruits” are celebrated as we uplift principles which support and strengthen family, community and culture. The NGUZO SABA (The Seven Principles) lifted up during Kwanzaa are UMOJA (Unity), KUJICHAGULIA (Self-Determination), UJIMA (Collective Work and Responsibility), UJAMAA (Cooperative Economics), NIA (Purpose), KUUMBA (Creativity), IMANI (Faith).

There is a traditionally established way of celebrating Kwanzaa. First, you should come to the celebration with a profound respect for its values, symbols and practices and do nothing to violate its integrity, beauty and expansive meaning. Secondly, you should not mix your Kwanzaa celebration or its symbols, values and practices with any other holiday or cultural celebrations. Thirdly, choose the best and most beautiful items to celebrate Kwanzaa. This means taking time to plan and select the most beautiful objects of art, colorful African cloth, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc. so that every object used represents African culture and your commitment to Kwanzaa in the best of ways.

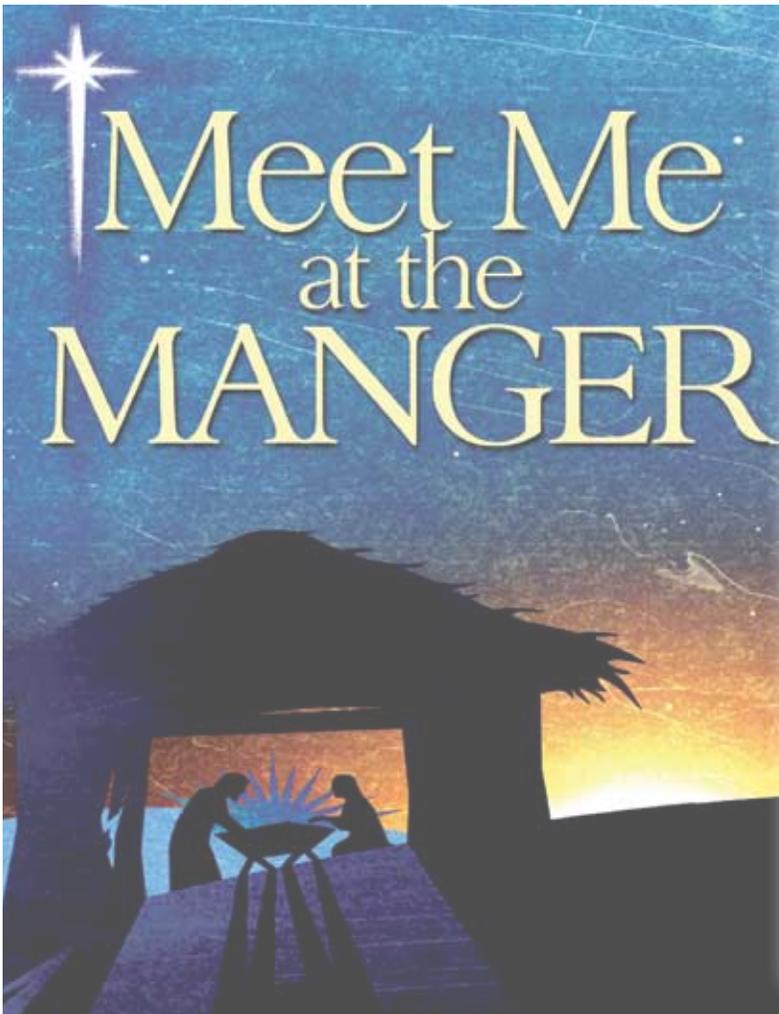
During Kwanzaa, we light the MISHUMAA SABA (seven candles: one black, three red, and three green), which together represent the seven Kwanzaa principles. The black candle represents the first principle Umoja (Unity) and is placed in the center of the Kinara. The red candles represent the principles of Kujichagulia (Self-determination), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) and Kuumba (Creativity) and are placed to the left of the black candle. The green candles represent the principles of Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Nia (Purpose) and Imani (Faith) and are placed to the right of the black candle.

The black candle is lit first on the first day of Kwanzaa (December 26); the remaining candles are lit afterwards alternating from left to right on the following days (December 27 through January 1).

The last day of Kwanzaa is January 1, the first day of the New Year. Historically this has been for African people a time of sober assessment of things done and things to do, and of self-reflection. Following in this tradition, this day of meditation is a time for us to ask ourselves and answer soberly and humbly the three Kawaiida (Kwanzaa value system) questions: Who am I? Am I really who I say that I am? and, Am I all that I ought to be? Thus, it is a time to recommit ourselves to our highest ideals.

Since its founding in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Kwanzaa has come to be observed by more than 18 million people worldwide. Join us for this rich cultural celebration, as together we commit ourselves to our highest ideals for 2010.

For additional details about Kwanzaa, visit www.ResurrectionMCC.org and click on the Kwanzaa link. Please RSVP today to Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org.



Meet Me at the MANGER

Some gifts are gladly received yet quickly forgotten. They dazzle the eyes. They may even find their place in our home. Yet they never quite enter the heart. Then there is the gift of God's love: this gift not only enters the heart—it transforms it.

At Resurrection MCC we celebrate the gift of God's love the entire year. There really is no gift that compares to spiritual transformation. The idea behind our Annual Meet Me at the Manger challenge is for each of us to participate in an act of gratitude for God's priceless gift to us.

The concept is simple: The power of God was revealed at the manger through the birth of Jesus. Nobody would have predicted that something as simple as a manger would have become a place to ultimately change history. There at the manger, God placed each of us first by giving the finest gift possible: The gift of Jesus.

Now it is time for us to put God first. Resurrection MCC invites you to put God first by giving a special offering (beyond regular pledges and giving) that is equal in amount to the most expensive Christmas gift you give—plus one dollar. Such an act is considered a spiritual practice, in the spirit of such spiritual practices as prayer or fasting.

Gift giving is all about celebrating relationships, and our most important relationship is with Christ. Even one dollar more than our most expensive gift does not express the value of our most important relationship. Yet such a gift is a way to thank God for the ultimate gift of eternal life.

Here is how you can participate. We have provided gift boxes (available now in the Narthex and Gathering Place) for you to take with you as a visible reminder of this opportunity. Children especially love to put some money in the box each week. Others simply write one check.

Tonight, you are invited to bring your gift and place it in the basket in front of our altar.

Join your friends and family at the Resurrection Manger on Christmas Eve. When you make your gift list, remember to put God first.

IMANI VIDA DRUM CIRCLE



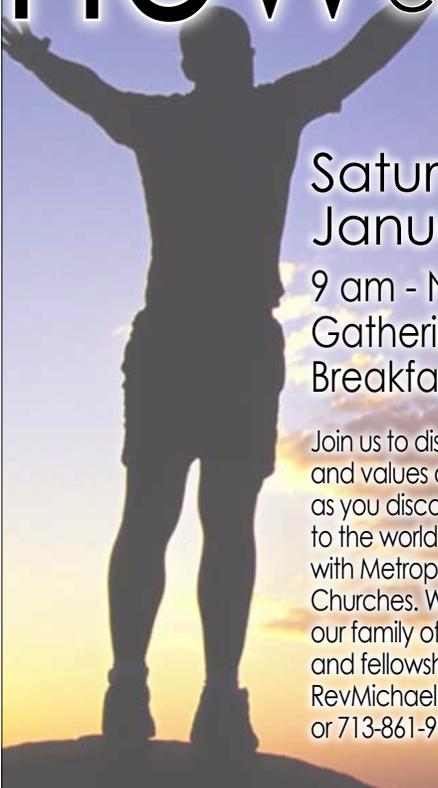
Friday, December 31
8 – 10:30 pm, Gathering Place

Gaining popularity across the country, some drum circles celebrate heritage, customs, and ethnic traditions, but all are outlets for people expressing a primal urge that drives their spirit, as they drum amidst camaraderie and fun. Drumming is not only fun, it induces deep relaxation, lowers blood pressure, and reduces the stress which contributes to nearly all disease and life-threatening illnesses. Drumming puts the mind, body and spirit in a place of rest and strengthens wellness! The drum circle is open to ALL, and requires no prior experience with drumming. Join us! If you want more information, contact Denise Junious, DrumCircle@ResurrectionMCC.org, or visit www.meetup.com/DrummingCircle

Imani Vida Drum Circle meets on the first Saturdays of each month

new

MEMBERS CLASS



**Saturday,
January 8**
9 am - Noon
Gathering Place
Breakfast Served

Join us to discuss the mission, vision, and values of Resurrection MCC as you discover your connection to the world through our affiliation with Metropolitan Community Churches. We welcome you to join our family of faith in purpose, service, and fellowship! Please RSVP to RevMichael@ResurrectionMCC.org or 713-861-9149 x105.

LGBT AND FREE IN THEE!

ADVENTURING OUT IN CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

JANUARY 9

1 - 5 PM • CHAPEL

“What does the Bible say about homosexuality?” and “What did Jesus say?” These questions are at the heart of this foundational Life Development offering for those seeking to reconcile their experience of God with their understanding of Scripture. Together we will engage the Bible through the lens of our personal faith experience as we consider the six “clobber passages” in light of current scholarship and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Open to all, this offering can provide Grounding for All Paths in the Journey of Faith!



Lunch will be served. RSVP and questions to RevKristen@ResurrectionMCC.org.

WORSHIP ARTS

Resurrection MCC is so blessed to have a number of groups to minister at our worship services. Auditions are not required, but a desire to worship and share is. Feel free to visit any rehearsals to see which group might be the right place for you to serve.

GOSPEL ENSEMBLE

Tuesdays • 7 pm

Directed by Cassandra White, this group sings music in the African-American Gospel tradition, traditional Spirituals and contemporary music of all types. Reading music is not required for this group, but the ability to match pitch and sing a part separate from the melody is.

SANCTUARY CHOIR

Tuesdays • 7 pm

This group sings mostly traditional church choral music with some contemporary music added from time to time. Reading music is not required for this group, but the ability to match pitch and sing a part separate from the melody is.

HEAVENSOUND HANDBELLS

Sundays • 1:30 pm

Currently there are several open spots in the handbell choir. Interested people need to have some music reading skills. Experience in ringing is not required. The director, Jim Winslett, will teach anyone the techniques of ringing.

If you have interest in any of these groups, please email our interim Director of Worship, Cassandra White, Cassandra@ResurrectionMCC.org

EQUALITY MINISTRY MEETING



Monday, January 10

6:30 pm

Gathering Place

Join team lead Ryan Rolston, as we discuss recent accomplishments and exciting upcoming activities!

Questions or to Sign up: Equality@ResurrectionMCC.org



FRIDAY NIGHT “FRIENDS BY THE FIRE”

Friday, January 14, 7 - 9 pm, Outside



Join us for our “Friends by the Fire,” sponsored by our Landscape and Facilities Team. Bring a chair and blanket and join us as we share stories, laughs, and “s’mores”. Hot chocolate will be provided.

RSVP to Joy@ResurrectionMCC.org (gotta make sure we have enough marshmallows!)
All are welcome. See you there!



Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor New Enrollment Period

The Neighbor to Neighbor program allows Resurrection MCC the opportunity to earn a portion of \$1 million that will be donated annually. The program earning period is July 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011. During the last program period, Resurrection MCC earned over \$1,200!

To participate in the program, simply take this printed page on your next shopping trip and have the cashier scan it at the beginning of the order.

Below are a few frequently asked questions of the program:

Can a household “link” their Kroger Plus Card to more than one organization at a time?

No, the system allows for one organization per household. To change organizations, you must present your Kroger Plus Card and the new organization’s barcode to the cashier.

Do I have to enroll each program year?

YES, all organizations and participants must re-enroll for each new enrollment period. The current Neighbor to Neighbor Program is effective July 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011.

Do I have to scan the organization letter each time I shop?

No, once the barcode is scanned with your plus card, you are enrolled for the remainder of the program year, ending on April 30, 2011.

How much can my organization earn?

The Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program will donate \$1 million annually. Each organization will earn a percentage of the \$1 million equal to the percentage of total earned contributions attributable to that organization.

RESURRECTION METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH



Additional information available at
www.krogerneighbortoneighbor.com

Kroger cashier: Please scan customer’s KrogerPlus Card at the beginning of the order, and then scan the above barcode. The customer’s KrogerPlus Card is now enrolled in the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program.

Get Connected to a First Impressions Ministry

Concierge Desk

Donna McRoberts

Concierge@ResurrectionMCC.org

Do you like to help people feel welcome and included?

We need loving, warm and friendly people to serve at the Concierge Desk, located in the Gathering place, before and after both Sunday Worship Services! This desk helps welcome new friends, provide them with a free gift, and help them get connected.

Inspirations Coffee Cafe & Bookstore

Kecia Bullock

Inspirations@ResurrectionMCC.org

Looking for new friendly faces and volunteers for this ministry! Provide outstanding customer service in an atmosphere of fellowship for people to make connections.

Ushers

Milton Ressmann

Ushers@ResurrectionMCC.org

We need ushers for 9 & 11 am Sunday Worship Services. Teams serve one service (either 9 or 11 am) each month. Remember, "No one is JUST an usher."

Welcome Team

Donna McRoberts

[Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto>Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org)

Do you like helping people feel special and welcome the moment they arrive to the church?

We want to welcome people to the church and help them get to where they need to go. Team members are positioned at every door and sidewalk, greeting people with a smile and kind word, offering directions or answering questions.

If you have questions or would like to join any of these teams, email the team lead (listed above) or contact Rev. Michael at RevMichael@ResurrectionMCC.org or 713-861-9149 x105.

Kids Communicate God's Love Every Fifth Sunday!



Come allow your kids to experience the joy of giving! Sign up your kids to serve at the Fifth Sunday services in the Sanctuary today. Every fifth Sunday our students will have the opportunity to serve as ushers, greeters, and eucharistic ministers. Experience the greatness of our kids!

Sign them up on Sundays in the Activities Building after Children's Church, or email Joel@ResurrectionMCC.org

We Can Do It!



I Want You!

Do you have a smile, a hello, and 20 minutes a month? That's all it takes to be a part of the Welcome ministry.

Contact Donna at: Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org

ADOPT A BED

Recent Work Days have beautified our campus! There are a few beds that need to be adopted so they'll stay maintained.

Email Joy@ResurrectionMCC.org if you would like to help!



FOOD PANTRY

Open by Appointment:
713-861-9149 x103

Nonperishables Needed:
Canned Meats, Vegetables, Fruit, Juice, Soup, Pasta, Rice, Beans

Please place donations in the shopping cart located in the Welcome Area.



Board Members on Duty

Jackie Marshall and Dejuana Jernigan

Board Minutes Available Upon Request.

Flowers in the Sanctuary

Consider donating flowers in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special day. Email the date and message to Mark@ResurrectionMCC.org or call 713-861-9149 x106.

Financial Report

For the Week and YTD Ended December 19, 2010

| Tithes & Offerings & Capital Giving | Attendance | Week Ended | YTD Total | YTD Average Per Person |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Amount Needed | 530 | \$16,534.62 | \$843,265.38 | \$31.20 |
| Amount Received | 493 | \$13,716.80 | \$788,130.00 | \$30.11 |

Bottom Line:

Did you know that it only takes an average of \$31.20 per week per person to transform lives in our community? Currently, we are not receiving sufficient offerings to accomplish the 2010 ministry goals approved by the congregation. We manage our cash flow accordingly, but due to the budget variance, we are falling short of fulfilling our ministry vision.

Ministry Plan for 2011

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-------------|----------------|---------|
| Amount Needed | 671 | \$21,762.54 | \$1,131,652.00 | \$32.43 |
|---------------|-----|-------------|----------------|---------|



*Experts in
Scenic Décor,
A/V, Lighting,
Staging, and more
for*

- ◆ Weddings
- ◆ Galas
- ◆ Meetings
- ◆ Parties
- ◆ Events, etc.

Angela Berrospe - (713) 863-9450 www.techave.com

Increase OUR Imagine Campaign Fund



How can YOU increase OUR Imagine Campaign Fund? Here's how...
Simply refer or use my services as your Realtor, to Buy or Sell a home. Once the transaction is complete a donation in your name will be made to the Imagine Campaign. *Together we can make a difference!*

Better Homes ANDERSON PROPERTIES
REAL ESTATE
713-822-8555
www.SellingHomesInHouston.com

Pamela Efferson, Realtor

COLORS Custom Painting and Design

Done Right! 713-775-9951

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| All Interior and Exterior Painting | Front Door Restoration |
| Color Consultation | Pressure Washing |
| Sheetrock Repair/Custom Textures | Many Specialty Services Available |
| Accent Walls/Faux Finishes | High Standards/Friendly Service |
| Nurseries/Murals | Free Estimates |

Kara N. Poole
www.colorsdoneright.com contact@colorsdoneright.com



Providing Spiritual Direction for individuals and groups at Resurrection MCC.

Sliding Scale fees available for Resurrection members and friends.

First session is free.

Cathleen Sheil, MA
Certified Spiritual Director
sacredjourney2@aol.com
713-304-9913



Care For Our Environment



by recycling newspapers, magazines, catalogs and junk mail in the containers in our parking lot.

We now have two collection bins as this program grows. We receive cash based on the weight collected.



Advertise with us.

As low as \$25 / week.

Ads@ResurrectionMCC.org

WELLNESS CENTER

at Resurrection MCC
LGBTQ Solutions for Living Well

Individual, family, and couples therapy available. Request MCC Rates.



Tammy S. Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC
832-863-8221
Children, Adolescents & Adults



Women's Group Psychotherapy

Focused on, but not limited to, the coming out process, improving self-esteem, identity clarification and establishing healthy relationships.

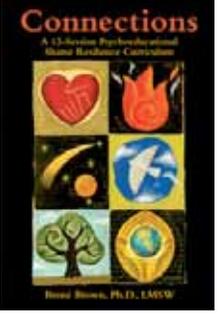
Therapist: Tammy S. Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC
Call 832-863-8221 for an intake appointment.

There is hope for change, empowerment and living authentically!

Connections:
A 12-Session Psychoeducational Shame-Resilience Curriculum

Call Tammy at 832-863-8221 for more information

Course developed by Brene Brown, PhD, LMSW, researcher, educator & writer. Learn to identify and overcome shame through exercises, handouts and lecture.



This Week @ ResurrectionMCC.org

SUNDAY DECEMBER 26

- 9:00 am Sunday Worship / Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechettini**
 10:15 am Fisher's Net Prayer Ministry *Chapel*
 10:30 am Children's Choir Rehearsal *Activities Building*
 10:45 am Youth Ministries Program *Activities Building*
11:00 am Sunday Worship / Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechettini
 12:30 pm "Un-Deck the Halls" Christmas Clean-Up *Sanctuary*
 12:30 pm The Sunday Basic Series *Activities Building*

MONDAY DECEMBER 27

No Events Scheduled

TUESDAY DECEMBER 28

No Events Scheduled

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 29

- 6:00 pm The Chalice: Community Gathering *Activities Building*
 7:00 pm The Chalice: Advent Connection Groups *Activities Building*

THURSDAY DECEMBER 30

No Events Scheduled

FRIDAY OFFICE CLOSED DECEMBER 31

No Events Scheduled

SATURDAY OFFICE CLOSED JANUARY 1

- 3:00 Pm Imani Vida Drum Circle *Gathering Place*
 6:00 Pm Kwanzaa *Activities Building*

SUNDAY JANUARY 2

- 9:00 am Sunday Worship / Rev. Harry Knox**
 10:15 am Fisher's Net Prayer Ministry *Chapel*
 10:30 am Children's Choir Rehearsal *Activities Building*
 10:45 am Youth Ministries Program *Activities Building*
11:00 am Sunday Worship / Rev. Harry Knox
 1:30 pm HeavenSound Handbells Rehearsal *Sanctuary*