



The Emmaus Newsletter

What Are You Giving Up?

Many churches do not observe the Lenten season as many of us do. As most of you know it is the forty days preceding Easter, excluding Sundays. In the early church it was a time for preparing new converts to Christianity for baptism. It still is in many churches. It has also been observed as a time for self-examination, devotion and commitment. Several years ago when I was discussing fasting with one of our church members, she asked, "Are you praying or reading the Scriptures when you fast?" I replied that I was. She then said, "If you are not then you have only made a dietary adjustment."

My five-year grandson reminded me that Wednesday, February 25 was Ash Wednesday and then he asked, "Papa, what are you

giving up for Lent?" He continued with, "I am giving up brownies." as he devoured the last one on the shelf.

Make this season meaningful by observing Lent by observing regularly some "means of grace" such as fasting, prayer, Bible study or regular devotion. It will make Easter so much more vivid for you. Remember a sacrifice was made for you upon the Cross. Written by Rev. Dick Bland, Community Spiritual Director



Keeping a Holy Lent

"Are you praying or reading the Scriptures when you fast?"

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- **March Gathering Mannford UMC at 7pm on Saturday March 14**
- **Men's Walk April 16-19 at Christ UMC**
- **Men's Send Off Thurs April 16th at 6:30pm**
- **Men's Candlelight at 7pm on Sat April 18**
- **Men's Fourth Day Tues April 21st at 6:30pm**
- **Women's Walk April 30- May 3 at Christ UMC**



Skip Ray, Pryor First United Methodist Church, Green Country Emmaus Walk # 131, Table of Luke.

When asked to write a bio for the newsletter, I was very hesitant. You see, I only found God about five years ago. I now know He's been walking with me my whole life, and I plan to write an article for an upcoming newsletter regarding this, but in sitting at Emmaus gatherings and with folks in the community who have known God their whole life and live good Christian values, I feel downright out of place sometimes.

Now I'm not a big dirt bag or anything like that, but I have definitely led a pretty "adventurous" life. I spent 10 years in the US Marines, traveled all over the world, drank, fought; think about all the stereo types of Marines, you got me.

I know God forgives all sin when you ask him, but can I get an AMEN to the statement, "We have to forget our sins and forgive ourselves in order for them to be completely gone." That's the hard part, isn't it?

I grew up in Joplin, MO, and left home at 18 to join the Marines. I got married to my lovely wife Sandy at the ripe old age of 19, and we're still together, oh my, 21 years now! I graduated with a BSBA from the University of Missouri-Columbia. We have two boys, Sean, who is 16

and is terrorizing the roads of Pryor, and Matthew, 14 who was actually born in Okinawa, Japan while I was stationed there.

We made a decision about six years ago to move back to the Midwest and try to have a stable home (10 years in the Marines living all over the world and 5 years in Philadelphia got really old, really quick).

Why we chose Pryor, I guess you can say it was a God thing. He put us in a home where two of the neighbors went to the FUMC in town, we became very close to them and they invited us to attend church with them. You see, I made a vow when we moved back "home" to do three things; stop drinking, start going to church, and stop cussin'. Well, two out of three ain't bad; I haven't had a drink since December 14, 2003.

God put us in a place, introduced us to the right people, and got me on the right track with Him.

As a hobby I love working out with weights (cardio is NOT my thing) and playing video games with my sons. I am employed by the fourth largest employer in the United States, and the world's largest food services provider, Compass Group, where I work as a Sr. Safety Manager. I enjoy providing a safe working environment for our employees, and I'm always telling our managers, don't do it because you have to, do it because it's the right thing to do for your fellow human being!

My family and I have truly been blessed with a great town to live in, a great church to attend and an awesome Emmaus community to belong to!

Skip Ray

Board Rep for Fourth Day

Moving? Prefer to Receive the Newsletter via E-

If you are moving, please give us plenty of advanced notice to help keep our postage costs down.

Name: _____

Old Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New Address:

Street Address: _____

Please mail this form to:

Newsletter

Green Country Walk to Emmaus

P.O. Box 701410

Tulsa, OK 74170-1410

Or email the information to:

publications@greencountryemmaus.com

Things You Can Learn About God From Hummingbirds!

My friends and some of my family probably call me the Crazy Hummingbird Lady behind my back. I'm definitely hooked by one of God's smallest creatures. The ruby throated hummingbird is the primary occupant in Green Country and my annual goal is to feed as many as possible. These tiny birds are about 3.5 inches long and weigh only about 3 to 4 grams normally, but will bulk up to almost twice this amount just before migration. Realize that a nickel weighs 5 grams.

One of the amazing things to see is the hummingbird's feeding prior to migration. They feed from dawn until dusk and multiple birds together have been known to drain my feeders in a single day. They cannot seem to get enough of the wonderful nectar that is provided.

One of the best days of the year for me is just

around the corner! Return of the hummingbirds from their winter migration in Central America.

Some of these tiny creatures fly approximately 1600 miles from Central America to the Gulf of Mexico, and get this! ...then they fly ACROSS the Gulf of Mexico approximately 525 miles non-stop in approximately 20 hours and then on into Green Country, OK. Isn't that amazing?

What I find even more amazing is how God never fails to speak to me through my love for these tiny little birds He created. He reminded me this week during some particularly stressful situations that the dedication to food prior to the Hummingbird's migration is how we should look at our time in His Word and with Him especially when we know times with trials lay ahead in our life.

His Word is our nourish-

ment that will get us across those vast expanses in our lives when satan would love us to give up. Feasting on His Word through scriptures, songs, sharing with others in our spiritual community, our Fourth Day Reunion Groups and obviously nature for me are just a few of the ways that He can speak to us and nourish our thirsty souls with His sweet nectar of love.

If our dedication to Him, were as consistent and committed as the hummingbirds are to the sugar water nectar I prepare for them wouldn't our world be a different place.

Take some time this month as Spring begins to bloom and feast on Him. Liz Merrill, Board Rep Newsletter



Reunion Group Regrouping

In recently taking over the position of Reunion Group board member, I was given a list of all current reunion groups which meet throughout Green Country. I would like to make sure this list is up-to-date and current. I've only been in the position a couple months and have already had four requests by folks who have recently moved into Green Country who are looking for a strong reunion group to join. So far we've been fairly successful. Please send me the name of your reunion group, when you meet, where you meet, if you are accepting new members, who your mem-

bers are and any contact information you can provide me (phone, e-mail, etc.). I am so excited about trying to get the reunion group database up to date!

Thanks and DeColores.

Skip Ray

Board Rep for
Fourth Day



Please send updates to
ReunionGroup@
GreenCountryEmmaus.com

No you're not imagining it? There is a new format to the newsletter!

Wouldn't you like to participate by contributing a newsletter articles? Feel free to send them in anytime before the 20th of the month and I'll include them whenever possible.

Please send any feedback, suggestions or questions to publications@greencountryemmaus.com.

Upcoming Chrysalis Flights

The next Chrysalis Flights will be in October and November so please start thinking about who you might sponsor. If you already have someone selected then get busy sending in your enrollment forms. The location for these Flights is still to be determined, but we know that the Holy Spirit is planning a wonderful weekend for caterpillars.

The Chrysalis Board and the GCWE Boards are working hard to coordinate

We know that the Holy Spirit is planning a wonderful weekend for caterpillars!



their Flights with the GCWE schedule of Gatherings whenever possible.

If you'd like to volunteer with Chrysalis please contact Nancy King or Larry Rakes. Don't forget they need Agape too!

Won't You Share The King of Hearts With A Pilgrim

Did you realize that the next steps of the Emmaus Walks are in April? Wouldn't you like to Get Ahead For Once?

If you haven't already done so please get your enrollment forms in for any Pilgrims wishing to attend the Walks.

Also, now would be a good time to wrap up all those Agape projects you've been working on this winter or begin a new

one. 75 pieces of Agape are needed per Walk and they should all be exactly alike. So put your creative juices to work to share the love you've received from the King of Hearts and share your love with the upcoming Pilgrims.

While your making the Agape you might even say a few prayers for the Pilgrims that will receive each piece of love.



UPCOMING GREEN COUNTRY EMMAUS CALENDAR WITH CHRYSALIS FLIGHTS

Here is a reminder of upcoming events as well as a few new additions.

March Gathering: Saturday March 14 - Mannford United Methodist Church at 7pm

Men's Walk #141— April 16th -19th at Christ United Methodist Church

Send off Thursday April 16 at 6:30pm Candlelight Saturday April 18 at 7pm

Closing Sunday April 19 at 4pm 4th Day Tuesday April 21st at 6:30pm

Women's Walk #142— April 30th-May 3rd at Christ United Methodist Church

Send off Thursday April 30 at 6:30pm Candlelight Saturday May 2nd at 7pm

Closing Sunday May 3rd at 4pm 4th Day Tuesday May 5th at 6:30pm

June Gathering: Saturday June 13th 1st Christian Church, Claremore at 7pm

New Pilgrim Orientation 6:30pm (Tentative)

July Gathering: Saturday July 11th Asbury United Methodist Church at 7pm

August Gathering: Saturday August 8th Meadow Creek United Methodist at 7pm

Men's Walk #143—September 24th-27th at Claremore United Methodist Church

Send off Thursday Sept 24 at 6:30pm Candlelight Saturday Sept 26 at 7pm

Closing Sunday Sept 27th at 4pm 4th Day Tuesday Sept 29 at 6:30pm

Women's Walk #144—October 8th—11th at Claremore United Methodist Church

Send off Thursday Oct 8th at 6:30pm Candlelight Saturday Oct 10 at 7pm

Closing Sunday Oct 11th at 4pm 4th Day Tuesday Oct 13th at 6:30pm

Girl's Chrysalis Flight—October 29th—November 1st—Location to Be Announced

Boy's Chrysalis Flight—November 12th- November 15th—Location to Be Announced

November Gathering: Saturday November 14th Location to Be Announced

New Pilgrim's Orientation 6:30pm (Tentative)

December Gathering: Saturday December 12th Location to Be Announced

Watch for more updates in future newsletters.

**Don't Forget To Spring Forward
on Sunday, March 8th
and
Happy Saint Patrick's Day!**



GREEN COUNTRY EMMAUS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ed Taylor Board Chairman.....918-627-4254
- Steve Williams.....Community Lay Director.....918-494-0037
- Rev. Dick Bland.....Community Spiritual Director.....918-906-2032
- Freda Heath Agape/Dining Room.....918-286-1743
- Mike Mayes..... Candlelight, Sponsors Hour.....918-494-7709
- Cathy Herring Emerging Ministries/Secretary 918-519-3120
- Gary Bennett..... Facilities, Set-up..... 918-691-3589
- Charlie Shaw Gatherings918-627-4254
- Jerry Willm..... Kitchen918-786-9877
- Ken Frazier..... Literature 918-438-1431
- Russ Riffle..... Music, Entertainment 918-341-0562
- Liz Merrill..... Newsletter918-872-6076
- Pat McGuire..... Prayer918-343-2827
- Skip Ray Reunion Groups/Fourth Day 918-824-1739
- Shelley Covey..... Registrar..... 918-749-7616
- Open..... Transportation/Housing918-000-0000
- Brenda Nickels Treasurer.....918-455-0668