

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS**

We say that God's mercy endures forever. Do we really believe that? What difference would it make in your life and in your attitude toward others if you believed that God is willing to take any kind of life that has been totally trashed and transform it? I was listening to a Christian radio program and the commentators were going on about how we shouldn't excuse the killings at Virginia Tech by Sheng-Hui Cho by saying it is really society's fault; that we need to maintain moral accountability. Mind you, this was supposed to be a program on evangelism. Who was accountable for reaching this disturbed person with the Gospel? Is it possible for a Christian to reach out to a person like Sheng-Hui Cho with the Gospel, with a saving word from God?

Can God take a ruined, misdirected life and transform it? Did you know that whole buildings are being recycled? In the 1960's East Germany erected great complexes of shoe-box-sized apartments made up of concrete slabs. After East and West Germany unified, the demand for these ugly but economical apartments began to drop and there are now about a million vacant units. Two young architects, the Biele brothers, are looking at these apartment buildings and seeing more than the last remnants of communist culture. They get the slabs for nothing more than the cost of hauling them away and transform them into light, airy, attractive single-family homes that cost \$200K and up. The only problem with the homes is "there is nothing round." You can't put a curve into a slab of concrete. God can step in and transform our lives. He doesn't send who we are to the trash heap. Instead, God takes the raw materials of who we are, every strength, talent, insight and experience, and makes them building blocks to use for His divine purpose.

Take, for instance, Saul. Saul, in personality, was just the opposite of Hui but headed in the same direction. He was morally responsible but lost, destructive in behavior. Born and bred a Jew, a Pharisee of Pharisees, he had been schooled by the best, completely obedient to the Law of Moses and the Talmud. And he took a solid stand against this new sect that has sprung up around this convicted and crucified blasphemer named Jesus. He was also the spearhead of the first wave of persecution that drove the

church out of Jerusalem. Stephen had been one of the men chosen by the apostles to lead the administration of the church, Saul held the coats of the men who took Stephen by force and stoned him to death. As he died, Stephen prayed for his killers, "Father do not hold this sin against them." Saul began rounding up members of the church that he could find in Jerusalem. The rest began to scatter, going to other nearby cities. Then Saul obtained letters of instruction from the Sanhedrin authorizing him to seize followers in Damascus and take them back to Jerusalem for trial. As Saul walked along the road a great flash of light blinded his sight. A voice came out of this light saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" You wouldn't blame Jesus for just doing away with Saul right there and then, would you? He was the Osama bin Laden of the early church. A terrorist with religious credentials. But that isn't God's plan. He is going to take the trash that is Saul and transform him into a great treasure named Paul. Jesus tells him, "get up and enter the city and you will be told what to do." Note that Jesus doesn't let Saul in on any of what he has in mind for Paul. The man who has gone down the road to Damascus, strong, authoritative and breathing fire, is led by the hand into Damascus. He is completely helpless with no knowledge of what is going to happen to him.

Far from hostility or vengeance, Jesus speaks words of grace and redemption – "Go into the city and you will be told what to do." From now on, Saul would become Paul. Before, Saul went where he wanted and did what he wanted. From now on Paul would be a willing prisoner of God's glorious grace.

The good news of this story is that God has a similar plan for each one of us. God doesn't destroy the raw materials of these lives that we have misused and abused. Instead God wants to take who you are and transform you into the person he means for you to be. We shouldn't beat ourselves up over who we have been in the past. Jesus doesn't want our regrets. He wants our raw materials, refashioned by grace. There is no trash God can't transform. There is no failure too great for God to use.

-Rev. Bill Kelley

**IMPORTANT DATES  
2007 WALKS**

**Women's Walks**

- #50 June 21-24
- #51 November 1-4

**Men's Walks**

- #33 April 19-22
- #34 August 16-19

*\*All Walk Dates Are Tentative*

**UPCOMING GATHERINGS!**

- Sunday, May 20th at 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, June 17th at 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, July 21st at 7:00 p.m.

**Food & Fellowship:** After each gathering, there will be a time of fellowship and food. If you plan to stay, please bring a dish to share.

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMUNITY LAY DIRECTOR**

Men's Walk # 33 finished recently and I hear that many of the pilgrims are having great Fourth Days. For those who missed the closing, it was great. What a bunch of fired up guys full of the Holy Spirit. I can not wait to hear what they have to say at the May Gathering.

Women's Walk # 50 has started their preparations under the leadership of Mary Casto. Please keep this team as well as the pilgrims who will be on the walk in your prayers.

At last month's gathering, I asked that the community keep the board in their prayers as we were dealing with a difficult situation. Since then I have heard a variety of comments about the issue and unfortunately, it was not always factual. So, I would like to give the community a brief overview of the situation at hand and continue to ask for your prayers as we evaluate the change before us.

The Upper Room from Nashville oversees the Emmaus movement around the world. As such, they issue "The Upper Room Handbook on Emmaus" which contains information to help the Emmaus communities stay true to the fundamental intent and structure of the

Emmaus walk. They state in the manual that the handbook is to "serve as a guide to each community for leading the Walk to Emmaus faithfully and effectively".

At the beginning of this year they issued changes to the section on Clergy Qualifications. The result of this has been much discussion at the board meetings to determine the rationale behind and implementation of the changes as provided. Currently a sub-committee made up of Rev. Chris Farmer, Rev. Bob Scott, Rev. Ray Harper and Rev. Dennis Moritz have been reviewing the affects these changes might have for our community and how best for the board to move forth.

The changes set different criteria for Community Spiritual Director, Week-end Spiritual Director and Week-end Assistant Spiritual Director. They have utilized the United Methodist clergy type qualifications but in all cases they indicate "or equivalent from other denominations". Rev. Farmer brought these changes to the board as that is part of his responsibility as the lead Community Spiritual Director.

I assure you that your board will

continue to review these and any other changes in the handbook to ensure that the Springfield Community remains with the spirit of the Walk to Emmaus. The handbook states that it is the responsibility of the board to determine what is best for the community while keeping the fundamental intent and structure of the Walk to Emmaus. Springfield has an outstanding community and each walk has truly received the blessing of the Holy Spirit. The servant spirit in Springfield is alive and well.

The following statement was included in some of the dialogue regarding the changes. I believe this truly sums up what it means to allow the Holy Spirit to direct Springfield Emmaus or any Christian movement. "No person lay or clergy has the right to serve in any capacity in Emmaus or Chrysalis, even if all criteria are met. Service is never a right, but always a response to the call of the Holy Spirit, through the Emmaus/Chrysalis Board."

May the love of God shine in you every day!

God Bless and De Colores!

-Tom

**MAY REUNION**

**Women's Walk #36** (Marty Scott , LD) will hold their reunion one hour prior to the May Gathering, May 20th, at 6:00 p.m. in the choir room.

**SPRINGFIELD AREA EMMAUS  
NEW BOARD MEMBERS  
FOR 2006 - 2007**

<b>AGAPE</b> Mary Cogan – 969-8193	<b>AGAPE</b> Barbara Baugh – 390-0954	<b>CHRYSLIS</b> Gene Porter – 265-5230
<b>COMMUNITY LAY DIRECTOR</b> Tom Dever – 399-3199	<b>EPIPHANY REPRESENTATIVE</b> Ray Harper – 614-861-2962	<b>FINANCE</b> Barbara Mulkey – 342-1910
<b>GOOD SHEPHERD (Women)</b> Mary F. Ahlborn – 322-1958	<b>GOOD SHEPHERD (Men)</b> Jerry Peterman – 325-3629	<b>HIGH STREET UMC REP.</b> Katy Roark – 399-3335
<b>HIGH STREET UMC REP.</b> Mike Morris – 342-0072	<b>KAIROS</b> Jim Vineyard – 324-4333	<b>KITCHEN</b> Johnnie Williams – 399-9886
<b>LEADERSHIP</b> Roy Mulkey – 484-3454	<b>LOGISTICS</b> John Baugh – 390-0954	<b>LOGISTICS</b> Larry McMahan – 324-4041
<b>MUSIC</b> Lynda Johnson – 390-0151	<b>NEWSLETTER</b> (Contact Tom Dever)	<b>OUTREACH</b> Sarah Cogan – 969-8193
<b>PURCHASING</b> Jennifer Anderson – 399-6773	<b>PURCHASING</b> Tobias Wilson – 484-3120	<b>REGISTRAR (Women)</b> Betty Yoakem – 390-3085
<b>REGISTRAR (Men)</b> Karen Speas – 322-2374	<b>SECRETARY</b> Patty (Aliff) Brandon – 360-2481	<b>SOCIAL</b> Pat Baker – 964-8503
<b>SPONSORSHIP (Women)</b> Madonna Caudill – 390-7436	<b>SPONSORSHIP (Men)</b> Jo Ann Horrocks – 788-2105	
<b>SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR</b> Bill Kelley – 206-8630	<b>SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR</b> Chris Farmer – 864-1621	<b>SUPPLY ROOM</b> Marty Castle – 323-7064
<b>SUPPLY ROOM</b> Sue Stephens – 323-3222	<b>WORSHIP</b> Sara Levesque – 284-7400	<b>WORSHIP</b> Debbie Mefford – 525-9131

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### WOMEN'S WALK #50 TEAM

<b>LAY DIRECTOR:</b>	Mary Casto	Perseverance
<b>BOARD REP:</b>	Maggie Myers	
<b>ALD's:</b>	Betty Yoakem	Priority
	Sarah Cogan	Life of Piety
	Terri Gansheimer	Fourth Day
<b>LOG's:</b>	Miki McMahan	
	Barb Baugh	
<b>MUSIC:</b>	Diane Page	
	Kelly Crain	
<b>TL's:</b>	Teresa Ehalt	4th Day Example
	Beth Tullis	Changing Our World
	Barbara Mulkey	Body of Christ
	Cyndi Carpenter	Grow Thru Study
	Suzanne Dick	Christian Action
	Kimberly Cobb	Priesthood of Believers
<b>ATL's:</b>	Linda Smith	Discipleship
	Shawn Clark	
	Kristy Stehle	
	Kay Moffitt	
	Karol Holloway	
	Veronique White	
	Mandy Holcomb	
	Anne Beal	
<b>SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS:</b>	Rev. Bill Kelley	Means of Grace
	Rev. Bob Scott	Sanctifying Grace
	Rev. Ray Harper	Obstacles to Grace
	Rev. Walter Mock	Prevenient Grace
	Rev. Ruth Pribe	Justifying Grace