

# Emmaus of the Midlands Messenger

P. O. Box 25165 Columbia, SC 29224-5165

www.midlandsemmaus.com

## May 2009

### In the May Newsletter ...

In this issue we begin with the conclusion of Dave Kelly's article on Kairos, which Dave entitles "*Why I Go back.*" On page 3 is a listing of the new Board of Directors and the May prayer concerns and announcements. Finally, we have a short article describing how the newsletter is created, printed, and distributed.

### All the Colors of Emmaus... Kairos Part 2—Why I Go Back

By Dave Kelly

The following are letters written from two perspectives. The first is from an inmate who was writing to a fellow Kairos volunteer friend of mine and the second was written by a clergy after serving on his 1<sup>st</sup> Kairos walk.

Robert Whitner wrote the following as part of a personal letter dated Nov. 16 (Sunday), 2008, at 11:08 p.m.

"We are a microcosm made up of people who were once free. We had wives, girlfriends, families, and jobs. We were normal in every way until our choices led us to this place of correction. Some of us are reading the handwriting on the wall and taking advantage of the opportunity to learn to do things the Lord's way. On the other hand, many have not come to accept responsibility for their actions. This presents a very challenging scenario to those who come to share the love of Jesus. Con men and predators of all types abound in this place. That makes prison ministry unique but very different from what is effective in society. The message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified is still the message to proclaim. However, you must adapt your methods to those you want to reach.

I don't know if any of you intend on getting involved in prison ministry. If you do, be sure that it will be frustrating at times. It will be difficult at times. At times it may tax you to the very limits. Yet your investment in a broken life has the potential to yield rich rewards. May God bless you and show how you may get involved."

(Continued on top of page 2)

### Emmaus Behind the Scenes Creating the Newsletter

The Emmaus of the midlands newsletter has two forms—the printed version that is mailed out and the web version. Currently, we focus on the one to be mailed since it is subject to restrictions of space, postage, and limitations on color and graphics. The newsletter is printed on a single 11" x 17" sheet of paper, giving us four pages. Since the last page is always used for the calendar of coming events, directions to the next Gathering, and the addresses, this gives us three pages of content. This newsletter is typical, with one feature article, one short article, and several service functions (listing of the board of directors and the May prayer concerns).

While there are a few individuals in the community who submit unsolicited articles, they are usually the result of continued gentle persuasion.

The letter is composed in either Word or Publisher (the Windsor printer requires Publisher).

The actual printing takes place either at Lexington UMC or Windsor UMC. Windsor has a laser printer that will accept tabloid size paper and allows us to have occasional color and to print the addresses directly. However, it is much more expensive and requires substantial effort on their part. The Lexington printer is very inexpensive and fast but does not support graphics or interface with a computer. This means that we have to print the address labels separately and paste one on each newsletter.

The newsletter is assembled at Lexington by the editor, his wife and, usually, one or two volunteers from the local reunion group. This takes about three hours for three people, about twice as long if address labels are used.

The newsletters are packed by zip code (290xx, 291xx, & the rest) and carried to the bulk mail facility (with the 3602z form of course!). It feels very nice leaving the facility!

## Kairos Part 2—Why I Go Back

OK, there you have it. I hope Robert's thoughts are useful. I think he's right on target. So often, it seems to me that 90-plus percent of the resident Kairos guys are involved in "our" activities either just to pack away as many drumsticks and wings as possible, to whine as much as possible, or to attempt to manipulate the volunteers for the maximum possible quantity of contraband or other "favors." There are, however, a few, such as Robert, Ronnie Williams, Anthony Hernandez and Mark Bolte, who help me keep from hollering "Forget this" and walking away in disgust when some guy tries another "hustle" or "game."

Chris wrote this to all of Kairos #30 Team members.

"The first training meeting I went to with the team for Kairos #30, I'll never forget running into Bill outside who asked me as we were walking into McCormick Baptist Church if this is where the "slammer gang" was meeting. I wondered then with a shocked look on my face ... and still wonder now, I suppose, if I could ever be so casual about the experience and ministry of Kairos even as his "name for the team" has stuck in my head. I just wanted to share with all of you how special this past weekend was. As I was telling one of my parishioners about the experience while driving back from the prison he said, "It sounds like you had a good time, preacher." I quickly corrected him saying, "I can say it was a powerful time ... an interesting time ... something that taught me more about our God of love and grace and even humanity as a whole but I don't think I will ever be able to describe Kairos ministry as a "good time." I thank all of you for your sharing and showing of God's love for all of God's created! It blew me away when I reluctantly went on my own street-walk this past spring but it truly stunned me when I was able to participate in the showing and sharing of God's love as a member of the inside team alongside all of you.

When asked to share what they were taking away from this weekend I'll never forget the simple and powerful answer one resident shared at closing when he said, "I am taking Jesus away from this weekend!" Regardless of where we find God's offer of relationship/friendship/

partnership, that statement is impressive, the fact that it was and is found in a maximum security facility truly takes your breath away. Believe it or not, the hostile atmosphere of MCCI (for a Christian) is the same that the Christian Church was born in. Fearing ridicule, beatings and worse, the earliest Christians never knew if their faith was going to be "discovered" by the Romans ... and to evangelize was a treasonous act ... and yet that difficult environment was the place where new believers were added daily and God's will was powerfully felt. As I watched the Kairos graduates, you know ... the Christian men, work behind the scenes this past weekend and got "God bless you, too's" in the dorms as I hesitantly handed out bags of cookies, I know that God's light shines all the brighter, the darker the room! Again, thank you to all of you for your ministry and your spirit of love - God smiled and it doesn't get much better than that!

I didn't mean to sermonize ... I really just wanted to share with all of you my thanks for your faithful service.

Thank you all for a chance at a new and powerful ministry. God's grace, peace and presence with all of you!"

*In Christ's Loving Service,  
Chris*

In South Carolina, Kairos is active in 9 men's and 2 women's prisons and has Kairos Outside for the female loved ones of those who are incarcerated. We have over 1600 volunteers and no paid staff. For further information and dates of Walks go to <http://www.kairossc.org>.

Looking forward to serving with you on the "other side" of the fence!

*In His Service  
Dave Kelly  
(Lay Leader Kairos #31 @ McCormick  
Correctional Institution)*

**Note**—The Kairos International web site is:

<http://www.kairosprisonministry.org/templates/System/default.asp?id=23761>

## 2009 EOM Board of Directors

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## April Prayer Requests

Bill Rowell, Tony Rowell's father passed away. Please pray for the family.

Ginny Kurtz's mother recently passed away — please pray for comfort and support for the family.

Barbara Graham recently had surgery

Rob, Laura, & Anna Claire's move to Atlanta

David Johnson (Chris and Terri Goodman's cousin)

Praise—Chris and Terri Goodman's daughter, Jennifer, was married on April 4.

*Would you like to have a bumper sticker supporting breast cancer. Just send me your name and address and I mail you one for free*

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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 22, 2009** - Gathering—Dalzell UMC  
**June 11-14, 2009** - Boy's Epiphany  
**June 26, 2009** - Gathering, McLeod UMC  
**July 24, 2009** - Gathering, TBA  
**August 14-15, 2009** - Walk #34 Team Training  
August 28, 2009 - Gathering, TBA  
Sept 3-6, 2009 - Girl's Epiphany  
**Men's Walk 34 Sep 17-20, 2009**  
(Candlelight Saturday Sep 19, 8 pm)  
**Women's Walk 34 Oct 1-4, 2009**  
(Candlelight Saturday Oct 3, 8 pm)  
Oct 8-11, 2009 - Boy's Epiphany

### **Next Gathering**

May 22, 2009  
Fellowship 7:00 pm Worship 8:00 pm  
Dalzell UMC in Dalzell, SC.

**Directions:** Take **I-20** east towards **Florence**. Exit at marker # **98** (this will be **US-521**). Go south toward **Sumter**. Exit onto **SC-441** towards **Bishopville**. Turn left and proceed to **Black River Road**.

Turn right and church is located at  
3330 Black River Road