

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

## 

# **Introducing our 2010 Community Lay Director:**

#### January, 2010 Volume 10, Issue 1

# G.R.A.C.E. Website www.gracemmaus.org

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# **Happy New Year!**

Greetings! I am Dan Matthews. I went on Kononia Emmaus Walk #640 in October 1998 at Mount Wesley Retreat and Conference Center in Kerrville, Texas. I sat at the Table of St. Stephen. My wife, O.Y., and I worship and serve at Palestine Grace UMC. I feel privileged and honored to have been chosen to serve as the G.R.A.C.E. Community Lay Director for this New Year of 2010.

The New Year for G.R.A.C.E. is a time for thanking board members who have served us faithfully: Ray Carden, Robin Gillian, Bill Durr, and Gail Meadows. Their leadership and gifts of service were paramount in the success of G.R.A.C.E. for the past three years. We wish them well and look forward to their continued, active participation in our community.

I join with you in welcoming our new G.R.A.C.E. board members for 2010. Ken Braswell of Athens, Frank Copeland of Palestine, Kathy Kapka of Whitehouse, Jo Anne Skeen of Palestine, and Jana Whitehurst of Longview. Also, we welcome Diane Frachiseur of Troup who will be serving for the remaining year of John Teegarden's term. John resigned in 2008 and Frank Copeland served in his stead for 2009.

As your CLD for 2010, I was thinking of what our community goals are for the year. There have not been any formal discussions as to goals for 2010. Certainly, we, the community, could not be successful in reaching any goal without the embracement and support of the community's Fourth Day members.

I have two goals in mind that I hope will be adopted by the board and you, for the community in 2010:

- 1. A Community Activity in at least 11 of the 12 months. We have four central Community Gatherings on our calendar for January, April, August, and November. Walks are scheduled for March and October. To reach this goal, Fourth Day members from the spoke areas around Tyler (East, North, West, South) are called to get together and organize gatherings for the months of February, May, June, July, and September (December's calendar is so full of family and local church/community activities). Burton Love is our coordinator for Community Gatherings and will be happy to assist you in scheduling and coordinating a gathering for your area.
- 2. Full Walks for two of the four scheduled Walks. Remember the day when there was a waiting list to get on a Walk? What has changed? I can look around me and see that we've only scratched the surface in the churched population having experienced the "Walk to Emmaus." I'm sure the answer to the question, What has changed? Is US, the Fourth Day members. We no longer actively sponsor Pilgrims as we are called to do. Scarcity creates demand. Scarcity would result from four full Walks per year. Demand would be waiting lists for women and men in wait for the opportunity to go on a Walk. When was the last time you sponsored a pilgrim? If every Fourth Day member of G.R.A.C.E. were to sponsor at least 1 pilgrim per year, we would have to offer eight or more walks a year. Why not set a personal goal of sponsoring at least 1 pilgrim per year? And take advantage of attending Sponsorship training offered in January 23 and August 28, 2010.

Grace and Peace,

Dan Matthews

**Community Lay Director** 

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## A Note from Our Community Spiritual Director: "Praying at Christmas Time".

I was waiting in line at the Post Office the other day and overheard a man talking about his son visiting from Florida. He was glad to have family at home so he took his grandson to see Santa Claus. When Santa asked the little boy what he wanted for Christmas the little boy said, "Santa, don't you remember? I told you in Florida in the mall!" It brought a smile to my face and a thought about faith.

I wondered if my prayer life held the faith of the little boy and Santa Claus. Praying once, telling God of my needs and then trusting God heard and remembers may be problematic. Am I more like the widow that keeps coming and coming before the Lord, pestering until I receive vindication? (LK 18:2) Hum, how should I pray?

Jesus prayed, and taught the Disciples to pray, for God's Will to be done. (LK 11:2, LK 22:42) "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, yet, not my will but yours be done." Jesus told God he would rather do something else. Hum, how should I pray?

Here it is, Christmas. Jesus is coming and I wonder if I am ready. What will I say, what will I do, how do I prepare for His arrival? What should my Christmas prayer be like? "Lord, thanks for sending Jesus. Lord, turn our guns and missiles into tractors and houses. Lord, give us peace on Earth. And by the way, could you take care of my bills they are really piling up." How does it sound to you? Maybe my prayer should be, "Lord, thanks for entering the world through Jesus. Lord, help me understand what I can do to turn guns and missiles into tractors and houses. Lord, help me understand how I can be a part of Peace on Earth this year. Lord, if Peace comes not this year then guide me to be an instrument of Peace. Lord, I know I have spent more than I have, please forgive me. Lord, open my eyes, ears and heart to your Will. ... [Take time to listen.] ... Thank you, Lord." Let us prepare to receive Jesus this year rather than Santa Claus.

De Colores, David Mays Spiritual Director

#### CONTINUING TO GROW THROUGH SHEPHERDING OR PILGRIM SPONSORSHIP

Hopefully we are all looking at our "instruction manual" to see if we are on track. We stay on track by reading the Word of God every day, by meditating on His grandeur, His majesty, His awesomeness. Spring is the most obvious time of the year to see God's amazing renewal taking place in nature all around us (I know it doesn't seem like it now, but it will be here soon). I think we all just soak it in – all the incredible rebirth happening everywhere, I love spring time in east Texas. We all really need spring right now. Just breathing in the fresh air and soaking up all the beautiful sunshine rejuvenates us, refreshes us, and helps us get back on track after these cold and dark days of winter.

Being involved with the Emmaus Board has lead me to look back at one of the instruction manuals we all received in our Sunday packets when we were pilgrims. I pulled out my <u>Day Four</u>, The Pilgrims Journey to review, and I was surprised to see answered some of the questions I had had for a long time. When I got to Chapter 8, I realized that as a Community, we need to reemphasize the importance of being a good sponsor, and what it means to be a sponsor. I encourage each of you to get your copy of <u>Day Four</u> and re-read this important chapter.

Chapter 8, "The Next Generation: Being a Good Sponsor" says these things: "The strength of any Emmaus community is a direct result of that community's recruiting practices. If the community is committed to recruiting strong church leaders for the purpose of strengthening the local church, then the community will be a strong, vital force in the renewal movement. If, on the other hand, the Walk to Emmaus is looked upon as a hospital where every human ill can be cured, it will have a weakening effect

on the entire community. Emmaus is designed to spiritually renew church members who, in turn, can "Christianize their environments". The church is a vital part of this renewal effort. If strong church members are recruited to attend Emmaus Walks, the Emmaus community will provide authentic spiritual renewal."

"The overriding purpose of Emmaus is to Christianize environments such as home, business, friendships, and churches. As people have an opportunity to consider the reorientation of their priorities, to experience the grace of God in a loving community, to be wooed by the Holy Spirit, to be disciples, and to participate in a supportive group following the weekend, it is only natural that they will want to change the most important things in their lives according to this new experience of love."

"There are several qualities in a Pilgrim that this expectation would suggest. First, the prospective Pilgrim should already be on a pilgrimage, willing to grow and move forward in his or her journey of faith. Second, the person should have a Christian orientation – no, a Christian fervor. The Pilgrim knows God can make and has made a difference in life. Third, the prospective Pilgrim is not so consumed by other situations that he or she will not be able to give full attention to the message and experience of the Walk to Emmaus during the seventy-two-hour experience and all the follow-up activities."

Over the course of working many Emmaus Walks in all capacities, I have noticed that there have been Pilgrims on an Emmaus Walk who felt coerced into attending, or did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, or were under the impression that somehow the problems in their life would disappear, or were not members of a church, or made it clear prior to send-off that they were unwilling to leave outside situations outside the front doors. Not only are these Pilgrims being unfair to the team who has worked extremely hard to provide a rich, spiritual experience, but they are also detrimental to the Pilgrims who are there to learn and grow and move forward in their journey of faith.

So I encourage each one of you to review your <u>Day Four</u> booklet, pray diligently about who you are sponsoring, and know what your responsibilities are as a sponsor. If you have any questions about sponsorship, you know you can call any member of your Emmaus Board.

We are eager to hear from you.

Tom Perdue, G.R.A.C.E. Walk No. 1, Table of St. John

**GRACE Board Member** 

## **GATHERINGS for GRACE(2010)**

Jan. 23, 2010 Fairwood UMC; Sponsor training 4:30PM; Pot Luck Dinner 5:45PM; Worship 6:45PM

April 24, 2010 Lanes Chapel UMC; Babe Chick training 4:30PM; Pot Luck Dinner 5:45PM; Worship 6:45PM

Aug. 28, 2010 Grace Community, OJ Campus; Sponsor training 4:30PM; Pot Luck Dinner 5:45PM; Worship 6:45PM

Nov. 20 2010 Grand Ultreya; Green Acres Baptist Church; Babe Chick training 4:30PM; Pot Luck Dinner 5:45PM; Worship 6:45PM

#### **GATHERING NEWS**

As you can see above, we have established the dates for all four centralized Community Gatherings for 2010. Please continue to keep in mind that the Grace Emmaus Board has voted to change the time of day for 2010 Gatherings. All Training sessions will start at 4:30PM; Dinner will be at 5:45PM with Worship starting at 6:45PM. Centralized Gatherings will continue to be on Saturdays in the Tyler area.

Throughout 2009, we included the criteria for putting on local Gatherings. We were blessed with local Gatherings in Marshall, Alba/Golden, and Payne Springs. So far we have heard about interest in the possibility of putting on local Gatherings in Marshall, Kilgore, Lindale/Mineola, Palestine, and Payne Springs. The critical issue for putting on a Gathering is the venue or place. The rest is easy. Churches are the best locations. If you would like to plan a Gathering contact **Burton Love** at **903 425 3864**(h) **903 880 5462**(cell) or <a href="mailto:burtonlove@embargmail.com">burtonlove@embargmail.com</a>. You can also get guidance from any of the other board members. Keep in mind, it is not difficult and there is a lot of help available to make it a success.

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of the G.R.A.C.Emmaus Gatherings in 2010. Have a great New Year.

(Be sure to check the G.R.A.C.Emmaus web site (<u>www.gracemmaus.org</u>) for additional directions and any updates on these Gatherings).

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## **REUNION GROUPS**

Tom Perdue, Reunion Group Coordinator

# With a Little Help from My Friends

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia;

Song by The Beatles from the album Sqt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band;

"With a Little Help from My Friends" (originally titled "A Little Help from My Friends") is a song written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney, released on The Beatles album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band in 1967. The song was written for and sung by Beatles drummer Ringo Starr as the character "Billy Shears"; it is ranked #304 on Rolling Stone's list of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr performed this song for the first time together at the David Lynch Benefit Concert in the Radio City Music Hall, New York in April 2009.

It seems like I always need a little help from my friends. We all do. I have a busy life. Between a job that demands a significant amount of daily energy and effort, church responsibilities, volunteering in various ways, trying to make time to walk my dog Charlie for exercise, running errands, spending time with family, caring for a house and yard, and (last but certainly not least) spending time getting to know God better through study and prayer, and all of the other things that "pop up" to do, I need someone to say to me on a regular basis "Stop. Look around you. Where do you see God working? What are you doing to advance His Kingdom?" That's what my Emmaus Reunion Group experiences do for me. Each time we meet, it has been different, but each time has served as part of my "compass" to keep me joyfully focused on prayer, study and action in my Christian life.

I have been a part of the same reunion group since I experienced the Walk to Emmaus in May of 1998. The group was waiting for me after my Walk and asked me "When can you meet?" We have always tried to adjust our schedules to accommodate each other so we wouldn't miss out on the reunion group experience. There

sometimes may only be just two of us, because of our busy schedules but we still try to meet every week. We share our joys and heartaches, pray for each other. We touch base with each other for encouragement and laughter. We pray for our church and our community. My weekly reunion group is a source of strength. Mike, Tom, Ray, Tom, Bruce and I (there are three Tom's in our group) make time to meet almost every Thursday and we've laughed and cried together. We really do hold each other accountable in a loving way, and we pretty much have the Grouping Card memorized. When I don't see them for a few weeks because of work or vacation or even sometimes my own attitude, I really miss our time together.

Helping you find a reunion group is your sponsor's duty that is much more important than most of us realize; our sponsorship role doesn't end when we unpack the car on Sunday evening. If your sponsor didn't help you get into a group, start one on your own. All it takes is two people who are committed to supporting each other on a regular basis in your Christian walk. If you are sponsoring a Pilgrim in 2010, make a personal commitment get your Pilgrim involved in a reunion group - and to go to one yourself!

Reunion groups should be open to growth and change. The members of your group can be other Emmaus Community members - or not. Invite new people to join you. If you are in a reunion group, make sure that our 2010 sponsors know that your group is ready and willing to welcome new G.R.A.C.E. members into your fellowship.

(By the way, there's room at our table at Mikes office on Thursday morning!) New people can change the dynamic of a group, certainly, but the nature of Emmaus reunion groups is to be welcoming and inclusive. Who knows what you might learn from a fresh voice? If the group gets too large for sharing, take the initiative and create another group. Nothing in the Christian life is meant to be static - reaching out and growing and being open to new experiences are important parts of our Fourth Days.

I pray that you will take the words of your Lay Director's Perseverance talk to heart and find or start a reunion group. I promise you that this small group of Christian friends you meet with will laugh with you, cry with you, celebrate with you, pray with you, challenge you and help you see and know God better in your Fourth Days!

# WANTED: EIGHT MEN AND WOMEN TO HELP LOAD TRAILER!



Those of you who love to hear the testimonies at the WALK CLOSINGS.... this job is for YOU! We need help moving the lidded, plastic boxes, speakers, banners, etc., to the Trailer. The Outside Team will have everything packed and by the door nearest the trailer. It has been a real chore for the faithful two or three who have helped in the past. With several committing to faithful service we can get the job done quickly! Frank has organized the trailer so all boxes

are uniform sizes for easy stacking, and are distributed for lighter weight. You'll be there for the 4 pm closing, anyway, and all can immediately begin loading the trailer when closing is over. Your help would be much appreciated!

PLEASE CONTACT FRANK COPELAND AT FHCOPEL@GMAIL.COM OR (903) 391-3542

## **GRACE Board for 2010**

## Community Lay Director

**Dan Matthews** 

Danmatt4497@hughes.net

903-338-2136 (h)

903-948-9039 (c)

### **Spiritual Director** David Mays

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903-663-2438

903-374-4766

### **Assistant Community Lay** Director

**Gathering Coordinator Burton Love** 

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#### Treasurer

Jo Anne Skeen

ioanneskeen@gmail.com

#### **Secretary**

**Diana Frachiseur** 

tdhbe05@yahoo.com

#### **Publications**

George Assaf

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### **Prayer Clock, Agape Letters** Judy Hawn

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903-681-1565 (c)

## **Babe Chick Training**

**Brent Hooser** 

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903-939-9528 (h)

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### **GRACE Crosses/Name Tags. Nominating/ Team Selection**

Ken Braswell

#### Newsletter

Joy Parker

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## **Walk Book Table**

John Norman

jenorman@hughes.net 214-803-4074(c)

Webmaster, Email Group Coordinator, Reunion groups, **Sponsorship Training** 

**Tom Perdue** 

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## Registrar

**Chrysalis Steering Chairperson** 

**Teresa Elliott** 

elliott.teresa@gmail.com

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## **Community Trailer/Cleanup**

Frank Copeland

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903-723-3420 (h)

903-391-3542 (c)

#### **Music Director**

**Patti Jones** 

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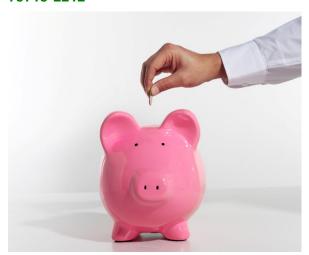
### Walk Agape

Jana Whitehurst

If you have a desire to see the G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Community to be able to further the ministry of God through the Walk to Emmaus program and would wish to make a automatic monthly tax deductible donation through your bank account, prayerfully consider filling out the form below and mail it back to

#### **GRACE EMMAUS**

**Treasurer** P.O.Box132212 Tyler TX. 75713-2212



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 vou 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. **DeColores** 

# PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: City, State, Zip: **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 \_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Transit/ABA # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: Return to: **GRACE EMMAUS Treasurer** P.O. Box 132212 Tyler TX.

75713-2212