

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS

Quite a few years ago I stood at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and looked at the long list of names inscribed on the shiny black granite. There among the names of the dead dim reflection of my face looked out at me like a shade, a soul on the point of departure.

As are we all. Everyone born is in the process of dying. Death is the unbeatable bully on the block of life. He sneers and says, "I'll get you someday. Soon."

I remember walking home from school terrified of a bully I knew would meet me on the way home. Day after day he would meet me by the playground and threaten me. One day I just couldn't take any more. I put down my books, took off my new glasses and went at him. Just like that. I'm not sure who you could say won. The audience who gathered had a great time. All I know is that I went away from there without my glasses (someone in the crowd stole them) but also delivered of the bully and my fear.

Death is one bully I can't beat. You can't either. But you don't need to. He has already been defeated.

On Friday and Saturday the celebration was in full swing. Satan was dancing with the demons in delight. The Son of God, the bringer of love and mercy had been nailed to the cross by merciless hatred and bitter anger and laid in the tomb by deadly sin and pitiless wrong.

As Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, she had seen all the hatred and horror. The back of her Lord laid open by the whip, his brow torn by a crown of thorns, his face dripping with spittle, his hands and feet pierced by nails.

How hard and bitter this world can be.

Words fail to plumb those depths.

Yet as she came to the tomb, the stone was rolled away! Fearing the worst, she ran back to tell the two remaining leaders, Peter and John, what she had found. The two men immediately ran to the tomb, the younger John outrunning Peter. However, when he got to the tomb, John hesitated at the door but the impulsive Peter pushed on in. Peter saw the grave

clothes lying on the stone bench and just backed out wondering. However John went in and thoughtfully saw that the cloth that had enfolded Jesus' body was not just scattered about as if the body had been roughly extracted but were folded on the ledge as if the body had simply evaporated out of their strips. John knew and believed the truth that will resound through the ages.

**JESUS IS ALIVE!
DEATH HAS LOST ITS VICTORY AND THE GRAVE HAS
BEEN DENIED!
JESUS LIVES FOREVER! HE'S ALIVE!**

The bully has been beaten. You need fear no more.

Lillie Johnson, a 96-year-old member of Emery Chapel, knew this. On the back cover of her Bible, so worn it was falling apart, were written these words

" Do not fear for I am with you;
do not be dismayed for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
(Isaiah 41:10)

In her last days, Lillie cried out to God, "Father, take me home."

She had no fear. She knew the bully was beaten. For Lillie, the Easter celebration was about to begin. Are you ready for that celebration? Is Jesus the Lord of your life and the conqueror of your death? May this Easter season find you with a new joy and fresh courage.

JESUS IS ALIVE!

Your friend and Springfield Community Co-spiritual Director

Bill Kelley

COMMUNITY LAY DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS

Thank you, you are marvelous!

I had some definite thoughts about this month's message but have quickly changed due to recent experiences. Springfield Area Women's Walk #52 was powerful due to the always remarkable presence of the Holy Spirit. The ladies – both team and pilgrims - have a closer and more meaningful relationship with their Creator and Savior.

But the part I was able to observe was the support by those in the background. The kitchen crew, the dining room volunteers, the community logistics and their volunteers, the agape personnel, the book table folks, the registrars, purchasing, High Street reps, musicians, secretarial, social helpers, supply room and worship folks. It was amazing to see how many worked so well together and worked so hard to make sure all the pieces were in place and at the right time so the walk could happen without a hitch. Weather, long waits, bats, illness, whatever, did not deter or discourage. Some had to fill in for others who were sick and did so with a big smile. No one was taking credit or worrying about what someone else did or didn't do. All were simply being a servant.

There is not enough room to mention names and I wouldn't dare try for fear of leaving several out. Besides, none were doing it for recognition. There is probably a group that I left out in the listing but it is not intentional. It is just that so many were doing so very much to insure that the team and pilgrims could enjoy their experience without any hitches or worries (the bat wasn't so cooperative so he was asked to leave and, thankfully, he did). What an absolute blessing to observe such an outpouring of pure love. Thank you for this experience. I know it wasn't anywhere near the first time – it has happened every walk. But I just wanted all involved to know that it hasn't been taken for granted and how much all the efforts are appreciated by us and, I am sure, by our Heavenly Father.

Gene Porter
Community Lay Director

MEN'S WALK #35 - TEAM ROSTER

		<u>Table Leaders</u>	<u>Assistant Table Leaders</u>
Dave Speas	Lay Director		
Ray Harper	Spiritual Director	Chris Ehrhard	Rick Clark
Dennis Moritz	Spiritual Director	Norman Moore	Dennis Carter
Dan Morter	Board Representative	Deron Blakely	Douglas Gardner, Sr.
Bob Baker	ALD	Mark Carpenter	Dan Shroyer
Larry McMahan	ALD	Tyler Mayhugh	Wayne Roth
Randy McHenry	ALD	Ky Crain	Harry Weaver
John Chambers	LOG	Doug Parish	
Greg Bachman	LOG		
Corey Pearson	Music Director		
Tom Myers	Music Director		

Men's Walk # 36 Lay Director: David Southward

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS

Many years ago I was privileged to be in the New Orleans Super Dome when the World Wide Congress on Evangelism was held there. There were many different denominations, many different nationalities but all were there to worship the same Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. People from all over the world came together as the one Body of Christ. For some people, it was such an important gathering they traveled any way they could to get to New Orleans. There was a man from Africa who had sold his only cow to raise the money to get to this meeting. I wonder if we would be willing to give up our most prized possession to come to worship God with the Body of Christ.

During one of the sessions the worship became more than just singing, in fact a wave of the Holy Spirit began on one end of the Dome and traveled all the way around the room, engulfing all who were in the building. The Holy Spirit became evident in many ways as people opened themselves to being vessels of God's love and grace. We here in the Emmaus Community witnessed a similar outpouring of God's love and grace as the Women's Walk #52 was going on.

There is really no way to describe the ministry of God's Holy Spirit during this last walk. I stood in awe as the Holy Spirit moved among the ladies. I watched as The Risen Christ was re-presented to them, giving them new life, breaking the chains that had long kept them bound and bringing spiritual sight to those who had failed to see God's kingdom here on earth.

During this month of March we are in the midst of the re-presentation of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The events that occurred in the life of Jesus during Holy Week remind us that when we stand firm in the faith, there will be opposition from those who do not understand God's ways. There will be opposition from the one who wants to defeat God's people, but praise God there is victory in Jesus.

New life comes only after we have died to that which stands between us and God. That moment of dying to our most important thing that has kept us bound to the world is not easy, but when we let loose of it, God is able to bring us into a new resurrected life. May the blessings of God's Holy Spirit bring you resurrected life during this Easter Season.

De Colores,
Carolyn Peacock
Your Community Co-Spiritual Director

Epiphany News

The Epiphany weekend #18 at Ohio Reformatory for women went exceedingly well. Members of the Springfield Emmaus Community who were on the team were: Jennifer Anderson (Agape), Lorie Datko (Music), Ray Harper (Spiritual Director), Walter Mock (Assistant Spiritual Director), and Art Zubiante (Table Leader).

The Epiphany weekend for Madison Correctional Institution is now in team formation. That weekend will be March 28-30, 2008. They are still looking for clergy. If anyone is interested in this Ministry to incarcerated youth, please see Ray Harper, covington@insight.rr.com, the Epiphany Representative to the Springfield Emmaus Board.

REMEMBER THAT CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU.

"YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE." JOHN 8:32

Ray Harper, Pastor/Founder
The Simple Truth Ministries

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United Methodist Church
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REUNIONS

One hour prior to the Gathering on March 16th,
the following walks will hold their reunions:

Women's Walk # 52

6:00 p.m.

Meet in the Conference Room

UPCOMING GATHERINGS!

Sunday, March 16, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 20, 7:00 p.m.
(*Spring Celebration*)

Sunday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.
(*Specials provided by Kairos*)

The August gathering will have specials provided by Chrysalis

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

53 June 19—22, 2008

54 November 6—9, 2008

Please Note:

Kim Bachman will be the Lay
Director for WW #53 in June.

*All Walk Dates Are Tentative

A THANK YOU FROM PURCHASING

KUDOS and THANKS!!! By mentioning Emmaus
when you shopped at GFS, we have been mailed
a check for \$542.92 for 2007. That is being
used to cover the cost of Upper Room materials
purchased for the 2008 Walks.

Please remember to mention Emmaus
when you check out!