

EMMAUS NEWSLETTER

March 2024

We are four weeks away from the Spring Walks. Have you been diligently seeking new pilgrims. How about including the Walks and the teams in your daily prayer time. For these events to be successful it takes all of us seeking God for his guidance. We must not put off what is necessary until the last moment. Our willingness to serve and to prepare makes the walks flow more smoothly.

So much happens behind the scenes that goes unnoticed. Our registrar, Jr Fitzpatrick, is constantly updating and revising the list of pilgrims. He needs all applications in as quickly as possible. While we are glad to accept all applications, it does take time to prepare name badges, send out welcome letters, and organize sleeping arrangements. Waiting until the last moment puts an unnecessary strain on the person who is trying to put pilgrim and team lists together so that workers will be given important information like allergies and special diets.

We hope you have marked the dates of the Spring walks and have set aside some time to come and serve. Even a couple of hours volunteering can be helpful. We seem to have the most hands on Saturday and that is great because as you know, Saturday is the busiest day. Fridays are slower paced and in the recent past we have seen a trickle of people come to help serve meals and we manage to pull together to get the work done. Sundays, serving breakfast and lunch, we have noticed a large decrease in volunteers and only one or two workers come to serve. You may not be aware that on Sundays, we have moved the meals to the conference room as the Church has services in the Life Center and this area has become unavailable. It takes more time and detailed planning to make the switch on Sunday. We certainly could use extra help to move the meals from the kitchen to the conference rooms.

If you are a member who serves often, thank you. If you are a member who hasn't been around in a while, you are truly missed. We would love for you to come join us again.

Preparations for the men's and women's Spring walks are underway. We are humbled to serve on the walks and excited to see what see what God has planned for both walks. Please keep us all in your prayers.

Women's Lay Director
Walk #53

Jenny Johnson

Remember this Friday March 15th is the monthly Gathering. The Spring Walk Teams and the Board will be Commissioned during the service. If you are on one of the teams, plan to attend.

The Gift of Relationship

Hello Emmaus Community!

My name is Jeff Williams, and I am a newly elected clergy member of our Board of Directors. I am 63, with a wife, (Kim) and two adult children, Jessica and Ryan, who I will not say how old since they are getting up there too.

As I began to write this to you, I thought about my children and how our relationship has changed over the course of life. When they were little, and I was much younger, our relationship consisted mostly of Kim and I providing for them, protecting them, and keeping them on the straight and narrow as we saw it. It seemed we were continually saying “NO”, or “STOP THAT!” OR “DON’T YOU TAKE THAT SPOON OUT OF THAT BOWL UNTIL YOU ARE FINISHED!” I have to say, while discipline was a necessary and common aspect of our lives, it was not nearly my favorite part of our relationship.

Then came the tumultuous teenage years, and the “I know more than you years”, and the “I have to make my own mistakes” years. Those are tough years for a parent, aren’t they.

Today, I would have to say that we are more friends than parent and child. While they still come to us with problems and advice, at times, we have become more in line in our beliefs and actions. I have to say that it is a blessing to be at this stage in our lives.

I wonder if God feels the same way about our relationship with Him?

You see, when reading the Old Testament, we think of the fall of Adam, the Ten Commandments, all the sacrifices to “wash away” the sins of the people, their inability to live and worship the way God called them to worship, and their constant turning to idols. These things tend to give us the idea that God calls us to be sinless, but is that His main desire?

First, let’s look at verses 1-2, where the bible says:

Genesis 17:1-2 (KJV)

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD (YHWH) appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God (EL Shaddai); **walk before me, and be thou perfect.**

² And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Walk before me and be thou perfect can be read that there are two things God commanded.

1. Walk before me and 2. Be perfect, and I will make my covenant between Me and you.

However, there is so much in the bible, especially the New Testament, that tells us that we cannot be perfect in ourselves. With that thought, what if El Shaddai was saying, “walk before me and be perfect, or walk before me and you will be complete?”

Let’s look at how a few other translations treat this. The New King James says, “**Walk before me and be blameless.**” The NIV says, “**Walk before me faithfully and be blameless.**”

Finally, the Holman Christian Study Bible says, “**Live in my presence and be blameless.**”

That's the one I love. Almighty God, YHWH, says, Live in my presence and be blameless. Live in my presence and be blameless and I will make my covenant between Me and you.

I want so much to have a relationship with God, closer than I can even imagine, and, in this scripture as in others that I see, I realize that the Creator and King of the Universe wants to have a relationship with me! AND, in Verse 7, YHWH tells Abraham that this covenant (relationship) would be **everlasting**. How beautiful is that? ***If you live in my presence and be blameless, I will establish an everlasting covenant between Me and you.***

Genesis 17:7 (NKJV)

⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for **an everlasting covenant**, to be God to you and your descendants after you.

Isn't it great to know that God is not just a ruler or a deity who only shows up when we mess up, but He is a relationship God who wants to commune with us daily.

In Genesis, God walks in the garden in the cool of the evening, looking for Adam. In Exodus he tells Moses to build a tabernacle so He could dwell among His people. In Hosea God says He wants mercy and not sacrifices, and the Knowledge of God more than burnt offerings and in John, He says simply, abide in me and I in you and you'll bear much fruit.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

⁵ I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

John 15:8 (NKJV)

⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Brothers and Sisters, my prayer for you is that you stop focusing on falling, or sin, or your shortcomings and begin to focus on abiding in Christ. If we abide in Christ, and His words abide in us, everything else will fall into place. That's grace.

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Jeff Williams
Emmaus Clergy

<https://www.timetosignup.com/ashlandemmaus/>



Be sure to sign up for the spring Walk prayer vigils on the Links above as well as what you are bringing to the send of Supper

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO serve?

So much goes on behind the scenes to insure the events flow smoothly. Three main areas always in need of hands are the Agape Room, the Kitchen, and Facilities.



1. The agape room has someone there from 7am till 10pm. They prepare all materials the pilgrims will receive throughout the weekend. For more information, contact Judy Conn at (606)923-5211.
2. The Facilities team is responsible for keeping all things going. From Set up on Thursday, to putting things back for services on Sunday morning, and many things in between. It is a hands-on team that needs as many volunteers as they can get. If you would be able to help in this area, please call Brandon Barney at (606) 694- 2482.
3. The kitchen is a very busy place where anyone can jump in at any time of the day and help serve. You do not have to know how to cook to be able to work in this area. Contact Kim Gleichauf at (740) 646-3625.

From your Community Lay Director

Karen Dial

Blessings Emmaus Family! What a busy and blessed month we are in. Palm Sunday and Easter followed by two Emmaus Walks. We have so much to be thankful for. Our men's and women's team meetings are well under way. Our members and reunion groups are making Agape and praying for the walks. Our Board members are readying their jobs to make these walks the best experience possible as the Holy Spirit directs our paths. We are going to have a special Gathering on Friday the 15th, so please come. Please be in prayer for the walks and pilgrims who the Lord has encouraged to attend. We have many members of our family who need our prayers due to illnesses in their family, those facing the death of loved ones and those facing stressful times. Please be in prayer for them. God knows who they are. Please respond to those who ask for prayers on the Facebook page, as well. As Holy Week approaches, we remember that Jesus taught his disciples the toughest lessons as he walked to the cross. He told them what he had to do, in no uncertain terms. He told them what they would do, despite their loyalty to him. He explains to them that He is THE WAY to God ("I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him"). He explained that as they abide in them he gives them strength, nourishment and the capacity to love each other and others as he loves them. He is our calling. This is our purpose - to share the love of Jesus with those whom he places in our paths. As an Emmaus Community, we have a very special calling. Not just to experience this special kind of love we received on our Emmaus Walks, but to bring fellow believers into that special sacred space where we sacrificially share that special love of Jesus Christ. Brothers and Sisters, lives ARE changed and enriched through this experience. Love only happens when we give it away. Jesus taught us that.

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