

Emmaus of the Midlands Messenger April 2008

March Gather and Training Event at Windsor

The March 28 Gather at Windsor UMC was very successful – there were over 230 people attending, including 41 first timers. It would appear that the pilgrims of Walk 31 are going to be very involved in Emmaus activities. There were training sessions on sponsorship by Charles Shipman and reunion groups by Sheila Elliott. Our thanks to Charles and Sheila for their efforts.

We also had a special training session (also at Windsor) on Saturday, March 29. There were presentations by Tom Howard, a certified trainer from Foothills Emmaus, and from Scoofer Jordan, the Emmaus Southeastern Coordinator. Both presentations were informative and well done.

Pictures of both events have been posted on the EOM web site.

Suber-Marshall 51st Annual BBQ



Suber-Marshall UMC will have their annual BBQ on April 26 from 11 am to 3 pm. Pit cooked pork and chicken BBQ, beef hash, and the traditional sides (rice, slaw, bread) will be available for dine-in, take-out, or drive through. There will be a bake sale as well.

A map showing the location of Suber-Marshall is shown at the right.

Walt Proctor III to Perform at Lexington UMC

The Lexington Lighthouse Reunion Groups are sponsoring a special appearance by Walt Proctor III on Sunday, April 27, at 7:00 pm in Wesley Hall of the church. Walt is from New Zion, SC and has performed at a number of churches in the midlands area. He has been music director on a number of Emmaus Walks and is familiar to most of the Emmaus of the Midlands Community. He recently released his first CD, "A New Beginning." There will be no talk for this special service; we will have a 45 minute musical program, followed by a communion service. There will be a love offering which will go to Walt Proctor Music Ministries, which is the co-sponsor (with Charleston Methodist Church) of the House of Praise in Charleston, which seeks to offer God's love through song in a way that calls all people. We believe that this is a pretty good description of what you will experience if you attend this very special service.

The service is open to all, whether they have gone on the walk or not.

Daily Bible Readings for May

This schedule of daily bible readings will take you through the entire bible in the course of a year. The January through April schedules are in the January, February, and March newsletters. However, remember that you may start at any time.

- 1 1 Chr. 14-15; Ps. 132; Mt. 18
- 2 1 Chr. 16; Ps. 106; Mt. 19
- 3 2 Sam. 7; 1 Chr. 17; Ps. 2; Mt. 20
- 4 2 Sam. 8-9; 1 Chr. 18-19; Mt. 21
- 5 2 Sam. 10; 1 Chr. 20; Ps. 20; Mt. 22
- 6 2 Sam. 11-12; Ps. 51; Mt. 23
- 7 2 Sam. 13-14; Mt. 24
- 8 2 Sam. 15-16; Ps. 32; Mt. 25
- 9 2 Sam. 17; Ps. 71; Mt. 26
- 10 2 Sam. 18; Ps. 56; Mt. 27
- 11 2 Sam. 19-20; Ps. 55; Mt. 28
- 12 2 Sam. 21-23; 1 Th. 1
- 13 2 Sam. 24; 1 Chr. 21; Ps. 30; 1 Th. 2
- 14 1 Chr. 22-24; 1 Th. 3
- 15 1 Chr. 25-27; 1 Th. 4
- 16 1 Ki. 1; 1 Chr. 28; Ps. 91; 1 Th. 5
- 17 1 Ki. 2; 1 Chr. 29; Ps. 95; 2 Th. 1
- 18 1 Ki. 3; 2 Chr. 1; Ps. 78; 2 Th. 2
- 19 1 Ki. 4-5; 2 Chr. 2; Ps. 101; 2 Th. 3
- 20 1 Ki. 6; 2 Chr. 3; Ps. 97; Rom. 1
- 21 1 Ki. 7; 2 Chr. 4; Ps. 98; Rom. 2
- 22 1 Ki. 8; 2 Chr. 5; Ps. 99; Rom. 3
- 23 2 Chr. 6-7; Ps. 135; Rom. 4
- 24 1 Ki. 9; 2 Chr. 8; Ps. 136; Rom. 5
- 25 1 Ki. 10-11; 2 Chr. 9; Rom. 6
- 26 Prov. 1-3; Rom. 7
- 27 Prov. 4-6; Rom. 8
- 28 Prov. 7-9; Rom. 9
- 29 Prov. 10-12; Rom. 10
- 30 Prov. 13-15; Rom. 11
- 31 Prov. 16-18; Rom. 12

Financial Report

There is no financial report this month since the board will not meet until April 21. The May report will include the April data.

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April 2007 Prayer Concerns & Praises

Prayer Requests:

- Eddie Taylor and the Rev Houston Taylor, Eddie's father in law.
- Randy Oakes
- Mary Beth Brabham
- Brenda Berry
- Debbie Murphy
- Clara N Sumter
- Mrs. Bennie Bodiford & family at the loss of her daughter Caroline.
- Dean Frye, as he awaits a 2nd doctor's opinion about surgery on his shoulder
- Carol Frye, awaiting a doctor's appointment for a mass in her thyroid,.

Praises:

- Rosemary Grace "Rosy" Burkett turned one on January 22.

Whatever Happened to Cleopas and His Friend?

We all have old friends and acquaintances that we haven't seen in a while. Occasionally, we may try to track down the person by phone or by mail. Detective agencies advertise that for a fee, they can find anybody on earth.

I wonder if they could find Cleopas and his unnamed friend (and perhaps reveal his name to us)? They were the two disciples who walked to Emmaus with Jesus. The Upper Room chose Luke 24 as the biblical theme for the Walk to Emmaus, hoping that what happened to Cleopas and his friend would happen to participants in the program. And it has.

What happened to the two disillusioned disciples? They met the risen Christ. They were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus into the setting sun. Was that why they didn't recognize Jesus when he "came near and went with them"? More than likely, they weren't expecting Jesus to be anywhere but in a grave. They certainly didn't expect him to be walking with them to Emmaus.

The Walk to Emmaus is like the story of Cleopas and Jesus. Nobody expects to meet the risen Christ on a weekend Walk. After all, we've been to church retreats and meetings before; we know what to expect. Most of us are as surprised as Cleopas when, in the breaking of the bread, Christ is revealed to us. We may suddenly recognize Christ's presence at a communion service or a meal.

What happened to Cleopas does happen to us at the Walk to Emmaus. We hear the word of God in talks by clergy and laity. We tell other people our doubts, our expectations, our dashed hopes. And along the way, our eyes are opened and we recognize him.

We don't know what happened to Cleopas and his companion. They were probably prominent leaders in the early church. Maybe when the first preachers told the story, they said, "If you don't believe me, just ask Cleopas. He'll tell you."

We don't know what happened to Cleopas and his friend, but we do know what happened to Jesus. The disciples ran back to Jerusalem to tell the apostles about their amazing experience and were surprised to learn from the eleven. "The Lord has risen, indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" No one doubted the authenticity of Cleopas' encounter with the risen Christ, but the Lord had appeared to the disciples as well. The story should remind us that the Walk to Emmaus is only one of many ways that Christ reveals his glory. Thank God for all of them!

Most Bibles break the story after Cleopas' reunion with the other disciples (Luke 24:13 – 35), but the passage doesn't end there. While Cleopas and his friend were still there, Jesus appeared to them and taught them more about his role in God's plan of salvation. The text says, "Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. Notice that open-mindedness is part of the story. Emmaus pilgrims need to be open-minded disciples who have learned to set aside personal agendas so that they can experience the presence of Christ, become renewed disciples, and renew the church.

Luke 24 is a unit. *The end of the story is the end of the gospel:* "And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God" (Luke 24:52-53, NRSV). If that is not a return to the congregation, I don't what is! The Walk to Emmaus, although valuable in its own right, is not complete until pilgrims have returned to their congregations with great joy in the Lord.

What happens to the Walk to Emmaus will depend in large part on the way we return to our congregations after the Walk and on how we continue our spiritual journey as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our fourth day should mirror that of Cleopas and his friend.

Emmaus of the Midlands
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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 tomfurse@sc.rr.com

Upcoming Events

May 23, 2008 Gathering at Crosspoint Baptist, Sumter

August 15 - 16: EOM Team Training Walk 32

Men's Walk 32 Sep 18-21, 2008

(Candlelight Saturday Sep 20, 8 pm)

Women's Walk 32 Oct 2-5, 2008

(Candlelight Saturday Oct 4, 8 pm)

Next Gathering - April 25, 2008

7:00 pm Meal - 8:00 pm Worship

First Christian Church - Columbia

The church is located at 2062 North Beltline Blvd in Columbia. It is across from Richland Fashion Mall.