



Heart of Florida

Walk to Emmaus

Heart of Florida Walk to Emmaus is a Ministry of First Presbyterian Church of Bartow
The Newsletter of the Heart of Florida Emmaus Community

December 2009

www.hof-emmaus.org

Vol. 11

Issue 6

Gathering

Saturday, January 16th, 2010

at

Sebring First United Methodist

126 S. Pine Street

Sebring, FL

5 - 7 PM

Wear your nametag and cross &

Bring a covered dish

Child Care will be provided!!

The Sebring FUMC Family Life Center is located

At Sebring Pkwy., turn left. Continue to N. Ridgewood, turn right onto Ridgewood, then left onto S. Pine. Church is 3 blocks and on the left. Family Life Center is behind the Sanctuary.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars

Spring Walks

Men's Walk #21 April 15-18, 2010

Women's Walk #21 April 22-25, 2010

Masterpiece Gardens, Lake Wales

. . .from Our Community Lay Director

Phil. 2:1-4 Now if you have known anything of Christ's encouragement of his reassuring love; if you have known something of the fellowship of his Spirit, and of compassion and deep sympathy, do make my joy complete—live together in harmony, live together in love, as though you had only one mind and spirit between you. Never act from motives of rivalry or personal vanity, but in humility think more of each other than you do of yourselves. None of you should think only of his affairs, but consider other people's interests also.

As we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, it is time to reflect and give thanks for the many blessings of the past year. Despite the economy and the distractions of a troubled world, our community continues to thrive and to grow. We are blessed with many folks with servant's hearts – those who show up to work on the teams, those who work hard on agape, bring snacks, and be present for send off, candlelight, and closing services. We have seen continued efforts in regards to sponsorship – new pilgrims continue to arrive for the special blessings of the weekends.

In January, I will step down as the CLD. I want to share a few thoughts with you. First, this year has been a blessing that I certainly never anticipated. I have learned so much and feel that God has given me a chance to grow in my faith walk through this opportunity for servant leadership. Each time that we gather, I learn more about what it truly means to be a part of the Body of Christ. As we sing “I can feel the brush of angel wings, I see glory on each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.” – it does not matter which location we are in – Bartow, Lake Wales, Winter Haven, Wesley Chapel – the Lord in all His glory is there with us. In looking around, I see the joy on the faces and the fellowship that brings us together to celebrate the blessings. It has been an honor and a privilege to come to know many of you better this year -to talk with you, to hear your suggestions and concerns for our community. I encourage you to continue to be thoughtful and purposeful in your support of this community. I also encourage you to do the same in your local churches. Be supportive – be the hands and feet and bloom where you are planted. While my time as CLD will end, my work for the Lord is only beginning. Where He wants me to be is not yet clear, but I have faith that in His time He will reveal what that picture looks like and I only pray that I will be prepared to follow His call.

My love, and continued support, for this community will not end in January. It is only through support of fellow Christians that this community can exist. I encourage each of you to examine your priorities and to continue to make Emmaus one of those. Think about how you spend your time and money. Remember the weekend that you took your walk – all those people who took care of your every need – who presented talks, who served your meals, made your beds, made agape for you, held doors, cleaned bathrooms, appeared in the dark for candlelight? Be that person for someone else. Don't assume that others will be there to take care of that – Christ is counting on each of us to be active and involved. As teams for Walk #21 are forming, examine your priorities – dedicate the dollars for gas to drive to team meetings, and to pay for the weekend. Dedicate time to be there for send-off, for candlelight, and for closing. Our community is now over 1400 strong – I would love to see that Gym filled with faces – not just the faces of sponsors, but with the WHOLE community! Wouldn't that send a message about the strength of our Lord? Make agape from the heart – don't just run by Publix or Walmart and pick something up. Be thoughtful about your gifts, pray for the pilgrims and for the community as you take time out of your busy life to prepare a special gift for the weekends. Make these gifts with love and prayer. Our community, like most organizations, has bills to pay. We never want to turn away a pilgrim because they cannot pay for the weekend. We never want someone not to be able to work on a team because they cannot pay. Please remember that your donations assist us in providing for those who are willing to be there, willing to work, but need some help in doing so.

I look forward to the next chapter and to seeing all of you soon and often.

De Colores!
Susan Garrett
Community Lay Director

Team Training

Mark your calendars! Team training dates are as follows: Saturday, January 30; Saturday, February 27; and Saturday, March 27. There will be a gathering / team dedication on April 10th at Ft. Meade UMC.

Mark your calendars! The Lay Directors (Heather Beato, and Joe Hart) will be calling each of you to discuss your willingness to serve on the teams. Pray for Lay Directors, pray for the pilgrims, and pray for the teams as we begin training and work to open the doors and welcome those whom God is sending to the weekends.

Board Nominations

Nominations were received at the December meeting for new board members. Those leaving the board (Susan Garrett, Rich Thompson, Faye Sarvis, Dennis Autrey, Michelle Brewington, Heather Beato) will be missed. We thank you all for your time and energy and for your dedication to Emmaus.

Please consider the following names – Ruthann Kleinhans (Wesley Chapel), Courtney Schulz (Bartow), Gerry Hubbs (Winter Haven), Bob Sarvis (Bartow), and Albert Reese (), Clark Obel (), Tom Freidt.

Voting will take place at the January board meeting (prior to the gathering).

Regional Training Opportunity

Plug-In to the Movement!

Would you like to:

- strengthen your Community through sponsorship?
- become a better servant leader for your Community?
- be a part of something new?

Your Southeast Regional Leaders invite YOU (Emmaus and Chrysalis Boards, Clergy, and Community members) to connect with other Communities in your area for yearly leadership development. Learn how Servant Leadership, Sponsorship, the Clergy/Laity partnership, 4th Day/Next Steps, and other topics can help build and strengthen your Community.

We will also be offering Clergy Certification at every leadership development session.

Leadership Development will be offered on:

- January 23 - Peachtree City, GA
- March 6 - Leesburg, FL
- March 27 - Prattville (Birmingham), AL
- May 8 (tentative) - Lake Junaluska, NC
- June 19 (tentative) - Chattanooga, TN
- July 10 (tentative) - Raleigh, NC
- August 21 (tentative) - London, KY
- September 4 - St. Simons Island, GA
- November 13 (tentative) - Memphis, TN

Please check <http://www.seemmauschrysalis.com> to get updated dates, times, and locations of leadership development in your area and to register to attend.

www.hof-emmaus.org

Here are a few things that are on the website:

Mapquest links to Masterpiece Gardens and churches where gatherings are held

Forms – Reservation for Pilgrims, Sponsor's form, Team Application

The newsletters are also posted there. We are hoping some of you might prefer to read your newsletter online instead of receiving it by mail. If you would like to receive it via the website instead of snail mail

– please email Sharon Harris at info@fpcbartowfl.org

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