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THE MIDLANDS MESSENGER

Emmaus of The Midlands

October 2005

Katrina Relief: Blessings at Ground Zero

By: Michael S. Bingham, Chaplain SC-TF1

We all watched the televised images from the areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina with strong emotions: sadness, horror, fear, anger, and a desire to help. The Lord blessed me with an opportunity to do something constructive and concrete to help those most deeply affected by this catastrophe. The Lord also blessed me with a family, a church, and good neighbors who would support me and my wife and children during this difficult time.

I serve as Chaplain on the South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force (Urban Search & Rescue)—abbreviated SC-TF1. This is a state wide heavy search & rescue team under the direction of the Governor through the Emergency Management Division. It is an elite group composed of experts in various fields from around the state—the very best we have to offer. Created in the wake of 9/11 with federal funding, we exist to respond to disaster in South Carolina or, as in this case, anywhere in the world. We can roll two hours after the Governor says “go.” We have an amazing cache of equipment loaded on 2 tractor-trailers, a box truck, 4 SUV’s, and personnel transport. Everything is palletized for air transport via military cargo plane. The Task Force is self-sufficient: water, food, shelter, and a medical team comprised of an ER doctor, trauma nurse and a paramedic with our own mobile ICU. We even have a chaplain.

We went on alert on Tuesday Aug. 30. Governmental snafus delayed our deployment until Sunday Sept. 4. Our team consisted of 63 humans and 4 search dogs, and we worked in Slidell (Tammany Parish) and Chalmette (St. Bernard Parish). These Parishes, adjacent to New Orleans, are two of the hardest hit areas in Louisiana. We located the dead, helped the needy, and—thanks be to God—rescued survivors. My primary duties were to care for the Task Force members, help them perform their duties, provide spiritual and emotional leadership, and help them transition back to normality after demobilization. Secondly, I was able to reach out to the survivors around us.

See Page 3—**Katrina Relief**



Prayers

Carolyn Dickson, Susan Finley, Kay Nooft, Phyllis Plemmons, Kay Scott, George Cancer, Wesley UMC, Vera Proctor, Linda Abbott, Jerius Stork, Michael Bingham, Sterne Bolte, those displaced by Hurricane Katrina, those who have lost families, and those still looking for families, those working in the gulf and assisting refugees in other places, Betty Booth, Rochelle James, Emily Killens, Barry Anderson, Shadenna Anderson, Mary Jane, Justin & Jason Shope, Roy Mertz, Bill Hynson, Miriam Koon, Leo Dryer, Whenev Stockman, Sarah Bond, Len Harris, Christine Johnson, Pete Amick, Gladys Crews, Ed & Kevin Hoffman, Becky Stowe, Maggie Coiner, Jessica Gadsden, Curtis Gadsden, Beth & Susan, Pauline Palmer, Steve Dozier, and Mary Rabon.

Visit our web site at
www.midlandsemmaus.com



Emmaus Education Corner

Candle Light Service

By Carol Frye

How many of you remember vividly your experience at your Candle Light Service? I still get goose bumps when I think about the Candle Light Experience from my walk which was on the Women's walk #19. It seemed like it must have been really late at night when we loaded on to the buses and started off to we didn't know where for we didn't know what. We arrived at a dark church and were unloaded still not knowing what to expect... But when the doors of that Church was opened and we heard "Jesus, Jesus, can I tell you how I feel, You have given me your Spirit. I love you so" and saw that totally crowded Church with all the candle light it was one of the most beautiful experiences of our lives. It meant so much to be told that all these people came from so many places to show us their love and pray for us by name it was just one of the most touching times of our lives and really prepared us to rededicate our lives to Christ as we responded to the grace of Jesus Christ.

I am Carol Frye and my duty for the Board of Emmaus this year is to handle the Candle Light Service for the Walks. I am so blessed and excited to be able to be a part of offering the pilgrims on these walks that beautiful experience of Candle Light. We want to be sure that each pilgrim is treated the same, and I know that it is hard not to draw your pilgrim's attention that you are there for them at this special time in their lives. But we need to be sure that we don't reach out and touch them as they are coming into the Church. It breaks their attention from what we want them to receive from this experience. We want everyone to understand that all this love is for all of them equally. There is no way each pilgrim's sponsor can be sitting at the end of a pew and we don't want anyone to feel left out. I can assure you that your pilgrim will see you as the community comes to the front of the Church and then files out, but at that moment their hearts are overflowing with special emotions and they need to be able focus on Christ and his love and to experience that feeling without any distractions.

It is our desire to keep the pilgrim's

focus on this rededication service and to make their Candle Light experience one they carry in their hearts forever. I hope that on the pilgrim's fourth days when they feel discouraged they will remember their Candle Light Service and know that if the Emmaus Community loves them as much as they showed during this service that God loves them that much more.

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Financial Record

July 2005—August 2005

Beginning Balance: 7/1/05	\$7,436
Income: Gathering - July	436
Walk/Team Fees	650
Total Income	\$1,086
Expenses: Newsletter	42
Bank Service	3
Total Expenses	\$45
Ending Balance: 8/31/05	\$8,476

Chrysalis

By: Doris Crocker

We are forming a steering committee to get started with the process of forming a Chrysalis community, but it will probably be twelve to eighteen months before we are ready to offer Chrysalis flights to our young people. In the meantime, you can help by praying for the committee as they go about their work. You can also develop relationships with youth pastors and workers, and young people and their parents in your church. Talk to them about Chrysalis. Tell them how helpful your Emmaus walk was to you. Tell them about the love you experienced there and how your walk with Jesus has been improved. Be enthusiastic and help us prepare the way, so that they will be ready to go when the time comes.

We need your support and help as we go about this process of influencing young people for Jesus and connecting them to Him in more meaningful ways. Thanks for being a part of the Emmaus Community and the whole family of God.

Men #27

Steve Scoma
L W Smith
Jerry Watson
Pat Chandler
Charlie Brookshire
Wayne Smith
Paul Taibi
Steve Hudson
Dennis Fish

Robert Pegram
Chris Goodman
ED Hynson
Henry Klein
Bill Rose
Doug Smith
Alex Tisdale
Steven Douglas
Dan Flanigan
John Osteen
Jim Rose
Nub Shofner
Peter Spadetti
Pam Rankin
Alex Tisdale
Sandy Scoma
Katherine Buzzard
Mike Madison

Position

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ATL
ATL
ATL
ATL
ATL
ATL
ATL
Kitchen
Board Rep
Music Leader
Asst. Music
Asst. Music
Asst. Music

Women #27

Linda Clarke
Debbie Nix
Tony Rowell
Bill McCown
Mary Teasley
Kem Thomas
Emily Allen
Kelsey Jones
Samantha Thames
Kathy Haupfear
Brenda Aiken
Betty Huggins
Louisa Gantt
Patty McIntosh
Sandra Harrison
Therry May
Vicki McLemore
Jan Smith
Judi Rose
Kathy Workman
Melanie Prewitt
Sandra Cantwell
Tammie Bates
Pam Rankin
Sheila Elliott
Anne Prescott
Laura Weathersbee
Billy Green
Tona Chandler

Keep the fire burning

By: Doris Crocker

Do you remember what it was like when you got back from your Walk to Emmaus? For three days you had grown closer to God and a group of people. You had been able to share with them, pray for them and hear them pray for you. You probably felt you had known these people for weeks or maybe even months. But, when you got back home what did you find? How about when you got to church? Was there the same camaraderie? Was there the same support?

The Walk to Emmaus only lasts for three days at the camp, but the intent is that the fire that is lit during those three days will burn for the rest of our lives. But what happens to a fire if you pull each of the coals one by one out of the fire and put them on the hearth by themselves? You end up with no fire!! So what are you doing to keep the fire burning? How are you maintaining your walk with the Lord? Who holds you accountable for your spiritual growth?

Some people do what is suggested at the end of the Walk. They form reunion groups. They get together with other people who have been on a Walk to Emmaus and they go over the questions in the little card you are given during the commissioning at the end of the Walk. Some of you were probably so tired you have forgotten about it, so let me refresh your memory. You were given a cross and a card and told "Christ is counting on you," and you replied, "And I am counting on Christ." The card has the words you heard on the front.

You are supposed to use this card as you meet with other pilgrims. And you are supposed to answer questions such as "At what moment this week did you feel closest to Christ?" "At what moment during this week did you feel you were responding to God's call to be His disciple?" "Where did you participate in being the church this week, the heart beat of Christ?" "When was your faith tested this week through failure?"

The purpose of these questions is not to embarrass you, it is to help you rejoice over discipleship lived out and to receive support and encouragement where you need it most. They are to help you keep the fire burning! If you haven't tried this already, why not give it a try? You will grow in your faith and commitment to Jesus as you do so.

Some churches provide opportunities for keeping the fire burning by having

worship services with singing of Emmaus type choruses, a sharing of a testimony and Holy Communion. Other people get together with people from their church and make table agape for the walks. Every one loves to get the little surprise gifts at meal times. Look in some craft stores and see how things are being put together. It's amazing how simple some things are to make. Little wooden hearts can be painted, have a sticker put on one side and a little magnet of the other and you have a gift. A few beads can be strung together to make a bracelet with meaning. There's no end to the ideas that you can come up with if you try. And you will feel good that you did something for someone else that you didn't even know. Someone did it for you. Keep the fire burning by doing it yourself! Make something that is unique and expresses who you are a person or as a group. Offerings can be taken to provide for materials and also for scholarships for people who can't afford to go. It's a big money commitment for some families if both partners are going on the walk.

Emmaus isn't really a three day experience. It is meant to be a lifetime experience. We leave the camp to go into our fourth days, so get busy and keep the fire burning!!!

From page 1— **Katrina Relief**

Heavy burdens I carry: dead people, dead and abandoned pets, surreal scenes of destruction, the stinking toxic sludge, crude oil coating an entire town, overwhelmed survivors, strong people with nothing left but tears and prayers, bureaucratic bungling, and the detritus of shattered civilization.

Sweet blessings I cherish: saving a life, heartfelt thanks from grateful people, a cell phone signal, an unexpected hot meal, hugging someone who needed to cry, the camaraderie of my brothers and sisters on the team, the love of my family, the support from home, the chance to serve, and a safe return. God is good—all the time.

It was dangerous, hot, dirty, work; it was the hardest thing I have ever done. The stench was beyond description. A "normal" day was 16 or 17 hours, and we once went 27 hours non-stop. The exhaustion was mind numbing and paralyzing. I thank God for the opportunity, and I am ready to go again if needed: May God grant I never am.

Walk 27 Send-off

Women's Walk 27 Send-off will be at Camp Agape on October 6, 2005.

Please be there at 6:30 pm and plan to stay for Sponsor's Hour immediately following Send-off.

From Columbia: Take I-20 towards Augusta. Exit at mile marker 39 (US178) towards Leesville. Go 5 miles and Camp Agape will be on your right. If you come to the fork with highway 245 you have gone too far. Camp Agape is approximately 300 yard prior to the road fork.

From Aiken: Take I-20 towards Columbia. Exit at mile marker 39, cross over the bridge and proceed as above.

Walk 27 Candlelight

Women's Walk 27 Candlelight will be at Trinity UMC in West Columbia on October 8, 2005.

Please be at the church by 8:00 pm and park in the lot away from the Sanctuary. There will be a service prior to the Pilgrims coming to the church.

From Columbia: Cross over the Gervais Street Bridge towards West Columbia (US 378). Take an immediate right and stay on US 378 for about 1.6 miles. Turn right onto Central Drive (across from the "tent" looking building at Northside Baptist Church). Continue on Central Drive until you see Trinity UMC.

From Sumter: Take US 378 (Sumter Highway) towards Columbia. Take I-77 South towards Charleston. Take I-26 towards Spartanburg. Exit onto US 378 towards West Columbia and go 1.5 miles. Turn left onto Central Drive (across from the "tent" looking building at Northside Baptist Church). Continue on Central Drive until you see Trinity UMC.

From Aiken: Take I-20 towards Columbia. Exit onto US 378 towards West Columbia and go 3.8 miles. Turn left onto Central Drive (across from the "tent" looking building at Northside Baptist Church). Continue on Central Drive until you see Trinity UMC



Emmaus of the Midlands
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If you received this newsletter and have an e-mail address, please consider using the Emmaus Web Site to read the monthly newsletter and help reduce the cost of printing and mailing. If you are willing to help in this way, e-mail me at: furset@bellsouth.net.

Future Events

October 6-9, 2005	Women's Walk # 27
October 8, 2005	Women's Walk # 27 Candlelight
October 28, 2005	Gathering—Rehoboth UMC
November 18, 2005	Gathering—Dalzell UMC
December 10, 2005	Xmas Party—Camp Agape
January 27, 2006	Gathering—Green Hill Baptist
February 23-26, 2006	Men's Walk # 28
February 25, 2006	Men's Walk # 28 Candlelight
March 9-12, 2006	Women's Walk # 28
March 11, 2006	Women's Walk # 28 Candlelight
March 24, 2006	Gathering—TBA

Next Gathering

October 28, 2005

at

Rehoboth UMC

6911 Two Notch Road
Columbia, SC 29223

Directions: Take I-20 to Columbia, take exit 74 onto US 1 south . This is Two Notch Road. Rehoboth is located at 6911 Two Notch Road, two blocks from exit 74.