



Prayer to the Holy Spirit
Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.
O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
Grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy your consolations.
Through Christ our Lord, Amen

Springfield Area Emmaus Jan 2021

NO GATHERING IN JANUARY DUE TO COVID

Where is God?

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28 NIV)

As we enter this new year, we are faced with so many challenges from the volatility and division of national politics to the challenge of the COVID 19 virus. Many of us are limping into 2021 bruised and battered in our minds, bodies and pocketbooks. We wonder not only what the next year will bring but also, “Where is God?”

We have just finished celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus, most of us at home alone or with our nuclear family. You may at some point have turned to the Scriptures to read the Nativity story which in Matthew and Luke tells the wonderful Good News of Jesus’ birth. If you began with Matthew you no doubt started with verse 18, skipping right over the ancestors of Jesus. We want to get right to the “good stuff” of what God is doing in Jesus. However, God was just as present in the struggles of those who preceded Jesus as he was in the Virgin birth. If you look closely you will see in the list some notable and surprising names in Jesus’ ancestry. Like Rahab the harlot of Jericho. Like Bathsheba with whom David committed adultery and who became the mother of Solomon. But God was just as present and active in the lives of the other named but unknown people in the list, working, laying the groundwork for the coming of Jesus, the climactic moment in human history. Were any of them aware of what God was doing in and through them? Like Boaz befriending Naomi and taking Ruth as his wife? Surely not, they just lived out a simple faith-fulness.

Coming to the birth itself, Joseph intended to take the young Mary as his wife, to live out the ordinary course of life. But then he finds that she is pregnant. God directly intervenes, sending an angel to tell Joseph that the child is of the Holy Spirit and to take Mary as his wife and name the child Jesus – “because He will save his people from their sin.” God’s present, powerful work is evident here. But then the world’s power seems to take over. Caesar Augustus in Rome commands everyone to go to the town of their birth and be registered for tax purposes. For me, anything to do with paying taxes is pretty far removed from the realm of divine activity. I imagine that Joseph, as he loaded Mary onto the burro was wondering “Where is God in this?” At the end of this toilsome 60 some odd mile journey, arriving there perhaps in the late afternoon or early evening, was Mary already experiencing labor pains? Ready to bear the Son of God? And there were no rooms left in the inn. I am sure Joseph, in his frantic (surely!) attempt to find a room thought at least in the back of his mind, “Where is God?”

I remember the first trip Sharon and I took after we were married. We headed out for a leaf drive through northern West Virginia in our (her) old Pontiac Firebird. We got to I think Clarksburg as it was getting dark. This was long before the days of Trip Advisor and the internet. We had a map and that was it. Finding a place to stay in the hills around Clarksburg in the dark is no mean feat, especially on our very limited budget. We ended up staying at the Holiday Inn east of town for the atrociously high price of 17 dollars. The point is I remember feeling the burden of manly responsibility of finding a place to stay in a dark and strange place. Joseph must have been at his wit’s end and wondering, “Where is God?” Then that night the thoughts and prayers found their answer in the blessed birth, the angels, the shepherds, and the magi.

But then after the birth there is the threat from Herod, the flight to Egypt and the exile till the death of Herod. According to Matthew, Joseph was considering remaining in the Bethlehem/Jerusalem area but because Herod’s son Archelaus was now king he was afraid to go there. The world is always with us, pressing and prodding us with fears and doubts, asking

us “Where is your God now?” But God has an answer for Joseph, sending him north to the hills of Galilee where Jesus grows up.

What did Joseph see happening in Jesus as He grew up, becoming a youth and then a man? Did Joseph see any sign of the Messiah? Did he ever ask himself, “Where is God in this young man?” Whatever he saw in Jesus it is plain that then rest of those in Nazareth missed any budding signs of the coming Messiah. Then at some point Joseph was on his deathbed and through his glazing sight he sees Jesus, this Son of the Promise. This One who healed so many, who raised Lazarus from the dead saw his earthly father slip away. Was Joseph wondering, “Where is God?”

As John the beloved disciple stood at the foot of the cross with Jesus’ mother, Mary surely, he was asking this question. As the rest of the disciples either ran for their lives or denied they even knew who Jesus was, they were asking the same question.

As we enter this New Year, we are no strangers to this question either. However, we, like Joseph can look back at all the evidences of God in our lives and the lives of God’s people. We are children of the Resurrection, who have a hope of life in death, of life beyond death.

In this coming year may we be those who live confidently, as those who can believe even if we do not see, because in believing we will one day see. Who live in the faith Paul expressed to the Roman church.

“All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it’s not only around us; it’s within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We’re also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don’t see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy.

26-28 Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God’s Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don’t know how or what to pray, it doesn’t matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That’s why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good. (And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.) (Romans 8: 22-28)

May you and I be found living in this faith during the coming year.

Waiting eagerly for the time we can regather as the Emmaus community

Bill Kelley

Spiritual Director



No Gathering in January

HAPPY NEW YEAR Emmaus Sisters & Brothers!

I “hope” you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas, remembering the birth of Jesus to a very young mother, Mary. I am still amazed at her obedience to God’s plan of redemption for His people! I have been praying Psalm 91 daily ever since last year when this COVID-19 virus became public. I pray with the “hope” that there will be an end to this virus soon. It was a hard year with many of us losing loved ones. You are all in my prayers, daily.

I emphasize the word “hope” because we look to Jesus as our hope. “The hope of heaven is meant to strengthen and encourage us, filling us with wondrous Joy” as Sarah Young writes in her Jesus Calling devotional.

We wonder, “What will this New Year bring us?” A new job or a new family member (through wedding, birth, adoption, etc.). My niece will be getting married in May this year and I’m hopeful she will be able have her wedding with all family members in attendance.

I am also hopeful we will host WW#75 this year-probably in the fall after all the vaccinations are taken.

I am also looking forward to seeing you at HSUMC for a gathering and singing! Who would have thought a year ago our lives would change so drastically because of a virus?

So, however you start your new year with traditions and resolutions—Be Hopeful and remember to look to the One who gives us Hope!

“May the God of Hope fill you with all Joy & Peace as you trust in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13.

In His service,

Libby Hammond ebshamm@aol.com 937-238-9883

No Gathering in January.



PRAYERS AND SYMPATHIES

Emmaus Sisters & Brothers-

Carolyn Cook will be going into the hospital for serious surgery on February 4th without her family due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Please send cards of encouragement for her to:

Judy Delledonne
1096 Old Farm Lane
Springfield 45503

Thank you so much & God Bless you all!

EMBRACE JOY

Reminders

What God starts, He brings to completion
(Philippians 1:6)

All good things come from God
(James 1:17)

God is able, always (Ephesians 3:20)

God will make a way (Isaiah 43:19)

Goodness and faithful love will follow me all the days of my life (Psalm 23:6)

God is my friend (John 15:15)

God has good plans for me. I can trust His plan (Romans 8:28)

God will be with me every step of the way (Isaiah 43:2)

God never tires (Isaiah 40:28)



A Prayer for New Days Ahead

Heavenly Father, thank You for making all things new! As another new year begins, help me live each day for You. May I continually have a new song in my heart to sing to You, no matter what comes my way. I trust in You because I know that Your mercies are new every morning, and nothing ahead of me will take You by surprise. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

- Joan Walker Hahn, Encouragement Cafe

Springfield Area Emmaus Willing Servant Sheet

Please Print:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Zip: _____

Home Ph: _____ Cell Ph: _____ Regularly Attend Share Group? Y / N

Church Attending: _____ Walk # _____ Walk Location _____

Email: _____

Information is current as of: (Date) _____

**=====
===== I Am Willing To Serve In These Areas:=====**

Please Check All That Apply

Help serving meals Be a Meal Coordinator Help with Agape for weekend

Help Registrar (contact pilgrims before walk) Help Set up/Tear Down for weekend

Help with Sponsorship (help get info to Sponsors) Help get word out about Emmaus

Help on purchasing team for weekend Be on a Live-In Team Lead Music

Play an instrument: _____ Offer special music for Gatherings or walks

Help with the newsletter Help with social after Gatherings Help set up Worship

Provide secretarial help at Board Meetings Help inventory and organize supplies

Help with cleaning bathrooms during a walk Help get people connected to Share Groups

To learn more about Emmaus by attending the Leadership Development Event (LDE)

Help in other ways: _____

Please Mail to Springfield Area Emmaus, 230 East High Street, Springfield OH 45505, or drop off at the back table at any Gathering.

SPRINGFIELD AREA WALK TO EMMAUS (Please PRINT and fill in ALL blanks)

Name _____ (as preferred on name tag) Age _____

Sex M _____ F _____

Address _____

Phone _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____ - _____

Church now attending: _____ Pastor: _____

Church Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Married _____ Single _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____ Separated _____

Spouse's name _____ Walk spouse attended _____

Sponsor's name _____

Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Walk attended _____

Dietary concerns Medical concerns Disability concerns

Occupation: _____ Company Name: _____

Name of a close friend: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____ City/State _____

Zip: _____

Briefly state why you want to attend a Walk to Emmaus and what you expect.

Would you be able to attend on short notice? Yes _____ No _____ Perhaps _____

I understand that this application does not reserve a position on a particular Walk but does place me on a list for future Walks to Emmaus in Springfield.

Signature _____

Date _____

Enclose a NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-TRANSFERRABLE deposit of \$25.00, which applies to your \$75.00 donation to offset expenses. Make checks payable to Springfield Area Emmaus. Remit to: Registrar, Springfield Area Emmaus, High Street United Methodist Church, 230 E. High St., Springfield, OH 45505.

REGISTRATION ONLY Date received _____ Card sent to:

Sponsor _____ Pilgrim _____ Deposit rec'd _____

Cash _____ Check # _____ Rec'd from _____ 1st

Invite _____ 2nd Invite _____ 3rd Invite _____

Inactive _____ Revised Sept. 2013