

The Messenger



A monthly newsletter of the Emmaus of the Midlands Community

Emmaus of the Midlands
PO Box 85
Lexington, SC 29071

Volume 25, Issue 8, August 18 2025

Upcoming Events:

August Gathering

Friday, August 22 2025

Lexington UMC

6:30 pm Sponsorship Training

7:00 pm Fellowship Meal and
Worship

September Gathering

Friday, September 19, 2025

Wightman Methodist

6:30 pm, Sponsorship Training

7:00 pm Fellowship Meal and
Worship

Fall Walks

Men's Walk, Sept. 25-28

Women's Walk, Oct. 2-5

COMMUNITY FOURTH DAY REFLECTIONS

Hello. My name is Brian Austin, I live in Elgin and attend Lifespring Church in Lugoff, SC. I went on EOM Walk #39 and sat at the Table of John.

In your Piety, Study and Action in the last week, was there anything that stood out to you?

Music plays a big part of my life. I was praying about a situation, and a song came on the radio. I had heard it many times before, but this time it took on a different meaning based on that situation. It about brought me to tears. It made me stop and think about the Bible, how it was written so long ago, but it is still so very relevant today. I don't know how anyone could not believe that the Bible was truly written by God through men. Men could not write something that stays so relevant.

At what moment in this past week did you feel closest to God?

This past Sunday. We have been searching for a new home church and visited this one several times. They celebrated Communion, which we do all the time at Emmaus. This time was different. The words shared by the pastor and his emotion while sharing them were incredible. I have felt this before during Emmaus walks. It was awesome to feel that outside of Emmaus. That is the feeling I have been searching for in a church, the same feeling I get with Emmaus.

At what moment this week did you feel like you were responding to God's call to be a disciple?

In the Team Training this past weekend. I have been asked to serve and assigned the talk titled *Discipleship*. I am always willing to serve, but I don't always feel prepared. This past weekend, I felt like I was right where I needed to be, giving the talk I am meant to give. I know that God had his hand in this and will continue to guide the people serving. It is His Walk, not ours.

When was my faith tested through failure?

We had a church clean-up and, although I was helping, I held back on some of my abilities. I worried afterwards if this hindered my opportunity to witness to the other men there. I wondered if I missed a God connection. My sponsor would say, "It is not always the sin of commission, but the sin of omission". Sometimes it is not our action but our inaction that is the sin-missed opportunities to share Christ with the world. Maybe I can do better in the future-I am a work in progress



What is your plan for piety, study and action in the coming week?

My plan for this week is to continue my devotions, pray with more attention to specifics and pray for those closest to me. I am also looking forward to starting with a new reunion group. It's been a while since I have been involved with one.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S WALKS ARE ALMOST HERE!

Now, we need pilgrims. But to get pilgrims, we need sponsors to step up. Pray that God will lay someone upon your heart that needs this amazing weekend with other Christians. Make an appointment to talk to this person about Emmaus, help him/her fill out the application. Then you will fill out the Sponsor's Covenant and mail it along with the completed application and deposit to Emmaus of the Midlands, PO Box 85, Lexington, SC 29071 to the Attn: Registrar.



In order to go forward with these walks we need to have the applications and sponsorship forms turned in no later than September 1. We must have at least 8 more women and 8 more men to go forward. Please pray (some of us have been fasting and praying) that we will continue to draw others closer to Christ through the Walk to Emmaus.

Christ is Counting on You!

ANNUAL ELECTIONS



It's that time of year when we begin looking for five people to replace the five board members who have completed their terms on the Emmaus of the Midlands Board of Directors. Nominations shall be solicited and/or accepted between July 1 and August 31. Each nominee, prior to consideration as a nominee, must sign a Statement of Commitment form approved by the Board verifying his/her willingness to serve as an elected

Director of the Board of Directors. In order to be eligible to serve as a director, a nominee must be an active member of the community and agree to serve a three-year term. Ballots will be published the first business day in September and disseminated to the community. Completed ballots shall be accepted through October 15 according to instructions printed on the ballot. The names of the elected directors shall be announced during the remainder of October to reach as many community members as possible. Elected directors shall take office on November 1, 2025.

The Nominations/Election Committee consists of the five (5) off-going Board Directors:

| | | |
|------------------|--------------|--|
| Kenneth Bundrick | 803.924.8678 | kbundrick1980@aol.com |
| Jodie Harper | 225.205.4534 | jodieharper55@gmail.com |
| Tina Lipscomb | 803.917.2165 | snugglesmama@gmail.com |
| Carolyn McLean | 803.414.6216 | chmclean55@yahoo.com |
| Terry Peterson | 706.424.3820 | petersonterryw@gmail.com |

If you are interested in serving the Lord and Emmaus by volunteering for the Board of Directors, please contact one of the above. We ask that you prayerfully consider how God can use you! We meet monthly on the second Monday at 7 pm, currently at Brookland UMC on Meeting St., West Columbia.

BANNERS, WE NEED BANNERS!

I know we have some very crafty members of our community, and the Emmaus of the Midlands is in dire need of some new banners for the conference room. If you feel led to create a banner that can be used to represent one of the fifteen talks from the weekend, please let me know. If you, like me, are artistically challenged, there are many ready-made banners for sale, even at Amazon. The Board felt that it would be nice to have a banner representing each talk that could be displayed following the speaker's presentation of his/her talk. I just saw one online that said "Come, Holy Spirit." Wouldn't that be a great one to hang for the entire weekend!! We have wall space for hanging larger banners, or perhaps smaller banners could hang from the podium while a speaker is giving a talk. I'm sure you, or your Reunion Group, could work on one together as an act of agape. You may not have time before our fall walks in September and October, but the spring walks in March of 2026 would give you enough time to either create one or buy one. If you would rather donate money toward buying a banner, please make your check payable to EOM and note that it is for a banner. At this time I am happy to announce we have a reunion group who has volunteered to make a banner for the Priorities talk!



You are Invited to our Next Emmaus Gathering!

Friday, August 22, 2025

Lexington United Methodist Church

Sponsorship Training - 6:30 pm

Fellowship Meal - 7:00 pm

Bring your favorite dish to share and join us for a time of fellowship and worship.



Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy your consolations. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Terry Peterson: Your help is needed to set-up the camp for the upcoming walks. Please meet at Camp Agape on Wednesday, September 24, at 9 am if you can help set up tables and chairs in the kitchen and dining area, in the conference room, and in the Prayer Chapel. Many hands make light work. Men and women are needed, so please set aside a few hours to help. Even though this is working in the background, it is your service to God so that these walks can happen. 706.424.3820 peteronterryw@gmail.com

From Christen McConnaughay: Workers for cooking and serving meals during the walks are always needed. Please set aside time to come to the camp to help with meals. If you can come to help with one meal, that is wonderful! If you can work all three meals on one day, that is wonderful also! If you can do the entire weekend, then God bless you!! Please let me know by signing up to work in the kitchen. 803.603.0317 christenmcconnaughay@yahoo.com

From Wendy McLean: The 72-hour Prayer Vigil will be available soon so that you can sign up to pray for the walks, the team, the sponsors, the pilgrims, and all the behind-the-scene workers. You can sign up for 30-minute increments as many times as you like. This is so very important to the success of each walk. We hope to have a separate prayer chapel set up for these walks that will be in a different room than the Sanctuary Chapel that the pilgrims use during the walks for Dying Moments and other chapel visits. There will be a list of names of pilgrims and team members to pray for, and also a list called Prayer Prompts for the Prayer Chapel that will be useful. If you are coming to pray for a speaker, please remember that you are to stay in prayer in the Prayer Chapel until the speaker has given his/her talk and has returned to the prayer chapel for a closing prayer. DO NOT sit in the back of the conference room while the speaker is giving his/her talk. 803.665.6200 wendyjojo12@gmail.com

From Melissa Sansolo: Donated snacks for the Snack Agape Table are always needed and appreciated. A list will be available soon showing what items are needed. 863.838.3334 masanolo06@gmail.com

From Greg Bowers: It's that time again to begin making table agape for the walks. Get together with your reunion group, or make agape items on your own. We usually need around 50 pieces of each agape item for both the Men's Walk and the Women's Walk. 803.530.4817 bowersmaintenance@gmail.com

From Linda Kiraly: Fourth Day Follow-Up Meeting for New Pilgrims and their Sponsors will be held October 11, 2025, at 11:00 am. The location is to be determined. This Follow-Up Meeting will be followed by a New Member Celebration for the entire Community of Midlands Emmaus and will be held at 12 noon on October 11. This will be a covered-dish lunch and will be held at the same location as the Follow-Up Meeting. More information to come along with the location. 803.727.6997 lkiraly2015@gmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

When life gives you lemons, make the very best lemonade God has to offer. Continue to pray as God leads us through. John 3:16 - God gave us the very best!

Mike Evans, Community Spiritual Director

August 16, 2025

To: Emmaus of the Midlands Community

Following the news from the 2024 UMC General Conference

Following the recently held United Methodist Church's General Conference, in an attempt to provide a maximum of clarity to their constituents, various Boards of Directors have reached out to the Upper Room Emmaus Ministries office. Their main question has been the following "How does the UMC's human sexuality related decision affect the work of the Emmaus Ministries community?"

The following is the essence of our response to those inquiries. It is our hope that it will be helpful as you seek to share with your community members on the matter:

The recent LGBTQ+ decision(s) taken by the UMC do(es) not affect our work.

There are 2 things that are central to this conversation:

1. Persons must have clarity on our mission –
"to renew Christian disciples and strengthen local churches"
2. Persons must have clarity on the nature of our work:
"it is ecumenical"

Our mandate – that goes back to the mid-1900s - continues to be an ecumenical one that results in us being in partnership with various local churches and denominations.

On some issues, these local churches and denominations have diverging views. In the context of the Emmaus Ministries, we acknowledge this diversity, but we do not discuss it. Having discussions/arguments over the many theological, political, racial, social, doctrinal ... positions that divide us as a people is not part of our mission.

On these divisive issues, Emmaus Ministries programs are neutral territories on which team members work with God to "build" an environment of grace in which participants are able to experience God's love in refreshing ways.

For that reason, when participants show an interest in having clarity on these divisive issues, **we do not give our stance.** We encourage them to further the specific conversation with their church leadership. Those leaders will help them gain clarity on their church's position on the matter.

All of this to say that in the context of the Emmaus Ministries, **we welcome everyone.** However, there is one caveat: no one is allowed to use the programs to promote their views on any of those divisive issues. When this happens, persons (team member or participant) should be immediately excused from further service on the team or participation in the event.

If persons (BoD members, Team members, participants) are having difficulties upholding the approach to the work of the Emmaus Ministries community then, it might be a case in which Emmaus Ministries is not (no longer) a good fit for them. They should not seek to change our mission. They should not seek to reduce the scope of the ministry. They should be treated with respect and encouraged to fulfill their calling in another ministry setting. Much grace and peace to each and every one of you.

The Emmaus Ministries Team



Newsletter submitted by Carolyn McLean at chmclean55@yahoo.com 803-414-6216