

Grace for Today

G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community Newsletter May 2026

Coming Events

**Saturday, May 16th, Work day at Camp
Gilmont 8:00 am**, Gathering and Lunch at
12:00 PM. Please bring a sack lunch.

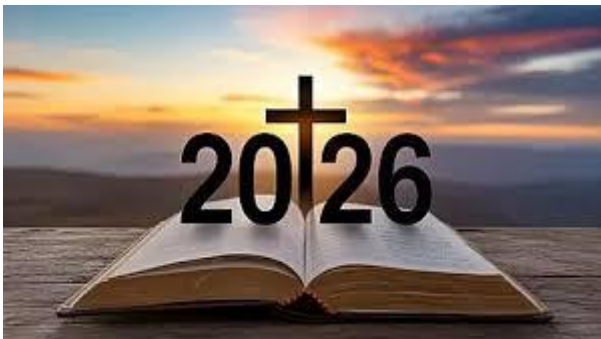
**Saturday, June 20th, Gathering at Smith
Chapel Mineola Tx**, Potluck lunch at noon,
Service immediately after.

**Saturday, July 18th, Gathering at Winona
Methodist Church**. Potluck at noon, service
immediately after.



Inside this Issue

- 2-4: Community Lay Director's Corner
- 5: Camp Gilmont Workday- Save the Date
- 6: Reunion Group Updates
- 7: The Joy of Working a Walk
- 8-9: May
- 10: Don't Miss the Train
- 11: God's Voice
- 12: 2026 G.R.A.C.E Board
- 13: Giving



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

www.GRACEEmmaus.com

Community Lay Director's Corner

Dear Emmaus Family,

I haven't shared my fourth day experiences in a long time. I went on Walk #8 at Timberline and sat at the table of Ruth. My husband and I now serve at Marvin Methodist Church, in Tyler Texas. When I went on my walk in 1999-2000, I was in my forties, I was much more physically active and I had a full-time job.

I was so humbled by my experience and awed by God's Holy presence at the walk, that I wanted to help on future walks. I took on many jobs, table leader, assistant table leader, chapel, timekeeper, speaker escort, etc. God worked hard on me, he gave me opportunities to speak publicly, to learn how to love others, even the difficult ones. He gave me an opportunity to improve on my weaknesses and to build on my strengths. Even more than that, he grew my heart for others and shared how important it was for me to love everyone.

I have continued to be active for over 25 years in the GRACE Emmaus community. Each time I participate in a walk I see God's Miracles, and his mighty Presence. I never thought of this as my ministry, until one day my pastor, Brandy Stephens prayed for me and my ministry, Emmaus. I have seen myself grow in God's presence, and I have felt the holy spirit working in me. What a glorious ministry it has been and continues to be. I hope my experience will encourage you to work on our walks, and to continually be active in the GRACE Emmaus community as well.

I have shared below another 4th day story from a doctor in Oklahoma.

My Fourth Day Story

DECEMBER 11, 2025 BY MARK GIBSON

We moved to Chickasha in 2002 and immediately started attending church at Epworth UMC. My children were involved in the youth ministry programs, and I started singing in the choir. I was also attending our monthly men's ministry breakfast and fellowship meetings.

It didn't take very long before I was asked to go on an Emmaus walk. When I asked questions about what that was, I was told I would have to attend the walk and find out. "It is so you don't start having preconceived thoughts and ideas about what it will be like", I was told.

Eventually, I signed up, and my wife and I worked it out where I could attend.



I have always believed that you should think about how you treat and interact with people you don't know, with the possibility that you might be speaking with one of God's angels, or Jesus, or maybe even God. The story of Emmaus fit into that belief, so going on a Walk made sense. "The way you have treated others is how you would have treated Me." I met new people from other towns and churches in Oklahoma. Eventually, through helping with subsequent walks and meetings, you get to know them, their friends. It's a very supportive community. I think maybe like the early churches in Christianity.

There are many opportunities for spiritual growth on each Walk, and I'm sure it's never the same for each pilgrim. Most of us are at slightly different places in our spiritual walks, and there are many underlying reasons for what we believe and how we receive, perceive, and

react to situations. The great thing is that I never felt like I was being judged or expected to act or say certain things. I had never been very comfortable speaking in public, especially when I had to pray, but found myself becoming more comfortable through my interactions with my table members and the walk volunteers. I definitely think I was able to learn from the leaders and participants of our walks, especially in the areas of prayer and acceptance.

I received many blessings from going on my walk. I had an opportunity to get to know pilgrims from my own church and from other churches in the southwest part of Oklahoma. It gave me a community to be a part of and to share with. The candlelight services were especially meaningful for me, as I believe they are for most of the community. In a world where being a Christian is often misrepresented as being better, more righteous, and more important than others who don't have lots of stuff (materialism), I felt accepted for who I was, not being judged or condemned for not being good enough. I realized personal growth and a chance to truly understand my purpose as a follower of Christ. A chance to walk beside and learn from our Savior.

I hope you enjoyed this 4th day story, and may your journey with Christ be one you can gladly share with others,

Debbie B. Hays- Community Lay Director.

Camp Gilmont Workday – Save the Date!

On **Saturday, May 16**, we will have our annual Camp Gilmont Workday! **Arrive at 8am at Mackey Hall (NOT the Dining Hall)**, and we will spend the morning doing projects around the camp. About noon we will stop for lunch and then have Worship. We can go home after that.

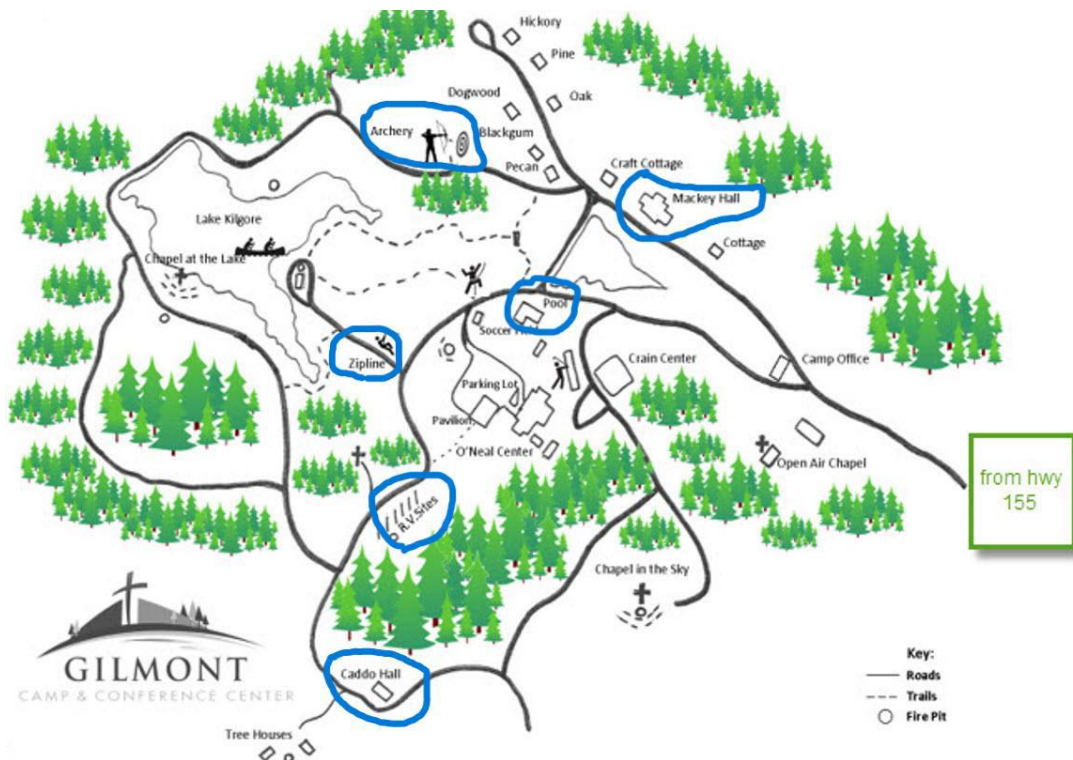
Bring your own food and drink since this is **NOT** a Potluck. **Also, bring insect repellent and sunscreen!**

This year we will be cleaning some of the outdoor paths so bring pruners, weed eaters, tree trimmers, and rakes.



Also, we will be cleaning some of the craft areas around the camp so bring cleaning supplies, brooms, and dust pans.

Please try to come! It is a great time of fun, companionship, and worship while we help Camp Gilmont with much needed improvements before the summer season begins.



Any Reunion Group Updates?

We need your help to keep our website **Reunion Group List** up to date! Some of our new 4th Dayers are still looking for a Reunion Group, and this list is important in their search.

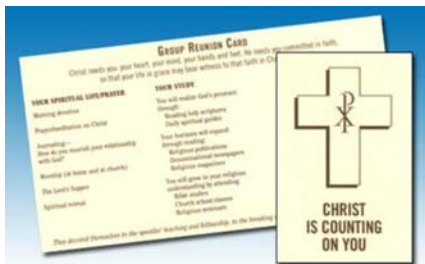
The Reunion Group also serves as a vital support system for those of us who have taken our own Walk. They are designed to help us maintain our spiritual growth and commitment to a life lived in the grace of God. These meetings provide a safe space for us to share our faith, celebrate victories, find comfort in life's problems and hold each other accountable in our faith journeys. They also offer a way to continue the experience of the Walk to Emmaus into daily life, ensuring that the lessons learned there are not lost.

Please check our GRACE Community website, www.GraceEmmaus.com. You can find a list of the Reunion Groups in our Community by clicking the "Reunion Groups" tab at the top of the main page, and then the "Reunion Groups List" option.

Please contact me either by email or by using the "Reunion Group Changes" option on the website if...

- there is a Group that is no longer meeting
- changes are needed for any Group that is currently meeting
- you know a Group that should be added to our list

Remember, if none of the Reunion Groups on the list are convenient for you to attend, it only takes you and one other person to form a group of your own!



DeColores!
Martha Walker
Community Reunion Group Coordinator
marthasgarden55@gmail.com

The Joy of working a walk

I love working at Emmaus Walks. After going on my Walk in 2009, I waited eight years before finally serving on one. The moment I worked my first Walk, I was hooked. Watching God at work in the lives of those who attend the Walks—and in the lives of those who serve—truly is a gift.

Over the years, I've seen women let go of pain, guilt, and obstacles they'd been carrying for years. I've watched those who were running from God's call finally surrender to obedience. I've also listened to women who believed they could never get up and give a talk—or lead a Walk—turn their fears and doubts over to God and do what seemed impossible. God is so good, and He always shows up on the Walks in amazing ways.

If you've never stepped out in faith and done something you knew you weren't equipped to do, let me tell you—there's nothing quite like it. Whatever God is calling you to do, no matter how unworthy you feel, do it. God will not let you down. He thrives on the impossible.

Whether it's Emmaus, your church, or your community, listen for what God is asking of you. Pay attention to what's been weighing on your heart and mind. Find friends who will pray for you, support you, and encourage you—then go for it. God will be with you in every step and every detail.

Sandra Grasch- Exoficio Lay Director

May



May: A Season of Growth... and Invitation

May is a beautiful reminder that growth is happening all around us. The flowers are blooming, the days are getting longer, and creation itself seems to be leaning toward the light. It's a season that quietly reflects what God desires to do in each of us; renew, refresh, and draw us closer to Him.

Just as gardens don't grow without care and intention, our spiritual lives need tending too. We all need time set apart to reconnect, to listen, and to be reminded of God's grace and purpose in our lives. That's exactly what the Walk to Emmaus provides... a space to step away from the noise of everyday life and experience God in a deeper, more personal way.

As we look ahead to the fall Walks, now is the time to begin praying about who God might be placing on your heart to invite. Who in your life could benefit from a weekend of renewal? A friend who feels weary? A family member searching for direction? A coworker who needs encouragement?

Sometimes the hardest step is simply asking, but that invitation could be life-changing.

The Emmaus experience is not just a weekend; it's the beginning of a journey. It strengthens disciples, builds lasting Christian community, and equips believers to live out their faith with renewed passion and purpose.



This May, let's be intentional:

- * Pray for future pilgrims
- * Listen for God's prompting
- * Step out in faith and extend an invitation

You never know how God might use your "yes" to impact someone's life forever.

Let's watch what He grows.

DeColores,

Charlene Burton
GRACE Emmaus Registrar

May:

A Season of Growth

God is always at work—
in our lives, in our communities,
and through the invitation
we extend to others.

 WALK TO
EMMAUS
THE UPPER ROOM®

PRAY. LISTEN. INVITE.
You never know how God might use your yes.

Sign up pilgrims for the Fall Walks!

DON'T MISS THE TRAIN

— Step Into the Blessing of Serving

Sometimes we believe we've missed our moment—but this train hasn't left the station. There's still a seat waiting for you.

If you've been feeling a nudge to serve as a team member on a Walk to Emmaus, consider this your reminder—it's not too late to submit your application for the Men's Fall Walk Team and Women's Fall Walk Team. You don't have to know everything about the journey—you just have to step onto the train before it departs.

Serving on a Walk to Emmaus Team is a chance to be part of what God is doing in the lives of others—and often becomes a time of personal growth, fellowship, and renewed purpose.

Team Selection is on May 16, 2026. So don't delay.

If you've been thinking about it or hesitating, take the next step. There is still time to say "yes."

Go to the Grace Emmaus Website graceemmaus.com and click on Team Application, and submit your application today, and join in the blessing of serving.

De Colores!

John Webb

Men's Walk #114 Lay Director

Donna Sustaire

Women's Walk #115 Lay Director

God's Voice

How do you hear God's voice? Is it like Moses did on the top of a mountain, or is it soft and gentle within your spirit? Is it through the voice of a stranger or a friend?

God speaks to us in different ways. One way to discern his voice is by the message that you are hearing. Is it one of peace? Does the message build you up or cause you to be fearful?

God does not give us a spirit of fear, but rather a spirit of hope, peace and boldness to proclaim the good news of his son Jesus Christ.

God is calling each of us to serve his people, Jesus ate with sinners, healed the sick and feed the hungry.

As this newsletter was compiled, I couldn't help but to think that God is calling each of us to boldly serve our church, our community, and or Emmaus community.

The Grace Emmaus Rose community has hosted #113 walks so far, with an estimated average of 25 pilgrims per walk, this is nearly 3,000 pilgrims that have experienced the grace and love of God through the Emmaus community!

On those walks, an estimated 3500 community members have served the pilgrims with many, many more attending sponsor's hour, signing up for prayer, attending candlelight and closings. This is an amazing ministry that I am so proud to be a part of.

When I went on my walk, I remember thinking, "I will never have the courage to get up there and give a talk". I learned a valuable lesson- Never say "No" to God or underestimate the spirit of strength and boldness that he can provide.

If you haven't worked a walk, please consider filling out an application. If you thought the walk was great, experience it from the other side. It not only transforms you during the weekend, but you get an opportunity to serve and stay connected for the months leading up to and after the walk takes place.

Let's work together to strengthen this great community and tool that God uses to strengthen the faith of the East Texas community.

Newsletter Editor-CJ Cox

GRACE Emmaus Community Board of Directors 2026

Lay Director

Debbie Hays
dhays55@yahoo.com
903-452-5331

Assistant Lay Director

Paul Breedlove
paul@breedlovelandscape.com
903-352-2840

Exoficio Lay Director

Sandra Grasch
grasch319@gmail.com
903-286-3331

Spiritual Director

Kara Mitchell
rev.karamitchell@gmail.com
903-399-4564

Assistant Spiritual Director

Brian Walker
triyourself@gmail.com
903-563-2131

Secretary

Wynn Harle
cowboycentral@suddenlink.net
903-245-2701

Treasurer

Blake Burton
clogguy82@yahoo.com
832-835-4692

Committees

Agape (Banquet)

Betty Buchanan
Jimbet85@gmail.com
903-930-2678

Babe Chick Training

Richard Smith
richsmith1144@yahoo.com
512-940-7553

Book Table

Dawn Woods
joynpraise@gmail.com
903-440-0309

Community Trailer

Douglas Denmark
denmark_douglas@yahoo.com
903-917-3454

Gathering Coordinator

Mary Rhoades
rhoadesm505@gmail.com
505-860-5169

Music Coordinator/Trailer

Brian Jones
bjones171958@gmail.com
469-337-8654

Newsletter Editor

CJ Cox
charlescox98@gmail.com
903-681-4668

Prayer Vigil/ Wall Agape

Mike Payne
mpayne0000@gmail.com
903-658-3637

Publications Coordinator

Kim Brooks
brookskimberly@live.com
903-926-2333

Reunion Groups

Martha Walker
marthasgarden55@gmail.com
903-235-0158

Sponsorship Training

Pam McAdams
sp1792@yahoo.com
469-383-4006

NON-VOTING

Registrar

Charlene Burton
cburtonlindale@gmail.com
903-920-6677

Walk Crosses

Elizabeth Minor
nm-design@msn.com

Dove Name Tags

Jay Edwards
je7255@aol.com

Communications

Brad Burton
brad.d.burton@gmail.com
903-920-6662

Community Trainer

Wynn Harle
cowboycentral@suddenlink.net
903-245-2701

Webmaster

Brian Walker
triyourself@gmail.com
903-563-2131

Ministry Manager Data Admin

Martha Walker
marthasgarden55@gmail.com
903-235-0158

SUPPORT THE G.R.A.C.E. EMMAUS COMMUNITY!

The **G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community** wishes to continue to spread the life-changing experience that an Emmaus weekend can bring. Won't you help us by donating funds for scholarships for both Pilgrims and team members, or to the general fund of our community? We will happily accept donations of any amount and apply them to helping more Pilgrims strengthen their relationship with Christ!

There are multiple ways you can give:

1. You can give online via **our website** by visiting <https://www.graceemmaus.com/pages/donate> and using the giving form there:



2. You can give via direct ACH out of your bank account or mail us a check. To send in a check, or to begin a monthly ACH, either send the check or the information below to:

G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community, PO Box 132212, Tyler TX 75713 -----

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ Email

address: _____

Bank Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ Account#:

_____ Routing #:

_____ -----

For any questions, feel free to reach out to Blake Burton, Treasurer:
clogguy82@yahoo.com or 832-835-4692