



## RETURN TO THE ALTAR

About 23 years ago, we began having Emmaus Gatherings in Springfield. There weren't many folks in Springfield who had attended a Walk to Emmaus, but those who had wanted to gather and share how the Holy Spirit was working in their lives. During that time Sheriff Gene Kelly spoke at Grace United Methodist Church and told us what he saw as the future for Springfield—increased poverty, more crime, many single-parent families, and increases in homeless people. Wow, it seemed that these were insurmountable problems. So, of course, we began to pray. God quickly answered our prayers—*“Begin a Walk to Emmaus in Springfield!”* The Holy Spirit had given us a gift through the Walk to Emmaus, so why not give it to others! If we could bring Emmaus to Springfield, we felt those who would attend would be led to work through their churches and community ministries to help with these inevitable problems.

As stated, it sounds so simple, doesn't it? However, obstacles were quickly thrown in the way. No one “in authority” could see why another Emmaus was needed as there were Emmaus communities in surrounding areas. Since Emmaus is a lay movement, we had a few Clergy folks plus the West Ohio Emmaus Group who consistently tried to discourage us—however, we pressed on. At our first “official” Board meeting, a sheet of paper was passed around from which we were to tear off a piece and write on it what we were willing to sacrifice for the next three years to bring Emmaus to Springfield. After a time of prayer, we took our pieces of paper to the altar and dedicated them. There were about thirteen people there that night and all declared gifts of large sums of money, time, and talents. As we continued to seek approval to begin an Emmaus movement, we had to prove our intentions, why we thought there was a need, and how much support we were willing to dedicate. As folks in the Springfield area recognized our commitment, more support was forthcoming. Our Community Lay Director, Dr Sally Abbott, went to the Upper Room in Nashville to state our case. She convinced an Upper Room Representative to come to Springfield to see how well we were prepared. A Rep came and finally after months of denial, the Springfield Area Walk to Emmaus began in November 1990. Hallelujah—Brothers and Sisters, perseverance was awarded!

One of the first expenses we had was putting showers in the church at a cost of \$25,000, which took most of the capital we had, thus we had to get a loan. Having no money meant we would have to borrow sleeping mats, dining room tables, kitchenware, team manuals, etc. from other communities for a year or so. We were not deterred. Everyone kept the promise they had made to God to sacrificially give of themselves and their resources. Attractive, healthy meals were planned around a meager budget, but Pilgrims never knew it and raved about the “fabulous” food. Everyone gave what was needed—desserts, garden flowers for the tables, cleaning and conference room supplies, etc. Many gave up vacation days to work before, during, and after the Walks. It was a time of giving sacrificially and God blessed Springfield Area Emmaus to the place where we will be able to look back on 100 Walks in November 2010 with approximately 3,270 Pilgrims ready to share Christ's love!

The city of Springfield still has crime, homeless folks, poverty, and many single-parent families—BUT, hopefully, these needs are more readily recognized. We have witnessed throughout these past years how quickly resources are made available to help others from those with caring, Christ-filled hearts. Many have answered God's call to follow Him into full-time ministry when they were on their Walk. Many faithfully work in their churches or volunteer to serve God through a community ministry. Emmaus didn't solve the problems, but it certainly has helped Springfield to be a better place because God is alive and well in our churches, in Emmaus, and in community service.

Is it time for us to return to the altar and sacrificially give of our money, time, and talents so we can continue to enhance our churches and community with God's love through the Walk to Emmaus? Pray about it -- how can we sacrificially give to God? He's waiting for us – shall we go to the altar?

May it be so, in Christ' love, Mary Faith, aka, Lashes

## GREETINGS TO THE EMMAUS COMMUNITY

I would like to start my article this month by wishing everyone of you and your families a very happy new year. Last year is gone, and now we need to look ahead to what I pray will be a great and blessed year for all. Barb and I finished up 2009 by spending December in Alaska with our kids, and what a blessing that was for us. But now we need to start this year by doing all we can for our Emmaus community. We need to support it at gatherings, walks, picnics and any way we can. We need to bring pilgrims, both men and women. We need to remember that we are here for Jesus and be here to serve Him and forget all the other things. I would really like to see some new faces serving at walks and at gatherings. I really enjoy seeing old friends, but I would like to see new ones also, so stop by and serve at a walk in the kitchen, or carry luggage, or help set up the church, or clean toilets, it makes no difference what you do, **just do it**. Please remember to keep Sarah Cogan and her team in your prayers as they start their team meetings. And please come support **your** Emmaus community. God bless you all and I look forward to seeing you all at the gathering.

In His service, John

## HOW DOES AN EMMAUS WEEKEND HAPPEN?

Most folks realize that conducting an Emmaus weekend takes many individuals and a lot of hard work and preparation. Luckily, a new and exciting format for each weekend is not one of the tasks which has to be accomplished.

The Walk to Emmaus is a ministry of the Upper Room of the United Methodist Church. Each member of the Board of Directors of the Springfield Area Emmaus must sign a covenant with the Upper Room on an annual basis in order to be recognized as an Emmaus Community. Recognition as an Emmaus Community is legally required to conduct Walk to Emmaus weekends.

The covenant states that Springfield Emmaus will abide by the guidance contained in the Upper Room Emmaus manuals and publications. These manuals include *The Upper Room Handbook on Emmaus*, *The Walk to Emmaus Directors' Manual*, *The Walk to Emmaus Team Manual*, *The Walk to Emmaus Talk Outlines*, and a pamphlet titled *Sustaining the Spirit*.

The manuals totally prescribe the entire weekend down to a minute-by-minute timeline. The goal of the Upper Room is to insure that all Pilgrims at any location will have the same Emmaus experience which was revealed initially by the Holy Spirit. The Upper Room recognizes that communities will add local color and may have minor differences due to distinctive backgrounds, but the manuals will provide the weekend format. Any deviation from the manuals must be cleared by the Board of Directors.

The Lay Director for each weekend is selected by the Board of Directors. By definition, the Lay Director leads the team through team formation and is the "principal" who directs the activities during the weekend. The Lay director serves in the employ of the Board and is responsible to the Board for the conduct of the weekend.

The Lay Director serves in partnership with the weekend Spiritual Director who is recruited by the Community Spiritual Directors and approved by the Board. *The Handbook on Emmaus* states that "Emmaus makes partners of laity and clergy in ministry. In contrast to centuries of clergy dominance in the church, laypersons do indeed carry primary responsibility for the Walk to Emmaus. (Page 4)

The team is selected by the weekend Lay Director and a Team Selection Committee chaired by the individual holding the Leadership position on the Board. Once the team is established, the Lay Director will assign team positions (Table Leader, Assistant Table Leader, etc.), determine talk assignments, and lead 23-26 hours of team formation.

## HOW DOES AN EMMAUS WEEKEND HAPPEN? CONTINUED

The people “behind the scenes” are as important to a successful weekend as are the team members. Without the leadership of the Board of Directors and the execution of the responsibility of each Director, along with sponsors, luggage carriers, room build-up and tear-down folks, bathroom cleaners, food and supply purchasers, kitchen workers, Agape’ sorters, worship volunteers, attendees at Candlelight and Closing ceremonies, and participating clergy, the weekend would not have the impact that all of us have experienced.

The Walk to Emmaus weekend doesn’t just happen...it is a deliberate, structured event constructed by the Holy Spirit and conducted by a dedicated laity and clergy team.

John Ahlborn

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

One of the areas that The International Emmaus and Chrysalis Office has needed some work has been in the area of relationships with communities. We have needed to do more listening and then recognizing that the local Community Board of Directors is our partner in these movements. **Our goal is to develop and empower the local leaders – members of the Board of Directors – and to develop relationships with other communities and each other.**

To accomplish this goal we have initiated a plan called “**Leadership Development**”. This program will draw the International Office and all the Regional Leaders and Assistant Regional Leaders into a relationship with each of the Board of Directors for Emmaus and Chrysalis where we can equip, empower and educate them to lead their communities. We are partners, not police. Each of the Regional Leaders is enthusiastically embracing this new method. We want to know how we can help you; what tools you may need to serve your Emmaus or Chrysalis community. We want to pray for you and will be asking you to pray for us.

Beginning in 2010, we will be conducting Leadership Development events in each of the five regions. We will be asking that all **new** Board of Director members – Chrysalis and Walk to Emmaus - will attend one meeting but other members of Boards and interested community members can attend too. Each region will hold from 4 to 7 of these one day meetings that are strategically placed around each of the regions. You are asked to attend the one meeting that is most convenient to your location.( In 2011, we will ask all those newly elected members of Boards to attend one of the 4 to 7 meetings and so forth, year after year.) As a local Board member, you are only expected to attend one meeting during your three years of service on the Board of Directors. Usually, that will be your first year of service on your local board.

These Leadership Development meetings will encompass six hours of content during one day – usually a Saturday. You will be able to ask questions from your Regional Leaders, meet board members from other Emmaus and Chrysalis communities and pray together with other Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Emmaus board members and Chrysalis board members will meet together.

In order to find the location of the Leadership Development Meetings in your region, simply go to the Emmaus/Chrysalis Website ([www.upperroom.org/emmaus](http://www.upperroom.org/emmaus) or [www.upperroom.org/chrysalis](http://www.upperroom.org/chrysalis)) and click on the Leader Development tab on the home page. That tab is on the left side on the Emmaus website and along the top on the Chrysalis site. You will be taken to the area that lists all the meetings – dates, times, locations and sign-up information.



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*Newsletter e-mail:*  
info@berners.com

*Find us online:*

www.spfldemmaus.com  
www.highstreetumc.com

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### **UPCOMING GATHERINGS!**

**Sunday, February 14, 2010 at 7 PM**  
**Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 7 PM**

### **FOOD & FELLOWSHIP:**

After each gathering, there will be a time of fellowship and food.

***If you plan to stay, please bring a dish to share.***

### **2010 WALK DATES:**

#### **Women's Walks**

- # 58 FEBRUARY 18-21  
LD: SARAH COGAN
- # 59 JUNE 24-27
- # 60 NOVEMBER 4-7

#### **Men's Walks**

- # 39 APR. 22-25
- # 40 AUG. 12-15

**HELP!**

***We are in need of applications.***  
***Please consider sponsoring a pilgrim!***

The LORD is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

Psalm 118:6