

The Rainbow Connection

Volume 9 ~ Issue 5

May 2013

My Chains Are Gone

by Georganne Thomas, Community Lay Director

"My chains are gone, I've been set free. My God, my Savior has ransomed me. And like a flood His Mercy reigns, unending love.....amazing Grace". Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)



If you attended the April Gathering, you heard Pastor Ricci sing Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone). As I sat there and listened with my heart...I realized that my chains are gone. Now I've never really seen anyone in chains (other than someone on TV with handcuffs or leg irons while being transported to or from court or jail), but I've seen far too many dogs chained to their dog houses, trees or the nearest post. You can always tell how long the chain is by the worn spots. They go to the end of their chains and pace and pull trying to be free. Then at one miraculous moment, either the chain, the clasp or the collar breaks and they're FREE! Because they know no other life, some will return to their master and their chains. Some though love their freedom and seek a new life and hopefully a new loving master.

At my Emmaus Walk seven years ago, I was set free. Free from the imaginary chains that kept me from fully accepting the love, mercy and grace that God had for me. I was a Christian sitting in the same pew for many years, doing the same things for the same reasons. Then, at that special moment for me on Walk #40, I was able to fully accept the fact that God loves me, so much that He gave His only Son for *me* and realized that I needed to rid myself of the things that

Upcoming Schedule of Events

May

19th 2:00 p.m.

Emmaus & Chrysalis Board Meetings

3:00 p.m.

Gathering

First UMC, New Lexington

June

30th 2:00 p.m.

Emmaus & Chrysalis Board Meetings

3:00 p.m.

Gathering

First UMC, New Lexington

August

10th 12:00 p.m.

Emmaus & Chrysalis Family Picnic

New Hope UMC, Logan

September

12th – 15th

Women's Fall Walk #55

Camp Akita

Still Time to Sponsor!

October

17th – 20th

Men's Spring Walk #55

Camp Akita

Pray about Sponsoring a Pilgrim

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were keeping me chained. Do you have chains? Are you frustrated at being at the end of your chain and want to be free? And what will you do when you are free?

Since my Walk, I have stayed active with the Community as well as my Share Group. The Gatherings and Share Group meetings help me keep my heart free. When I need a little encouragement, I know they are there for me.

My chains are gone. I have found a new life and a loving Master. Psalm 119:32..(NIV) "I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free." I encourage you to

stay connected with your brothers and sisters of the Southern Ohio Emmaus Community and a Share/Reunion Group. The next Gathering is May 19th at 3:00pm at the New Lexington United Methodist Church. Come for yourself and others. Share in the joyful singing, praising, Fourth Day moments and of course....food.

John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (NKJV)

John 8:34-36 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (NIV)

Servanthood Reflections

by Ricci Arthur, Community Spiritual Director

I have been thinking and reflecting a lot lately about servanthood. Think of our Precious Saviour, who, if anyone had the right to not be a servant, it was Him! Lord of the Universe, Maker of all we know, and the Power that holds everything together. And yet - and yet - as it says in Phillipians, He "humbled himself." It would have been such a wonderful thing if all He did was to become a man, did a few good deeds, said a few good teachings, and that was the end of it. But He did more - far more - He had a Masterful Plan to train 12 disciples, teaching them how to be servants, and then, the most amazing thing of all - He humbled himself unto death, even death on a Cross. The Creator of the Universe became as a common criminal - for us.



It is hard to think about being a servant, isn't it? We fight and claw our whole life to gain position and honors - expending much energy at times for the accolades of people. But we are called to be a servant, first of all. Jesus said: "He who is the Greatest among you must be the servant of all." How are you doing in the servanthood arena? Christ is counting on us!

The Light of the World

by Karen Crawford, Assistant Spiritual Director

"You see, we don't go around preaching about ourselves. We preach that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we ourselves are your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let there be light in the darkness,' has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ." - 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

What do you remember about your Emmaus weekend?
What moments of your walk still stand out as memorable?





As a community, as we pray and prepare for the upcoming walks, how can you become involved? Your help and participation in some part of the weekends will help show God's love to the pilgrims, and help you again sense the presence of God like you did on your own walk. For me, candlelight still stands out as the highlight of my walk. it was a very special time.

Did you know that the use of candles in the church has a long Christian tradition? The candle represents Jesus, the Light of the world, the Light that shines in the darkest recesses of our lives and cannot be overcome by darkness -- the Light that binds us together in community, the Light of hope and peace. What a surprise when we realized at Candlelight that so many people appeared from far and near in the midst of the darkness, their faces glowing as they showed us how much they loved us. I saw the Light, I saw the face of Jesus, I reveled in the presence of God as we walked around and sensed that God was there, among us.

So, join us at Candlelight, as we offer this same amazing experience to the pilgrims of the Southern Ohio Fall Walks? Let us radiate the light of Christ Jesus. Let us show the love and grace of our Savior. De Colores!

Students participate in self-reflecting retreat

By Mary Graci, Loyola Maroon, The student newspaper of Loyola University, New Orleans

All undergraduate and graduate students have the opportunity to experience a spiritually reflective journey. The Emmaus Retreat is an occasion for students to escape their hectic campus lives and reflect on their theologies. The Emmaus Retreat, as well as other retreats hosted by the Office of Mission and Ministry throughout the semester, all aim at offering students chances to explore their spirituality and open themselves to God.

Loyola New Orleans' graduate assistant and resident chaplain, Joseph Albin, described the Emmaus Retreat as one of great importance to both the students and the university. "At a Jesuit university, it is important to create opportunities and contexts where students may draw closer to God," Albin said.

Surrounded with the natural silence of Fontainebleau State Park outside of Mandeville, La., the students attending the Emmaus Retreat will be able to immerse themselves in prayer and the tranquility of God. "Saturday is largely spent in silence, which I love because it gives me a chance for introspection that I don't normally get," Bridget Kratz, economics senior and retreat participant, said in an email.

Kratz highly recommended the retreat to any student willing to participate. "This will be my second time on the retreat, and I genuinely think the Emmaus Retreat is the best retreat Loyola offers," Kratz said. The students will also be challenged to consistently grow and develop in their religious assurance into spiritually-committed men and women. Although this retreat centers on the Catholic and Jesuit values, Loyola welcomes every student wanting to participate. "Emmaus is entirely staff run and everyone working it goes out of their way to make sure the retreaters are relaxed," Kratz said.





Being the hands and feet of Jesus

by Clint Cooper, *Chattanooga Times Free Press*

One of the messages Barbara Hartman took away from her Walk to Emmaus Christian renewal and formation weekend last year was a directive to be the "hands and feet of Jesus."

Acting on that felt directive and remembering a project at her previous church in San Diego, she approached her pastor at Jones Memorial United Methodist Church.

Like a good pastor should, the Rev. Larry J. Dial acknowledged its worthiness, suggested she get it organized and gave her an initial contact.

On Sunday, May 5, the Pass It On campaign will go live, with more than 70 people attending an abbreviated service, then staying in the building or leaving it to participate in service projects across East Ridge. "What I really hope," says Hartman, co-team leader for the campaign with Jones Memorial children's director Ashley Wade, "is that people do something they can be passionate about" and continue it after the initial day. They'll have nine different projects from which to choose, all but one on that Sunday.



To assist their town, they can paint concession stands at East Ridge High School, fill weekend lunch bags for hungry children at Spring Creek Elementary School or make improvements to raise awareness for the East Ridge Animal Shelter. Further, they can make tray favors, visit and play games with residents or do some yard work at Life Care of East Ridge, and do some minor yard work or make minor repairs at Stella's House, a Partnership for Families, Children and Adults safe house. In the wider community, they can prepare and serve meals at the Chattanooga Community Kitchen or make bears for hospitalized children, the latter taking place on May 22.

In gestures that will make a difference across the world, they can create mosquitoes out of pipe cleaners for the United Methodist Church's Imagine No Malaria campaign or put together food buckets for Zimbabwe in another denominational project. Hartman says the number of volunteers "is still growing" but insists she doesn't have a goal. "What I've decided about goals," she says, "is that when we make the goals, we have limited God. When we speak to him, more people surface that way."

Visitors are welcome to join the fun, Hartman says. If they do, they may feel more at home working on one of the projects at the church, she says. "We're not going to turn anybody away," she says. Breakfast is at 8 a.m., a worship/commissioning service is at 9 a.m. and the departure for service is at 9:45 a.m. Hartman says church members, even more than a week before the campaign, are "excited."

"My hope is it's not a one-time thing," she says. "If we'd fallen on our face," it might have been. "But people are already talking about next year." So if you drive through East Ridge next Sunday and see groups working around the town in gray T-shirts with hearts on their fronts, that'll be the Jones gang. Better yet, join them.

"We just want people to know there are people who care about them," Hartman says.



2013 Southern Ohio Emmaus Board of Directors

This is the current contact list of our Board of Directors. Keep this list so you can contact the board with questions, concerns, and ideas. Please keep the board in your prayers as they serve the Lord and our community.

<u>Spiritual Director</u> Ricci Arthur 395 Mae St Logan, OH 43138 740-385-4127 pastorric@aol.com	<u>Newsletter</u> Andy Ellinger (2013) PO Box 223 New Straitsville, OH 43766 740-394-2444 andyellinger@yahoo.com	Note: Each board member's name is followed by the year their term ends Updated: January 14, 2013
<u>Asst. Spiritual Director</u> Karen Crawford 60 Pomeroy Rd. Athens, OH 45701 Phone: (740)593-8541 pastorkaren@richlandumc.org	<u>Agape</u> Joyce Drake (2013) PO Box 177 Malta, Ohio 43756 740-962-4169 jdrake@wmcap.org	<u>Logistics</u> Tom Parrish (2013) 3285 Meadowbrook Dr. Lancaster, OH 43130 740-438-4750 NO EMAIL
<u>Board Chairperson</u> Georganne Thomas (2013) PO Box 192 Albany, Ohio 45710 740-698-8571 gat192@frontier.com	<u>Outreach</u> Cathy Powell (2014) 1852 Mill St. Albany, OH 45701 740-698-6145 cpowell1669@yahoo.com	<u>Social</u> Barb Harkless (2015) P.O. Box 52 Haydenville, Ohio 43127 740-385-4359 rbharkless@yahoo.com
<u>Vice Chairperson</u> Betty Clark (2014) 645 Connett Rd. Nelsonville, OH 45764 740-664-5040 bwclark@nelsonvillev.com	<u>Women's Registrar</u> Kim Russell-Reed (2015) 12804 Twp. Rd. 1001, NE, Crooksville, OH 43731 740-808-7081 k12russell@yahoo.com	<u>Supplies</u> Sharla Snedden (2013) 8027 Hirst Rd SE Newark, OH 43056 740 323-4859 sssned@windstream.net
<u>Treasurer</u> Greg Rush (2014) 38032 Scout Rd Logan, OH 43138 740-385-0945 gr44gregr@yahoo.com	<u>Men's Registrar</u> Jeff Bender (2015) 1 East Main Street Logan, Ohio 43138 740-653-0184 bendej1@gmail.com	<u>Worship</u> Emma Hockenberry (2015) 7280 Gregg Rd. West Jefferson, Ohio 43162 614-843-1919 emma19marie@yahoo.com
<u>Secretary</u> Linda Lohse-Smith (2014) 7140 Selby Rd., Lot 103 Athens, Ohio 45701 740-594-9296 lindadavid77@frontier.com	<u>Sponsorship</u> Larry Moneypenny (2015) 1450 Ginder Rd., N.W. Lancaster, O. 43130 740-756-9148 lmoneypenny@columbus.rr.com	<u>Music</u> Tom West (2015) 9727 Old Rushville Rd., Rushville, Oh 43150 740-569-7342 jatbwest@yahoo.com
<u>Good Shepherd</u> Floyd Tackett (2014) 226 Cedar Cove Asheville, OH 43103 740-983-6565 fltack@aol.com	<u>Literature</u> Lena Bruno PO Box 87 Haydenville, OH 43127 (740) 974-2612 lena_bruno@yahoo.com	

Southern Ohio Emmaus

c/o Andy Ellinger

PO Box 223

New Straitsville, Ohio 43766

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