

# Grace for Today

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

May - June 2023

### Coming Events

#### **Saturday, July 22, Gathering**

Carroll Springs Community Church, Carroll Springs - Noon Potluck, Worship immediately following

#### **Saturday, August 19, Gathering**

Bar None Cowboy Church, Tatum Noon Potluck, Worship immediately following

#### **Fall Men's Walk #102**

##### **Thurs Sept 21 thru Sun Sept 24**

Camp Gilmont, Gilmer  
Sat, 7:30pm, Gathering & Candlelight

#### **Fall Women's Walk 103**

##### **Thurs Sept 28 thru Sun Oct 1**

Camp Gilmont, Gilmer  
Sat, 7:30, Gathering & Candlelight

### **We need PILGRIMS for these Fall Walks!**

Do you know someone who is a good candidate? Please consider being a sponsor! Helpful Information is on the website. See the Pilgrim Application tab.

**Prayer Vigil signup is posted on the website!** Please signup to pray for Walks 102 and 103.



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**Find More on the G.R.A.C.E. Website:**  
[www.graceemmaus.com](http://www.graceemmaus.com)

## Community Lay Director's Corner

A few weeks ago we celebrated Memorial Day. I, like many others, was swept up in a traditional holiday fashion. Maybe you too were relaxing by the water's edge, or having a BBQ? Maybe you were listening to music, playing games, and visiting with friends and family? One thing that probably crossed our minds on Sunday night was the pleasant thoughts of not going to work on Monday morning.

However, looking back over the weekend I wonder if we gave enough thought to the reason we celebrate Memorial Day weekend? Did we spend more than a quick minute to take advantage of the great opportunity we have to remember and honor the sacrifices of the innumerable individuals who sacrificed themselves to preserve the freedoms all Americans enjoy today? Or were we too busy enjoying those very freedoms at that very moment?

Unlike Veterans Day, which honors all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Memorial Day honors those who gave their lives in doing so. This reminded me of someone else who gave their life, so that we could live free. It reminded me that we can sometimes get so caught up living life that we forget about Jesus' sacrifice for us and for whom we live our life.

*"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:2*

De Colores!  
Chad Bearden  
Community Lay Director

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

—John 15:13 (NIV)



## **The clock is ticking**

*“Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered—how fleeting my life is.”*

*Psalms 39:4*

Remember being 10 and dreaming about being a teenager? It seemed like it would never arrive. But 13 came and went, and almost instantly you dreamed of turning 16 and having your driver’s license. That came and dashed right by, too.

As we age, the clocks hands seem to accelerate. Their pace, as if they’re in a rush to get somewhere, dragging us along. One day we look up and wonder where the years have gone.

And flip side view is the antidote. We can use our days in such a way as to turn that dash into warmth, that feeling of loss into a legacy of love. This, of course, is something we must not put off any longer. After all, the clock is ticking.

John Webb  
Assistant Community Lay Leader



The future is something which everyone reaches at a rate of 60 minutes an hour, whatever he does, whoever he is.

~CS Lewis.

## **His Holy Name**

Did you know God had concern for His Holy Name? He did.

God talks to Ezekiel, and Ezekiel writes it down.

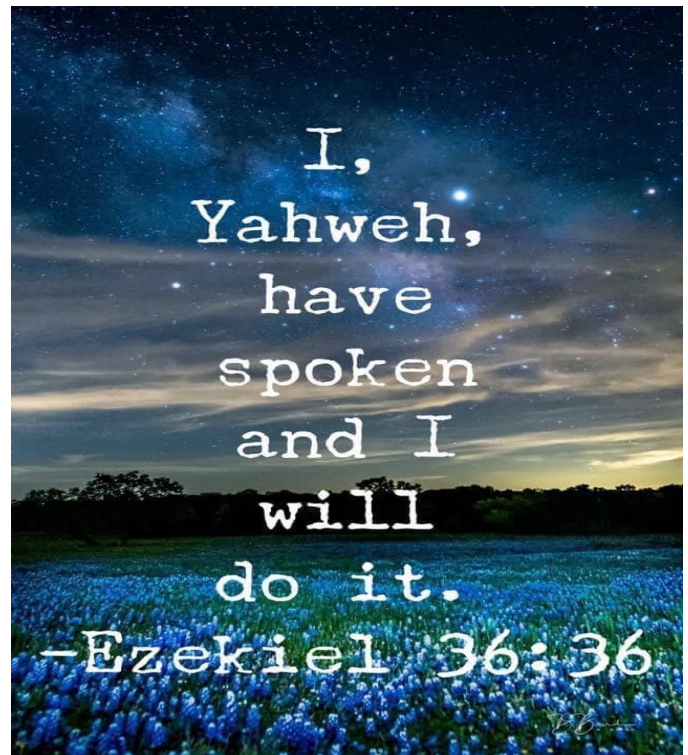
King David had already conquered Jerusalem. King Solomon had already built the glorious Temple. This Jerusalem is where Ezekiel lived.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem in 598BC. It was the greatest crisis in Israel's history; the destruction of Israel and the Temple along with the exile of approximately 10,000 citizens deported to Babylon. Ezekiel was one of those 10,000.

Five years later, when Ezekiel is 30 years old, he would have begun his duties as a priest had he been in his home land. But God had other plans for Ezekiel. He received his prophetic call.

Ezekiel had already been writing of the nation's moral depravity and absence of spiritual concern. But, after the destruction of Israel, while the nation was still in exile, he began to write about hope.

The people needed hope the most during this time. Everything they had known is gone, their holy city, the holy temple. And now they live in a foreign land.



One of my favorite Scriptures in Ezekiel is 36:16-36. Here God reveals to Ezekiel that He is concerned for His Holy Name. Those who worship other gods have begun to believe and speak of how Israel's God was not strong enough to protect and care for them; He is weaker than the gods they serve.

"I will honor the holiness of My great name," God says. He then proceeds to tell Ezekiel what He will do and how He will do it. It's a marvelous chapter. It's a great reminder of ALL God is capable of; especially when He sets His mind to do it!

We are the beneficiaries of what He did. He sent His Son. He gives us a new heart and puts a new spirit within us.  
Thank You, Lord!

Blessings,  
Liz Webb





# Holy Land 2023

with the Upper Room Emmaus Ministries

November 28 - December 7, 2023

Join us from November 28 to December 7, 2023. The pilgrimage is open to leaders and members of Emmaus Ministries communities around the world, as well as their family members and friends.

During the ten-day event, pilgrims will:

- join in daily reading and reflection on carefully selected passages of scripture
- share with speakers from the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religions who will bring their various faiths and cultures together for interaction and understanding of present-day realities
- be invited to sit with a grassroots movement of understanding, nonviolence, and transformation among Palestinians and Israelis
- continue to experience God's grace in new ways
- be increasingly sensitive to situations of injustice in their respective communities
- reflect on ways in which, as followers of Christ, they can contribute to building a more just society

Don't miss this opportunity to retrace the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus taken by the two discouraged followers of Christ. Come with us to explore how, as a result of their encounter with the risen Lord, these two persons rushed back to Jerusalem to be fully part of what would become a transformative community.

Presentations on the importance of this pilgrimage and ways to make it meaningful will be available to all participants before and after the trip.

Please visit the Upper Room website to access the full itinerary and additional information.



## My Emmaus Story

My name is Brett Walker, I attended G.R.A.C.E. Emmaus Walk 66 at Camp Gilmont in the Fall of 2013, sat at the Table of St John, and my wife Martha and I worship and serve at FUMC Longview, (among other places).

First, a little bit about my history. I grew up in a loving, Christian home and we attended church just about every Sunday. In fact, I can think of very few Sundays that I was not in Sunday school, morning worship, afternoon youth programs, and Sunday night service.

When I was a teenager, I even considered going into the ministry. However, I didn't think that I could ever be good enough. You see, I felt like in order for God to love me, I had to earn it, and I just didn't think I could ever be good enough to "earn it".

As the years went by, I did many of the normal things that folks my age were doing. I worked, played a little too much, was married more than once, and just didn't feel like my life was whole.

Many years later, I joined a church in Longview, and began to worship and participate on a regular basis. Shortly after I became a member, one of the men invited me to a weekly book study. We read and studied a variety of Christian based books.

A couple of years later, my friend invited me to go on some kind of men's retreat called the Walk to Emmaus. I had never heard of it, and asked a lot of questions. After learning more about it, I told him that I just didn't think that I was interested in that sort of thing. I told him that I had attended several Christian retreats in the past and that I usually came away feeling worse than before I attended. I always felt that I just couldn't "measure up".

Luckily, my friend never gave up, and a couple of years later I agreed to attend. Once again, I had many, many questions for him, and even asked him how in the world we would be able to walk all the way to Emmaus in just one weekend.

Well, I attended the Walk, and after spending the weekend with guys I had never met, I realized that it was worth the time. For the first time in my life, I realized that God loved me unconditionally, regardless of what I had done or who I was.

When asked what the Walk to Emmaus meant to me, I tell people that it “freed me up”. It was wonderful to finally feel like I was being accepted for whom I am, just as I am.

After going on the Walk, I became much more active in my local church almost immediately. I started attending Emmaus Gatherings on a regular basis, joined a reunion group, got to know many new folks in the G.R.A.C.E. Community, including lots of pastors, and began working on the Walk teams. All of this while being an “extreme introvert”!

Over the years I have been blessed to work on several teams, the Community board, and various committees. I even proposed to Martha while working on a team at a Walk!! This fall will be the tenth anniversary of my Walk to Emmaus, and I am looking forward to working on a team one more time.

Consider sponsoring someone to go on the Walk. Before talking to them, take a few minutes to review the sponsorship requirements that are listed on our website, [www.graceemmaus.com](http://www.graceemmaus.com), under the “Applications” and “Pilgrim Application” tab. There is a link titled “Sponsor App Guide” that will help you. If you have never attended sponsorship training, feel free to contact our Board Member in charge of sponsorship for additional assistance.

So, I encourage everyone to consider sponsoring a friend in your own church to attend the Walk. Don’t be afraid to tell them a little bit about the course of the three days, answer their questions truthfully, it is not a secret! Of course, you may not want to tell them about the special services on Saturday. They may not be ready to attend when you first talk to them about it, and that’s normal. Just stay ready to answer any questions that they may have. Do your part, and let God do His part. If it is meant for them to go, it will happen in God’s time, not yours.

If they decide to go, just let God, through the Holy Spirit and those who volunteer to be His “hands and feet”, give them the experience that He wants them to have.

Brett Walker

Community Trainer





## ***Anxious and Worried***

You can constantly be worried, negative, anxious, fearful, critical, and bitter. Or, you can be known for seeing the good in people, choosing joy, offering encouragement, looking for God's fingerprints, and always finding something to be grateful for. In either case, the cycle feeds itself.

Like hummingbirds are attracted to sweet things while vultures scour the earth for dead things, we will always find what we are looking for. Why? Because darkness and light both exist. Good and evil are everyday realities. And we must decide who we'll trust, and how we'll spend our lives.

There are plenty of scary things happening in the world, but—because of Jesus—there is always good.

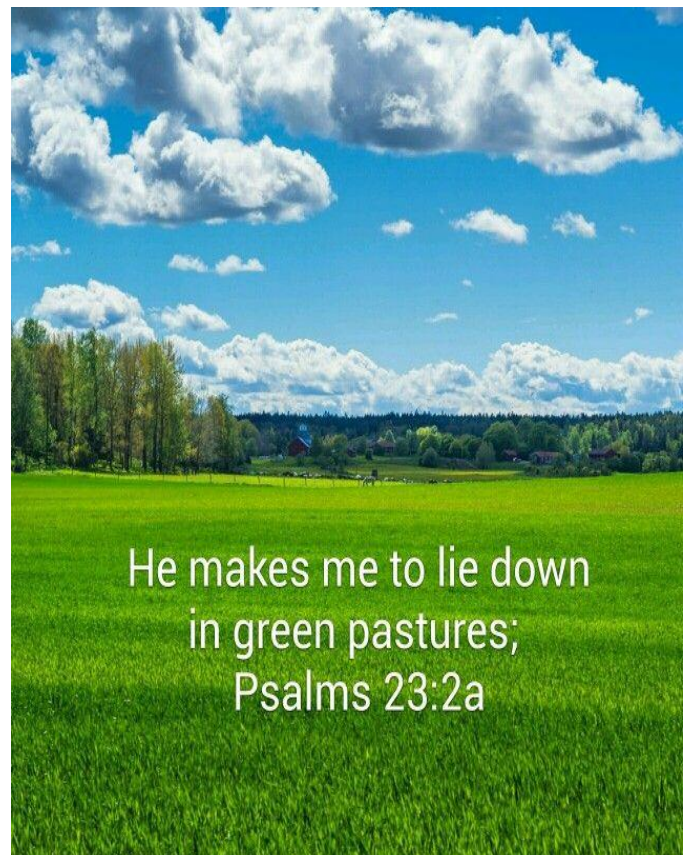
“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.” Proverbs 12:25

Even on our darkest days, Jesus is the light of the world. He's already carrying the weight of the world on His shoulders, which means we don't have to. He has already made a way where there was no way, which means we can follow the path He has blazed. The Holy Spirit is already compelling us and leading us and teaching us and comforting us, which means we're not alone.

The hope we have in Christ isn't just wishful thinking or positive vibes. It's hope that's based on truth—on facts and faith.

So the next time you feel anxiety and fear weighing down your heart, ask God for help and encouragement. Remember, He is closer than a prayer away.

Anonymous Submission  
The Hands and Feet





## **Finding Your Purpose**

Finding our purpose through the seasons of life can be one of the most challenging tasks that we face. Be assured that God has a purpose for us every step of the way, and that purpose can change with the passage of time.

Consider these steps in your search.

1. Engage in different activities that make a difference in your life and in others' lives. You may find one that makes you come alive and truly brings you joy.

2. Always pray. Prayer opens the way to understand what your heart yearns for and the ways you can help others.
3. Know that whatever your circumstances, good or bad, God still has a purpose for you. Continue to search for it.
4. When you feel passionate about something and are willing to work hard, go for it. You are capable of more than you realize.

We must be prayerful and relentless in our pursuit to discover and live out our purpose in life. The journey is different for everyone, but all of us can make a difference in our own way.

A Community Member



## **Looking for Pilgrims**

***Who knows but that you have come to your...position for such a time as this.***

***Esther 4:14***

Some people think God's plan for their lives is like a sales projection chart: an arrow continuing indefinitely upward and to the right. But many of us realize, in retrospect, it's more like a crazy straw—constant twists and turns but with a sweet reward at the end.



Esther was just trying to survive as a decent Israelite girl in Persian captivity, yet God's plan placed her in the royal palace as queen at the precise time a bold voice was needed to prevent her people from being slaughtered.

All David planned to do was silence a giant Philistine intimidating Israel's army, yet his victory over Goliath led to a valued friendship with Jonathan and his first steps toward becoming Israel's next king. (1 Samuel 17-18)

God sent Philip away from the evangelistic fervor of Jerusalem into the wilderness, where he ran into an Ethiopian official seeking spiritual clarity. As a result, the Gospel was carried into Africa. (Acts 8:26-39)

Two pilgrims returning from Jerusalem were grieving the death of their Lord when they met an apparently uninformed stranger on the road. They were among the first to see the resurrected Jesus. (Luke 24:13-35)

Who do you know that needs to join these pilgrims as they see the resurrected Jesus in a new and exciting way? Who can you sponsor on the Walk to Emmaus? Who needs to be there for "just a time as this"?

Carolyn McCain,  
Secretary

# GRACE Emmaus Community Board of Directors 2023

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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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