

February, 2012  
Volume 12, Issue 02

[G.R.A.C.E. Website  
www.gracemmaus.org](http://www.gracemmaus.org)

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**Men's Walk #60  
Disciples Crossing  
March 15-18, 2012**

**Women's Walk #61  
Disciples Crossing  
April 19-22, 2012**

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***DEAR  
G.R.A.C.E.,***

**Community Lay Director  
February, 2012**

A big THANK YOU to the Van UMC Fourth Day Group for a wonderful meal and Gathering in January. I am looking forward to the next Gathering at Hallsville in February.

I received so many blessings from my Walk and continue to receive them from the G.R.A.C.E Community. One of so many is being a part of the Board.

Another is from the G.R.A.C.E. Community itself. The wonderful people I have met and gotten to know over the last few years is amazing. People I would never have had the opportunity to meet had it not been for G.R.A.C.E. It's nice to go to a meeting or training or Gathering and instantly feel at home. And that's because we are all there as a result of someone asking us to go on this "Walk to Emmaus". And we are there because we believe in the mission of the Walk to Emmaus and because of the shared experience of the Walk – even though we all went at different times!

Another blessing is the knowledge that what we experience here in East Texas is being experienced all across the country and around the world.

I encourage each of you to come to a Gathering, go to your Reunion Group meeting, help with a Walk, sponsor a Pilgrim and you - and the rest of us - will be blessed.

DeColores!

Jo Anne Skeen



**THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL GROUP  
REUNIONS**

A Fourth-Day perspective on The Walk to Emmaus prevails in communities with successful group reunions. These communities measure

the vitality of the Emmaus movement not by the number of Walks or the number of pilgrims but by the number of ongoing group reunions among the pilgrims. Community members understand that the goal of Emmaus is not just a great Three-day experience but a revitalized and sustained spiritual relationship with Christ and the church during our Fourth Day as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world. Commitment to this understanding is evident in the community's leadership, teams, and sponsors.

Fourth Day is a priority among the Emmaus Community leadership. Though everyone agrees in theory that group reunions are important, the leaders of the Emmaus community practice this method of living in grace. While every Board of Directors hopes that pilgrims will group, each discusses and acts on this hope in concrete and creative ways. After and Emmaus weekend, the board discusses its continuing responsibility to pilgrims who have just completed and Emmaus weekend and monitors the effort to involve the pilgrims in groups.

Printed from Chapter 12 [Handbook on Emmaus...](#)

Burton Love



**GATHERING NEWS**

The next Gathering will be at Hallsville FUMC on February 18th. Sponsorship training will begin at 4:00 pm, potluck dinner at 5:00 pm, with worship at 6:00± pm.

We will have two Gatherings in March. The first being the candlelight service at Disciple's Crossing on March 17th. The other March

Gathering will be at Lanes Chapel on March 31st. There will be a babe chick meeting then for the men coming off Walk #60 at 4:00 pm with potluck dinner at 5:00 pm and worship at 6:00 pm.

If your church would like to host a Gathering in 2012, please contact me.

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### A COLD DAY IN PHILLY

This story is true. It happened January 26th, 2012 in Philadelphia, PA. I am submitting this story anonymously – because it is not important what I did, but it is important what God did...The lessons learned in this story are so profound, so true, and so revealing about how God works in our lives – I just felt compelled. Sort of like the afternoon of January 26th, 2012...

A couple of years ago I read Under the Overpass by Mike Yankoski. Mike tells the story about his intentional journey into the world of the homeless. Mike and his friend spend 5 months on the street – homeless. The book broke down so many preconceived notions I held about the homeless. The two most important things I learned from the book were: 1) More than food, more than shelter, more than anything, the homeless need affirmation they are valuable human beings. 2) The number of times during the 5 month period Mike and his friend were helped by somebody who professed to be a Christian – One!!! So with that in mind, I have made it my personal ministry to try and help at least one person a week while traveling for business. It is uncanny how God always seem to lead me to the one person who needs it the most. In cities of literally hundreds of homeless people, I always seem to find the One. In cities like Philadelphia, Houston, or San Francisco, there is no shortage of homeless. They are everywhere. And it is impossible to help them all...But

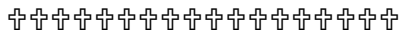
God knows that – he just really wants me to be open to helping the One.

I was returning from the office late in the afternoon. The walk from the office to the hotel is about 15 minutes. I always try to walk the same route - partly for safety and partly because it is the most direct route. This particular afternoon it was cold and drizzling rain. As I approached the intersection where I make one of many zigzags, the lights were not set properly for me to safely cross. So, instead, I continued straight ahead and proceeded down a street I have rarely traveled. And it didn't take long to see something I have never seen before – a young man sitting in the middle of the sidewalk, with his bare feet suspended over a steam grate. He was trying to warm his feet in the steam, in the middle of the sidewalk, in 35 degree weather. I was watching him and watching the people as they passed. Nobody even acknowledged his existence. It was like he was invisible. And it was disturbing. My first thought was, "He really doesn't have any shoes – he needs shoes." But I kept walking – along with the rest of the city – as though this was not a concern of mine. It wasn't 10 seconds after walking by the young man that the thought hit me, "What am I doing? Here is somebody with a real need and I just walked by like he doesn't exist." I then begin to rationalize. I look around thinking there are probably no places to buy shoes anyway...I look up and down both sides of the street looking for a store that sells shoes. I'm thinking, if I see a store that sells shoes in the next minute or so, I am going to return and buy the young man some shoes...So what do I see – of course, I see on the opposite side of the street three businesses that sell shoes - one being Foot Locker. I turn around and start walking back toward the young man. I make eye contact as I approach him. He is still sitting there holding his frozen feet in the steam. Before I speak I examine his feet. It is quickly obvious this is not some attempt to scam somebody into buying shoes. His feet are blistered and bloody and filthy. He has been without shoes for some time. I asked him, "Where are your shoes?" He responded, "I don't know." I said, "What do you mean you don't know?"

He tells me, "I woke up yesterday and my shoes and socks were gone." I told him to come with me. He asked me, "Am I in trouble?"

It was painful to watch the young man walk. I can only imagine how much it must have hurt him to walk on the cold, wet streets. We walked very slowly – he stayed a few paces behind me. I could tell he wasn't really sure what was about to happen. We get to the entrance of Foot Locker and I open the door and turn around and he is just staring at me – not saying a word. I said, "Come inside. I am going to buy you some shoes." We entered the store and a clerk comes over and asked if we needed help. I tell the clerk, pointing at the young man, "He needs some shoes." The clerk looked down at his cold and bloodied feet, then looked back at me and said, "I guess he does". "What size?" the clerk asked. "13", the young man responded. I thought great, I would have to get the homeless guy with a size 13 foot! The clerk headed to a backroom looking for a size 13 in the style we picked. I asked the young man his name. "Josh", he said. He is really not looking at me and he seemed a bit confused by the whole episode. I asked him where he is from. He responded by giving me the intersection of the two well-known streets a couple of blocks from where we were. He really seemed uncomfortable by the whole thing. It was almost like he was waiting – and you will have to excuse me – for the other shoe to drop. The clerk reappears with a box of New Balance shoes. I tell the clerk to get him a 6-pack of socks as well. The clerk handed him the socks and shoes and Josh proceed to put on the socks – then the shoes. "Do they fit?" the clerk asked. Josh responded with a nod. We headed to the register to pay. I could feel Josh standing behind me, waiting for an explanation of what just happened. The clerk rang up the bill - \$72. I gave the clerk my credit card - and handed the sack, with the socks and the empty shoe box, to Josh. I kept the receipt. Josh was still just looking at me. I told Josh, "You know, I don't even know you but I care enough about you to buy you shoes. So go take care of yourself...And before the day is over I want you to





**NON-ELECTED POSITIONS**

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## GRACE EMMAUS

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 donate \$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 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Thank you for your continued support of our Emmaus community.

DeColores

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 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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