

Grace for Today

G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community Newsletter

February 2025

Coming Events

Saturday, February 22, **Date Change**

Gathering - 1st Methodist, Athens - Potluck at Noon, Worship immediately after

Our Spring Walks at Disciples Crossing in Athens

Men's Walk #108, March 6 – 9

Gathering & Candlelight Sat, Mar 8, 7:30pm

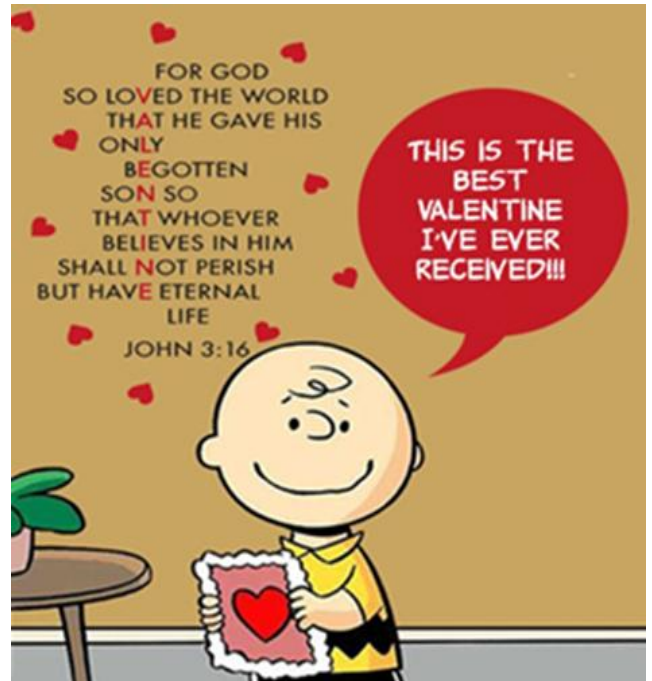
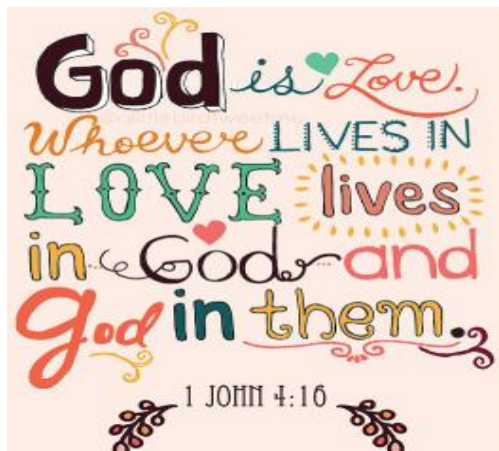
Women's Walk #109, March 13 – 16

Candlelight & Gathering Sat, Mar 15, 7:30pm

Saturday, March 29 – Smith Chapel, Mineola – Babe Chick/Sponsorship Training at **Noon** **** Time Change****, then Potluck Lunch and Worship.

Please prayerfully consider sponsoring a Pilgrim! If you know someone start asking them now!

See page 3 for ways you can help before and during the Walks.



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Find More on the G.R.A.C.E. Website:
www.graceemmaus.com

Community Lay Director's Corner

February is the month for LOVE. Let's all focus this month on showing and sharing God's love with those around us. Not just on the 14th, but every day. One of the best ways to show God's love is by sponsoring someone to go on the Spring Walk. I know I saw and felt God's love so intensely on my walk. I bet you felt the same. Be praying that God will bring someone in your path who needs to feel that love and go on this Walk.

Another way to show God's love is through prayer. If you're not signed up to pray on the prayer vigil, I encourage you to go to our website, click on the prayer vigil link and sign up to pray. Feel free to sign up for more than one time slot on both the men's and women's Walks. Now that's love!

Find new ways to show God's agape love this month. Do something unexpected. Maybe show love to someone who seems unlovable.

I love each one of you, and can't wait to see you at the gathering on February 22nd!

John 13:35: "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another".

Sandra Grasch
Community Lay Director



***Open your Hearts to the love God instills...
God loves you tenderly.
What He gives you is not to be kept under
lock and key, but to be shared.
-- Mother Teresa***

[Help With Our Spring Walks](#)

- **[Pray, Pray, Pray for our Spring Walks!](#)**

Disciples Crossing Camp, Athens
Men's Walk #108, March 6 – 9
Women's Walk #109, March 13 – 16

- **[Sponsor a Pilgrim!](#)** Do you know someone you would like to share this amazing experience with? Prayerfully consider asking them to attend a walk. Pilgrim information is found on our website www.GRACEEmmaus.com -> Applications tab -> Pilgrim Application.



- **[Start making agape gifts for men and women!](#)** Recommended number of identical pieces of agape for each Walk (you can add the name of your Reunion Group and city to the Agape, but please do not put the name of your church):
 - Agape for Everyone – 72
 - Dining Room Agape – 64
 - Bed Agape – 36Feel free to make as many sets as you would like! It's not too early to start! We will also need lanyards for nametags and crosses, and decorated place mats. Contact Nancy Edwards (ne52055@aol.com) for more information.
- **[Do you have a Golf Cart or Mule we could borrow for one or both Walks?](#)** Contact one of the Walk Lay Directors, Ken Duesterhoft (kwdues@gmail.com) or Kathy Pruitt (kathy.pruitt74@yahoo.com) if you can help.
- **[Consider being a server for the Agape Dinner on Saturday evening of each Walk.](#)** Women will serve for the Men's Walk on Saturday evening. Men will serve for the Women's Walk on Saturday evening. All you need are black pants, a white shirt, and a willing heart! Contact Nancy Edwards (ne52055@aol.com) for more information.
- **[Can you help with snacks and drinks for both Walks?](#)** We can use all drinks from bottled water to cans and bottles of soft drinks and tea, along with plenty of snack food! Individually wrapped goodies are best.

[Prayer Vigil](#)

The Prayer Vigil is an essential part of the Walk to Emmaus. Perhaps it is the one part of the Emmaus experience that touches not only the pilgrims and the workers, but it also touches the entire community.

A prayer vigil is a predetermined amount of time that a group of people devotes entirely to [prayer](#). Prayer vigils often, but not always, have a specific goal as the object of the prayer. Have you thought about the goal of our Emmaus Prayer Vigil?

The first Prayer Vigil is recorded in [Acts 1](#). When Jesus ascended back into heaven, He told His disciples to wait for the gift from His Father before obeying His command to take the gospel to every nation ([Matthew 28:19](#)). [Acts 1:14](#) says, “They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.” The outcome of this Prayer Vigil should be the outcome of every Prayer Vigil: God’s people entering into right relationship with Him so that His plans and purposes can be carried out through us ([Matthew 6:10](#)).

Our vigil is divided into 30-minute time slots, and you are asked to sign up for one or more slots. In this way, prayers are being offered up from us continuously during each Walk. [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#) tells us to “Pray without ceasing”. If you have not participated in a Prayer Vigil before, you may wonder what you are supposed to pray about. Do you pray just for the pilgrims or the workers, who else? The G.R.A.C.E. Community has a set of guidelines you can



use for this Vigil if you want. I will send these guidelines to whomever signs up for the Prayer Vigil.

Signup is easy. Go to our website, www.graceemmaus.com, and click on the “Prayer Vigil” tab at the top. There will see instructions and links to both the “Men's Walk #108 Prayer Vigil” and the “Women's Walk #109 Prayer Vigil” using the SignUpGenius application. Once there, you can scroll to see the available time slots. Also, if you have registered to pray for previous Walks, then check your email. You should have received an email from Grace Emmaus with this message *“Hi, you have been invited by Grace Emmaus to sign up for ‘Men’s Spring Walk #108.’ Please click on the button below to view the online signup sheet”*. A similar email will also be sent for the *‘Women’s Spring Walk #109’*. It’s that simple, click on the time slot(s) you wish to pray, and you are done. If you are having trouble signing up, you may contact me at mpayne0000@gmail.com, and I will help you.

Please prayerfully consider participating in the Prayer Vigil for both Spring Walks. It will be a fulfilling experience for you, the Pilgrims and workers, and for our G.R.A.C.E. Community.

De Colores

Mike Payne, Community Prayer Vigil

Pilgrim Registration is Easy!

Did you know that you can register pilgrims online? Our website, ***graceemmaus.com*** has pilgrim applications. Just pull it up, fill it in, print it, and submit it! It comes straight to my inbox and reserves a space on the walk (pending signatures and deposit). After you obtain appropriate signatures, attach a check, and mail to:

PO Box 1814
Lindale TX 75771



Easy peasy! There's plenty of room left on both Spring Walks! The Lord is making plans for your pilgrim to attend! You just need to step out and make it happen! What are you waiting for?

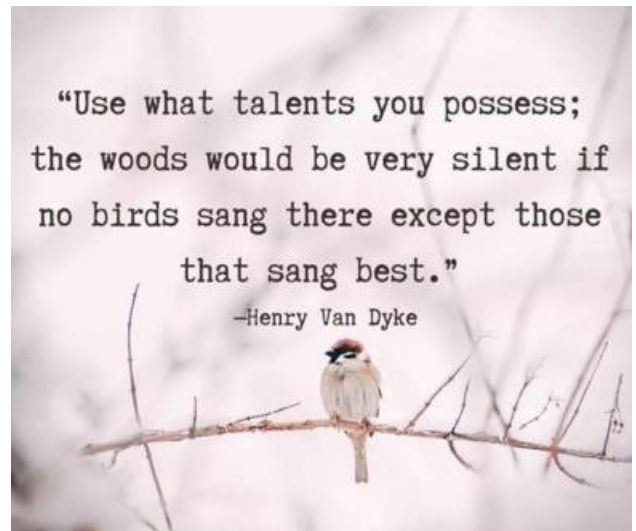
Charlene Burton
Community Registrar

Camp Gilmont Opportunity

Camp Gilmont is currently seeking a new board member from the G.R.A.C.E. Community. Over the past several years, our Community has been honored to have representation on their Board of Directors. It has been my privilege of serving in this capacity for the last four years; however, my extended term concluded on December 31.

As many of you are aware, our Community and Camp Gilmont have enjoyed a fruitful and collaborative relationship for over twenty years, and we've had Walks there since 2000.

Gilmont Board members typically serve a three-year term and are expected to participate in a committee aligned with their interests.



If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity for service, please contact me at brettfcall@gmail.com or via phone or text at 903-987-3090.

Brett Walker
Grace Emmaus Walk 66

AGAPE GIFTS

I know we ask Community members to make agape gifts for each Emmaus Walk but have you ever thought about what the word “agape” truly means? According to Wikipedia, Agape love is “the highest form of love and charity. The love of God for human beings and the love of human beings for God”. It is a profound sacrificial love that transcends and persists regardless of circumstances.

In the New Testament, “agape” refers to a covenant love that God has for us, His people, and our returning that love for Him. A selfless love that is passionately committed to the wellbeing of others.

As we make our agape gifts for the coming walks in March, let us remember what “agape love” really means...a covenant with God to love others as He loved us...sacrificially regardless of circumstances.

When making your agape gifts, these are the amounts we need:

- * 36 for bed agape (placed on the beds of Pilgrims only)
- * 72 for meal agape (Pilgrims and team members)

If you could put your agape in baggies or a container labeled with Men or Women’s Walk and the number of each it would be a huge help!

We know you cover each gift with love and prayer, often thinking back to your walk and what those gifts meant to you. You probably still have many hanging on your refrigerator... I know I do. We love to see your creativity, too!! So, get busy and make those agape gifts!

Never stop doing little things for others. Sometimes those little things occupy the biggest part of their hearts.

Blessed to be a blessing,
Nancy Edwards
Community Agape/Christ Dinner

Through

I have a new favorite word. (I'm a writer. I collect them rapidly, by the dozens.) But this one keeps tapping me on the shoulder. Whispering in my ear. Tugging at my sleeve. The word is "through."

It's no proud noun. It's ordinary. You can't take a definitive picture of it. You almost always find it combined with something else...used as an accompanying preposition or a supportive adverb.

- "You'll get through this," we say.
- Or, "Go on. Just barrel through." (Hopefully, not at a yellow light.)
- "Power through," we might command ourselves during a workout, or mid-exam.
- "Press through," one friend might coax another.
- "Just wander through, take your time," could be an easy invitation of sorts.

All in all, I like *through*. *Through* says there's more. *Through* says wherever I am is not permanent. *Through* implies motion and change and possibility. *Through* secretly carries the freight of hope, hidden for now.

Whether I know you or not, I'm certain that *right now*, there's something particular you're going through. How do I know this? Easy. If you're reading this, you're breathing. And if you're breathing, you're passing from one grief or joy or trial or consolation or season or celebration to another. *Through* is momentary, but constant. It's where we live. So today, here's a prayer for your own through, wherever it may lead:



Heavenly Father, bless this through. I'm not sure how I got here, or the duration of my stay. I didn't choose to be in this place, and I ache to be somewhere else. Maybe anywhere else. It comforts me to know I am not unseen by you. Not lost. Not abandoned. Not ever. You know my whereabouts and the present condition of my heart. You are at work in ways unknown to me. You've made the sun stand still. Turned back rivers from their source. Divided seas. Caused bushes to combust and donkeys to speak. You've raised your beautiful Son from the dead, making even death temporary for me. You will not lose me. I cannot lose you. You are with me. You've promised. We are going through this "through" together, and nothing can separate me from your love. Hallelujah. Amen.

When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. (Isaiah 43:2, NLB)

From *Wednesday Words* by Leigh McLeroy
Submitted by Brad Burton
Community Book Table

Be a Berean

You have to show up ready to fight the good fight of faith every single day. No watering down God's Word, sugar coating it, or painting it pretty to mold around your life is acceptable. Justifying actions that go against Scripture is prohibited. You must choose to live your life around God's Word, testing everything against the Truth...

Scripture:

The people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, since they welcomed the message with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." Acts 17:11

Don't be complacent. Pick a side. The enemy owns the fence. No one is going to run their race and finish their course by accident. Lukewarm is not acceptable. Jesus said, "So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth." Revelation 3:16

You must be intentional,
tenacious,
resilient,
courageous,
focused!!

It takes effort to believe the truth of God's Word over the lies of the enemy. *Salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.

It takes strength to prioritize your God given purpose over your own preferences. *His will not mine.



It takes faith to hold on to the promises of God when the going gets tough. *Standing on His promises.

It takes conviction to stand firm when you're standing alone. *God is with me.

It takes radical commitment to do what you are called to do, even if it's never esteemed, noticed, or approved of by people. *God sees all, that's enough for me.

It takes great humility to be willing to be misunderstood or misrepresented in order to be obedient to God. *My relationship with Him is priority.

One way! Stay the course. Jesus is worthy. He is so worthy.

Liz Webb
GRACE Emmaus Walk 87

Agape Love

***We love Him because
He first loved us.
1 John 4:19***



The New Testament was originally penned in Greek, and there are four different Greek words translated *love*. The word *agape* represents the essence of divine love—God’s own special love. It’s the love God has for us and the kind of love He gives us for Himself and others.

Osborne Gordon, a nineteenth-century British pastor, said, “There is no soul so pure and heavenly that it can throw back upon God all that love which He lavishes upon us. God loves us infinitely more than it is possible for us to love Him; but whatever feeble flame of love is kindled in our hearts and goes up as a sacrifice to Him, we are only giving Him of His own.”

That’s a good description of *agape*. The greatest command within Scripture is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and soul (Matthew 22:37). It’s the Lord Himself who gives us the *agape* that allows us to do that. Let His love set your heart on fire and return it like sparks flying upward to Him.

Dr David Jeremiah
From “Today’s Turning Point”
Submitted by Mike Payne
Community Prayer Vigil

***Our love of [God] is nothing more than His love to us,
reflected back upon Him, the source of love.
-Osborne Gordon***

3 Ways to Believe Big, Think Big and Pray Big!

At times all of us face problems that seem impossible to solve. How can you make the impossible possible? Latch onto these three important “keys.”

Key #1: Simple faith. Once a distraught father appealed to Jesus to heal his epileptic son who suffered from convulsions that made him foam at the mouth and throw himself into water or fire: “If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” The Master’s answer: “Everything is possible for one who believes” (Mark 9:22-23).

If it rained until even the mountaintops were submerged, could earthly life continue? “Common sense” says no. Yet one man—Noah—built a boat large enough to save everyone and everything aboard. And Hebrews, chapter 11 tells us he did it “by faith.” That same chapter lists numerous others who overthrew kingdoms, faced down lions, drove away hostile armies and even raised the dead...all through the power of faith.

Key #2: Believing prayer. Jesus, of course, healed the poor epileptic boy whose father came to him. But earlier his disciples had

tried to heal the child and failed. When they asked why they were unsuccessful, Jesus replied that the only thing strong enough to accomplish such a miracle was prayer (Mark 9:29). Prayer is the other side of faith—a theme that occurs repeatedly in Jesus’ teachings.

- “And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive” (Matthew 21:22).
- “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7).
- “Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24).

Key #3: The Word of God. Just before he died, Jesus told his disciples: “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7). The fact is that faith itself “comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). There is no substitute for regular, disciplined study of the Bible. It is your source of sustenance and power.

Believe big, pray big, think big, do what God leads you to do...and look forward to surprising results!

Elizabeth Peale Allen
Reprinted from *Guideposts Power of Prayer*



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SUPPORT FOR THE GRACE EMMAUS COMMUNITY

The G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community wishes to continue to spread the life-changing experience that an Emmaus weekend can deliver. Won't you help us by donating funds for scholarships for both Pilgrims and team members, or the general fund of our community? We are asking you to consider donating \$5, \$10, \$25 monthly or whatever amount you would like to set the donation to. This monthly donation will be debited automatically from your bank account on or about the 15th of the month.

Thank you for your continued support of our Emmaus community.

De Colores

PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW:

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

BANK INFORMATION

I (We) hereby authorize GRACE Emmaus to initiate debit entries to my (our) checking in account indicated below. The amount will be charged monthly. This authority is to remain in full force and effect until GRACE Emmaus receives written notification of its termination.

Monthly gift amount \$ _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Fill out information below or attach voided check.

Depository Name: _____ City: _____

State: ____ Zip: _____

Account #: _____

Transit/ABA #: _____

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