



## Metropolitan Community Churches



**A Message From  
The Reverend Nancy Wilson  
Office of the Moderator**

### **TEARING DOWN WALLS. BUILDING UP HOPE.**

**Your Generous Gift Will Bring Hope and  
Faith Through MCC's 2007 Eastern Europe Initiative!**

Dear MCC Friend:

It is that time of year again! This Easter season, the MCC Board of Elders is pleased to offer you an opportunity to support a cutting-edge MCC ministry -- and to spread Hope and Faith around the globe -- by participating in [MCC's Eastern Europe Initiative](#).

Last year, the people of MCC provided nearly \$36,000 (USD) for our work in Eastern Europe through the MCC Easter Appeal and over \$42,000 (USD) for church planting through participating in our Fellowship Sunday Appeal and offerings received at Regional Conferences. Along with the \$80,000 (USD) raised in 2005 to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina and assist MCC New Orleans, the \$158,000 contributions by local churches and individuals in just two years represents a new era of generosity within MCC!

***Your participation in this year's "Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe" will make a powerful impact on the lives of people who are hungry for MCC's ministry.*** Three years ago, MCC ministry in Eastern Europe was only a dream. Now -- thanks to your generosity and God's blessing -- we are struggling to keep up with the invitations and the needs of our brothers and sisters in Eastern Europe.

#### **Let me share with you what your Easter Offerings last year accomplished:**

-- We hired Florin Buhuceanu to focus on MCC ministry and human rights in Eastern Europe. Florin is a dynamic, human rights hero whose ministry is changing lives from Romania to Kyrgyzstan. (We have invited Florin to preach at MCC's [General Conference](#) in Scottsdale!)

-- We celebrated the first gay marriage in Romania and that country's second pride march, which attracted more than 500 marchers -- and 10,000 protestors!



PHOTO: Elder Fisher Performs Romania's First Gay Marriage Ceremony (2006)

-- We sent MCC Communications Director Jim Birkitt on-site to Romania for seven days of unprecedented media coverage which was seen, heard and read all over Europe. Jim also trained young LGBT leaders in media strategies.

-- Rev. Elder Diane Fisher was an invited speaker at the European Community on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion, where she addressed the leaders of 50 nations and the Vatican.

-- We forged a new partnership with the International Lesbian and Gay Association ILGA in Europe that allowed MCC to offer training to young activists.

-- We launched MCC's initial work with churches and religious groups in Latvia and Moldova, and some Latvians were able to attend MCC's Regional Conference in Germany.

All of this was accomplished last year, thanks to your church's generosity. Now we are presented with a God-given opportunity to build and expand on last year's accomplishments.

**Here's what we want to accomplish through this year's Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe:**

-- We will conduct the first official MCC visits to Warsaw and Krakow, Poland, to advance the cause of LGBT rights and to meet the spiritual and religious needs of LGBT people in Poland.

-- We will launch a major MCC initiative in Moldova, where Florin has been providing worship services once per month.

-- Rev. Elder Fisher will hold a public debate with the Russian Orthodox Church in Moldova, participate in Moldova's first-ever gay pride march, and offer training to young activists.

-- We will expand MCC's organizing efforts to collect LGBT books and rainbow merchandise for Romania and Moldova.

-- We will continue our partnership with ILGA for training activists.

-- We will work to arrange for Elder Fisher to represent MCC at the International Homophobia Conference in Ankara, Turkey in May.

-- We will explore educational opportunities for clergy and lay leadership in Eastern Europe.

-- We will continue support for Florin Buhuceanu's vital MCC ministry across Eastern Europe.

-- We will provide support for key emerging leaders in Eastern Europe to attend MCC's General Conference this July.

-- We will follow through on MCC affiliations and church plants in Latvia, Poland, Romania and Moldova.

**And here's more exciting news:**

This year, Rev. Mark Bidwell will travel with Rev. Elder Fisher to Romania through the generosity of MCC Detroit. MCC Detroit will also provide one month's rent for an office and apartment while they are there (and which will save a lot on hotel bills!) In addition, MCC Hamburg and MCC in Stuttgart, Germany, will be participating in the Romanian Pride events.

**Here's where we stand:** MCC has continued to support Eastern Europe in 2007. This year's designated "Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe" will provide the much-needed funds to continue and expand MCC's vital ministry in that part of our world. Together, we can surpass the 2006 total offerings provided by the Easter Appeal and reach this year's goal of \$40,000 (USD). MCC's groundbreaking work in Eastern Europe is saving lives and bringing hope to LGBT people in these countries.

***This is why I'm inviting your church to receive a designated Easter Offering for Eastern Europe.*** If your church will participate this year -- either on Easter Sunday or a Sunday close to Easter -- please write and let me know at [RevNancyWilson@MCCchurch.net](mailto:RevNancyWilson@MCCchurch.net).

As soon as I receive your response, your congregation will be added to the list of MCC's 2007 Pacesetter Churches that are leading the way -- and we'll add your church's name to the list of Pacesetter Churches on the MCC website at [www.MCCchurch.org](http://www.MCCchurch.org).

I hope to hear from you this week -- and I hope you'll write to me at [RevNancyWilson@mccchurch.net](mailto:RevNancyWilson@mccchurch.net) to let me know you're joining the 2007 MCC Pacesetter Churches who are receiving Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe.

/signed/

+Nancy

**Rev. Elder Nancy L. Wilson**  
*Moderator*  
Metropolitan Community Churches

P.S. When you commit to receive an Easter Offering for Eastern Europe, we'll provide your church with a special bulletin insert to use on Easter Sunday or during the Eastertide season.



PHOTO: Rev. Elder Diane Fisher Leads MCC Worship Service Following Romania's Pride March

P.P.S. You may also send your individual donations by postal mail. Simply mail your check -- made payable to "Metropolitan Community Churches" with the notation "Eastern Europe Initiative" -- to Metropolitan Community Churches, ATTN: Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe, P. O. Box 1374, Abilene, Texas 79604 -- or donate on-line at <https://www.mccchurch.org/eseries/source/EasterDonations/donate.cfm?>

### **Join The Growing List of Pacesetter Churches Participating in MCC's 2007 Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe**

**MCC Detroit** (Detroit, Michigan)  
*Rev. Mark Bidwell, Senior Pastor*  
Region 5

**MCC Louisville** (Louisville, Kentucky)  
*Rev. Dee Dale, Senior Pastor*  
Region 5

**Vision of Hope MCC** (Lancaster, Pennsylvania)  
*Rev. Debbie Coggin, Senior Pastor*  
Region 3

**Cornerstone MCC** (Mobile, Alabama)  
*Rev. Lee Carlton, Senior Pastor*  
Region 2

**Exodus MCC** (Abilene, Texas)  
*Rev. Margaret Walker, Senior Pastor*  
Region 7

**Harbor MCC** (Galveston, Texas)  
*Rev. Pat Farnan, Senior Pastor*  
Region 6

**MCC of the Coachella Valley** (Palm Springs, California)  
*Rev. David Pelletier, Senior Pastor*  
Region 6

**Open Arms MCC** (Rochester, New York)  
*Rev. Jim Mulcahy, Senior Pastor*  
Region 3

**SunCoast MCC** (Venice, Florida)  
*Rev. Dr. Sherry Kennedy*  
Region 7

**Trinity MCC** (Gainesville, Florida)  
*Rev. Joe McMurray, Senior Pastor*  
Region 7

To participate in MCC's 2007 "Easter Offerings for Eastern Europe," write to  
[RevNancyWilson@MCCchurch.net](mailto:RevNancyWilson@MCCchurch.net).

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