



WalkTalk Newsletter

March 2023

The Greater Austin Emmaus Community

Volume 34, Number 15

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2023 Walks at Eagle's Wings Retreat Center

Women's Walk #149 scheduled for May 4-7, 2023.

Now is the time for you, the members of our community, to seek and sponsor additional pilgrims to make this the "Best Walk Ever". We encourage the community to talk to people you know, complete applications early and submit them as soon as possible.

Men's Walk #150 : Next Men's Walk will be Nov 2-5, 2023

The cost of the weekend is \$240 and can be paid with a check or with a credit card for an additional fee of \$7.50 to cover the credit card processing fee. You can download pilgrim, sponsor, and church forms from the austinemmaus.org website. Scholarships are available and forms are on the website.

The Next Gathering is Saturday, March 18 at Westlake UMC

Westlake UMC is located at 1460 Redbud Trl, Austin, TX 78746. The potluck dinner is at 5:00pm in the Fellowship Hall and the worship will start at 6:15pm as usual in the Sanctuary. See the attached flyer for more information on the gathering. **We will have Women's Walk #149 Team Commissioning at the Gathering.** We should be finished by 7:30pm. Please mark your calendar so you can see friends, fellowship, eat, sing, and worship! **Fourth Day Emmaus Members who serve as Points of Contacts for GAEC Churches are invited to be recognized at the March 18, 2023 gathering—please come!**



Fourth Day Speakers Needed

Would you like to give a Fourth Day talk at a Gathering? Fourth Day speakers are always needed! Please contact Steven Scott at laydirector@austinemmaus.org if you are interested.

Next GAEC Board Meeting

Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.



The above board meeting will be held at
Westlake UMC

Greater Austin Emmaus Reunion Groups

Looking for a reunion group?

Want to add a new group?

Need to update info on an existing group?

Send information to the Reunion Group/POC Support person

ReunionPOC@austinemmaus.org.



So, Help Me God

I read ahead in my Upper Room Devotional to a devotion titled “**So Help Me, God.**” The scripture was Psalm 17:6 “I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.” The writer of the devotion, Kong Peng Sun, is from Singapore and he relates how the public officers in the US swear an oath ending with the words “**So Help Me, God.**” He says that the public officers are saying they cannot carry out the tasks of their office without God’s help!

That made me think of the times where I thought that I could not do a task such as being a Sunday School superintendent when I had never been to Sunday School. Or the time I was asked to help teach an adult Sunday School class since the teacher needed a break. Or the time I was asked to stand up in front of a group of people and give an Emmaus Talk! For all of those times, I prayed to God for help to know what to do and learn what I needed to learn. My first thought as a baby Christian was I am afraid to do those things and I would mess it up or make a fool of myself. I told myself I do not know all the Bible or have memorized scriptures, so how can I teach other adults in a Sunday School class! How can I even begin to set up a Sunday School program when I did not know anything about Sunday School. I was afraid to speak in front of people in general, so how am I going to stand in front of a group of Christians and talk about my inner feelings and my testimony!

The other scripture in the devotional is Joshua 1:9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” That scripture is what I did for the tasks of Sunday School superintendent, adult Sunday School teacher, and giving an Emmaus Talk. I prayed “**So, Help Me God**” and trusted that God was going to get me through the tasks as long as I did my part to try to do the task to the best of my ability. I realized that God gave me strength to do what he wanted me to do and that he was there with me while I did the tasks. I believe when I gave my Emmaus Talk, that he was giving the Talk through me with examples of my life testimony. That allowed me to not be afraid when I gave the Talk.

Then my wife, Paula, got uterine cancer. We both prayed “**So, Help Me God**” for God to heal her from cancer by taking the radiation therapy treatment. We prayed and did not get discouraged about the cancer. We were not afraid from the cancer, but just realized she had to just do her part by going through the therapy. I fully trusted God to get her through the cancer with no doubts. Both of our relationships with God were actually strengthened through the experience because we learned to trust God more!

As I have gone through life and learned more about God and developed a closer relationship with him, I prayed “**So, Help Me God**” to God and trusted that God would get me through life issues. I learned that “**So, Help Me God**” was a prayer, a turn of God’s ear to hear my prayer, an opportunity for God to answer me, and a growing relationship with my God.

We all have an opportunity to listen to God by praying to be a sponsor to someone who has the opportunity to be a pilgrim on an Emmaus Walk to be changed by God. We have the Women’s Walk #149 May 4-7 and need sponsors and pilgrims. Please consider letting God act in your lives with the Walk to Emmaus! Forms are on the austinemmaus.org website. Also, we have a Gathering Saturday March 18 at Westlake UMC that you can come and fellowship and worship together! Do not just be a faith community but be a faithful community.

With the HOPE of Jesus, we continue to step forward one day at a time. We need to expect God to work in our lives. Thank you for all you are doing to keep HOPE alive! Stay connected to each other, your Church, and God. Continued blessings on you and all those around you.

De Colores!

Steven Scott, Community Lay Director

Testimony from Jeanne Randall:

God and Sister Love

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I want to start by saying “Thank God for my Walk to Emmaus.” I’m certain that many of you echo that sentiment. But there is so much more to say.

My Walk was April 2006, #1298 at Cathedral Oaks in Weimer TX. I went with no real understanding of what the 72 hours was about; just that several people felt that I should go. The idea of spending that much time with total strangers was unsettling at best (look up shy wallflower in the dictionary and you’ll see my picture).

Throughout the Walk I felt that I was surrounded by love, compassion, and an understanding of who I was. Who I was meant for me to be in my Walk with Jesus. Then I went home, and the love continued to pour out from people I hardly knew. We were told to join a Reunion Group, NOT!! I hate being the new kid on the block (see wallflower) but God had other plans. Two of the ladies on the Walk (from my own church, but had never met) were also looking for a Reunion Group. We lived within 1 ½ miles of each other. We became a Reunion Group – Sisters With A Higher View (two of us live in High View Ranch subdivision and one is just across the road).

I had to be home in the evening at the time to care for an elderly Alzheimer patient, so we started meeting at my home on Tuesday nights. Over the years others have joined us for a while, and stayed or left when their schedules or family commitments changed. But the “original” three are still meeting, still strong, still prayerful, and still supporting each other in our daily walk with Jesus.

And “supporting each other” doesn’t begin to explain what support looks like. One of the group lost both her mother and her father and started raising her two grandsons, one lost a father and two daughters, two of the group lost their husbands, and with Covid we all lost more family and friends.

Because of the losses I had suffered, I was so depressed that I thought suicide was my only answer. Because of the love of my Sisters, I got into counseling. If it weren’t for them, I might not be here today. They prayed and loved me back to where I knew that God hadn’t abandoned me, I had abandoned myself! They held me up so I could reach back up to God. The tears shed, the prayers said, the comfort given, it might have been there outside the Reunion Group but I couldn’t have found it!

Sisters and Brothers in Christ, love surrounds you from people you haven’t even met BEFORE your Walk, and you didn’t even know it! The Walk made love visible, and the Reunion Group sustains it. That love continues to grow as you walk your Walk with Christ.

De Colores!

Jeanne Randall, Walk Support



Greater Austin Emmaus Community Board of Directors

Position	Name	Term Ends	Contact
Lay Director	Steven Scott	2023	LayDirector@austinemmaus.org
Assistant Lay Director	OPEN	2023	AssistantLayDirector@austinemmaus.org
Past Lay Director	Steven Scott	2023	PastLayDirector@austinemmaus.org
Secretary	OPEN	2023	Secretary@austinemmaus.org
Treasurer	Rick Seifert	2023	Treasurer@austinemmaus.org
Upper Room Support	Ann Montgomery	2025	UpperRoom@austinemmaus.org
Communications Support	Ann Montgomery (Temporary)	2025	Communications@austinemmaus.org
Walk Support	Jeanne Randall	2023	WalkSignups@austinemmaus.org
Gathering Support	Gene McConnell	2025	Gathering@austinemmaus.org
Spiritual Director	Rev. Sylvester Chase	2024	SpiritualDirector@austinemmaus.org
Team Selection Support	OPEN	2024	TeamSelection@austinemmaus.org
Reunion Group/POC Support	OPEN	2025	ReunionPOC@austinemmaus.org
Database/Website Support	Christian Nelson	2024	DatabaseWebsite@austinemmaus.org

Term Expiration 2023-3, 2024-3 & 2025—4 (* indicates newly filled position)

Top three Directors expire every year. Officer roles and terms expire on May 31st of the above years.

Non-Board Positions

Music Coordinator	*Randy Nettles	Music@austinemmaus.org
Assistant Music Coordinator	Jesse Madera	AssistMusic@austinemmaus.org
Registrar	Myles McKemie	Registrar@austinemmaus.org
Website Developer	Eric Bursley	WebsiteDeveloper@austinemmaus.org
WalkTalk Editor	Ann Montgomery—temporary	Communications@austinemmaus.org

Emmaus Sunday!

Don't forget!

The first Sunday of each month is Emmaus Sunday. Wear your cross and lanyard to worship. This is a great opportunity to help bring



Financial Statement

as of 2/28/23

Bank Balance

\$20,942.15

Scholarship Fund

\$3390.61

GAEC Website

<http://www.austinemmaus.org>

GAEC Facebook page

www.facebook.com/groups/GreaterAustinEmmaus/

Our Last Gathering January 24, 2023

Our January 24 Gathering was an in-person gathering at St. Mark UMC. We enjoyed the potluck for the fourth day with food, drinks and fellowship at 5:00 pm! The worship was at 6:15pm with the format for the gathering similar to what we have been doing.

We had songs before announcements and songs during worship. We had communion and Michael Pavlu was the Fourth Day speaker. We enjoyed his testimony. Randy Nettles provided an AMAZING worship service!

Thank you to everyone who worked on the Gathering.

While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and walked with them. - Luke 24:15

De Colores GAEC!

Women's Walk #149 is underway. We had our first team meeting last Saturday, March 4th.

God has brought together a beautiful team of ladies with servant hearts. We are excited and eager to meet some new Sisters in Christ. Please prayerfully consider providing us with some pilgrims for this walk. If you have ladies that want to go, get those applications in now. We are waiting for them. We are already praying for them.

Let's make the first walk since 2019 the best Walk to Emmaus ever!

Paula Scott, Lay Director Walk #149



We are requesting the GAEC Fourth Day Community to bring Christian books (that they have read) for use on the Women's Walk #149 Book Table to the March 18th Gathering at Westlake UMC. Pass on the good books to a pilgrim!

The *WalkTalk* deadline is the 20th of each month. Items received after that will be printed only if space is available.

Communications@austinemmaus.org

WalkTalkEditor@austinemmaus.org

GAEC Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2023

The January Board Meeting was held in person and by call-in at St. Mark UMC. Steven opened the meeting with a devotion and prayer.

The following members were present: Steven Scott, Lay Director; Harold Sundbeck, Secretary; Christian Nelson, Database/Website Support; Gene McConnell, Gathering Support, Jeanne Randall, Walk Support, (by call-in) and Rev. Sylvester Chase, Spiritual Director. Absent: Ann Montgomery, Upper Room Support, and Rick Seifert, Treasurer.

QUORUM: Five Board members were present, and one Call-in providing a quorum for the meeting.

MINUTES:

REPORTS - The following officers, directors, or other persons presented reports to the Board of Directors, with any items discussed or actions taken as noted below. The following items were discussed:

LAY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Steven Scott reported there are currently four open positions on the Board: Team Selection Support, Reunion Group/POC Support, Assistant Lay Director, and permanent Communications Support. Steven will request the community get involved and fill the open positions at the Gathering scheduled for today.

Steven has been discussing with surrounding Emmaus communities the possibility of sharing resources and working with us in the future.

Jackie Williamson was one of the eight people who transferred her application and payment from Women's Walk #148 to the new Women's Walk #149 on May 4-7, 2023. She has requested a refund since she is a member of the Heartland of Texas Emmaus and would like to go with her community. Rick has sent a refund check.

Steven is presenting the curriculum sections 2-5, & 8-12 from the Upper Room Directors Manual for use in the leadership training for the prospective LD's, ALD's, BR's, and SD's.

Steven proposed the following GAEC Policies for review and discussion for the training:

1. The Board has the only authority to cancel a Walk.
2. The team is not permitted to take a vote to cancel a Walk since that is the Board's authority.
3. The minimum number of pilgrims to make a Walk valid is 15. The Board has the authority on a case-by-case basis to have a minimum of 12 pilgrims with a majority vote.
4. If a Team member is a giver of a talk and has to leave a Walk weekend, the Lay Director has the option to allow the Board Representative to read the talk of the person who had to leave or allow someone on the inside team who has given that talk in the past to read their talk that they brought to the weekend in advance in case of this issue.
5. If the Spiritual Director of the Walk has any faith issues or is considering not continuing on the Walk, they need to discuss this first with the Spiritual Director of the Board and the Board before anything is discussed with the team.
6. If the Lay Director of the Walk has any faith issues or is considering not continuing on the Walk, they need to discuss this first with the Board Representative and then the Board before anything is discussed with the team.
7. The upper limit on the number of pilgrims on a Walk is 36.
8. The cutoff date for receipt of Walk applications is three (3) days before a Walk.
9. The maximum of 10 pilgrims will be allowed from one church on a single walk.

GAEC Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2023

Steven made a motion to approve the use of the Directors Manual (Sections 2-5, 8-12) Team Role and Talk Assignment Charts from the Upper Room Community Manual, the Approved Schedule Template, and the GAEC Board Policies listed above for the LD, ALD, BR and SD Leadership Training. Jeanne seconded the motion. The motion passed.

We need to set the Leadership training for those qualified for the roles for Saturday 1/28, or 2/4, depending on the availability of folks.

The next Board meeting will be March 18, 2023, at 3:00 PM at Westlake UMC. The Board meeting Dates for the rest of the year are 5/20, 7/15, 9/16 (or 9/23), and 11/18.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Rick Seifert submitted the Treasurer's report by email, and it was approved by email. His report indicated the Frost Bank balance reconciled with the Aplos balance of \$21,973.63.

UPPER ROOM SUPPORT – Ann Montgomery to confirm that three (3) copies of the Spiritual Directors Book were ordered.

DATABASE/WEBSITE SUPPORT – Christian will work with the Database/Walk template committee for our 2023 Walks.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT – Ann Montgomery worked with Steven to create the January Walk Talk. Ann did a great job on the WalkTalk and will continue to temporarily help to do the WalkTalk and MailChimp messaging while we are seeking a permanent person for the position.

WALK SUPPORT –The Sign-up agape list and the 72-hour Prayer Vigil need to be redone for the new Women's Walk #149 on May 4-7, 2023, and sent out.

GATHERING SUPPORT – Gene would like to have the churches hosting the Gatherings to commit to hosting on a 2-year commitment. St. Mark UMC is hosting the Gathering today. Our second potluck dinner since the pandemic will be at 5:00 pm. Worship will be at 6:15 pm. with Michael Pavlu as the 4th-day speaker.

The next In-person Gathering is on March 18, 2023, at Westlake UMC at 6:15 pm., with food at 5:00 pm.

REUNION GROUP/POC SUPPORT - Steven will request info today at the gathering on Reunion Groups.

NEW BUSINESS – Steven will work on updating the By-Laws in the future.

OLD BUSINESS – We still need to find a backup treasurer.

WalkTalk Articles – Steven will provide an article for the WalkTalk along with Jeanne for the March WalkTalk.

Rev. Chase closed the meeting with prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I certify that I am the duly elected Secretary of Greater Austin Emmaus Fourth Day Community, Inc., d/b/a Greater Austin Emmaus Community and that these foregoing minutes were adopted and approved by email by the Board of Directors on February 15, 2023.

Harold Sundbeck, Secretary.



Greater Austin Emmaus Community

GAEC Community Gathering

March 18, 2023

Westlake United Methodist Church

1460 Redbud Trail

Austin, TX 78746

5:00pm – Pot Luck Dinner in the Fellowship Hall

6:15pm – Music and Worship in the Sanctuary

BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS

4TH Day Please Bring for Pot Luck based on First Letter of Last Name:

A – H: Main Dishes

I – M: Desserts

N – Z: Appetizers, Salads, Side Dishes

4TH Day Speaker will be Byron Attridge

If questions, please contact Gene McConnell @ 512-567-1118

gene.mcconnell@yahoo.com