



**Minnesota Emmaus Community Organized 1991**  
**September 2013 Newsletter**  
**Website [www.mnemmaus.org](http://www.mnemmaus.org)**

## **FROM THE COMMUNITY LAY DIRECTOR**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I would like to extend blessings to all of you as fall is ushered in with cooler days and nights, and beautiful fall colors. I was fishing with my aunt and uncle, who are both in their 80s, this past weekend on the Otter Tail River near Perham, MN. I marveled at a pair of Trumpeter Swans flying overhead, a pair of Bald Eagles soaring, ducks and geese swimming, various trees changing color, and God's creation expressing itself. This reminded me of just how much God loves us, and how much he has given us. Emmaus is but one expression of God's love.

I am very pleased to announce more information regarding next year's Walks. The next set of Walks will be held April 24-27, 2014 (Men's Walk #103, with Allen Blegen as lay director), and May 1-4, 2014 (Women's Walk #104, with Janice Sellner as lay director). These will be held at Koronis Ministries near Paynesville. We have set tentative dates for the fall walks as October 23-26, 2014 (Men's Walk #105) and October 31 to November 2, 2014 (Women's Walk #106). We are hoping and praying for at least 20 pilgrims for each Walk, which is our goal. Begin to prayerfully consider sponsoring someone for next spring. It is never too early to begin sponsorship and send in a registration. Please go to our website [www.mnemmaus.org](http://www.mnemmaus.org) for sponsorship information. The team selection process will be starting very soon.

As you recall, our community and board are in the process of restructuring and rebuilding. We are building on our strengths and finding opportunities for improvement. In June, I entrusted a steering committee to review our community structure, Emmaus materials, and board descriptions in depth. This committee spent over 300 hours reviewing and researching, resulting in many recommendations for improvement of our board structure and operations of our community before Walks, during Walks, and after Walks. Much of the focus is on strengthening our Fourth Day, thus allowing for improved engagement of community members.

One of the purposes of Emmaus is to provide opportunities for leadership development. Our board of directors has worked hard and has had to make some difficult decisions this year. The journey has not been an easy one. However, with the Holy Spirit guiding us, I am very pleased with the progress we have made this year, and am looking forward to a very bright future for the Minnesota Walk to Emmaus.

Please peruse the articles in this newsletter, which discuss the many Emmaus opportunities open to you, Agape love being ever present, and historical facts about the village called Emmaus. You will find many opportunities to celebrate Christ's working in our lives.

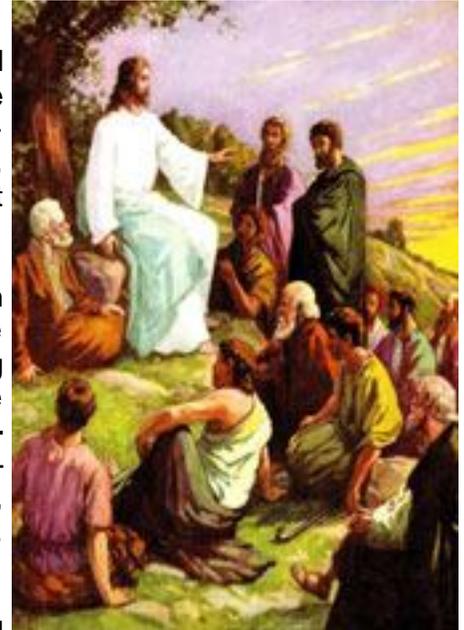
Blessings to all of you in your Fourth Day, Don Putzier

# Emmaus opportunities at all levels

*Barb Keith, Team Selection chair*

The **goal of the Emmaus movement** is to equip leaders for the local church. The **hidden treasure of Emmaus** is the Reunion group, where people spur each other on in their discipleship, within their own communities. I urge you to find a friend (or two or three) and begin to meet weekly, challenging each other in your piety, study and action. This may be just the spark you need to rekindle the spirit of Emmaus in your own life.

The **MN Emmaus Board** has discovered in the past few months that with a little zig here and a little zag there, our community has ended up off the pathway prescribed by the Emmaus model. The Board has been steering the vehicle and going on a ride without giving the community at large the opportunity to join in on all the fun! We have, in fact, **stolen the community's role** and deprived others of the chance to experience the joy of servanthood. Even if it will not be a smooth ride getting back on the right path, it is necessary. Roles have been restructured and there is room for YOU. In fact, **we NEED you!**



The MN Emmaus community will soon be electing a new slate of Board members, to fill specific **Board positions**. Those of you with skills in coordinating and leading others may well be interested in a Board member position. For those who say, "Just tell me what you need me to do, and I will do it," there will be a myriad of opportunities to **work on a committee** led by one of the Board members. Again, there will be some roles where your specific skills can be put to use to further God's kingdom through Emmaus, and in other roles there will be "no experience necessary."

In addition to the important background work, there are more Walks coming up and the "under construction" Team Selection committee will be poring over data to put together a Men's and a Women's team. One of the goals will be to follow the progressive servant hood plan, where a person **develops their servant heart** prior to working on the **Conference Room team**. Some ways that can be demonstrated are by serving on the Agape team, attending Candlelight, Closing or Gatherings, working with your reunion group to provide Agape to the pilgrims and so on.

Our goal is to become more strategic in **developing Emmaus leaders** who can progress through the ranks. Not everyone will be interested in moving along this path, but those who are interested and qualified need to be nurtured for roles of increasing responsibility.

Where do you see your gifts and your passion leading you? The Team Selection committee would love to work with you to find a role that fits! [barbartsweden@gmail.com](mailto:barbartsweden@gmail.com) 507-779-4124

## Bylaws Approved

Recently the Board proposed a set of Bylaws which reflects our current operating practices but also enhances the opportunity for the Board to serve the community better. With the current discussions on the Board as far as Board restructuring, if changes are agreed upon, you will see another set of Bylaws being proposed. Those changes will be those we would hopefully enact on January 1, 2014. Again, depending upon the results of our discussions, there could be more significant changes in the next set of Bylaws.

# Where is Emmaus?

*On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:13)*

With those clues, Emmaus should be reasonably easy to find. If only we were so lucky. *Emmaus* actually had multiple locations in Israel. Around 4 B.C., *Emmaus Nicopolis* was recognized on several Roman maps located 19 miles west of Jerusalem. More modern maps show the town 20 miles west of Jerusalem in a location that once was a Palestinian village known as *Imwas* up until about 639 A.D. Up until sometime in the 7<sup>th</sup> century the village of Emmaus took on several other names, most recently, "Amwas" or "Imwas". Its importance as a religious location was lost as a religious center. During the Six Day War in 1967, Israeli armed forces recaptured the village, razing it to the ground and forcing all Muslim and Christian Arabs out of town. This location is now located on the West Bank in a location known as *Canada Park*.

Modern historians and archeologists however have some problems with that location since the Biblical location says "seven miles" from Jerusalem. Seven miles is significant since that has long been known as the distance a person can walk in a day. Not surprisingly, still some rural towns and villages in the United States are also located seven miles apart.

The apparition of Jesus Christ has been reported in three locations around Jerusalem, also helping to identify or confuse the location of *Emmaus*. Those three reports are 4 miles and seven miles west of Jerusalem. The third location is 7 miles northwest of Jerusalem. Further on in the some Bibles it is mentioned that Emmaus is 160 "stadia" away from Jerusalem thus making the location 30 miles away, "on the road to Joppa". With Joppa added into the equation most believe the location is west or west northwest of Jerusalem. Only the distance is up for discussion.

So much is left up in the air about the actual physical location of Emmaus. The Catholic Church, after *Emmaus Nikopolis* was virtually destroyed in 1967, have been occupying that location ever since, claiming that this was the Biblical village of *Emmaus*. Unfortunately, *Emmaus* claims also exist only 3 miles from Jerusalem as well as 7 miles from Jerusalem on the road Joppa.

Emmaus does still exist and a very important Biblical event took place on the road to Emmaus. The location of the town while seemingly important, does not overshadow the experience, "On the Road to Emmaus".



*A possible location of Emmaus, near Jerusalem*

## Emmaus Agape Love

An old song sung in bible school seems to embrace Emmaus Agape Love:

*"Love is something when you give it away, give it away give it away, Love is something when you give it away, you'll end up having more.*



*Love is like a magic penny...hold on tight and you won't have any...lend it, spend it, and you'll have so many they'll roll all over the floor."*

All of us remember the sweet feelings we had when our tables and beds were like a surprise package filled with love, the overwhelming love enveloping us at the Saturday Banquet Table, the awe and wonder of all those who showed up for Candlelite to sing "Jesus, Jesus" to us and then go home, or the quiet drive to and from the retreat center with our sponsor. God's Agape Love filled our hearts, minds, and spirits.

I hope these memories bring back emotions and fill you with a desire to share this Agape Love with others...making agape items for pillows or tables, making a new banner, sponsoring another to go on their Walk to Emmaus next spring, answering yes when you are asked to serve on team, and helping decorate and serving the Banquet. Other opportunities include reaching out to someone to invite to your reunion group, joining a reunion group, starting a new reunion group (there is now a Skype Reunion Group), attending Candlelight or closing. In the coming newsletters will be opportunities for you to 'spend your magic penny' and enjoy the benefits of God's Amazing Love through the MN Walk to Emmaus Community. COME & JOIN US. De Colores!!!!

# From Your Community Spiritual Director

Just recently I became reacquainted with Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-30). I already remembered him as one of the entourage of faithful servants that travelled with the Apostle Paul. Paul calls him a brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, and then also says that he is the Philippians' representative and minister to Paul. Paul praises Epaphroditus as someone who came close to death for the work of Christ, and risked his life to provide what others were not in a position to provide. Paul seems immensely satisfied at the sacrificial servanthood of Epaphroditus. This passage also indicates that Epaphroditus' term of service has ended as Paul is sending him home again.

The word "representative" caught my attention this time as did this idea that Paul was sending him back with his blessing to his home faith community. Epaphroditus was sent from the Philippian community to be their representative for giving their support to Paul's ministry. He did what they were not in a position to do any other way. It also seems that the intent always was that Epaphroditus would complete his term of service and return to his local church.

This idea of representative ministry and shorter term service fits with my perception of Walk to Emmaus. Each volunteer servant in Emmaus arrives from some faith community with the objective to aid and support the ongoing ministry of Emmaus which is to nurture, develop and inspire more effective leaders for our churches. Whether that ministry is at the Board level, committee level, team level or in some other way, each person dedicates him or herself to the fullest giving of themselves on behalf of the whole community, and especially on behalf of their own reunion groups and Fourth Day communities. However, that service continues to be passed on to new leaders at regular intervals, allowing each faithful servant to focus his or her leadership more locally in their own congregations.

I just want to express my own thanks for every servant, lay and clergy, who allows him or herself to be a modern Epaphroditus, working hard and faithfully to support the mission of Emmaus and then letting another servant step up to offer her or his best. None of this can happen without your generosity and dedication!

—Art Keith, Community Spiritual Director



## Ask the Board

*Q: Where are the changes you told us were coming?*

A: The changes actually began with the last set of Bylaws which were just approved by the Community. Initially the response is; who cares? We all should, but in reality Bylaws are boring; right? There is another article in this newsletter pertaining to the Bylaws that may explain more.

Step number two involves the restructuring of the Board. Again, for the most part; who cares? Well, we all should once again. A steering committee just completed over 300 hours of research and presented its findings to the Board. There were significant changes proposed including the elimination of some existing Board Chair positions, adding new Board Chair positions, and creating some other opportunities for committees most impacted by these changes. It would be impossible to get deep into the findings of the steering committee but the results will be shown on the next set of Bylaws being submitted for your approval in the very near future.

The third step has already begun. The Board is attempting to communicate more with the Community. Newsletters have been resurrected and opportunities to get involved have been extended. This needs to be continued and we are taking steps in that direction.

This is a process and it is not an overnight fix. We made a commitment to more closely follow the Emmaus model and to provide a consistent and positive Walk experience for pilgrims well into the future. We hope you'll support the Board and the community.

# Prayer and the Upper Room Emmaus Model

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*



The MN Walk to Emmaus Board of Directors have been spending time these past several months, really getting back to the recommended *Upper Room Emmaus Model* and what it teaches us as we seek to involve you, the community more. We are always brought back to the importance of prayer as a fundamental cornerstone – and the one thing that brings us unity. Mark your calendars for two important times of prayer this fall. We encourage you to **plan a Gathering in your area in October or November** and pray intentionally for the work of the board. Then the **first week in November** (the time we usually have a set of Fall Walks), we will send out via email a 72-hour prayer chart – and ask you to sign up to pray for the team, sponsors and the pilgrims for the Spring Walks held in Paynesville at Camp Koronis. The dates for the Men's Walk #103 is April 24-27 and the Women's Walk #104 is May 1-4.

## ***What are some of these essential elements that make the Emmaus Model so successful?***

- Prayer – Emmaus is not just undergirded with prayer, it's **lavished** with prayer - sacrificial and extravagant prayer in response to God's sacrificial and extravagant Love for us.
- Intentional Seeking of God's Leadership – In Emmaus, we not only pray for it and light candles acknowledging it, we are excited by the prospect that God is going to do things beyond anything we can imagine if we can just stay out of the way, and we are open to God's leadership in every aspect of the Walk from Team Selection to Closing.
- Focus on Agape Love and Humble Service – "Small things done with Great Love" - recognizing that the Great Love is not our love, but God's Love flowing through us. It's what Agape is all about. Sacrificial and extravagant love is the natural result of sacrificial and extravagant prayer, and humble service is the natural result of intentionally seeking God's Leadership.
- Based on Scripture and Inclusive Theology – Not just the talks, but the entire model is based on scripture. Emmaus is intentional in including all Christian heritages. The theology presented is inclusive, not because it is watered down to the point no one can disagree, but because the focus is on letting God speak through the talks rather than "this is what I believe."
- Frequent Experiences of Worship and Grace – From morning and evening devotions to joyful praise and Communion every time we get together, Emmaus is filled with holy moments and means of Grace. But it is not what we do or how we do it that makes Emmaus worship so powerful – it is our openness to God's presence resulting from all of the above that leads to true worship.
- Spirit of Community – Emmaus is a community of people bonded together by a common experience, an experience of God so powerful in our lives that it overshadows all of our diversity and breaks down the walls we build between ourselves and others. And a community open to the Spirit of God is a community transformed by God into the Body of Christ.

## ***Board Meetings***

**Community members are always welcome to attend meetings on the second Saturday of the month, 9 a.m. to noon, at Richfield UMC.**

DeColores  
Linda Nelson, Assistant Community  
Lay Director