

Emmaus of the Midlands Messenger

August 2007

Emmaus Regional Celebration

An Emmaus Regional Celebration will be held at Lexington United Methodist Church on Friday and Saturday, November 9 and 10. The Friday activities will begin around 5:00 pm with a light buffet meal and include an opening ceremony, worship, and plenary speakers. Saturday will be a full day with morning and afternoon workshops of interest to the Emmaus Community, a plenary session, dinner, worship, and a closing service. Many of the speakers and workshop leaders will be from the Emmaus headquarters (at the Upper Room in Nashville) so this will be an opportunity to hear some outstanding individuals. As soon as the complete schedule is available, it will be included in an upcoming Messenger.

Financial Report as of June 2007:

Beginning Balance:	\$9,565.73
Income:	\$960.00
Expenses:	\$1,875.77
Ending Balance:	\$8,649.96

Jerry Watson – Your Community Spiritual Director's Journey

One of the most bewildering moments of my life occurred when I was 19 years old and heard God's call to preach the Gospel. This happened in 1959 and I am still amazed that God would choose someone with so few gifts and graces and someone so ill prepared to approach such an endeavor. I had no college education and little hope of entering college. My father had been disabled for several years and my brother and I were the providers for our family. In fact, my father's faithfulness to God through the years and the stroke that took away his health had embittered me toward God and the church in general.

However, I could not escape His call and claim upon my life. If "preaching" had ever appeared upon my list of things to do in life I had never looked that far down on that list. I had a myriad of reasons why this experience seemed so absurd: 1) *I had no education*, 2) *I had no money*, 3) *I had family responsibilities*, 4) *I was a loner*, and 5) *I was not even a friendly person*.

Yet this "call" persisted.

I had an aunt, Theat Brantley, who was one of the few saintly people in my extended family and I carried my burden to her with all the explanations why this was an impossible venture. She listened so patiently as I went over my excuses, then she responded wisely, "Son, you are putting the cart before the horses. God never calls someone to do something they cannot accomplish. You just ask God to open the doors and commit yourself to going through them." I prayed fervently asking God to show me the any way I could please Him but, in the back of my mind I felt making a preacher out of me was too big a task even for God. I hope you can imagine how shocked I was a couple of weeks later when the Grand matron of the Eastern Star in Chesterfield, S.C. called me and offered me a scholarship if I was planning on entering the ministry. I attended Coker College for one semester, Wingate College for three semesters, and finished my Bachelor of Arts degree at Furman University in 1966. During the summers I attended classes in the S.C. Conference Course of Study at Duke University.

In February of 1967 went to Jamaica and Haiti on a two week preaching mission and when I returned home to Greenville, S.C. I was invited to speak to one of the UMW circles at St. Matthews UMC. I went there with a full complement of slides and pictures from my trip and these ladies were thrilled to see the work Paul Soles was doing at the Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf and Mute. I was now 27



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years old and after graduating from Furman University with a degree in Psychology I felt I was about as smart as I ought to be and because of financial issues Seminary was out of the question. Again you may imagine how shocked I was when one of the ladies at this meeting asked me for my telephone number and the next day her husband called me and offered to buy me lunch. This lunch never took place because he was transferred back to New York. But before he moved he told me on the telephone he was interested in making an investment in me, If I would go to Candler School of Theology at Emory University he would foot the bill for it. I received my Master of Divinity Degree from Candler in 1970 and he lived up to his commitment. My only regret is I never met this man face to face.

I served three pastorates in the S.C Conference for a total of 40 years. I served Lewis Chapel UMC for 32 of those years. I was a part time instructor in Religious Studies at the University of South Carolina at Sumter for 22 years. Many of the people who have heard me preach have described me as a good preacher. Many of the hundreds of students who sat in my classes have described me as a good teacher. I don't quite know what to make of it all; I just hope they were good judges. I do know this, if I ever preached a good sermon or taught a good course it is evidence of what God can do with someone willing, "to walk through the doors" when He opens them.

I am retired now and how thankful I am for Emmaus of the Midlands because it continues to offer us glimpses of the difference my Lord Jesus can make in the lives of the most ill prepared disciples who are willing to follow His example.

Blessings upon thee. Jerry

Emmaus of the Midlands Board of Directors for 2007

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Conference Room Service

By: Tom Furse

Emmaus of the Midlands (EOM) teams usually have twenty-eight people. The board selects the Lay Directors and Spiritual Directors each year for the following year's Walks. Team formation starts five to six months prior to the Walk. The EOM Board appoints a Team Selection Committee (TSC) chaired by one board position and consisting of 4-7 experienced community members. The TSC works with the Walk Lay Director and Spiritual Director to select about 50 candidates for each Team.

Each Walk requires a Team of people willing to make a significant commitment of time and energy. Each Team has an intensive training session. Each team member gets a manual and



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talk assignment (where applicable). Each talk has an outline that provides 50-75% of the material presented on the weekend. The team is given from one to two months to prepare and then has a Team Training weekend.

The EOM community is committed to a Team Selection process that ensures fairness and proper preparation. We seek to have each Team be representative of our community in age, location, race and denomination. There should be no more than three Team members (excluding LD & SD) from the same church. Lay members are not eligible for consideration by Team Selection until one year after their Walk. Lay members should not serve twice in the same calendar year or on two consecutive Walks.

There is a progression of Team positions based on learning through experience. All Team members must be active in a church and Emmaus activities. Each Team is roughly one-third first time Team members, one-third on their second or third Team and one-third on their fourth or more. Each Team has five clergy and nineteen or twenty laity. All Lay Team members should be the same gender as the pilgrims on the walk. There must be one EOM board member on each Team who is responsible for ensuring conformance to the Walk to Emmaus manual.

First time positions are Table Leader, Assistant Table Leader, Assistant Spiritual Director and Music Team Member. The Team Selection Committee looks for people that have learned about the Walk by serving behind the scenes and participating in Gatherings. Given that each Walk returns about twelve active members to our Emmaus community and needs six or seven first time Team members, over time we will need about half of our active community to serve on a Team.

Team positions:

Spiritual Director (SD) is the spiritual leader of the Walk. They form and train the Clergy Team. They give the Means of Grace talk and lead the Dying Moments communion service. They have been an ASD at least once previously.

Assistant Spiritual Directors (ASD) give one of the clergy "grace" talks. They also lead one or more of the meditations and are available to pilgrims (and team members) for spiritual counseling.

Lay Director (LD) is the leader of the walk. They form and train the lay team. They give the Perseverance talk. They have been a LDIT previously.

Lay Director in Training (LDIT) has been approved to be the next LD and is in training for their walk. They have been an ALD twice and given three talks.

Assistant Lay Directors (ALD) give one of the key lay talks. They are responsible for keeping the weekend moving smoothly. Each day one of them is responsible for the conference room, one for the kitchen and one for that day's speakers. First time ALDs have previously been on at least two teams, have served as both an ATL and TL, and have given at least one talk

Assistant Table Leaders (ATL) give one of the lay talks. They also help the table leader by modeling a cooperative pilgrim – they follow directions, are on time, help keep table discussions on topic, and encourage all pilgrims to participate.

Table Leaders (TL) are responsible for facilitating the talk reviews at the table. They need to encourage all pilgrims to participate and not let any one person dominate the discussion.

Music Team Members (MTM) help lead the music. They may provide some of the special solos. Most importantly, they are there to learn how to select appropriate music during the walk's progress and how to transform music from performance to group worship.

Music Leader – responsible for all of the music on the weekend. They should have been an MTM at least twice. They select appropriate music, teach the pilgrims community songs, provide meditative solos during special services.

Board Member – responsible for ensuring conformance to the Walk to Emmaus Manual.

Emmaus of the Midlands
P.O. Box 25165

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If you receive this newsletter and have an e-mail address, please consider using the Emmaus Web site to read the monthly newsletter. This will reduce the cost of printing and mailing. If you are willing to help in this way, e-mail furset@bellsouth.net

Upcoming Events (2007)

August 17-18	Emmaus Team Training for Walk #31
August 24	Gathering @ Trinity UMC – Aiken Meal @ 7:00 pm, Worship @ 8:00 pm
September 20-23	Emmaus Men's Walk #31
October 11-14,	Emmaus Women's Walk # 31
October 26	Gathering – Wesley UMC Columbia
November 9-10	Emmaus Regional Celebration at Lexington UMC
December 13	Christmas Gathering

Trinity UMC

2724 Whiskey Road
Aiken, SC 29803

Directions from Columbia: Take I-20 towards Aiken. Take exit #18 which is US 19 or Edgefield Road. Travel south on US 19 to Richland Avenue. Turn left and go three streets to Chesterfield Street. Turn right and go 4.1 miles. Chesterfield Street becomes Whiskey Road. (you will be on US 19 all the way). You will pass by Aiken Mall on the right just before to get to the church. The church is on the left side of the street.