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CHANNEL

The Official Newspaper of the Metropolitan Community Church

M.C.C.

Church's Image Re-evaluated



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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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.

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From The Pastor's Pen

As we approach the end of 1974, we find ourselves filled with anticipation for what God has planned for us for 1975.

We already know of the District Conference, which will be in Ft. Worth in February and will be attended by representatives from our churches in Dallas, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, New Orleans, Houston and of course Ft. Worth, the host church.

Also we look forward to July 20 thru August 2, when approximately 6000 persons from Metropolitan Community Churches all over the United States and Canada, Australia, Nigeria, Sweden, England, France and Scotland will "encamp" at the Adolphus Hotel for 5 days for the sixth general conference of this fellowship. That should be enough to keep the town talking for months!

But beyond these two things, we wonder what awaits us in the Gay Community of Dallas, insofar as an awakening within our sisters and brothers to the longings God put in us at our Creation; that longing of the "creature" to worship the "Creator".

With a Gay Community the size Dallas has, approximately 85,000 if only one-tenth of our gay sisters and brothers chose to come and worship with us each week, we would have to acquire the largest auditorium in Dallas to seat everyone. Don't take that as a joke, because God can move on and within individuals so that this well may be a "probability", rather than a "possibility" for God is with us!

We invite each and everyone of you to come and worship with us at all times, but especially at 10:45 P.M. on Tuesday, December 24, for our annual choir presentation and Holy Communion to be celebrated at 12 midnight. This will be a Candlelight Eucharist with the candles donated by Margaret, the owner of T.J.'s.

Come worship with your gay sisters and brothers in celebration of our Savior's birth.

Also if you have no other plans for Christmas dinner, come and share ours with us at 4 P.M. Christmas afternoon. The donation is \$2. If you do not have the \$2, come anyway, you will be fed.

There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism—ONE GOD, of all humanity, and He loves you just as you are.

In love,
Rev. Jim

Pastor Ponders Church's Image

By Frank Taggart, Dallas Times Herald Religion Writer
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The new minister of the Metropolitan Community Church of Dallas (MCC) is

concerned about the image of his church in the Dallas community.

The Rev. James C. Harris thinks far too many people in the city look upon his church as being only for homosexuals.

The Perfect Gift

To Give For Christmas

Such screaming and shoving and pushing and rushing in stores as one is never ready for is now going on as everyone is trying to find just the gift for those dozens of people on their list. Does George like red, or is he allergic to wool? Would Myra use imprinted stationery? Will Joe get mad if we give him a skull to hang from his car mirror?

The ideal gift for everyone, not just at Christmas but the year round, has already been thought of and delivered. Who could ask for anything more than the fabulous gift whose gift card is found in the third chapter of the Gospel of John, verse 16: God "gave His only begotten Son" and, as a bonus and part of the gift, "everlasting life."

The sad story connected with this gift is that there is enough to go around and that nobody has to do without—but so many do! Countless millions each day spread their lives with hate, fear, unhappiness, discontent, lovelessness, all because they do not know, all because they have no friend

who care enough to take the time to tell them that God loves them as much as anyone ever will—and more than they can ever fathom.

It's so easy to sit back at Christmas and talk about the gifts we would like to give if we only could afford to do so. We might like to give Bill a Rolls-Royce, to give Mary a mink coat, to give Jane a country estate with a swimming pool. Face it, reader, the best gift of all costs you nothing. If you share Christ with anyone, both of you will be richer. I don't mean that you have to go plowing into somebody and say to them that and this and something else like a bull in a china shop. I mean that there are so many openings to speak to people each day. Just pray, and you'll find them. Ask, and it shall be given.

Will your Christmas be complete this year? It can be—if you give the ultimate Gift of all.

God loves you, too. May His blessings be with you now and in the year ahead.

The Channel Comes Out

SHAZAM! How do you like our new format? Personally, we are sitting back and waiting to see just how much material we can get printed in the space allotted to us. We're also waiting to see how well people rally to our call for articles. It's like playing Russian roulette to sit here and watch those typewritten words fly off the typewriter and wonder when they will see the light of day and how much we will have to junk or postpone.

I wonder if the New York

Times would be interested in giving us all of their news space and letting us work on it?

But really, isn't this great? We've just put countless people out of work—our layout staff, our advertising staff, our distribution staff... our new printers will do it for us.

We are looking for your letters, suggestions, and whatever. And especially whatever, if it prints to fit and is fit to print...

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Official newsletter of MCC-Ft. Worth

Alcoholics Group
Meets every Wednesday night at 3834 Ross Avenue
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"Sure, a lot of our members are gay," said the 39-year-old minister, who succeeded the Rev. Richard Vincent as pastor of the 185-member church at 3834 Ross. "But we are not a church just for gay people."

Rather, he said, MCC is comprised of "all human beings who have been ignored or suppressed within their former church affiliations."

"In other words, we are not stereotypes," said the former Southern Baptist minister of religion education and choral music. "We do not believe everyone has to have the same race, creed, sex or sexual orientation to worship God."

Although the MCC originally was founded "as a church where members of the homosexual community might worship God freely without condemnation," Harris said the church's outreach to homosexuals is not the main emphasis of the church's ministry.

"Our main emphasis is to preach the word of God," said the former rodeo clown and heavy-duty truck driver. "A lot of people in Dallas don't seem to understand that."

He said too many people confuse the church's social outreach with its ministry. "Our outreach to gays is distinct from our ministry to God."

Harris said he hopes to correct this misunderstanding by making numerous personal appearances at civic and social meetings and on radio and television programs to explain what his church is all about.

Since coming to Dallas from a MCC congregation in Ventura, Calif., five weeks ago, Harris has attracted considerable attention for his efforts to promote understanding of MCC and homosexuality.

Harris recently led a group of gays and gay sympathizers on a protest march at WFAA-TV after the station refused the group's demands not to air a series of "Marcus Welby, M.D." dealing with homosexuality.

The group said the program was insensitive to gays and misrepresented the homosexual lifestyle.

The Arkansas native said he disapproves with Biblical scholars who say the Bible condemns homosexuality.

According to his interpretation of the Bible, Harris believes "sexuality is a gift of God" and "God accepts you as you are no matter what your sexual orientation."

He said it is a "slow process" to convince even members of his congregation that God accepts everyone as they are, including the homosexual.

"After all, many of these people have been ingrained all their lives with the idea that homosexuality is sin."

Harris admitted convincing people outside the church about the validity of his ministry is an even slower process. However, he said he intends to keep on trying.

Behind Closed Doors

By Steve Childers

(Steve is a past member of the editorial staff.)

It was a dreary, rainy Saturday afternoon when I made my first trip to the Dallas County Jail. I wasn't sure of my emotions—they were mixed. New experiences are unpredictable. I felt compelled, an inner drive that led me to go visit someone in jail—someone I had never met. Frankly, I was nervous.

When I arrived downtown, there was a feeling of sadness as I passed the JFK monument and saw the flowers placed on it. I was aware of the beautiful Christmas decorations that were above the streets. I wondered what Christmas would be like in jail.

As I entered the new county courthouse, I was confused as to where to go. I was told it was downstairs and to see an officer to fill out a visitors permit. As I walked down the stairs, I saw some people sitting on the steps. They were transferred to some other place—probably the 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th floor. I was amazed to see so many people waiting in a group to get on an elevator. They were mostly relatives and close friends. Most of them were black, a few Chicano, and a few whites. Being in the minority didn't bother me a bit—in fact, I felt right at home.

I admire black people for their spirit—they were talking, laughing, feeling good—I expected a sea of silence. It helped me. While filling out the card, I came to the question: Relation-----? I knew that he was gay, so I wanted to put *brother*. However, I put *friend*. Then I got in line. There were lots of small children, even babies. It's really easy to understand why Jesus had a special love for them.

There were two elevators going up. While waiting, my mind was thinking about his

letter. A plea for help is sometimes simple but often complex from inmates. I wanted to reach out to hug him as we always do in church—just to reassure him of the fact that he is loved. I didn't care what he looked like—he was still my brother. I knew that it was impossible to do—so I was going to have to just use words, and a very positive thinking formula, which I really do believe in. Christ said, "If ye have faith, ye can move mountains." I have faith! Maybe not enough to tear down physical walls, but I knew I could send positive vibrations to penetrate them.

Everything happens for a reason. Perhaps we don't always know the reason. In jail, one has to readjust his or her thinking in a positive sort of way or suffer by drowning in a sea of negative sadness. Loneliness is normal, feeling forsaken is common, crying out is inevitable, and hearing silence is the response from the outside world. It isn't true for every inmate, but for gay sisters and brothers who live in a society as criminals, they enter jail to become most hated inmates, second only to child molesters. You want to think about it? Most people don't.

As I boarded the elevator, I felt the atmosphere changing. Everyone was getting serious. I really didn't wonder why; I felt it, too. At the top we walked into a room where I saw a group of people enter a hall with the bars opening and shutting behind them. After a while, they opened again and I entered. The sound of them shutting made me aware that I was imprisoned, only difference was I could get out. In this hall you are enclosed between bars in front and in back of you; it's like a large cell. After an announcement about having to wear your coats, and leaving packages at a desk, they opened up and we were free to move on to

another elevator. When we got on, I realized I didn't know what floor he was on. So I got off at the 11th floor and asked a guard. He didn't know, so he asked the elevator operator, who found his name on a list. He was on the 12th floor.

When I got off, the elevator operator told me to check the list on the wall. So I did. I asked where the numbers listed was, and was told the wrong directions. So I entered a hall that had little doors on the wall that opened up to see the inmates. A little screened square are below was what you talked through. As I was looking for the numbers, I noticed some black inmates standing behind the walls, staring through the glass at me. They were hoping someone would be coming to visit them. I recalled, "Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them." (Heb. 13)

Finally, I sought directions again. The guard apologized for giving me wrong directions. I found the place. I opened the door and looked in to find two black inmates. One was sitting on the edge of a table with his head lowered. The other was staring blankly at a wall. I spoke into the screened area. They were out of it. They didn't even hear me. But then, all around was loud sounds of many people trying to communicate with the people they came to see. I spoke louder and got their attention. I asked for my friend, and they went somewhere to get him. He was a white male, my age, and nice looking. That is, I think he was. When you speak to an inmate you have to talk with your head lowered into the speaker and you can't see and talk at the same time.

He was afraid of being transferred to Huntsville. He had a guy on the outside that he is in love with. It was tearing him apart. He openly discussed being gay and the effect it has had on him, by the

arresting officer, and his parole officer. I got the message. I know now what effect gay liberation has had on prisoners. It has helped. Last year, being gay was a federal offense; now what we do in the privacy of our bedrooms is only a misdemeanor. I thank God for gay activists and pray for the recovery of the closest cases. You see, closeted gays are in prison, too! Most everything we said is personal. Deacons are not at liberty to betray a confidence, for the protection of those involved. All I could say in closing was, "You can and will make it, for the sake of the one you love." His lover had visited only three hours earlier. Perhaps a "Hang in there" and giving him the peace sign isn't very contemporary for today, but he knew what I meant.

As I made my way back—I

forgot the bars—the trip down the elevator, or the people around me. All I could see was the staring faces of the lonely inmates, waiting for someone to visit them. On my way back to my car, I felt joy. Why? God gave me a shot of vitamin B-12. I'm not the same person, because now I have a valid reason to live. It took my first trip to the jail to become aware, really aware of the song that is always with me:

"Life is a song worth singing...loud and true—sing it!"

And that's my message to my inmate sisters and brothers, too. When they are released, even if they never are, God can give them a shot of vitamin B-12, too! We can choose to assist God or to ignore Him. I'll choose the positive route! How about you? God bless you!

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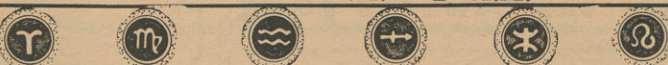
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Animal Control: Is It Really Humane?

By Sandy

Many people have openly criticized the Animal Control Department of the City of Dallas (and of many other cities, for that matter) for the methods of Euthanization (painless Death) used in putting unwanted or sick animals to sleep. After many years of constant testing by the American Humane Society, and other such impartial organizations, the method considered the most humane, quickest, and painless is that of rapid decompression. Within a matter of three or four

seconds, an animal is unaware of its surroundings and feels that he is simply falling asleep. In about three seconds, he has expired.

This method is much better than the method of injection, not only from the standpoint of time and money (which, unfortunately, are considerations which must be present), but also from the view of the animal. In four or five cases out of fifty in using drugs, the animal will recover, and possibly have brain damage or other side effects. With rapid decompression, there is no

known case of recovery by an animal.

Why is it necessary for hundreds of animals to be put to sleep every week here in Dallas? Basically, it is our own fault. How many people do you know who let their pets violate the leash law of the city? These animals are allowed to roam around at their own free will. Perhaps in the Garden of Eden it was a fine situation, but here in a growing Metropolis such as Dallas, it is a very dismal situation. Often, dogs and cats are without tags or any identification. They are

impounded by the Animal Control Officers of the city, and taken to the Animal Shelter in Oak Cliff next to the zoo. It is a pitiful fact that only five percent of these animals are in such a condition that they are able to be placed in the adoption section of the Shelter. The rest are often sick or wounded. Every effort is made to find the rightful owner of each and every animal. A good many don't have one. Emergency care is attempted to be given to any animal in need by a veterinarian who is on 24-hour call. But due to the increasing number of animals in need of medical care, and the cost of such services to the city (and ultimately the taxpayer), less and less can be done for an individual animal. Very few individuals would ever wish to adopt a pet in the condition which most of these animals are in.

The Animal Control Dept. has been trying very hard in their efforts to keep this city free of rabies. From 1951 to 1957, there were 500 reported cases of rabies in Dallas. Since 1957 there have been zero cases. That's right—zero cases of rabies in the past fourteen years. This is due to a lot of hard work on the part of many who wished to eliminate this dreaded disease from being a threat to our society.

But even though rabies may not be a problem at the

present time in Dallas, there are many, many animals in this area who are very sick. This is because there are simply not enough homes to put them in, and not enough people who care enough to take proper care of their pets. So what is the answer? Spaying and neutering. Inhumane? Unnatural? Hardly! What is humane or natural about having more dogs and cats than loving homes? What is humane or natural about having to drown kittens? What is right about having a dog who is turned loose in the country by people thinking that he will find a home at a farm, when what actually happens is that he becomes wild, and returns to a wolf-like existence? Anyone who breeds their pets without knowing what they will do with the offspring of the litter is only adding to this problem.

The other thing that you as a citizen and a pet-owner can do to help is to make sure that your pet is vaccinated against rabies, and has his identification tags around his neck. And make sure that you keep his leash right next to the door to remind yourself that keeping that leash around your pet's neck is about the best way to show him that you really do care. Remember, they are God's children, too.


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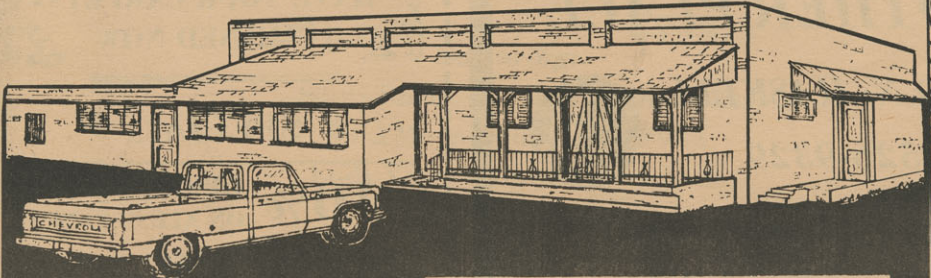
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Ask The Lawyer

By Thomas More

As far back as the 1950's society became informed that approximately 10% of the population has a sexual preference different from 90% of the population, that being homosexuality. This information would therefore indicate a substantial minority class. It revealed a social phenomena which is a reality and exists in our society. This sexual preference was not peculiar to any particular social grouping but was prevalent to people in all walks of life.

Thus far the biggest effect has been caused by those involved in exerting pressure through the media of public information, education and picketing. This was a most important stage, however, now law and theology have been called upon to respond to the call and provide answers which heretofore they were not required to evaluate. Obviously, this no longer can be the case. This minority class has made itself heard and now it is the responsibility of those in or outside this class who are diligent in their respective disciplines whether in law, philosophy, or theology to act & be heard.

From the philosophical viewpoint—law is meant to serve the needs of the people. It is a rule of reason promulgated by the people to govern the conduct of the people and to help achieve their ends for which they were created. When the law departs from this purpose it becomes invalid for that which does not serve the particular end for which it was established, becomes in itself useless & often unjust. Likewise, traditionally in this country we have historically depended upon theological principles to influence the promulgation of many of our laws. There is no question that in today's world, man is seeking to be concerned with the development and growth of the individual and thus it becomes apparent that when a large minority class in this country is being oppressed by laws, then it is the responsibility of its citizens to investigate these laws and within our tradition make the necessary changes.

Should society condemn this uniqueness of homosexuality or rather respect it? Should not this uniqueness be accepted with the same dignity as the rest of mankind? Should a father condemn a son because of uniqueness in being gay? Is not the father as wrong as when he condemns his son for wanting to be a musician rather than an engineer like his father? Each

person is gifted with a uniqueness and thus is called to use this uniqueness as it was given to him. Certainly his uniqueness does not affect the nature he has in common with all men. But rather in his uniqueness he is called to serve man and God. Otherwise he would not have been created within the framework of that particular existence. In contemporary theology, there is the attempt to understand the individual's anthropology, 'the unique existence of a man and not the objective man. Thus there is great hope that theology shall be able to come to grips with this phenomena of sexual preference for the individual of the same sex. Also, theology is attempting to understand more fully the total humanity of Jesus. That he was totally human, but without original sin. But because he did not have original sin didn't mean He couldn't love. On the contrary he could love better and more fully, and the minute we limit his humanity we diminish the meaning behind the incarnation. There is sufficient scriptural testimony that he loved men and women (no sexual inference is intended) with no implications as to a preference. His command was to "love one another as I have loved you." In fact we are called to love one another because of our differences or uniqueness.

Although the law is not helpless to pass legislation regarding the sexual preference of one for another of the same sex the source for the original erroneous legislation is founded upon a theological background. Therefore, it is incumbent upon theology to undo what it has done. It no doubt shall require cooperation between law and theology as to resulting new legislation. At least theology could help pave the way for such new legislation.

However, regardless of the position theology has or will take in the future this country has an independent tradition of protecting the rights of a minority. The law has been confronted clearly with the existence of this class of people and it is the legal responsibility of the law to take action. Once the law comprehends its duty it is compelled to relieve this class from injustice. Historically this nation has often legislated against injustice once social pressure has been sufficiently exerted. Probably by now something would have been done about it, however, the cause for these unjust laws against homosexuals unfortunately stems from an ancient

moral code ignored seriously by theologians. Therefore, theologians must realize that, they have a moral duty to respond in order to alleviate the law from being tied to their source for such laws. Just as, morally a man has the responsibility, once he is aware of a man drowning, not to turn his back and ignore the crises.

The courageous thrust which MCC and other worthwhile religious oriented groups have taken should shame the theologians from not speaking out. Theologians may need time to properly treat the matter but at least they should be able to promptly cut the strings of the source for the existing legislation of injustice being done to the homosexual. Such action on the part of the theologian would not be condoning the existence of homosexual acts but at least allowing a gay person to live freely in society as an equal with his fellow members in society. The system which our law should always attempt to provide.

The legislature here in Texas as well as local communities need your help. If

new legislation is to be proposed concerning sexual behavior then new standards must accompany this legislation. Although the rule of reason should prevail, specific suggestions concerning the norm of behavior should be forthwith—If this article can act as a forum for this objective, then let it be so, as an example, why should gays marry? That may be the norm for the heterosexual but is it for the homosexual?

If you have any particular legal questions please direct your questions to the writer and if possible they shall be

answered. This is the first and last time the writer shall be so involved in a general approach to this problem and we shall try to confine ourselves to more specific material. However, this was an opening statement by your writer. Furthermore, any remarks concerning this article will be published and answered if a response will be helpful.

This article can be your forum to either ask questions concerning legal matters or expressing your opinions in relation to rules, laws and standards of behavior governing the homosexual.

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The Story Of Ruth Part III

(Editor's note: This installment concludes the story of Ruth, as researched and retold by Rev. Jim Harris, Pastor of MCC-Dallas. The story of Ruth is the first of a series on Women of the Bible.)

Ruth was not ashamed of the low order of her work as she took her place as gleaner with the poor and outcast. The sacred historian tells us that as Ruth went out to secure food for Naomi and herself that it was "her hap to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech." But her entrance into the field of Boaz,

and not into another man's field, did not just happen. Under Jewish law Ruth had the right to glean in any harvest field. It was not mere chance, then, that brought Boaz and Ruth together, for even the steps of God's children are directed by Him. In His plan for His own there is no such a thing as luck. Determined not to eat the bread of idleness, industrious Ruth walked right into the arms of divine providence. Little did she dream that she would become the much-loved wife of the master of the field in which the reapers had given her a friendly welcome (Ruth 2:12;

Psalms 17:8; 36:7).

Being one who feared God, and one who cared for the poor, Boaz went among his reapers, spoke kindly to them, and earned their benediction. Coming upon Ruth he was arrested by her staid and modest look. Although poorly clad there was a dignity in her mein, a refinement giving her distinction, and Boaz is arrested by her beauty and personality. Making inquiries about her, Boaz learns of her sacrifices for Naomi, and of her conversion to the worship of Jehovah (2:6,7), and commands the reapers to purposefully drop extra sheaves for Ruth's

benefit. Boaz also bade Ruth to glean only in his field, and to stand fast by his female workers. He wanted to preserve her from coarse contact with men who might take advantage of such a poor woman, who was in his admiring eyes a superior one. She was not to eat with others but present herself at his feasts.

As for Ruth, her heart was full because kindness had been shown her by a stranger in the solitude of a strange land. How excited she must have been when she reached home and told Naomi all about her good fortune, and showed her all the

parched corn she had fathered. Was there a lyric note in Ruth's story of that first day? Had she sensed that somehow Boaz had been strangely attracted to her, hence his generosity in spite of the alien blood in her veins? As for Naomi, when Ruth came to mention the name of her benefactor, Boaz, she recalls the name as that of a kinsman of her deceased husband, Elimelech. It may be that in the mind of Naomi there entered a feeling that perhaps a brighter future may be hers and Ruth's.

We all know how matters between Boaz and Ruth developed which caused Goethe to say of the Book of Ruth that "we have nothing to so lovely in the whole range of epic and idyllic poetry." The name of Boaz became immortalized because of his loving-kindness toward Ruth, the poor Moabitess while the kinsman who would not mar his own inheritance is unknown. It turned out that Boaz was one of Naomi's nearest relatives and one of the few remaining kinsmen of her husband's family. Therefore he was able to befriend the widow of Mahlon, Elimelech's son, according to the deep principle pervading the law of Israel regarding the preservation of families. This Levirate Law stated that where a husband died without issue, the nearest brother-in-law (levir) might be called upon by the widow to perform for her all the duties of a husband, and raise up seed for the deceased.

In the case of Ruth, however, no brother-in-law was available, seeing the only sons Elimelech had were dead. Consequently, the nearest of kin could be called upon to act as "redeemer" (goel) for the unfortunate, relieving them thereby of their distress. The nearest relative to Ruth by marriage was unable to function as her goel, and being the next relative, Boaz did not shirk his responsibility toward the lovely widow. To a council of ten men at the city gate he announced before witnesses his decision to buy Ruth's inheritance and marry her. Although bachelor Boaz was advanced in years, he was determined to play his part and as Naomi said, "The man will not rest, until he has finished the thing this day"—and finish it he did! So the idyllic conclusion was reached, with Ruth being lifted out of obscurity into a happy union with Boaz, the might man of wealth. This story provides us with one of the first records in world history of a rise from rags to riches, from poverty to plenty.

God smiles upon the marriage of honorable Boaz and

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2509 Fitzhugh

MON-FRI - noon-2a.m.
 SAT - noon-4a.m. (2-4a.m. is "After Hours" - dancing,
 coffee, cold drinks - 50¢ cover
 SUN - 1PM - 2a.m.
 HAPPY HOUR - 5-7 - SUN. - THUR.

virtuous Ruth, and blessed them with a son whom they named Obed, which means "a servant who worships." As Ruth was the servant who came to worship Jehovah, we can imagine her son's name as being expressive of her own conversion from idolatry. Through the birth of Obed, who became the father of Jesse, who was in turn the father of King David, Ruth found herself numbered among the elect, and God wove the thread of her life most intricately into the web of the history of His people, both before and after Christ. A gentile by birth, Ruth yet became the chosen line through which later the Saviour of the world appeared. As He came to redeem both Jew and Gentile alike, it was fitting that the blood of both should mingle in His veins. "A good name," says Solomon, "is rather to be chosen than riches, and loving favour than silver and gold." Ruth found it so, and thus her good name found a place in the royal genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:15). As George Matheson so beautifully put it, "In the soul of Jesus the wedding bells of Ruth and Boaz are rung once more. Here again Moab and Israel meet together. In the heart of the Son of Man the Gentile stands side by side with the Jew as the recipient of a common divine fatherhood."

Those of us who are Christians praise God for Ruth's inclusion in His portrait-gallery, for she was the ancestress of Him who, by His death, brought us night to God. It was from Boaz, an Israelite without guile, and from Ruth, who became an "Israelite not in race, but in mind; not in blood but faith; not by tribe but by virtue and goodness," that Jesus came as the most perfect expression of

all graces.

One could say much of the merits and message of the book of which Ruth gave her name, as well as of the many lessons to be gathered from it. Benjamin Franklin, who was ridiculed at one time in Paris for his defense of the Bible, was determined to find out how much of it his scoffers had read...He informed one of the learned societies that he had come across a story of pastoral life in ancient time that seemed to him very beautiful but he would like the opinion of the society. A night was arranged for Franklin to read to the assembly of scholars a lyric which impressed him. The Bible lover read the Book of Ruth, and when he had finished the scholars were in ecstasy and begged Franklin to print it. "It is already in print," said Franklin. "It is part of the Bible you ridicule."


There is nothing in the entire range of biography sacred or profane, comparable to the idyllic simplicity, tenderness and beauty of the story of Ruth, the young widow of Moab. There are only two books out of the sixty-six forming the Bible that are named after women. Ruth is one, and the other is Esther, and both books have exchanged succeeding ages. The Jews have a peculiar regard for both books. At their Feast of Purim they read Esther, and at the Feast of Pentecost, the scroll of Ruth. Among the many typical features in the latter, the most outstanding is that of the composition of the true church of Jesus Christ. Ruth was a Gentile, Boaz a Hebrew. Boaz redeemed Ruth's possession and then became her husband. All have sinned, both Jews and Gentiles, but Jesus died for all, and His church is composed of regenerated Jews and Gentiles whom He calls His Bride. Thus

"the marriage-bells which sounded at the marriage-supper of the Lamb."

From Ruth's outstanding qualities of unselfishness and loyalty we learn that such virtues are the only foundation upon which true happiness can be built. Without them, abiding friendship is impossible, home ties are loose, and the social structure weak. Ruth also teaches us that attractive graciousness is worth cultivation, and that racial hatred and

religious bigotry can be solved by a right relationship to Him who made of one blood all nations. Further, the rare literary gem of the Book of Ruth, which takes one some fifteen minutes to read, shows us how our industrial and labor problems can be solved. Boaz was a wealthy farmer, yet he maintained a delightful relation to those who worked for him in a dark, chaotic period of Israelitish history. As he walked through his fields,

meeting his servants he would say, "The Lord be with thee," and such was the harmony that prevailed that they would reply, "The Lord bless thee." In our time, the strained relationship between masters and employees would be quickly solved by the application of the good will manifested in those ancient days. Combining as it does all the traits of human life and character, Ruth is a book all can read with both pleasure and profit.



4006 Maple • 526-9295

Open 1p.m.-2 a.m.
Happy Hour 5-8 p.m.

The Swinger

On The Town

Dear reader, we are looking for spies to let us in on all the news that prints to fit, let us tell you. Does anyone feel like 007 out there? Then report in to M (that's short for Me, your friendly editor) immediately for your assignment!

We do have the latest scoops as follows, which is new news to some and old oldies to others. C'est la vie, darling. For those of you who feel more sedate and not quite up to the hectic pace of madcap music, screaming and whatever goes on at some of these places (and isn't it fun!), remember back if you are old enough to a place called the Bon Soir, where silence was golden and you could actually hear whatever your friend was saying. Well, now there's a new Bon Soir that Tex and Joe (Or is it Joe and Tex?) have opened up for you. No more hangovers when you haven't been drinking, dear, at 4527 Cole. That give you all the chance to bar hop back and forth between the Bon Soir's

quiet atmosphere and the livelier **Encore** a block over. When you drop by, be sure to give our regards to the cute and talented organist, "Sandyrella."

Or, if you prefer, you can start collecting funny money (Terry, is that in three dollar bills?) at the **Ranch**. The money you collect can be saved up for their gala (gayla?) auction at ten every Monday night. And what can you buy? Why, what everyone wanted but was afraid to ask for-your very own slave! (Where were they when I was young?)

Joe Elliot has again forgiven me. This is a third offense, and we did not mention last month that **Joe's Other Place** had opened up, with mixed drinks, dancing, pool and pinball machines. December 14 is a Christmas party, plans indefinite now. Door prizes are in the planning...That's at 3019 N. Haskell, guys welcome and women even more welcome, okay? Right, Joe?



Sunday ~ beer bust, 3:30
LIGHTED DANCE FLOOR

2pm - 2am • Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
4pm - 2am • Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
Closed Mondays



The quest for the best - at TJ's.
girls' bar • mixed drinks • pool

3307 McKinney
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Book Review

By Jerry Heller

THE CHARIOTEER
by Mary Renault.
Pantheon Books (hardcover)
Bantam Books (paperback).

During a discussion of homosexual partnerships, someone said, "What patterns can we go by? Where can we read a book that gives us a clue how to behave, how to make a relationship work?" My first thought was—how the hell do the novels of Harold Robbins and Emilie Loring help heterosexuals? The second was—have you read *The Charioteer*?

Is any reader of *The Channel* unacquainted with the work of Mary Renault? Her Theseus novels, *The King Must Die* and *The Bull from the Sea* are, in the simplest terms, the most thrilling, moving, and fascinating novels of adventure ever written. Her stories of ancient Greece and the Hellenistic world, *The Last of the Wine*, *The Mask of Apollo*, *Fire from Heaven*, and *The Persian Boy*, are examinations of love between men that are all the more moving for the controlled emotion and clear-eyed irony of their telling. It's said courage is more moving than sentiment: read these novels

and learn the truth of that.

But how many of Miss Renault's readers know her modern love story? I repeat: have you read *The Charioteer*?

First published in 1959 and reissued last year by Pantheon Books, *The Charioteer* is set in England during World War II. Its central figure is Laurie Odell, twenty-three years old and lamed at Dunkirk. His wound is not only physical: deeply disturbed by his homosexuality, Laurie is driven to glory and despair by his unexpressed love for Andrew Raynes, the young conscientious-objector orderly in his hospital-ward. "Darling Mother," he writes, "I have fallen in love... Since I can see no earthly hope for this attachment, I ought to be wretched, but I am not. I know now why I was born, why everything has happened to me ever; I know why I am lame, because it has brought me to the right place at the right time." But the letter is only in his head.

The other great influence over Laurie is Ralph, first known to him only as Lanyon in their school days, when, "at 19, (Lanyon) was marked already with the bleak courage

of the self-disciplined neurotic." After Dunkirk, they meet at a gay party. This long and complex scene is extraordinary. Most of the dialogue might have been heard last night at any gay bar ("You know what a bitchy little number that one is"); at the same time, the party has the fascination of a period piece, immediately recognizable, subtly remote.

At times you may find yourself wondering precisely what a handsome 23-year-old flanked by an adoring though unawakened innocent and a boyhood hero has to worry about. At times Andrew's innocence at Ralph's integrity are such as to make Francis of Assisi and Sir Thomas More seem like whores by comparison. But finally Miss Renault involves us so completely with Laurie's hopes and pains that we are held up to the last moment in sharp suspense; and when that moment comes... Well, I wouldn't deny you the pleasure, the heart-ache, the satisfaction of reading it for yourself.

But *The Charioteer*, absorbing novel that it is, is much more. In Laurie, Ralph, and Andrew, we see ourselves reflected without sentiment; the book is as much a discussion of love, its alternatives, its dangers, and its painful joys, as the dialogues of Plato from which the title is taken. The Platonic vision is

uncompromising, never wavering, but always life-loving: it is Mary Renault's vision. Her novels move us; they fascinate us; make us smile in tender-

ness and laugh in exultation. But more than that, they challenge us to be all we can be, and more.

THE ALL NEW

CREWS INN



3220 N. Fitzhugh

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1 p.m. - 2 am

Sat. & Sun. 11 a.m. - 2 a.m.

Happy Hour 4 - 7 Mon.-Fri.

Dancing

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The Encore

THE ENCORE PRESENTS:

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Draught beer..... 35

Name beer..... 45

Bar drinks..... 60

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GARY SHANNON-
disc jockey

NEW BON SOIR

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Piano & Organ & Mixed Drinks

GRAND OPENING

Jan. 5, 1975

The Fabulous Helena

from Shreveport, La.

4 p.m. - 2 a.m.

SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH FRIENDS

Dec. 15th - Joe's Other Place

Dec. 17th - Entre Nui 8-10 p.m.

Dec. 20th - Villa Fontana 8-10 p.m.

Dec. 23 - Opening of Sundowner

Dec. 25 - Candle Light Mass at MCC

Dec. 31st - Old Plantation



SOMETHING NEW AT THE FOREST

By Mickey Carden

*The Forest (formally
Owls Nest) has started
DRAG SHOWS. The
shows are really Super.*

The club regulars are

as follows:

FRAN (M.C.)

DIANA

GINGER

MONIQUE

SHAN

*The shows are on
Sundays at 8:30 p.m.
and Thursday at
9:30 p.m.*

COVER CHARGE is a
\$1.00 at the door.

*The FOREST is located
at 3236 McKinney.*

*The club is owned and
operated by
FRANK CUNNINGHAM*

The Villa Fontana

823-0372

Open Daily 12 Noon-2 a.m.

Happy Hour 4-7 p.m.

Dancing

*Oldest Gay Bar under continuous
operation in the United States*

Christmas Party Dec. 20th 8-10 p.m.

Special Invitation for Gay Bill & Ray & The Staff

1315 Skiles

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ENTRE NUI

823-0423

Mon.-Fri. - 5-2 a.m.

Sat. & Sun. - 1 p.m.-2 a.m.

Jisc Jockey Friday & Sat.

Female Impersonator Shows on Thur. & Sun.

9:00 p.m. \$1.00

Featuring:

Sindy Birdsong - Miss Dallas 1972

Lisa Moya - Miss Dallas 1974

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The Supremes

Free Keg Beer - Thur. & Sun. 7:30 p.m.

NO COVER



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No Cover (After Hours)

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TWO BARS IN ONE
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‡
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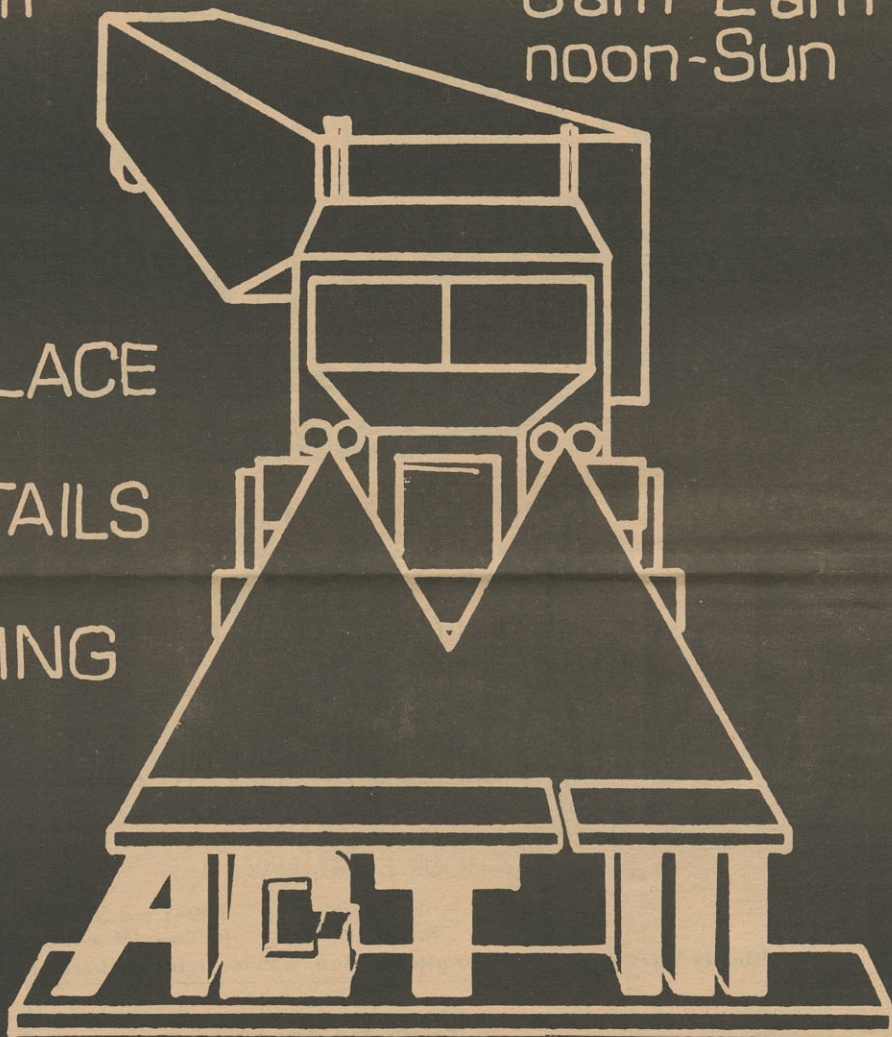
HAPPY HOUR
4-7 pm

OPEN
8am - 2am
noon - Sun

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