

Near the Cross Emmaus



April 2013
Volume 8, Issue 4

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 6th

Follow Up Meeting
Walks #27 & #28
11:00am-12:00pm
FUMC Jonesboro
Fellowship Hall

Monthly Gathering

12:00pm
FUMC Jonesboro
Fellowship Hall

Saturday, April 20th

**Regional Emmaus
Leadership Event**
9:00am-3:00pm
FUMC Jonesboro

Saturday, May 4th

Monthly Gathering
12:00pm
FUMC Jonesboro
Fellowship Hall

COMMUNITY LAY LEADER
Jim Markley
jmarkley_best@msn.com

TREASURER
Sherri Slaven
sherrislaven@yahoo.com

SECRETARY
Sara Frazier
wsfrazier@live.com

REGISTRAR
Shelly Fulks
shellyfulksemmaus@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Haley Mitchell
haley_jo_01@yahoo.com

NEW MEMBERS LOOK FORWARD TO 4TH DAY

Comments from Walk #27 Closing

"It was a renewing of my spirit and I want to be a willing vessel in church, home or the other side of the world."

"Indescribable; excitement and trepidation. Fear is gone; excitement is still here!"

"This weekend I found God everywhere I turned."

"The Walk gave us stepping stones to God. All those letters were a good trick!"

"I am now a better person after 72 hours in the woods."

"God was really inviting us (19 men) to 'show up'. Now it is time for me to 'step up!'"

PILGRIMS ON WALK #27

Royal Baldwin	James Meurer
Tony Byrd	Keith Milam
Randy Couch	Trey Murrah
Michael Davis	Jaye Playter
Ron Dunn	Emmett Smith
Josh Green	Brent Swaim
Brian Ibanez	Trey Vernon
Eddie Jones	Kenneth Wahlgren
Weston Jones	Glen Whitehead
James McLean	

PILGRIMS ON WALK #28

Michelle Burnett	Barbara Hill
Monica Buxton	Tammy Koty
Becca Craft	Michelle McCrackin
Brittany Cremeens	Ashton Milam
Theresa Crossfield	Ginger Sain
Kim Couch	Natalie Sawyer
Darlene Dumas	Becca Simmons
Gina Garrett	Jeanina Smith
Katrina Groves	Cindy Sparkman
Monica Gunkel	Ruth Stewart
Sherri Harp	Susan Tyree
Pam Harness	Mary Ann Wilson
Diana Herren	Mandy Zipfel

Comments from Walk #28 Closing

"Emmaus is a cool, clear drink of water after walking through the hottest desert."

"I saw the love of God in many new ways and started believing it!"

"Now I can better understand what being a Christian is really like."

"Now I feel like I can respond when God calls 'I need a volunteer'."

"Darkness has been lifted. Experienced God's amazing grace for the first time in many years."

"I learned I am not ever really alone. I have more 'brothers' and 'sisters' than I ever knew I had."

BEING CALLED TO SERVE ON AN EMMAUS WALK TEAM

Team formation is a process of prayer and discernment. Before a person is asked to serve on a team, the community's board selects a lay director. A team selection committee then reviews the worker applications and suggests the names of people who have the experience and/or abilities to participate on a team. The names are then prayed over and, through the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, teams begin to form.

People who have been contacted to serve on a team should pray and meditate to discern whether or not God wants them to participate. If they believe that God is calling them, they should offer praise for the opportunity to serve. If they feel that they cannot serve as team members, they should also praise God for guiding their decision. God will form the team God wants.

Team members depend on one another. Each team should include some community members who have never been on a team, some who have been team members more

than once, and others who have a good deal of Emmaus experience. Because of the variety of gifts we bring and the dynamics of spiritual formation within the team, each person has a chance to grow in faith. Everyone is important to the team and contributes to the spiritual growth of others. A team that is strengthened by and committed to Jesus and understands itself as the body of Christ will help bring the blessings of the Holy Spirit to all who participate in the Walk to Emmaus.

Being a team member is a challenge no matter what tasks are undertaken. People who are chosen by Christ are privileged to serve him. No one should take lightly the calling to serve. The unconditional love of team members will help pilgrims to open their hearts and minds to Jesus. What reward could be richer?

Lay Directors and dates have been set for Fall 2013 Walks. Travis Emery has been selected to be the Lay Director for the Men's Walk September 12-15 and Casey Emery has been selected to be the Lay

Be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

—1 Peter 4:7-10

Director for the Women's Walk September 19-22. If you are interested in working either walk you must fill out a worker application and submit to the Registrar Shelly Fulks by the end of April. Team selection will take place in early May. Worker applications can be found on our website www.nearthecrossemmaus.org.

FOURTH DAY REUNION GROUPS

While the Walk to Emmaus is an event, continuing participation is primarily in small groups. Some people meet each week with between two and eight other Emmaus members, for prayer, support and encouragement. Others prefer a more open approach and welcome anyone to join the group regardless of their interest in or history with Emmaus. Regular participation in a fourth day small group is explained and encouraged on the Walk to Emmaus.

Continued small group involvement in Emmaus is important to sustain spiritual growth and renewal. Long ago, John Wesley discovered the disciple's need for small group nurture: "I was more convinced than ever, that the preaching like an Apostle, without joining together

those that are awakened, and training them up in the ways of God, is only begetting children for the murderer." he bemoaned the fact that in one area, twenty years of hard work had produced no societies and "the consequence is, that nine in ten of the once-awakened are now faster asleep than ever." Some might say the same could be said of Emmaus members who have not availed themselves in a fourth day group.

If you are looking for a reunion group, contact your sponsor to see about joining a group or starting a new group. You can also find groups that are currently meeting and their location and times on our website. If you are in a group and it is not listed on our website, contact Jason Chandler at jaclac@att.net or at 870-932-4307.

 Find us on
Facebook

This is a closed group to keep in touch and share our 4th Day experiences, study material, prayer requests and praises. This is not an official page of the NEAR the Cross Board of Directors.



4th Day Talk

Clayton Fletcher Speaks at Candlelight

I went on my Walk at NEAR the Cross Walk #19, Table of Thomas. As with other pilgrims before me I took my time when deciding when to take my walk. Luckily, men like my sponsor Kevin Walters and friends like David Belk, among many others, kept me reminded about when the next walk was happening. Thankfully they never quit asking and after nearly 2 years of being asked I was at a place in my turbulent life that I let go and went. I chuckle looking back now when someone asks me to describe my Emmaus experience because I can only muster this "It was Awesome!" I laugh because that's all my good friend Kevin could say when he was trying all those years in convincing me that I should go. Boy was that description accurate and I thank everyone involved to the smallest detail that supported me and my family during my Walk. I know that you all experienced the same on your walk and that is why you are here this evening to support these pilgrims.

I am a very anxious person so I looked forward to, well actually dreaded my Walk. I like to be in control, tend to not to like surprises, and have to know what the outcome is before I generally will commit to something such as the Walk. My wife, Tracie, and family of 3 little boys have always been supportive of me, sometimes undeservedly, and my time gone to the Walk was no different. My weekend was an amazing experience and God's timing and role placement of the men who were there could not have been scripted any better in a Hollywood production. Things that I learned about God and His Kingdom that weekend have proved invaluable and I will always remember them. During my dying moment I have never felt as loved as I did when I let my lack of forgiveness die. I was holding a grudge against many people in my life,

situations that had occurred, and myself. I let it go and a huge burden was lifted off of me. I also, learned a great deal about patience that weekend and that has stuck with me ever since. The "talks" built on one another and all the pieces fit together and made since.

I also have a "by the book" personality and I see things, mostly, as white or black, wrong or right. In my Christian journey I began growing up in a loving home with a Church of Christ mother and a Baptist dad. We didn't attend church regularly, but when we did, in my mind it was like going one week to Busch Stadium to cheer on the Cardinals and then the next week we would be at Wrigley Field in our Cubs gear. I was confused. What I was missing was God's love, it was shining through and at that moment in my life I missed it. I was more worried about the legality of who is right and who is wrong and which "team" I should be rooting for. By attending the Walk to Emmaus any lingering questions about right or wrong were directly answered. We had men that attend Assembly of God, we had Baptists, we had Church of Christ, we had Methodist, we had non-denominational and I am sure we had many more but one thing is for certain we all came together to learn more about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are all on the same team we share a common goal no matter how we worship on Sunday we all are praising and worshipping the same God. I came to this realization for certain at Candlelight and I witnessed more grown men crying and hugging then I had ever thought possible. It was one of the first moments that I felt like a member of the Body of Christ. I was determined to play my part whether that put me as the hands and feet or as a mole on the cheek.

During my 4th day I have come to realize and acknowledge that I absolutely love to be inspired. Whether it's a story of an athlete overcoming adversity or a family pulling through a tough situation. On my walk there were several inspirational men who have and continue to inspire me. Also, as I have come to read the Bible more; what better place to become inspired, to literally read the stories of God's people and the struggles they have gone through and how through their faith God delivered them to the promise land. We should take these examples and apply them daily in our lives. This is my continued hope and desire of my 4th day to be inspired and make a difference. To take my blessings, whether at the time I knew they were blessings, and use those experiences to help bless others.

My call to action for you, and quite frankly myself, is to go out and find someone to sponsor. I have yet to do this and I really should be sharing the opportunity to experience this with others. I appreciate this unique opportunity to have a chance to discuss this experience this evening and I hope your 4th Day is going as good as mine. Sure I still have my ups and my downs but I am constantly reminded of God's love for us and I willingly accept His grace and I am committed to furthering God's Glorious Kingdom.

