



LESSONS for LIFE

MAY 3, 2009 7:00 p.m

CELEBRATE

Deacon Randi Williams

Tonight we're celebrating the second year of our evening service and tonight I'm honoured to be sharing with you on this occasion. You see, my introduction to MCC was through the night service at our previous church over at Gerrard and Woodbine, and at this time I just want to pause and recognize and recall those who have come before to set the foundation of this service tonight – whether it was back over there with Danny Ray and others who you may recall, or whether it's here and the re-working of this service with Paul (Rev. Paul Fairley). So I'm just going to pause for a moment and you can perhaps name someone who you knew. I think that due to our service schedule here at MCC Toronto we feel that it is actually typical of an MCC church to want to worship during the day, when in fact the vast majority of MCC churches actually worship at night, because their congregations are smaller and they actually rent from other churches. So in this sense we are just returning to our roots. In our case – here – our goal is to present an alternative worship format to the a.m. service, though if any of you have traveled across the U.S. you will know that this type of worship format is indeed part of the morning and evening services at some of our churches. So, if you believe, if you think, if you feel that what goes on here on Sunday night is a positive step for MCC Toronto shout AMEN. "AMEN." So if you believe, if you think, if you feel that what goes on here on Sunday night is a positive step for MCC Toronto, shout GLORY. "GLORY." If you believe, if you think, if you feel that what goes on here on Sunday nights is a positive step for MCC and this city shout HALLELUJAH.. "HALLELUJAH."

Tonight we're going to have a very interactive chat. It's all about God and you celebrating. Let's celebrate tonight, amen. Do me a favour and turn to your neighbour on your left – if there is a neighbour there – and shout, "I'm here to celebrate." Now I want you to turn to your neighbour on your right and say, "Won't you celebrate with me?" Let's pray:

*Amazing God we thank you for tonight, the end of a day we've never seen before
And here we are – worshipping, rejoicing, celebrating, laughing, having fun,
enjoying your presence despite all that may be happening to us. Tonight we pray
that you will lift us out of ourselves, beyond ourselves and may the words
of my mouth and the meditation of all of our hearts be acceptable,
encouraging and a blessing to us and others in all of your many names. Amen.*

Like any birthday, anniversary, important recognition in life, we celebrate this occasion. My feeling is that we simply celebrate every service, but we are indeed high-lighting this service. Tonight I feel energized in a different way. It's not because everything has gone terrifically swell in the past month or week – and some of you may know what I'm actually talking about because you could be going through some experiences that may not be what you actually want to be dealing with right now, yet in the end we know that something is happening and we will transition. Amen? And then I take time to rejoice with others, others who may be having a new job, maybe a budding relationship as spring occurs. Some of you are just happy being your authentic self.



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Now I considered tonight that I could have begun this talk with the obvious; well, obvious to those of us in a certain age bracket; or those of you who are really computer savvy and have been looking around at songs. You see, I could have referred to the song, *Celebrate Good Times*. *Come on*. Now, who sang that? (A voice from the congregation said *Kool & the Gang*.) They've got it.

Celebrate good times, come on! (Let's celebrate)
Celebrate good times, come on! (Let's celebrate)

There's a party goin' on right here
A celebration to last throughout the years
So bring your good times, and your laughter too
We gonna celebrate your party with you

Come on now

Celebration
Let's all celebrate and have a good time
Celebration
We gonna celebrate and have a good time

It's time to come together
It's up to you, what's your pleasure

Everyone around the world
Come on!