

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMUNITY LAY DIRECTOR**

Think of a Christmas when you were very young, when you weren't caught up in the scramble it may have become now. You looked forward to the school recess or the Christmas Vacation, as it was called then. You anticipated snow, sledding, building a snowman and a fort and snowball fights. You may have made a Christmas present for your parents in Sunday school or took bottles to the store for the refund so you could buy Mom some little trinket. Mom helped you with Dad's gift. Your biggest problem was learning the lines and practicing for the church nativity program. You attended a Christmas Eve service, maybe got to open one present and were shoved off to bed (so your parents could finish Santa's work) and woke up earlier than the folks wanted you to. But they got up anyway and the fun began. Then Grandparents arrived in time for the big meal. Afterwards you showed off your gifts and played in the snow.

Maybe your Christmas wasn't quite like that but pieces of it were. I remember the one in 1945. The year was memorable for everyone with WWII ending in victory. Dad had spent a year in Hawaii working in the Pearl Harbor shipyards for the Navy. He had to return to Missouri early because Mom was having an operation. The war ended while he was home but he had to finish his contract time in California. Mom and I joined him and his time was up in December. We headed home on Christmas Eve in our 1931 Chevrolet that Dad had bought with a \$75 loan. Mom pointed to all the lighted trees in people's windows to make up for us not having one. No freeways so we drove by a lot of homes. We made it to Desert Center (not sure if it was Nevada or Arizona but I remember the town's name) and the Chevy was having problems so we stopped at a motel there. I wondered if Santa would be able to find us in such a remote place. He did (I'm pretty sure with help from Mom 'cause Dad was busy fixing the car) and on Christmas morning I got a real nice, big toy truck. Wow! What a super surprise. It was special!

What an opportunity we have now to share our Christmas. Try to slow down once in a while, think about the First Christmas Gift, a baby boy born in poverty so that we might be rich. Think about what joy you can give to others – family, friends – and take advantage of the many ways to share with strangers through the Salvation Army, Toys for Tots, Angel Tree, Samaritan's Purse Shoe Boxes and so many more. Choose one or two and "just do it". May the spirit of the Christ Child bless you and yours.

De Colores,  
-Gene Porter

**UPCOMING GATHERINGS!**

**Sunday, December 16th, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Sunday, January 20, 2008, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Sunday, February 17, 2008 7:00 p.m.**

**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.*

**Walk Dates**

Men's Walks

#35 April 24—27, 2008  
#36 August 14—17, 2008

Women's Walks

#52 February 21—24, 2008  
#53 June 19—22, 2008  
#54 November 6—9, 2008

*\*All Walk Dates Are Tentative*

**PRAISE GOD!**

And that is what we will do on December 16. Come and join the community for the **PRAISE GATHERING** at 7:00 p.m. Bring your friends, family and potential pilgrims. We promise it will be worth your while. The program will not drag and will not drag on. How could you spend your time any better than being in fellowship with friends and praising the Lord?

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 7:00 P.M.**  
**HIGH ST. UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

## SPRINGFIELD AREA EMMAUS WOMEN'S WALK #52

### TEAM LIST

SHERRY PORTER	LD	PERSEVERANCE
CINDY WRIGHT	BOARD REPRESENTATIVE	
REV. CAROLYN PEACOCK	SD	MEANS OF GRACE
REV. CINDEE JOHNSON	ASD	PREVENIENT GRACE
REV. DENNY MORITZ		SANCTIFYING GRACE
REV. ALICE K. HOOVER		JUSTIFYING GRACE
REV. SHERRY BLACKWELL		OBSTACLES TO GRACE
LESLIE VASQUEZ	ALD	PRIORITIES
VIKI HYSLOP	ALD	FOURTH DAY
DEE MOORE	ALD	DISCIPLESHIP
AMY LORD HEARLIHY	MD	
ELLEN SMITH	AMD	
BETTY YOAKEM	LOG	
TERRI RINKOSKI	LOG	
SARAH COGAN	LOG	
CINDY MOORMAN	TL	4 <sup>TH</sup> DAY EXAMPLE
JOYCE PENWELL	TL	PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS
BARBARA MULKEY	TL	BODY OF CHRIST
BECKY WIANI	TL	LIFE OF PIETY
ANGELA BOBLITT	TL	CHRISTIAN ACTION
SHARON KELLEY	TL	GROWTH THROUGH STUDY
CATHERINE DIXON	TL	CHANGING OUR WORLD
LISA COX	ATL	
BRENDA VAN PELT	ATL	
CATHY BOYD	ATL	
ROBIN HOUGH	ATL	
JOYCE GANNON	ATL	
DIANE FINNEY	ATL	
KATIE MORITZ	ATL	

### Update on Share Group Information

If you are currently in a Women's or Couples' Share Group, please send the below information to Mary Ahlborn, Women's Good Shepherd, email: [jahlborn@woh.rr.com](mailto:jahlborn@woh.rr.com) or 937-322-1958.

Please send information on Men's Share Groups to Sim Bowen, Men's Good Shepherd, email [sim@changinglivesnow.org](mailto:sim@changinglivesnow.org) or 937-605-1066.

We would like the following information:

I am currently in a Share Group with:

Names and telephone numbers (or at least the phone number or email address of a contact person).

Date, place, and time you meet.

If you are not in a Share Group and wish to find one:

Name, telephone number or email address, the best day and time for you to meet, and your Emmaus Walk #.

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS

The time has come to set up the Christmas tree(s), risk our lives to put up lights on the house, play carols, and yes, buy presents, presents and more presents. In fact, this year there is a whole extra week of shopping before the BIG DAY.

Our country each year drifts closer and closer to insanity for these four weeks of the year as parents frantically search for Wii's and whatever else is all the rage for kids and teens. We will spend well over 15 billion dollars on goods and toys, 250 million dollars for wrapping paper alone. 200 million will be spent on real or plastic trees and decorations and another 300 million on postage. Along with all of this, emotions will begin to run wild. A combination of nostalgia and guilt can and will prompt illogical and extravagant purchases. Along with the carols are the constant cha-ching of the cash register and the swish of the credit card.

I don't want to sound like The Grinch Who Stole Christmas, but how about taking time away from the usual holiday rounds and rush for an alternative agenda? After all, it isn't your birthday or your kid's birthday that we are celebrating, is it? In honor of the One whose birthday it REALLY is, how about giving some gifts that would bless the heart of Jesus?

Mend a quarrel.

Make a friend.

Write a love note.

Forgive an enemy.

Reach out with love to someone who is hurting.

Be gentle and patient with someone who is angry.

Tell the store clerk or waitress "Thank you." And mean it.

Find the time to keep a promise.

Make or bake something for someone.

Call someone who is lonely.

Refrain from criticizing someone.

Let go of a grudge.

Listen. No, I mean really listen. For more than a minute, or five.

Smile at a stranger and say "Hi!"

Share someone's sorrow.

Apologize if you were wrong. Even if you think you might be right.

Turn off the TV and talk.

Do the dishes AND the laundry, that is if it isn't usually your job.

Pray for someone.

Kids, give your teacher a break. Don't give her or him an apple, give your complete cooperation.

In other words, give people what they really need. Not another gizmo or gadget. Give what Jesus came to give you. Yourself. And have a wonderful Merry Christmas!

Your Co-Spiritual Director and friend

*-Rev. Bill*

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**We're On the Web!**

<http://spfldemmaus.com>

You can also see our

Newsletter at

[www.highstreetumc.com](http://www.highstreetumc.com)

**Newsletter e-mail:**

[pascot@prodigy.net](mailto:pascot@prodigy.net)

#### **ATTENTION SPONSORS**

Sponsorship has a very important place in the Emmaus process. After all, no one would be taking a Walk to Emmaus without a sponsor who willingly and lovingly takes the responsibility to 1)Ask, 2)help with an application, 3) make sure the application is delivered to the registrar, 4)keep in touch and let the pilgrim know what to expect while they wait for a call, 5)send notices to friends and family, asking for letters when the call to attend is received, 6)make sure the pilgrim has a ride to the church and help in getting registered and settled, 7)attend the sponsors' hour, 8)pray for the pilgrim and the entire walk, 9)make sure all letters are delivered to the agape personnel, 10)care for the pilgrim's family during the weekend, 11)attend candlelight and closing, 12)make sure the pilgrim has a ride home, 13) help the pilgrim find a share group and continue to love them.

That is quite a list but when followed, the blessings far outweigh any efforts or inconveniences. Now here is a very short list of what a sponsor should not do.

1. **Do not give special gifts to the pilgrim during the walk.** Each pilgrim is given the same love and acceptance. Special gifts to one or two draw attention to those receiving and may make other sponsors who follow the rules seem less loving. Even a flower or whatever can cause a problem. The team and the agape personnel work hard to make sure all pilgrims receive the same tokens of love. Please do not sabotage this concept. If there is a birthday or an occasion that should be noted, let the team know and they will handle it appropriately.
2. **Do not include special gifts for the agape packet given near the end of the walk.** This should be for letters and cards only. Special gifts can be given on the ride home. The team will try to assure that each pilgrim has an adequate supply of agape in the packet and specialty items do not fit into the packets and also can cause the same problem as No. 1 above.
3. **Do not make any extraordinary contact with your pilgrim during the walk.** Be a help at meals, let them know you love them, but keep the conversation short and appropriate to the intention of the walk. Remember, being a true servant means keeping in the background as much as possible.
4. **Do not leave your pilgrim stranded after the walk.** Make sure they have a way home and keep in contact, helping with questions, share group, advice, encouraging them to fill out the willing servant sheet, etc.

It's really not at all difficult being a sponsor. All you have to do is care enough and God will bless you and the pilgrim.