

THE MESSENGER

February 2009 Lynchburg/Central Virginia Emmaus

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John Mitchell

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I would like to share with you a devotion I read recently:

I fear our generation has come dangerously near the "I'm-getting-tired-so-let's-quit" mentality. And not just in the spiritual realm. Dieting is a discipline, so we stay fat. Finishing school is a hassle, so we bail out. Cultivating a close relationship is painful, so we back off. Getting a book written is demanding, so we stop short. Working through conflicts in marriage is a tiring struggle, so we walk away. Sticking with an occupation is tough, so we start looking elsewhere....

Ignace Jan Paderewski, the famous composer-pianist, was scheduled to perform at a great concert hall in America. It was an evening to remember-black tuxedos and long evening dresses, a high society extravaganza. Present in the audience that evening was a mother with her fidgety nine-year-old son. Weary of waiting, he squirmed constantly in his seat. His mother was in hopes that her boy would be encouraged to practice the piano if he could just hear the immortal Paderewski at the keyboard. So – against his wishes – he had come.

As she turned to talk with friends, her son could stay seated no longer. He slipped away from her side, strangely drawn to the ebony concert grand Steinway and it's leather tufted stool, staring wide-eyed at the black and white keys. He placed his small, trembling fingers in the right location and began to play chopsticks. The roar of the crowd was hushed as hundreds of frowning faces turned in his direction. Irritated and embarrassed, they began to shout:

"Get that boy away from there!"

"Who'd bring a kid that young here?"

"Where's his mother?"

"Someone stop Him"

Backstage, the master overheard the sounds out front and quickly put together in his mind what was happening. Hurriedly, he grabbed his coat and rushed toward the stage. Without one word of announcement he stooped over behind the boy, reached around both sides, and began to improvise a counter melody to harmonize and enhance "chopsticks." As the two of them played together, Paderewski kept whispering in the boy's ear, "Keep going. Don't quit, son. Keep on playing...don't stop...don't quit."

And so it is with us. We hammer away on our project, which seems about as significant as "chopsticks" in a concert hall. And about the time we are ready to give up, along comes the Master, who leans over and whispers:

Now keep going; don't quit. Keep on....don't stop; don't quit

(From "Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life" by Charles Swindoll)

An exciting and positive new year is upon us – 2009! Pay close attention as we hear Christ say to us, individually and as a Community, "Now keep going; don't quit. Keep on...don't stop; don't quit!"

I look forward to serving you in this New Year.

Christ's Peace be With You,
Donna Martin, LCVA Walk #10
Community Lay Director

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

—Luke 24:32

L/CVA Emmaus Board Meeting Minutes (12/4/08)

Venue: Heritage United Methodist Church Tower Room

Members Present: Chris Greever, Donna Martin, Joyce Maddox, Deborah Francis, Jan Guthrie, Katie McDaniel, Tanya Paulette, Matt Sapsara, Judy DeBres, Jeff Davenport, Annette Patrick, John Seaquist.

Call to Order

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Devotion - Donna Martin read a devotion based upon readings in Acts 14. In the face of adversity and challenges, God is telling us to keep it up and don't quit.

Welcome and Introduction of New Board Members

New Members – Katie McDaniel, Deborah Francis, Judy DeBres (Clergy), Matt Sapsara, and Jeff Davenport.

Overview of Board – work by consensus; members can abstain; one member does the monthly devotions; members handle bringing elements to the monthly gatherings; members will be asked to contribute to the monthly newsletter.

Minutes – November minutes were not available

Treasurer's Report – Annette Patrick – Current balance is \$3523.08 (including Jessie Askew Fund and those who have contributed for the newsletter by mail).

Reports

Community Spiritual Director – Riley Smith – Reception from the Community has been strong. Clergy are excited about upcoming Walks. David Rash cannot take over CSD, but the Board hopes he can continue to contribute to the Board. We need to ensure we have strong music at each gathering.

Chrysalis – n/a

Team Selection – process is complete; calls will go out this weekend (12/6); teaming schedule is set to include some combined teaming (Men & Women) and some separate teaming.

Website – Lee is looking for someone to train on the website. As a side note, please pray for him, as his cancer has returned.

Closing Comments from Chris & Board

Chris thanked everyone for a productive year.

Tanya led the Board in thanking Chris for her dedication to the Lord and her work as Community Lay Director.

Bob Robinson was approved as Assistant Community Lay Director.

Part I Adjourned

Part II Convened w/Donna Martin as Community Lay Director.

New Business

Assignments for 2009

Secretary – Matt Sapara (nominated/approved)

Treasurer – Jeff Davenport (nominated/approved)

Team Selection – TBD (Joyce will provide Clergy assistance)

Chrysalis – Judy DeBres is willing to continue her support in this role. There was limited activity in 2008.

Weekend Committee (Set-up) – TBD (Tanya is willing to train during the Spring Walks).

Training – TBD

Specific Goals/Input for 2009 from Board Members

2009 is the year of being positive. The Community will continue to move forward with a focus on the excitement of the future. What has happened in the past has been reviewed repeatedly, addressed, and now we move forward.

November Follow-up - Follow up on the November meeting/meal is very important. David Rash collected the written input from everyone. It is imperative to compile and review the

feedback. There was momentum created and we need to continue it. Judy really likes having the meal/fellowship at each Gathering.

Address the childcare concerns. There were a lot of ideas including using a portion of the offering to pay babysitters, having the host church provide some childcare, parents having a rotation, etc. This is a topic to cover at a meeting in the near future.

Teaming Applications. John S. remains vocal about a teaming application. There may be capable team members that are not being selected because their names aren't as prominent in the community. Having an application may assist this. It is important to let the Holy Spirit provide guidance too. The website can provide an option for soliciting interest in teaming. Additionally, the interest sheets completed by community members can help identify those interested in teaming.

Website Guidelines – Chris and the Board have updated several guidelines (Flavorings, Agape, etc.). Community Coordinator guidelines need to be updated. Additionally, there can be some Lay Director guidelines if necessary.

3-Year Board Terms. Joyce reaffirmed the value of a 3-year board term.

Importance of the Model. Matt led a lengthy discussion about the value of the model. Essentially, the model is words and framework on paper. A committed heart is essential to a spirit-led Walk. For example, reading the Table Training is not as effective as really focusing on the role the TL and ATL need to play in providing guidance and encouragement to the pilgrims at his/her table. Don't be so rigid on the model that the heart and spirituality are left out. Another example is truly praying the Prayer to the Holy Spirit rather than just reading it. PRAY IT DON'T JUST SAY IT. Regardless of the model/flavorings/etc., each and every walk will be personal to the individual pilgrim or team member. The model provides a framework that gives everyone a fair chance to have that individual experience. Richmond Emmaus battled the same thing during their transition.

Make Reunion Groups more prominent.

Address maximum size of the Walks.

Should we consider 1 Walk/year rather than force 2/year?

This is psychologically better than canceling Walks. May also complement Epiphany and Chrysalis schedules.

Use each Gathering as an opportunity for community training.

For example, five minutes about team selection would help everyone understand the process and why they may/may not have been selected.

Newsletter needs more content. Board and Clergy will provide more articles.

Miscellaneous Business

Board Representatives for Spring Walk – Jan Guthrie and John Mitchell. Contact Donna or Lay Director with your input.

Newsletter contributions (due 1/8/09)

4th Day – Jan Guthrie

Devotion – Joyce Maddox

Being a new Board member – Jeff Davenport

Any other articles are welcome.

Board voted that the Gatherings should be moved back to Heritage UMC beginning in January. Donna will confirm availability.

December Gathering – March Memorial (12/13)

Music – Alice Watson & Praise Team (Chris to confirm).

Offering – Jeff will coordinate.

Communion – Paul Greer.

Elements – Deborah Francis.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

—Luke 24:32

Next Board Meeting – 1/8/09, 7PM @ Heritage UMC (Devotion by Katie McDaniel).
2009 IS THE YEAR OF BEING POSITIVE.
Closing Prayer/Meeting Adjourned.

Life as a New LCVA Emmaus Board Member
by Jeff Davenport, LCVA Walk #52

I was in a hotel in Claypool Hill, Virginia, when my phone rang. I didn't recognize the number, but because I wasn't doing anything important (*it is Claypool Hill after all...*), I decided to **answer the call**. While the number was new to me, the voice on the other end was immediately distinctive and familiar. "This is John Seaquist." After exchanging pleasantries and reminiscing about Walk #60, we talked for a few minutes about the Emmaus Board opening. I assured him that I would pray about it and I would talk to Jen (the other boss) about my availability. He assured me that if she needed any persuading, I just needed to tell her that "a NO for Jeff means a YES for Jen." That seemed to seal the deal for her and I committed to being on the ballot in November.

After the November meeting and election, I was formally invited to the next Emmaus Board meeting as a new Board Member. Needless to say, I was excited and honored. I was also wary of the impending hazing that would certainly occur at my first meeting. I was positive that I would be carrying John's luggage, getting him drinks/snacks, personally taking notes for him, or even having to do a solo of my favorite praise song (to put that in context, Jen makes me lip-sync in church).

In the end, there was no hazing and just the same warm welcome expected at any Emmaus function. Most faces were familiar, others were new to me, but it didn't take long to feel God's love and purpose in the room. Emmaus has a way of bringing that out in all of us (sometimes in spite of us!). The meeting was simple. It focused entirely on strengthening the Community and its members — past, present, and future. God has created the blueprint with the Walk to Emmaus; we just have to follow it.

As we move forward in 2009 and into the rest of this three-year term (*yikes...is that really at least 36 meetings?!?*), I am excited about this new role. We all know that God works through LCVA Emmaus Community. The Emmaus model is tested over time and pleasing in His eyes. My perspective is that, as a Board Member, I am honored to play a small role in helping the entire LCVA Emmaus Community move forward and reach others in need of spiritual growth. I believe we all grow each time we interact with God at an Emmaus event. It is awe-inspiring to me that by doing a small part on the Board (i.e. recording minutes, helping with the treasury report, etc.), God is allowing me to help facilitate a healthier community that can reach more people through the Walk to Emmaus. Those people can then strengthen their relationship with God and their church. That strengthened relationship can lead to impacting others in our community, state, nation, and world. I have seen the impact Emmaus can have on the lives of all of us. I am humbled to be able to assist God in that process just a little bit. I hope you will also commit to small ways you can help God create a wonderful experience for future Pilgrims.

Please know that the Emmaus Board is here to **serve** you. We are committed to the positive direction God will continue to move all of us and this community. Most importantly, we are **available** to YOU — members of the LCVA Emmaus Community. Should you

have any questions, comments, or concerns, feel free to contact me (hokiejeff@verizon.net) or any of the other Board Members.

Lastly, if you see a number on your phone that you don't recognize, **answer the Call**.

De Colores!

Committee News:

Do you want to develop leadership skills to help you be bold for Christ? Have you wondered how to get involved with your Lynchburg/Central VA Emmaus Community?

The Lynchburg Community has 6 different committees that you can serve on. To follow is the committees and a short explanation about each. If you have interest and want to know more about a committee, please contact the committee chair or co-chair:

Gathering Committee: There is a lot that goes into putting a monthly gathering together. 4th day speaker, child care, set-up, clean-up.... If you have interest in planning and putting together our monthly gathering please contact Bob Robinson and Debra Francis

Training Committee: This year the Emmaus community will offer an all day training event, we will also have small training sections at each monthly gathering. If you like to read and do research and if you are willing to pass this knowledge onto the committee, please contact Chris Greever and Matt Sapsara

Team Selection/Board Nominating Committee: This committee prayerfully puts the teams together... do you have a desire to serve on a team or serve on the board, please contact Jan Guthrie and Katie McDaniel.

Weekend Committee: Do you have organizing skills that the committee could use? This committee makes sure that all the supplies necessary to put on a weekend are available. They also make sure that those supplies are in place by setting-up for the weekend and cleaning up after the weekend. Do you have a passion to organize and have things in order, contact John Seaquist and Barbara Burks.

Community Committee: How can you be a silent servant behind the scenes on the weekend? There are so many things that need to be done to make a weekend to happen, from prayer to setting up chapels, from checking people in and carrying bags to making beds...the list is endless. How about our community after a weekend is over, prayer chains, reunion groups and the newsletter? Are you interested in finding out more, contact John Mitchell and Jeff Davenport.

Chrysalis Board: Do you have a passion for our youth? Our youth are so important and we need you to show them how much they are loved and needed. Does this sound like you, contact Liz Huband and Jeff Turner.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, you are needed and wanted. If you cannot serve on a committee right now, but feel led to work behind the scenes, give a 4th talk at a Gathering, or watch children for a Gathering or teaming (list of one-time tasks is endless) please contact one of the people listed above. If you are unsure as to who to contact, you can always contact me, Donna Martin 540-874-4478 or dmartin1971@att.net. For all contact information on the above listed please look at the front of your newsletter.

God's peace to all and I can't wait to serve with you!!!!

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And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?
—Luke 24:32

LCVA Emmaus Board Meeting Minutes (01/08/2009)

Board Members Present:

Donna Martin, Barbara Burks, Jan Guthrie, Deborah Francis, Joyce Maddox, Chris Greever, Liz Huband (Chrysalis Board), David Rash, Jeff Davenport, Bob Robinson, Jeff Turner (Chrysalis), John Mitchell, Matt Sapsara, John Seaquist, Jerry Viemeister (Chrysalis), Katie McDaniel

Donna Martin opened with an illustration of dying to self by writing a name on a blank piece of paper and trading it in for a heart, representing the heart of Christ.

I. Call to Order (7:12)

II. Prayer to the Holy Spirit

III. Devotion

Katie McDaniel led the devotion by reading from Romans 8:28, Ephesians 3:20, I Peter 5:7, and Hebrews 13:8.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Jeff Davenport reported that the balance in the account as of 1/06/09 was \$4,063.98. We are waiting for signature privileges to be changed from the previous treasurer, Annette Patrick, to the current treasurer, Jeff Davenport. A general request was made for accounting help as we need to do an audit before transfer as a typical formality of changing officers.

V. Duties of the Board

Board Members:

Attend and participate in Board meetings
Delegate and participate in activities
Observe loyalty and confidentiality

Donna noted that her plan is to make the minutes public to the Community at large. She also plans to offer open Board meetings so that anyone in the Community can attend as a silent observer. The Board plans to discuss two subjects each meeting, regulating with a timer to keep the discussions to 30 minutes each.

VI. Approval of Minutes

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the December meeting.

VII. New Business

a. Chrysalis

The LCVA Emmaus Board does not have the authority to end the Chrysalis Community attached to us. Only Nashville can do that. Chrysalis is a committee of LCVA Emmaus, with its own board. Currently, that board does not have enough board members to function. Their one-month goal is to fill the vacancies with a six-month goal of having Chrysalis up and running. They need to have four adults and two youth (age 23 or under) to round out the minimum board membership. The plan is to have an emergency nominating committee to find willing people to serve on the Chrysalis board. They will make an announcement at the January Gathering that they are looking for willing people.

b. Distributing Board Manuals

To track the allocation of manuals (the property of the Community and due to be returned to the Lay Director at the end of each person's term) to board members, each person received a uniquely numbered binder.

c. Committee Assignments (Chair & Co-Chair)

By the March meeting, each committee chair and co-chair need to assemble willing committee members from the Community, meet at least once, and develop a list of goals.

i. Gathering: Bob Robinson & Deborah Francis

ii. Community: John Mitchell & Jeff Davenport

iii. Team Selection: Jan Guthrie & Katie McDaniel

iv. Training: Chris Greever & Matt Sapsara

v. Weekend: John Seaquist & Barbara Burks

At the January Gathering, each committee will have a poster and sign-up sheet to help develop further membership.

d. Gathering Plan

The January Gathering will have a potluck supper at 6:00, and members of the Chrysalis community will provide child care at 7:00. There will be a request for a \$5 donation to cover that care.

VIII. Closing Prayer

IX. Meeting Adjourned

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—Luke 24:32

Fourth Day Message

When Donna asked me to write an article for the news letter about my 4th Day, I thought, "okay, God, you are taking me out of my comfort zone again," (which he likes to do). So let me tell you a little bit about my 4th Day and how it has changed my walk with Christ as well as my entire family's.

As my sister told me when she went on her walk she had a relationship with God and that He was her friend and after her walk God has become her best friend and continues to be her best friend.

I come from a unique family: we all have taken the Walk to Emmaus, and through this experience, Emmaus has changed the dynamics of our family. My dad is my dad, but he is also my brother in Christ. This is true with my whole family; they now are my sisters and brothers in Christ. What I mean by this is we have always been close but now we are close in faith. Before the Walk, we would be there for each other to listen about things but now we listen and pray together for each other. It's like being at the next level. You see, even though we were brought up in a Christian home, we really never talked to each other about our faith or what God has done in our lives. Now it comes up every time we talk. It truly is amazing.

This is also true about the Emmaus community. We are all here for your support. Before I went on my Walk, if someone had told me I would be writing an article for a newsletter about my faith, I would have told them they were out of their minds. But after my experience on the mountain, I find myself wanting to do God's will in my life through showing the same unconditional love I received — to those at work, to my sisters and brothers in Christ, and to my family.

My prayer for you is that you feel God's presence as you have never felt before and know his will in your life and share God's unconditional love to others.

May the Lord be with you as you continue your 4th Day

Jan Guthrie, LCVA Walk #?

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Prayer Requests Shared at January Gathering

- Teams and Pilgrims
 - Darla & Timmy Crews
 - Barbara Robinson (spine surgery in Feb)
 - Jerry Viemeister
 - Pam Thomas (Recovering Cancer Surgery)
 - Sandra Parker (She can see Praise God!)
 - Beth Dunnam (Chemo)
 - Francis Layne
 - Lewis & Audrey Frazier
-

Servanthood

What are we — as Christians, as true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ — striving to do for each other and for the world? Are we sincerely trying to help our neighbor? Do we really hear the cry of the needy? Or do we turn a deaf ear or a blind eye to the hurting people around us? Do we turn and walk the other way when we think we might be asked to do something?

We mistakenly think that being a servant means we have to be at the beck and call of others, answering every request, doing whatever pleases them, no matter what. Biblical servanthood is not slavery. Servanthood sincerely seeks the well-being of others. Christ-like servants sincerely want to serve others with the love of God.

Do we wake up each day thinking, "Well, who can I serve today? How can I share Jesus with someone today?" Most likely, we do not wake up with that thought in our mind. We are usually thinking about all we have to do, how busy our schedule is, and will we find enough time to do everything on our list. Are we thinking about what Sister Betteryou or Brother Grumpy Gus did or said to us yesterday? Do we become offended when someone jumps in and helps us with a chore at church or gets to the pastor before we do with a question? Who does that serve?

Life is too short for Christians to waste time on things that do not have an eternal significance. I have a saying that I use many times when assessing any situation to decide what is truly important: "If it won't get me to heaven or keep me from going, *it doesn't matter.*" I have a very close friend who is in the last stages of cancer. Her life is a great testimony to her faith. She has had a positive attitude through the entire illness. She says she knows God will heal her either here on earth or when she crosses over into heaven. Either way is okay with her. Her illness has not kept her from being a servant to everyone she meets. She is always asking, "What can I do for you? How can I help you?"

There is no time for selfishness, rudeness, indifference, gossiping, bickering, jealousy, or apathy toward each other. The world is full of that nonsense! Christians need to bond together and look for ways to serve. We cannot let anything get in our way of serving. We should 'be about our Father's business.'

Take time today to serve someone. Our desire to serve God is based on service to others. Servanthood can come from the most unexpected places sometimes. Think of the life of the servant who came to earth as a baby and paid the ultimate sacrifice for us. Total servanthood from beginning to end. No greater servant ever lived.

Isaiah 65:14 My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts.
Joyce Maddox, Pastor: Poplar UMC

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—Luke 24:32

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FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING

**February 12, 2009
7:00 pm at Heritage UMC**

This month the board will be talking about:

- Reunion Groups — How can we make reunion groups more available to people who want to join?
- Team Selection and applications

These are the topics that are slated to talk about. If anyone has questions or comments about these topics please email them to dmartin1971@att.net

Just a reminder, the Community is invited to attend the board meetings.

HAPPY AGAPE DAY!!!!

The February Gathering is Saturday, February 14th. Most people know this holiday as Valentine's Day. LCVA Emmaus is changing that to **Agape Day**.

Bring someone special with you to the February "Agape" Gathering. During Fellowship time (6pm to 7pm) we will eat dinner, have reunion groups, and make agape together for the Spring Men's and Women's Walks. During our Worship time (7pm to 8:30pm) we will sing and praise God, have training on agape for the weekends, enjoy a 4th day talk, and share in the Lord's Supper together.

Please bring with you non-perishable food agape for the Walks (such as bottled water, soft drinks, chips, candy, trail mix, etc.).

Note to parents: We will have a table set up during fellowship time for children to make agape for the Walks. During worship time, child care will be provide. Come one, come all and spread a little bit of "agape."

Gathering, February 14, 2009

Heritage UMC

If you need directions or need a ride to the Gathering please contact me: Donna Martin, 540-874-4478 or dmartin1971@att.net

Spring 2009 Walks

We are getting excited! The teams for the men and women are coming together. The men and women are planning to team together part of the time. All but one teaming will be at Heritage United Methodist Church (2/28 for the men). The men will team 2/7 & 2/28 by themselves and then will team with the women on 3/7, 3/21 & 4/4. The women will team on 4/25 & 5/2 by themselves. We are planning to have lunch together during the teaming. If you can provide one of the lunches, we would greatly appreciate it!

Both teams are in need of a Community Coordinator. Please prayerfully consider if God is calling you to help. The Emmaus Board's Weekend Committee is going to help tremendously with this task. If you need more information about their help, please contact any member of the board.

Our biggest request is for your prayers for the teams as they begin to prepare for the Walks and for the Pilgrims that God will send. Your prayers will make all the difference in these Walks.

This is such an awesome opportunity to be God's hands and feet. These weekends take the support of everyone in the Emmaus Community. If you can help, please contact Jimmie Pettus, 434-568-6351 or Linda McConnell, 434-385-6292.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?
—Luke 24:32