

Messenger

A monthly newsletter of the Emmaus of the Midlands Community

Volume 24, Issue 1, January 15, 2024



Upcoming Events:

January Gathering:
January 26, 2024, 7:00 pm
Mill Creek UMC

Board Meeting:
February 12, 2024, 7:00 pm
Red Bank UMC

February Gathering
February 23, 2024, 7:00 pm
Edgefield UMC

EOM Men's Walk #55
March 7-10, 2024
Camp Agape

EOM Women's Walk #55
March 14-17, 2024
Camp Agape

WE ARE BEING MADE NEW!

Happy New Year Everyone! I pray that your year has started out well. As for me, things are extremely busy these days in January as I begin a new year, thanks be to God! I was thinking about the fact that I will be a year older very soon and I would just as soon let that day pass without much hoopla and press on with my new year. As I think about aging, I am reminded that our physical body (tissue and bone) is regenerating. Yes, that is true. Science tells us that humans with non-injured tissues, the tissue naturally regenerates over time; by default, new available cells replace expended cells. For example, the body regenerates a full bone within ten years, while non-injured skin tissue is regenerated within two weeks. Wow, so with that said, I am not the same "physical person" I was ten years ago. I have new skin tissue and even my bones have been regenerated over the past ten years.

I am reading a new devotional guide from Our Daily Bread Ministries. I wanted to share, in part, the devotion from January 1.

The scripture is *1 Corinthians 5:14-21* and the title of the devotion is New Identity in Jesus.

It begins, "I'm not who I once was. I'm a new person." From a spiritual perspective (*2 Corinthians 5:17*) we receive this promise: "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

The writer of this devotion encourages (even challenges you and me) to remember that HIS transforming love compels us to live with new identity and purpose. It helps us point others to our Savior, the One who can make them new people too!

Back to this devotion. At the end the writer asks this question: What does it mean to you that a new beginning is possible with God? How can you live as His "new creation"? I had to answer it, and I challenge you to do the same.

As for me, this devotion challenged me to stay in God's holy scripture more and go deeper as I do. I have challenged myself to read the Bible in a Year and have begun already. I know that as I do, I will gain new insights and will continue to grow spiritually and continue to be made new in Christ as I go through the year (thanks be to the Holy Spirit guiding and directing me).



I want all of you to know that I am blessed to serve with you in the Midlands Emmaus Community and look forward to all God is going to do as HE guides and directs each of us according to HIS will!

I conclude by quoting the Apostle Paul: *Philippians 1:3* "I thank my God every time I remember you."

De Colores, Faye Stephens, Community Spiritual Director

Carolyn's Corner

It's difficult to believe that we are already half-way through January, 2024! A lot of people are relieved when Christmas and New Year's Day are over, and all the decorations are put away for another year. Even though we love the holidays, they sometimes wear us out and we can't wait for January when things slow down. In our family, though, it's a little different. We have an October birthday, Thanksgiving, a November birthday, Christmas, and then six birthdays in January. By January 29, the celebrations are finally over, we are sick of eating cake, and we all need visits to the gym! But...all we want to do is rest!!

However, I'm so thankful to say that for the past two years January has brought new excitement, joy, and enthusiasm! That's because we have been and are gearing up for another set of Emmaus Walks. The Men's and Women's Emmaus Walks #55 are just around the corner in March. The first Team Training was Saturday, January 13, and the second one will be Saturday, January 20, both at Camp Agape. The Lay Directors, Mary Lynn Medlin and Pat Longshore, have worked many hours and have prayed much for the team that God wants for these walks. The only thing left now is the need for pilgrims.


I urge each of you to prayerfully consider sponsoring pilgrims for these upcoming walks. What a joy and privilege it is to sponsor someone! You get to see that person change from Thursday evening (when they are still wondering what they have agreed to) into someone who has been filled to the brim with agape love and whose hearts are burning within them. To God be the glory for sponsors, volunteers, team members, and especially pilgrims.

De Colores, Carolyn McLean, Board Chair

January Gathering

We are looking forward to seeing a great gathering of the Emmaus Community on Friday, January 26, 7 pm, at Mill Creek UMC. The address is 1041 Old Garners Ferry Rd, Columbia, SC 29209. You are invited to come, bring a prospective pilgrim and a covered-dish to share. If you can find your Reunion Group Card, please bring that also. After the meal and announcements, we will break into small groups of 3-4 people for 15 minutes to discuss one question on the card. This goes along with our attempt to re-focus this year on Reunion Groups. Linda Kiraly will be our Fourth Day Speaker and Shay Long will provide the Clergy Response. Sheri McClendon will lead the music.

News From the Board Meeting on January 8, 2024

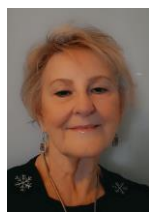
- The last vacant position on the board has now been filled with Thad Hinnant accepting Public Relations/Training. If you are aware of a church who would like to know more about Emmaus and our walks, please contact Thad at 803-237-4545. He will be happy to go to that church to present The Walk to Emmaus, to provide music, and have someone give a testimony about what Emmaus has meant in that person's life. We are also hoping to have training events during the year for anyone interested in learning what it means to serve in Emmaus in all capacities.
- Treasurer's Report: We have a little over \$3000.00 in our treasury at the moment; however, putting on a walk costs money for renting the camp, for supplies to be used during the walks, for food, for transportation to Candlelight and miscellaneous expenses. We need at least 20 pilgrims each for the Men's and Women's Walks to break even. 
- A committee has been formed to finalize our 501(c)3 application for a non-profit organization. Thanks to Linda Kiraly and Kim Corrigan for agreeing to serve.
- A yearly audit of our finances is being conducted with Kirk Atwood, Treasurer, and Adam Kiraly who is volunteering his services.
- Team formations have been completed. Team Training #1 was held on Saturday, January 13, and Team Training #2 will be held Saturday, January 20. Thanks to Red Bank UMC for providing lunch on the 13th and to Northeast UMC who will provide lunch on the 20th.
- A new songbook is in the works and hopefully will be ready for Walks #55. Thanks to Donna Fulmer for her work in adding new songs and deleting those that have not been used in a long time. She has reformatted everything and we are awaiting approval from our Music Chair on the board, Paul McKeever, in order for them to be printed and spiral-bound. Please note that our Prayer Vigil/Seed Agape Chair, Wendy McLean, will be asking for your donations at the next couple of gatherings as a Seed Agape offering to pay for the new songbooks.
- **Kitchen Training: Our Kitchen Coordinator Co-Chairs, Christen McConnaughay and Kim Hutchins, have an important announcement to make in reference to volunteering in the kitchen during the walks. In the interest of safety concerns, especially during this current flu/Covid/RSV season, anyone working inside the kitchen where the food is prepared must go through a training session. All volunteers are appreciated and needed, but it is very important to know all the safety regulations when handling food. Christen is ServSafe certified, and she and Kim will be able to hold two training sessions before the walks. The dates are February 17 and February 24 at 9 am at Christen's restaurant, The Spud Stop, at 327 E Columbia Ave, Leesville right across the street from Shealy's BBQ. The sessions should last only about one hour and you must attend at least one. If you cannot make these sessions, you can still volunteer to work in the dining room area, but not in preparing food. A sign-up sheet for training will be provided at the next gathering, or you may contact Christen at 803-603-0317, or Kim at 803-231-8407.**

To God be the glory, great things He has done!!

Emmaus of the Midlands
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Meet our Board Members: (a new board member will be introduced each month)



My name is Carolyn McLean, I live in West Columbia and worship at Red Bank UMC in Lexington. I went on Foothills Emmaus Walk #3, and I sat at the Table of Mary. I have been married to Charlie McLean for 46 years and together we have five boys: David, Brett and Alex McLean, and Ken and Mel Medlin. We are now blessed to have six beautiful granddaughters, and one handsome grandson. I like to tell people I met Charlie in jail! That's because I worked at Richland County

Sheriff's Dept. and he was the Chief of Police at Forest Acres. My Walk to Emmaus was a turning point in my life and it changed my life forever. With five boys it was difficult to work full time, so I left my job at the Sheriff's Dept and went to work for our church, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I never intended to have a career as a church secretary, but that is where God placed me for 34 ½ years. I have been privileged to serve in Emmaus since EOM Walk #4 on multiple teams and on the board. I am honored to be serving as Chair of the Board this year, and I covet your prayers as we go forward. I love the enthusiasm of the community I have seen and felt since the pandemic. I can truly say, **"BOY, AM I ENTHUSED!!!"**