



FROM THE COMMUNITY SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

Some Thoughts about Christmas and New Years

The New Year sometimes reminds me of Lent. You know, you give up chocolate and then dream about it for forty days and then on Easter you pig out on bunnies and sweets of all description. The difference being that what you decide on New Year's is supposed to be life changing – not a 40 day discipline, but a change that is seismic toward the way you live.

So, for this New Year I have decided to lose some of the girth that is causing my sweaters to shrink. Problem is there are so many goodies around the house because my lady is such a good cook, and we have all this pizza, as well as ice cream, in the freezer. Well as soon as the holidays are over, I'll get started. Have any of you been there or done that?

Paul says that on Christmas there was a seismic change in the whole order of the world. He says that "at the right time Jesus was born of a woman, born under the law" and the result of that birth was our "adoption" as the children of God. Because of the birth of Jesus, what we celebrate as Christmas, we have seen the grace of God in all of its powerful beauty.

How do you respond to that? "Wow, Bam, Alakazam!" Life has a new direction; it's as if I've been born again into a family of life! It is "Dying

Moments, Mimes, Candlelight and Closing" all in one package.

Maybe that is how we should define "epiphany." Epiphany is what happened to the shepherds as the angels spoke to them about the newborn in Bethlehem. Epiphany is what caused the Wise Men to leave Iraq and travel, maybe for years, in search of the new leader who had been born. Epiphany is that seismic change in your life when all you can do is say "SHAZAM" and move out in a different direction and with a different life.

Jesus has come! That's Christmas, that's Easter. The shepherds traveled to Bethlehem and the Wise Men followed the star. I have been born anew, my life is no longer for the grave; I am a child of God. That's Epiphany.

But you know events that cause you to shout "Wow, Bam, Alakazam" or "Holy Moly" or "SHAZAM" sometimes last as long as our New Year's resolutions. But God is so good! Christmas and the New Year come each year and we are able to begin again. One of these times, "the Lord willing and the creek don't rise," we'll get it right.

SHAZAM! DeColores! Bill Saxman, CSD

change?.....Change?.....CHANGE?????????

It's true! The older we get, the more we come to dread change. (I don't even like change in my pocket.) But undeniably, change is a part of life. That is why, as a past member of the TRWE Board, I thank everyone who made agape for the last set of walks because we thought it necessary to make a change. It means so much to the pilgrims as you well know.

In case you haven't heard -- we were told during training from Nashville (our national headquarters) that we needed to change the way we make and send agape to the pilgrims on the weekends. In order to show true agape love, we need to be anonymous in its preparation and distribution. That means we should not put our names on these wonderful pieces of Jesus' love.

But if you think about it, isn't that what true agape love is? Shouldn't our motivation be in giving humbly and freely because we want to, and not because we want to show others what we have done?

Now it would be OK (I've been told) to put the name of a Reunion Group on any agape given since it doesn't reveal personal names. It reminds me of the agape letters we receive on the walks from other communities – from the communities themselves, not from individuals.

Wouldn't this be a terrific reason to start new reunion groups? Have your regular reunion get-togethers and make agape as a group. Many reunion groups already do this. After all, one of the main purposes of Emmaus is to continue to build and strengthen our walk with Jesus by being accountable to a group of believers and not just to ourselves. So let me thank you again for your willingness and cooperation in this important matter.

Ron Hujik Board of Directors' Member 2010-2012

AGAPE UPDATE

The TRWE Community has been speaking and we, the Board of Directors, have not turned a deaf ear as many valid points were given. The guidelines in the Handbook, coming down from the Upper Room Walk to Emmaus Model state, *“Table/bed agape are expressions of unconditional love; therefore personal names are not attached, although Reunion Groups or church names are acceptable.”* (A “reunion group” can be two or more people.)

While we continue to stand by this recommendation, **no agape will be turned away.** If

you feel very strongly about seeing individual names on agape, we graciously ask that you use **“first name and Walk # only.”**

Our Education Day this year will be Sat. July 20th after the NE Leadership Training at Ingomar UMC. Personnel from the Upper Room, Nashville office will be here to discuss this issue and any others you may have.☺ There will be more details on the NE Leadership Training, in the future.

Thank you for your input, grace and mercy on this issue. Judy Grice CLD

Joy

Happy New Year! I hope you were able to greet the beginning of 2013 with friends and family ... with a sense of optimism and belief in all the possibilities a new year brings ... with joy.

Joy is a word that doesn't get enough usage in our hustle and bustle world - perhaps because we don't allow ourselves the "luxury" of feeling it. The very concept of joy seems almost frivolous in these serious times. Yet celebrating our own joy and sharing it with others can be one of life's most moving experiences.

Mark Twain wrote... ***"To get the full value of joy, you must have someone to divide it with."***

Since I am the registrar for the TRWE community, you may be asking, “What does any of this have to do with registration?”

First, I must ask you to check out this video on You Tube. [Watch Their Ode to Joy](#) Som Sabadell's flash mob It is only a little over 5 minutes and it is sure to put a smile on your face, The sound of that single bass was beautiful in itself. But the addition of each new instrument and voice only increased the power of the performance .You can see the joy in the faces of the people as they watched and listened and in the musicians as the shared their gift. It's like that in everyday life, too. When we dare to show our JOY and invite others to add their "voice" to the chorus, we create an incredible symphony that impacts countless others.

Last year, residents of the town of Banco Sabadell in Spain marked its 130th birthday in a very special way - through the joy of music.

I received the above message in an email recently. It then got me thinking about joy. What is it and why isn't there more of it around us and why don't we let Joy happen to us? God gives us Joy, Joy that goes beyond our understanding, but we need to get out of God's way and accept this gift.

Now, think of your walk to Emmaus. I suspect that for most of those 72 hours you felt the Joy that God can give. I also suspect that there are others in your life with whom you would love to share this gift of joy. When we do that, we then can get the full value of JOY because we are dividing it (sharing it).

Ask yourself who is that person who would enjoy the weekend or who needs the weekend? You may have many people in mind. How does one decide? You don't need to decide; let God tell you. Start praying about it today and move out of God's way and then follow God's lead. You will know. It will be very clear.

Bill Wiegand, Registrar



Gatherings

Mark your calendars now!

February 8 Regionals
March 8 Ingomar UMC
April 20 Family Resource Center
May 10 Regionals
June 14 Ingomar UMC
July 20 Ingomar UMC

August 10 Family Resource Center
September 13 Ingomar UMC
October 11 Ingomar UMC
November 2 Family Resource Center
December 13 Ingomar UMC

We Need Your Feedback on TRWE Gatherings

Since being back on the Board of TRWE, I am curious and very interested in feedback from any and all of you. What's the issue? Attendance at Gatherings. It's not about numbers but numbers are a sign of something. What do the numbers signal? What are the questions that need asked? Do Regional Gatherings work better for the community at large? Does a mix of both Regional and All-Community Gatherings make the most sense for this Emmaus Community centered around the Three Rivers? Is Friday night a bad night for most, for all? Would Saturday night Gatherings be better?

Why have Gatherings? Well, one answer is to say they are for worship and fellowship of a unique community of faith in Christ, born out of a common experience - Emmaus Walks. Gatherings are monthly reminders to the community of both whose and who we are. We are reminded as in the Perseverance and 4th Day talks that we are not "a" church, nor are we to replace the local church, and yet we are a faith movement within "the" Church – the worldwide body of Christ.

And so let's begin a simple dialogue and keep it going throughout this year. Do you attend Gatherings regularly? If so, why? Have you stopped making regular attendance at Gatherings a priority? If so, why? Hey, I know I haven't been the best attender recently and I know my reasons, but I don't know yours. Please share.

In closing, I think it's important that we ask ourselves these questions. Simply – the Walk to Emmaus is amazingly brilliant. Throughout all of my work within and outside the church, I know of no other instrument that serves the church's mission of discipleship anywhere near as well or as efficiently. A Walk can take a crusty old and tired servant of the church and provide a revitalizing and rejuvenating spiritual vitamin B-12 shot. A Walk can take a newer believer and answer so many questions about the reality and joy of the Christian life to set them more properly on a true and fruitful path of relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. All this – in only three days. You and I have seen it time and time again. God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – never fails to show up and use this model to do great and powerful things in the hearts and minds of men and women.

So...why Gatherings? Gatherings have something to do with keeping this TRWE community of faith, loosely networked across the broad geography of Western Pennsylvania, together and serving a mission well beyond our community and ourselves.

Please share your thoughts with me, Ken Gryger, by email @ kgryger@comcast.net or come and talk with me at Gathering. Blessings, Ken Gryger

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Our Memorial Service will be at our March All Community Gathering on March 8 at Ingomar Church. If you know of community members who have gone to be with our Lord in 2012 or others from previous years who weren't memorialized at our service in March 2012, please send the names to trwecomm@comcast.net by January 31, 2013.

\$\$\$ Fees for Family Resource Center

The cost for the FRC is \$165/person. Additional pilgrim costs are approximately \$30. (These include but are not limited to: pilgrim crosses, purple worship books, nametags, \$13 /pilgrim fee that we have to pay Nashville, talk outlines, poster/skit supplies, tablecloths, napkins, etc.) Therefore the Board of Directors voted at our January BOD meeting to keep the pilgrim fees at \$200.00 We did however, reduce the Team fee for the spring walks to \$175.00.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Wouldn't it be nice if the Walk to Emmaus were free! I don't know about you but \$200 is a lot of money to me. It would be far less of a financial burden on people if we didn't have to charge to go on the walk. Of course, in that world I have a full head of hair!

When I came on board one of the last things I thought about was the finances of the community. I never thought much about it--you paid your money and you came on the walk. However, much to my amazement, we don't break even on the walks. We are able to pay for the walks and make up the difference from the kind generosity of community members. The board has worked long and hard to try to reduce costs and with our move to the new camp, and, although we won't make money and we are not supposed to, we will be breaking even.

We have always hoped as a community that money would not be a detriment to coming on the walk. This brings me to the point of this

message. If the person that you sponsor cannot afford to come on the walk, there is a limited scholarship fund available. The scholarship fund is available but a person must apply. That means as the sponsor you might have to take the initiative and help your pilgrim obtain the funds. This funding is confidential, it comes through the Community Spiritual Director (Bill Saxman), and the information will not be shared with the community. The problem is that folks wait too long to apply for the funds, so this is just a reminder. If you need financial help, don't wait to the last minute to ask for it. The deadline is usually two weeks before the walk and if you believe you need to apply, GET TO IT! It sure will make things a lot easier for your pilgrim and the board.

If there is anything I can do for you as Outreach Coordinator, just give me a holler.
Grace and Peace Ernie DeLuca



The Emmaus Board

to retiring Board members **Jim Markley, Sophie Park, Cindy Parker, Mary Pellett, and Mike Varner** for their service to our Emmaus Community! You served us well!

2013 Board and Positions

Comm. Spiritual Director	Bill Saxman	Fourth Day	Ken Gryger
Community Lay Director	Judy Grice	Kitchen	Kathy Shusteric
Ass't Community Lay Director	Bryan Pass	Literature	Teresa Kendall
Secretary	Lisa Foust	Music	Rick Nelson
Treasurer	Wes Kindelberger	Outreach	Ernie DeLuca
Agape	Janet Stewart	Purchasing	Gary Pennington
Communications	Lynne Johnson	Registrar	Bill Wiegand
Facilities	Ginny Spindler	Reunion	Maxine Ellis
Fellowship	Carena Phillips	Webmaster	Mike Wild

DUTIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

Following is a brief outline of nine of the Board positions. (Other positions will be featured in the next newsletter.)

The **Community Spiritual Director** acts as Pastor for the community. The CSD recommends the Spiritual Directors for the Walks and oversees the scholarship program. All worship materials are approved by the Community Spiritual Director. Rev. Bill Saxman

The **Community Lay Director** is the presiding officer, giving leadership to the Board of Directors and to community events. The CLD also presides over monthly Gatherings and Board meetings and is an Ex-Officio member of all committees. The CLD may represent the community at various functions. Judy Grice

The **Assistant Community Lay Director** guides Education Day, the Prayer Chain, and acts with and on behalf of the Community Lay Director as needed. The ACLD chairs the Team Selection Committee and assists the Lay Director in coordinating all committees and functions. Bryan Pass

The **Secretary** records the minutes, emails them to all Board members, acts as custodian for all official records, and corresponds at the request of the Board of Directors. The secretary is responsible for maintaining correspondence with other communities, churches, boards, etc., as necessary and/or requested by the Board. The secretary is also the custodian of all official documents. Lisa Foust

The **Treasurer** receives all income and counts all cash money with one other Board member, indicating the amount on an accounting sheet with the signature of the treasurer and other money counter. The treasurer also disperses monies as necessary with the coordination of the Board, Kitchen Coordinator and the Purchasing Coordinator. The treasurer provides a report of such actions at each monthly Board meeting and submits an annual report for audit by an independent auditor. Wes Kindelberger

The **Community Agape Coordinator** trains the Weekend Agape Coordinators and coordinates the arrival of all agape room supplies and the set-up of the Weekend Agape Room. The CAC also readies the weekend information packets and sends general agape to other Emmaus type communities. Janet Stewart

The **Community Communications Coordinator** publishes and distributes the newsletter five times a year and distributes newsflashes by email for Gatherings, Candlelight, E-Day and at other times when expedient. A list of teams and pilgrims is published in the Newsletter. The CCC also aids the Fourth Day Coordinator by informing the Community when servants are needed on the Walks. Lynne Johnson

The **Community Facilities Coordinator** cares for the community's personal property and arranges for locations for all functions including Weekends, Gatherings, E-Day, and other events as requested by the Board. The CFC, with the help of Weekend Angels, coordinates the set-up, maintenance and tearing down of all weekend sites beginning on Thursday and ending on Sunday and oversees the storage of all property and supplies. Ginny Spindler

The **Community Fellowship Coordinator** recruits laity and clergy for participation in the Community worship life. This includes Fourth Day speakers, clergy, and hosts for fellowship time for Gatherings. The CFC also coordinates the Communion set-up (including elements). Carena Phillips

PRAYER CHAIN



If you have a prayer concern that you would like lifted in prayer or have other information that you want to share with the Community, please send the information to Rpratt2707@gmail.com.

Bill Saxman Spiritual Director
11811 Route 949
Sigel, PA 15860
814-752-6466

Judy Grice Community Lay Director
1105 Vista Valley Road
Washington, PA 15301
724-225-7806

Bill Wiegand, Registrar
69 Edwin Dr.
N. Huntingdon, PA 15642
412-824-7061

Lynne Johnson, Newsletter Editor
251 Portman Lane
Bridgeville, PA 15017
412-257-2727

Visit our website at www.trwe.org

Lynne Johnson
251 Portman Lane
Bridgeville, PA 15017