

# Messenger

A monthly newsletter of the Emmaus of the Midlands Community

Volume 18, Issue 2, February 2018



## Upcoming Events:

### Board Meeting:

February 12, 7:00 pm @  
Red Bank UMC,  
Lexington, SC

February 14: Valentines  
Day/Ash Wednesday

February 19:  
President's Day

February Gathering:  
Macedonia Lutheran  
Church, Prosperity, SC,  
February 23, 7:00 pm  
potluck, 8:00 pm  
worship.

March 11: Daylight  
Savings (Spring  
Forward)!!!!

Board Meeting:  
March 12, 7:00 pm @  
Red Bank UMC,  
Lexington, SC

March Gathering:  
Boiling Springs UMC,  
Lexington, SC, March  
23, 7:00 pm potluck, 8:00  
pm worship.

“I am renewing your mind. When your thoughts flow freely, they tend to move toward problems. Your focus gets snagged on a given problem, circling round and round in attempts to gain mastery. A renewed mind is Presence-focused. Train your mind to seek Me in every moment, every situation.” *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is- His good, pleasing and perfect will- Romans 12:2. Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always- Psalms 105:4 Jesus Calling, Enjoying Peace in His Presence. Sarah Young.*

In this present state of our world, it's hard to see what God's will is for us. We are bombarded with political views from everyone! We are constantly being told what to wear, how to talk, and when and whom to listen to. In this age of instant information, our thoughts are jumbled and we find ourselves confused. God made it very clear that we are to be presence-focused; that is, let God be the compass of our every thought and action. As Christians, we are especially targeted, but if we do as God directs us, He will make our vision crystal clear in a world that is cloudy.

A big thank-you to St. Johns United Methodist Church for agreeing to host the May gathering! That being said, we still need churches for the June, July, and September gatherings.

## The Chairman's Corner

### **Sponsorship: The Most Important Job of All**

Most communities take sponsorship for granted; they assume that everyone knows the how and why of sponsorship. Unfortunately, often sponsorship is not discussed except in reference to the number of pilgrims signed up for a Walk or to a conflict over an issue like the husband/wife rule. Yet sponsorship is the most important job in Emmaus. It is more than “signing up people.” The importance of an Emmaus community being educated about

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the value of good sponsorship cannot be overemphasized. The quality of sponsorship influences the pilgrim, the health of the Emmaus movement, and the church affected by the movement.

First, Good sponsorship is the first act of agape before a Walk ever begins; the experience of the Walk for a pilgrim really begins with how we handle sponsorship.

Second, good sponsorship undergirds the whole weekend with sacrificial love on behalf of each pilgrim. Sponsors use discernment in recruiting pilgrims, embody the personal commitment of the community to each pilgrim, and provide personal acts of agape during the three days for the pilgrims. These acts of agape include prayer, agape letters, presence at Candlelight and Closing and follow-up.

Third, good sponsorship is the foundation for a healthy, effective Emmaus movement that is fulfilling its true purpose: The development of Christian leaders and the renewal of the church in ministry. Wood and Roy write in *Day Four: The Pilgrim's Continued Journey*, "The strength of any Emmaus Community is a direct result of that community's recruiting practices. If the community is committed to recruiting strong church leaders for the purpose of strengthening the local church, then the community will be a strong vital force in the renewal movement."

### **Why do we sponsor? What is our aim?**

The aim of a sponsor should not be "to get all my friends to go," to fill up the three-day event, to fix people's problems, or to reproduce one's own religious experience in others. Rather, the aim of the sponsor is to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians who, in turn, will bring new life and vision to the work of the church in the congregation, home, workplace and community. The aim of sponsorship is to build up the body of Christ.

### **Whom do we sponsor?**

One's awareness of and commitment to the purpose of Emmaus influences who is sponsored and how they are sponsored. Emmaus is for active Christians and members of churches whose own renewal will mean new energy, commitment, and vision in the church and everyday environments for Christ's sake. Those sponsored could include the following:

- Church leaders (pastors and laypersons) who will bring new vision, commitment and understanding to their congregations and who need the renewal and grace Emmaus channels;
- Dependable church members who are the quiet backbone of the church;
- Less active members who need their awareness of grace rekindled and their commitments renewed;
- Christians who are hungry for "something more" and who want to grow spiritually;
- Members and leaders who represent a cross section of the church and who will help Emmaus remain theologically sound, centered on the essentials of our common faith, and open to different perspectives;
- Respected laypersons and clergypersons whose participation, support, and leadership will encourage others to take the Walk and will build a sound, balanced leadership base for the movement in the community; and
- Members of diverse congregations, denominations and ethnic groups.

Emmaus is right for many people – but not for everyone. The religious background or emotional

condition of some people may make Emmaus an improper discipleship tool for them. Other persons may be unsuitable choices for sponsorship to Emmaus because of the negative effect they might have on an Emmaus Weekend or the divisive influence they might bring to the church. Sponsorship requires sensitivity to these factors. Some examples of questionable sponsorship are as follows:

- Non-Christians
- Christians whose theology and/or practice is notably different or incompatible with the traditional theology and practice represented by The Walk to Emmaus: Christians who have specific dietary restrictions and Sabbath celebrations that the Emmaus experience cannot provide, members of groups who will feel a need to defend the uniqueness of their beliefs throughout the Walk, or persons who do not share belief in traditional doctrines of the faith basic to the major denominations of the church and to Emmaus;
- Persons undergoing an emotional crisis (for example, family breakup, job loss, severe grief) or who are psychologically unstable;
- Persons who decide not to make a Walk after being presented the opportunity. A potential sponsor need not feel like a failure if a prospect says no. Perhaps the timing is not right. Perhaps God will renew the person in another way. Remember, The Walk to Emmaus is not the way to renewal for every Christian;
- “Church hoppers,” members who always have an axe to grind against the church; persons who will use Emmaus as a tool to divide the body, to further their own theological agendas, or who will create an “Emmaus church.”

Sponsorship training is held a few times per year about twenty minutes prior to a monthly Gathering. The next Sponsorship training session will be identified in a future newsletter.

**Just a reminder, if you have any information for upcoming newsletters please notify me at my contact info below.**

DeColores!

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