

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Men's Walk Oct. 15-18, 2015
- Women's Walk Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2015
- Board meeting June 13, 9 a.m. (Electronic—Contact Pete Schenck for details)

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Minnesota Walk to Emmaus

WWW.MNEMMAUS.ORG

MAY 2015

The Blessing and Privilege of Serving

"Never lag in zeal and in earnest endeavor; be aglow and burning with the Spirit, serving the Lord. Romans 12:11

Welcome to our newest community members from Walks #107 and #108. As I've reflected on this set of walks, one word keeps coming in my head to sum it up! **JOY!!!!** It was hard to escape it – it was expressed in a variety of ways - words, actions, deeds. How blessed we are to be able to serve our Lord – and the **JOY** He gives us in serving fills our hearts to overflowing! Here is a ROUGH estimate of the number of community members that were involved in showing Christ's love to our newest members...

200+ Prayer Warriors who filled the prayer chart for both sets of walks – though many additional prayed throughout team selection and formation who are not documented.

33 Sponsors – who had the important job of approaching, inviting, praying, securing letters, attending to the pilgrim's families, and driving back and forth to the camp for sponsor hour, candlelight and closing – a sacrificial, loving agape act on behalf of another.

40+ Conference Team members who poured themselves out for these newest community members throughout the weekend and were willing to be God's vessel to bring these precious pilgrims closer to God throughout those 72 hours.

60+ On site Agape Team members - who worked tirelessly throughout those 72 hours in the background – mostly unnoticed by the pilgrims (but hugely noticed by God) for the sacrificial love shown to God's precious children – who set up, tore down, served and cleared tables, cleaned bathrooms, made beds, delivered pillow agape, ensured all went smoothly with the many behind-the-scenes details that were attended to – so that these pilgrims would come to know how much they are loved by God – and that they could trust this experience throughout the weekend.

300+ Community members who attended events (sponsor hour, candlelight and closing) throughout the weekend, who donated abundant snack agape and made pillow agape, wrote letters, gave green Agape – all to let those new pilgrims know that these newest belong to the larger community of support we call the Minnesota Walk to Emmaus.

11 Board Members – who have worked hard on the vision of involving increased numbers of Community Members in these walks.

As I reflect on these precious weekends, I am reminded of how blessed I am to be able to witness the Body of Christ in action – being His hands and feet to a world that needs His message of love so badly. I am humbled by all who came to serve so beautifully & **JOYFULLY** – and were blessed so abundantly by God for saying "yes" to the call. As saying a HUGE Thank You to all who served doesn't seem adequate enough, I am simply asking God to pour out His blessings to all of you as you live out your 4th Days in this grace-filled life as His disciple.

Fall walks will be here before you know it. If you are interested in passing on to another what you have received – feel the love all over again – and **experience the pure JOY of SERVING**, please contact team@mnemmaus.org about how you would like to serve our next yet unknown pilgrims.



*Do not be afraid,
little flock, for it is
your Father's good
pleasure to give
you the kingdom.*

-Luke 12:32

Welcome New Community Members!

The Minnesota Walk to Emmaus Community would like to welcome 6 men and 17 women to the Community. The Walks were held at beautiful Lake Koronis Ministries near Paynesville, MN from April 23 to 26 and April 30 to May 2. We pray that your Fourth Day may be filled with wonderful opportunities to grow in Christ and further God's kingdom!

Walk #107

Jeff Court
Larry Degling
Chris Depies
Steve Jackson
Matt Sipe
Cody Taylor

Betty Griffin
Sarah Hess
Gail Keck
Ellie Martin
Debra Michalski
Janice Petersen
Jocelin Reynolds

Walk #108

Lavon Court
Loretta Degling
Bridgett Dohmen
Cheryl Emery
Janet Freemore

Luann Rieber
Emily Steele
Stacie Thompson
Alicia Webb
Trudie Wood

Exciting News with our Clergy!

Because our mission is to develop leaders for the church, the Board has felt that having clergy promote Emmaus is key to our future success. Clergy attending walks is important in leading to discipleship development within congregations. We are pleased to report that God has been moving mightily in this direction!

Clay Oglesbee, United Methodist River Valley District Superintendent, has addressed leaders of the Minnesota Conference on how they may utilize and promote Emmaus for spiritual renewal in our churches.

We also have a unique and exciting opportunity to promote Emmaus with clergy just ahead of the United Methodist Church Minnesota Annual Conference at an informal dinner meeting on May 26. The meeting will focus on how clergy can become involved and promote Emmaus within their congregations. This is championed by Russ Jacobsen, an ASD on the recent Women's Walk, Matt Sipe, Delano UMC pastor and recent men's walk pilgrim, Wes Johnson, the SD on the recent Men's Walk, Jim Crecelius, SD on the Women's Walk, and Fred Vanderwerf, newly appointed Southern Prairie District Superintendent. The dinner meeting is open to all clergy. We pray that God continues to do amazing things through this committed group of servants.



While they were
talking and
discussing, Jesus
himself came near
and went with
them . . .
-Luke 24: 15a

Reflections on the Spring Walks

"I can't wait to get back to my church and start making a difference!"

"Everybody should hear these talks, these concepts and definitions"

"I just want to help my church love our neighbors and each other better"

These are three comments pilgrims shared with me during Women's Walk 108 just a couple weekends ago. They all point to the focus of what Emmaus is designed for: Building leaders for the local congregation. It was delightful to hear the excitement in their voices as they began to think through how the experience could help them live out their faith in concrete and tangible ways.

I invite us all to consider ways we can "make a difference" in our own congregations. Get more involved in volunteer opportunities in worship, education, and outreach. Ask your pastor if there's a committee or action team you could serve on. (Wait a moment for them to get back to their feet or regain consciousness.) Mentor a youth or come alongside a child of the congregation. The pilgrim is right; everyone should learn the concepts and ideas from the talks at an Emmaus walk! You can start a bible study, book club, reading group, or covenant small group where you can introduce and practice all the spiritual disciplines, ideas, and ideals from the talks!

Emmaus exists to strengthen and build up disciples in the local church that each congregation might more ably love one another and the neighbors whom God has placed them in the community of. The third quote above comes alive as we live out what we've learned on the "three day launch" weekend. Emmaus is most successful as it enables, equips, and supports disciples of Jesus, the Christ in their fourth day journey.

Pastor Jim Crecelius, Spiritual Director, Walk #108

It was a great joy to serve as Spiritual Director for Men's Walk to Emmaus 107 at the end of April this year. God used the Walk greatly in each of the pilgrims' lives as well as in the lives of those on the team. How much is it worth to have a life that is struggling find peace in God and with others? As the commercial says, "priceless!" Are the Walks worth the effort and money? In my estimation, "You betcha!" I saw God work in many different ways, from the pilgrim testimonies at the Sunday closing to the amazing growth of men giving talks. It was this growth of the team that might ultimately be the most significant of Emmaus. Developing Christian spiritual leaders is one of the greatest needs in the church today. I saw great growth in the confidence and delivery of talks in a number of the men. I have no doubt these men will continue that growth as they serve Christ in and through their churches. Let us keep praying that God will mightily use the Walk to Emmaus movement in Minnesota to revitalize and empower our churches to transform lives through the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Wes Johnson, Spiritual Director, Walk #107

I believe there were many breakthroughs for team members and pilgrims to be our authentic self in our walk with Christ. It was very evident that the Holy Spirit was working throughout the weekend. Even though there was sadness in some hearts, there was great joy and positive energy throughout the weekend. Stories were being told throughout the weekend how Christ had given pilgrims and team members the desires of their heart in small but powerful ways. I saw and experienced the blessings that others and I received on the walk and it made the work as a Lay Director all worth it. As servants, we don't always get to see the fruits of our labor so to have it presented in four days was over the top exciting!

Terry Berg, Lay Director, Walk #108



Be joyful always,
pray continually. .

-1 Thes 5:16-17

Reflections (continued)

Where have you seen or experienced God's activity in your life? This is a question that drives me in ministry. I am constantly seeking what God is doing in the world, in my community, and in my life. This question is so important for preaching each week. There are moments in my life where I feel close to God and see God's activity easily. There are also moments where I am far from God and seeking God's activity is challenging. Not because God is not speaking, rather, because I have a hard time listening. The Walk to Emmaus retreat weekend I attended in April was one of those rare moments where I was able to devote three full days to listening and experiencing God speaking to me.

I am thankful to God and the Emmaus community for the uplifting and inspiring weekend. There are moments in life that stick with you because of God's powerful presence. The Walk that I experienced was one of those times for me. I preach about God's love most every Sunday as a pastor. In fact, the grace of God is what called me into ministry. I now lead a congregation in practicing the means of grace as an Ordained Elder. And, John Wesley's teachings on God's prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace are my ethos as a United Methodist Pastor. Yet, there are few experiences that bring all of these into focus in such an uplifting and encouraging way. The Walk to Emmaus experience has strengthened all of these things in my life.

I look forward to sponsoring and encouraging more people from my congregation to get involved in Walk to Emmaus. The Walk is a powerful way to help persons grow in their relationship with God and find renewal of their faith. This has now become a personal goal for me. I truly believe in the power and presence of God's grace and this experience is a vital tool for knowing and experiencing that grace. From working with other United Methodist pastors and churches in the Minnesota Annual Conference, I can personally tell you that the Walk to Emmaus is something many of our churches are desperately looking for and longing to experience. We are at a moment when God's grace can use the Emmaus community to help further God's mission in the United Methodist Church.

God's grace is what led me into ministry and God's grace is also what continues to sustain me in ministry. I see the Walk to Emmaus as an important tool for building church leaders and helping people in our churches have an uplifting experience of God's Agape love. I look forward to joining with all of you and sharing this experience with others. May God continue to move powerfully through us! De Colores my new best friends!

Pastor Matt Sipe, Pilgrim, Walk #107

It was a privilege and huge blessing to me to serve the women on Walk 108! The Holy Spirit was a powerful presence throughout the weekend and it was quite evident! I was blessed when stories were shared with me about how a song touched someone or meant a lot to them. I was overcome when hearing the women sing "Sanctuary" on Sunday. I have a weakness for the women of God singing praise to Him! I just love to see the Holy Spirit at work on a walk. What an awesome team to be on!

Deb Hoganson, Music Leader, Walk #108

God's love is amazing and incomprehensible. His grace is capable of changing anybody. He is asking me to trust in His lordship. He accepts me as I am and will bring glory to His name through me if I let Him lead me. He asks me to trust Him with my children and that He will take care of them. He uses the weak and dim (me) of this world so that people will acknowledge Him. The testimony of a broken man is worth a thousand sermons. I need God in my life for every step I walk because if I am leading me, I will go astray.

Chris Depies, pilgrim, Walk #107

Attention All Former Lay Directors



*... it is by grace
you have been
saved.
-Ephesians 2:5*

I have heard this comment several times: "once I finished serving as Lay Director I was put out to pasture." I agree that being a Lay Director is a challenging and yet extremely rewarding experience. It can leave us with the question -Now what?

Well, coming from a background as a farm girl, I was often sent out to pasture with the bell to "call home." I am doing that again.

We, the Emmaus community, would be remiss if we did not recognize the wealth of experience and knowledge former Lay Directors possess. I am working on behalf of the board to invite and welcome former Lay Directors to share your talents and experiences in numbers of ways which will be of benefit to the entire Emmaus community. We have identified several areas where we would welcome your participation. It could be as little or as much time as works for you.

Please look at the list below and see where you would be willing to plug in. We are setting up mentoring pools. Your experience as LD is of great value to someone volunteering for the first time. An example is that you walk alongside a current LD as he/she goes through the journey of team selection, team training etc.

These are areas we have identified thus far:

1. Mentoring current, upcoming LDs
2. Assisting team members with the process of talk preparation
3. Serving on one of the board committees. We would like to have a former LD on each of the board committees—not board attendance—just part of committee work on agape, facilities, music/worship etc.
4. Prayer committee
5. Visiting churches to talk about Emmaus—script outline provided
6. Willingness to be in a pool that could fill in on walk team in an emergency
7. Committee to provide food agape for team training meetings

As you can see, the need is great. Your willingness to serve will be EXTREMELY appreciated.

Together we can build a stronger Emmaus Community. We can provide the Walk to Emmaus experience to more people. We can continue to strengthen church leaders and be the hands and feet of Christ.

Please let me know of your interest and ability to serve in one of these areas. I am available to answer questions, discuss concerns, and provide additional information.

May God bless and guide you as you consider where you can be involved.

Darlene Vandermyde—Board Chair Leadership Development/Training

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612-781-9839. Cell 763-218-0719



*Dear friends, let us
love one another,
for love come from
God.
-1 John 4:7a*

Your Presence is Requested. . .
Special Gathering of the Emmaus Community
Saturday, August 15, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.
Spirit River Community Church in Isanti
Cost \$35 per person—Proceeds go for Pilgrim Support

Appetizers	Veggie Shots Cheese Ball & Crackers
Salad	Garden Fair Mix on Bed of Greens Fresh Fruit, Raspberry Vinaigrette
Entrée choices	Beef Burgundy Smoked Gouda Chicken Breast Almond Crusted Eggplant
Sides	Baby Red Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Medley Dinner Rolls
Dessert	Ice Cream Bar Cookie Bar Buffet
Mail contact:	E-mail: agape@mnummaus.org
MN Walk to Emmaus	Phone/text: 612-799-8022
1500 27th Avenue NE	
Minneapolis, MN 55418	

Been to prison lately?

There is great joy in being along side a prison inmate when he or she experiences the truth of 2 Corinthians 5:17: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." Charis of Minnesota invites you to share that joy by being part of a future Charis team at a Minnesota men's or women's prison.

A 3-day Charis weekend is very similar to a Cursillo-type weekend (or Walk to Emmaus). Teams of 25-30 volunteers attend three or four team meetings. On the weekend, we do talks, posters, lots of singing, Stations of the Cross, chapel visits, an agape dinner, and we finish the weekend with a clausura.

For more details check out the Charis website (charismn.com), or e-mail Charis president Maret Ryan at maretryan@gmail.com.

Why I Serve

—asked of recent team members from the spring Walks



Serve
wholeheartedly, as
if you were serving
the Lord, not men
-Ephesians 6:7

Serving during an Emmaus weekend is like having a front row seat as I watch God move! It gives me an amazing opportunity to partner with Him in the smallest of ways and to have so much fun doing it!

Coming back to serve gives me the best opportunity to see and fellowship with others who have had this shared experience. I always receive way more than I give. Anonymous servant hood is a blessing.

Coming back to serve is "reunion time" with my Emmaus family. It's a wonderful way to "feel the Love" all over again and to be blessed with the opportunity to share Agape Love with the Pilgrims.

Serving on Emmaus walks is such fun! I love to reconnect with friends and make new ones. More importantly, I serve in order to help show the Love of Jesus to the pilgrims.

Service on Emmaus weekends is such a joy in many respects. But, the best part for me is to be at closing and hear all the ways God has transformed lives throughout the weekend.

If you have never come back to serve during a walk, then you have missed half of the experience. It is such a blessing to give back and to share what was given to me so beautifully during my walk.

Coming back to serve, either in the conference room or behind the scenes, is the best way I can say "Thank You" to all those who showed up to serve me during my Walk.

Serving on Emmaus weekends fills me with the Holy Spirit like nothing else. Serving also gives me the opportunity to give back some of the love to others that was so abundantly given to me.

Being a part of the Emmaus Family has given our marriage the chance to grow and experience our Lord in a new way. Emmaus has been such a blessing in our marriage.

What a joy to hear the many comments made by our recent team members from Walks #107 and #108. It was evident that there is pure joy in giving back to others – and that you receive so much for serving on a weekend.

If you are interested in serving on the fall walks, contact team@mneammaus.org Also, to ensure you're getting the latest information and that we have your latest contact information, visit our website and fill out the form:

http://mneammaus.org/site/questionnaire.asp?q_id=180005666&sec_id=180014908.

Blessings to you in your 4th Days!



The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest.
—Matt. 9:37-38

Matching Desire with Intention

When I came to serve Hilltop United Methodist Church in Mankato, it wasn't long before I realized the presence of equipped lay members who exhibited a passionate faith, a strong understanding of the Wesleyan concepts of grace, a readiness for leadership, and a zeal to engage with God in mission and ministry. This is the kind of church pastors dream of serving! Most of these members had attended the Walk to Emmaus. Hilltop is an example of the ultimate aim of each one of our walks – that pilgrims would go back and strengthen the local church.

Anyone who has gone on the Walk to Emmaus can attest to its powerful impact on his or her life and church. And all of us can think of persons in our communities we would like to see go on the walk.

I knew right away the value of the Walk to Emmaus and I had the *desire* to send as many folks as we possibly could. But I quickly learned that desire is nothing unless matched with intention. Do you know that when I was twelve I had the *desire* to dance like John Travolta? I still can't dance like John because I have yet to put an intentional plan in place to do so.

In January 2014 I felt persuaded by God to see that 12 people from Hilltop Church go on a walk that year. I mean, what would your church look like if 12 were able to experience the walk? Then I put a plan in place:

From the recruiting side:

My wife and I set a date on the calendar to gather past pilgrims at my house for a good meal (When you share a meal with people in your own home it communicates something).

This would be a time of fellowship and testimony to the Walk's benefits. (Note: not a time to recruit leaders to work the walks! Stay focused and don't overwhelm people with too many challenges).

I passed out two notecards and had each person present spend time in prayer asking God to reveal to them a person they might invite on the walk. They wrote the names on both cards while keeping one and giving one to me as an accountability partner with them.

Don Putzier was able to tell us how we sponsor persons and provided us with registration forms. (This is crucial! It gives them the next intentional steps to take.)

From the church strategy side:

I worked to purposefully add Walk to Emmaus to our overall discipleship plan so that all of our leaders would be clear that we will no longer simply desire folks to go on the walk, but instead will make the Walk a part of what we do to move people into deeper discipleship.

We elected Don Putzier as our point man at Hilltop for the Walk to Emmaus, so we always have someone who is the guru of sorts, and a person who can make sure the baton doesn't drop in our plan.

That year we sent 11. No, it wasn't 12, but we came a lot closer to 12 than I have come close to dancing like John Travolta. Desire and intention well spent!

Rev. Fred Vanderwerf

P.S. As incoming Southern Prairie District Superintendent, I have the desire to champion the Walk to Emmaus in my district. I am now beginning to match that desire with an intentional plan.

Minnesota Walk to Emmaus
Richfield United Methodist Church
5835 Lyndale Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55419

Upcoming Walks! **Walk #109 (Men) Oct. 15-18, 2015** **Camp Koronis, Paynesville**

Walk #110 (Women) Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2015

Walk #111 (Men) April 21-24, 2016

Walk #112 (Women) April 28-May1, 2016

2015 Minnesota Walk to Emmaus Board of Directors

Linda Nelson	Community Lay Director	612-655-1899	cld@mnummaus.org
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Jeff Adams	Treasurer/Facilities	507-340-2432	treas@mnummaus.org
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