



SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS

"for the love of Christ compels us.."

2 Corinthians 5:14

Dear Fellow Pilgrims

As we look forward to November, a season of Thanksgiving I ask you, why do we do what we do?

Why do we work in our churches?

Why do we serve in so many different ways on weekends?

Why do we lift our praise to God?

For simply this reason – the love of Christ compels us.

Think about this. What has Jesus done for you?
How much do you owe him?

Has he forgiven your sins, all of them, completely?

Has he laid upon your shoulders, prodigal child, the finest robe of righteousness, the wedding garment of saving grace?

Has he set your feet upon a rock of salvation that not even death can move?

Has he set your course in life through pleasant places filled with lovely Christian fellowship and joy instead of the disorder and disquiet of the world?

Has he prepared for you a place in heaven?

Is he preparing you now for a place in heaven?

Has he given you so many outward blessings you would have a hard time counting them all?

Has he given you unending inward blessings of grace such as peace, joy and assurance of salvation in the Holy Spirit, as much and as many as you have the faith to receive?

These all are the reasons for our thanksgiving to God and why we do the things we do – the love of Jesus compels us.

We take seriously his call to work and witness in the world. We take every opportunity to love God with all of our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We share our hearts in testimony to those who have not heard the Good News. We turn our hands to helping those who are in need. We teach others to love God just as others once taught us.

This love from God in Christ flows into our lives like a flood and flows out again in a life-giving stream.

The Jordan River flows down from the heights of Mt. Hermon north of Galilee into the Jordan Valley. All along its banks it gives life to the land, so much so that its fertility is known the world over. Forty different kinds of dates are grown in Jericho. Yet just a few miles farther on, the river sinks into the salty brine of the well-named Dead Sea. The only difference in the water is that along the river the water flows freely along where in the Dead Sea it becomes confined by sand and rocky slopes, going nowhere, evaporating into the dry desert air.

That is a vivid metaphor for those who receive God's love but keep that love to themselves.

When we think of how Jesus loved us and gave himself for us we can never settle for a Dead Sea life.

No, we are like the church gathered in the Upper Room at Pentecost. God's love and power blew into that room, lighting flames of fire on every head and in every heart. The people couldn't keep that love to themselves, hidden inside those four walls. Despite the real possibility of opposition and persecution they ran out into the streets of Jerusalem, proclaiming to all the wonderful works of God, the Good News of the crucified and risen Christ. This love was revealed in their lives together as they shared their goods together, praised God in

GREETINGS TO THE EMMAUS COMMUNITY

the temple and broke bread together in their homes. Why? Because the love of Jesus compelled them.

So as we come to this season of Thanksgiving, remember all of those things for which you have to give thanks, the great love of God that has swept into your soul, driving out the blinding fog of love for the world and the deadly mists of sin. Let the

love for Jesus be a fire on your head and in your heart. Let it compel your life.

Praise God for each one of you!

Your Pastor and friend,

Rev. Bill

GREETINGS TO THE EMMAUS COMMUNITY

From the Community Lay director

Well here it is, that time of year when we start slowing down and thinking about all the things we have to be thankful for in our lives. Yes, it's heading towards Thanksgiving and then the holiday season starts. When I think of the things that God has blessed me with this year, I can't help but think of my family and all the things that God has provided for Barb and I this year.

I also think of the pilgrims that have completed their walks this year and how much closer to God they must feel. Speaking of walks, I want to welcome the ladies of Walk # 57 to the community and wish you the best of all God has to offer you in your fourth days. I also want to remind you once again about our Emmaus gatherings that are held on the second Sunday of each month at High Street UMC and encourage you to attend. Remember your reunion to be held at 6:00 before the December gathering, where you can share with your new friends all the excitement of your fourth days.

I once again encourage you to join a share group so you can stay in close touch with other Christians who can help you in your walk with God.

I want to thank all those who have served on the teams this year and those who have worked behind the scenes to make our walks so successful this year.

I would want to remind everyone about helping to purchase the tables for the dining room, if you are interested, please contact me or any board member and let us know.

I would like for everyone to please support the gatherings, it's a great time for fellowship and of course, a bite or two of food.

Thanks again to all for all you do for God and Emmaus, and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

In Christ's service

John Baugh

WANT A BLESSING, LEARN HOW TO MAKE LANYARDS!

We are looking for volunteers who would like to learn how to make lanyards for the women's walks. I will teach them, it is easy and fun. They will be blessed for it. SIMPLE AND QUICK. 1 SKEIN OF YARN MAKES MANY!! Contact Wilma Southward: dwsouthw01@aol.com or 342-0268 or 408-4781

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT AN EMMAUS WEEKEND

When we come off an Emmaus weekend, we are usually tired but really excited and ready to put even more effort into the Emmaus experience. It doesn't matter what our role was on the weekend—Pilgrim, team member, sponsor, kitchen or logistics worker, prayer warrior, or participant in any of the special events—we look forward to serving again. For most of us, the Emmaus weekend was a refreshing renewal of our Christian faith and an inspiration to become more effective and intentional in serving the Lord and each other.

Some of us just can't wait to get into a servant's role and it's only natural that we want to do everything we can to make someone else's Emmaus weekend the great experience it was for us.

We must never forget, however, that Emmaus should never become anyone's "new church". The sole purpose of Emmaus is to strengthen home church congregations by stimulating individuals to assume leadership positions. Try it. Volunteer for something and blow your pastor's mind! Begin your service in your own church.

My personal belief is that the Walk to Emmaus (and its predecessor, the Roman Catholic Cursillo) was created by the Holy Spirit to be an instrument of spiritual renewal for individuals and, in turn, the Church.

The first part of this renewal experience is the content of the weekend. The team presents itself as a complete and functioning Body of Christ. The fifteen talks are effectively one talk in fifteen parts, which attests to God's active grace in the world. The talks, the prayers, the Communion, and the fellowship are by design uninterrupted by outside influences and activities.

As an aside, the average Christian who attends church services and Sunday school every week spends almost as much time in one year hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ as a Pilgrim spends attending the Walk to Emmaus—a concentrated weekend with no interruptions. Emmaus truly is a "short course in Christianity".

A second component of the Walk to Emmaus is the opportunity for the Pilgrim to experience what has been referred to as "a New Testament community". The table groups soon become friendship groups and through the process of table discussions, praying together and sharing with each other eventually become table families discovering an intimacy that is a hallmark of Christian relationships. The obvious support by the Emmaus community also helps us grow in understanding the unmerited love of God.

A third and very important factor of the effect of a weekend is the challenge for us to reevaluate our priorities. Remember—"Priority" was the first talk of the Weekend. Most people are not aware that the Priority talk contains nothing spiritual and does not even mention God, yet it is the concept most often mentioned during the weekend and probably has the most impact on reordering our lives to establish a loving relationship with God.

Finally, perhaps the most distinctive component of the Emmaus experience is the strong encouragement to get involved in a weekly reunion or share group. This small group of Christian friends can be instrumental in keeping us accountable for our actions (or inactions), and support and challenge us to become stronger disciples in Christ's church. It is a group in which to find and experience a deep level of trust to the extent that we can willingly invest ourselves in each other. Just as an ember soon cools when removed from other glowing embers, so will our excitement for the Lord cool if we are removed from our Christian community.

The four components of the Emmaus renewal experience I covered here are present in many church programs. Emmaus merely exposes the Pilgrim to these concepts in a concentrated, dynamic manner by a well-prepared team.

Help your church to be receptive to the work of Emmaus. Show your pastor how a spiritually renewed individual can become involved in the ministry of the church.

Please don't waste your enthusiasm. Give all you can to your church (but save a little for Emmaus)!
In His Love...John Ahlborn

High Street United Methodist Church
230 East High Street
Springfield, OH 45505

Newsletter e-mail:
info@berners.com

Find us online:

www.spfldemmaus.com
www.highstreetumc.com

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UPCOMING GATHERINGS!

Sunday, November 15, 2009 at 7 PM

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 7 PM
Praise Gathering

REUNION:

Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 6 PM
Women's Walk # 57
Shelly Canan

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.

2010 WALK DATES:

Women's Walks

58 FEBRUARY 18-21
LD: SARAH COGAN

59 JUNE 24-27

60 NOVEMBER 4-7

Men's Walks

39 APR. 22-25

40 AUG. 12-15

HELP!

We are in need of applications.
Please consider sponsoring a pilgrim!

No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame.

Psalm 25:3