



The Greater Austin Emmaus Community Newsletter



January 2021

Volume 32, Number 1

HOPE CONTINUES

We are starting a new year, 2021, after the most eventful year most of us have ever had in 2020; a lot of the things that happened in 2020 were not good things. We are still living with the COVID pandemic and the changes that impact our everyday lives. A lot of us still must work from home and deal with COVID at colleges or schools. We are still changing the way we attend church and Sunday School. We have not been able to hold Emmaus walks or attend gatherings in person.

However, we just celebrated the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day and we were reminded of the fulfillment of promises made by God. We were reminded of the love of God that he sent his son to earth for us. We were reminded that he works all things together to execute his plan no matter how impossible the things that have happened seem to us. A star that the shepherds saw at the right time that they chose to follow, kings sent on a quest to find the baby Jesus, and a baby born in Bethlehem in a manger with animals all around in the cave or as it has been told in the stable. God prophesied through **Isaiah 7:14** that a virgin woman will give birth to God's son and he will be called Immanuel (God With Us). God prophesied through **Isaiah 9:6** that Jesus Christ would come as a baby and that he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. God prophesied through **Micah 5:2** that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem. These and many more prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus through his life including **John 3:16**, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

We need to be reminded that in this world of SIN, that spouses, families, work mates, work companies, and government may hurt us or not be there when we need them; but God will always be there to provide the LOVE that we need in any situation. We need to be reminded that the difficulties of life and SIN in the world are conquered by God. That Jesus died for our SINS and that God is looking out for us. You need to remember that God provided his Son to cover our SINS to give us HOPE in the world so that we know that we can survive this world and join him in Heaven. Continue with the HOPE that he will get us through the problems that we have now in our lives. GOD is in CONTROL and just as we have been reminded of the prophecies in the Old Testament that were fulfilled in the New Testament by the birth of Jesus, he is continuing to give us HOPE for the future. Remember **Matthew 28:19-20** "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We are still requesting the Fourth Day community to send TESTIMONIES of how the Walk to Emmaus has changed their life to put on a TESTIMONY page on the GAEC website. Remember that Paul stated in **2Timothy 1:8** "So do not be ashamed to TESTIFY about our Lord." You can check the last three WalkTalk editions on the GAEC website for Board member testimonies to give you an idea of what the article might look like (<https://www.austinemmaus.org/testimonials/>).

Send a written or video TESTIMONY to communications@austinemmaus.org. **Start off the new year now by sharing** and make a difference in the GAEC community on the new website. We have not received many yet, so step out in faith and be changed by the experience!

With the HOPE of Jesus, we continue to step forward one day at a time. 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, Lay Director

Greater Austin Emmaus Community Board of Directors and Non-Board Positions

Lay Director

Steven Scott

LayDirector@austinemmaus.org

Assistant Lay Director

Dennis Perryman

AssistantLayDirector@austinemmaus.org

Past Lay Director

Fred Widmer

PastLayDirector@austinemmaus.org

Secretary

Harold Sundbeck

Secretary@austinemmaus.org

Treasurer

Patti Bizzell

Treasurer@austinemmaus.org

Upper Room Support

Mel Chambers

UpperRoom@austinemmaus.org

Assist Upper Room Support

George Scherer

AssistUpperRoom@austinemmaus.org

Communications Support

Lauren Moffatt

Communications@austinemmaus.org

Walk Support (Sign-up/Trailer)

Jeanne Randall

WalkSignups@austinemmaus.org

Assistant Walk Support (Agape)

Jo Peters

Agape@austinemmaus.org

Gathering Support

Chuck Tencer

Gathering@austinemmaus.org

Spiritual Director

Rev. Sylvester Chase

SpiritualDirector@austinemmaus.org

Team Selection Support

Susan McMillan

TeamSelection@austinemmaus.org

Reunion Group/POC Support

Christian Nelson

ReunionPOC@austinemmaus.org

Training Support

Nelda Carpenter

Training@austinemmaus.org

Database/Website Support

Rick Seifert

DatabaseWebsite@austinemmaus.org

Non-Board Positions

Music Coordinator

Mike Carmagnola

Music@austinemmaus.org

Assistant Music Coordinator

Jesse Maddera

AssistMusic@austinemmaus.org

Registrar

Myles McKemie

Registrar@austinemmaus.org

Website Developer

Eric Bursley

WebsiteDeveloper@austinemmaus.org

WalkTalk Editor*

Lauren Moffatt

Communications@austinemmaus.org

*denotes a change in person holding position



Board of Directors



Financial Statement As of 1/6/21

Bank Balance

\$33,208.69

Scholarship Fund

\$5,301.50

GAEC Website

<http://www.austinemmaus.org>

GAEC Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/groups/
GreaterAustinEmmaus/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/GreaterAustinEmmaus/)

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 awareness to the Walk to Emmaus at your church!



Join us for our next
LIVE STREAM Gathering
from Pflugerville First UMC!

January 9, 2021

Music and Worship at 6:15 p.m.

Further details coming soon!

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

Communications@austinemmaus.org

Our Second Live Stream Gathering at Hope Presbyterian Church

We had our second live stream gathering on Saturday November 21, 2020 at Hope Presbyterian Church. There were only a few people at Hope Presbyterian to facilitate the live streaming. We had 2 musicians and 2 singers welcome us with 3 songs to start the live streaming. I then discussed the announcements and read the Board Officers names and their roles. We followed with the worship service with 3 more songs. Our Fourth Day speaker was Rick Seifert who provided an uplifting talk. We had an offering for the few people at Hope Presbyterian and reminded everyone that you can also participate in the offering by sending a check to our treasurer:

Austin Emmaus
12005 Black Angus Dr.
Austin, Tx 78727

We had a joint communion led by Pastor Sylvester Chase for the few present and for those at home that had their own communion elements, so we could have communion together at the same time.

We had 132 different devices join in the live stream gathering on November 21 by YouTube which in some cases had more than one person in the room viewing the live stream. That is a lot more views by people then we had been having by in person attendees at gatherings in November before Covid!! November is always a very busy month for folks. Thank You again GAEC Fourth Day for spreading the link and notification of the live stream to people that you knew have not attended a gathering for a long time. Great Job GAEC Fourth Day!!!!!!

The live stream was a way for us to worship together and feel connected to the Austin Fourth Day Community and God. For those who did not get a chance to see the live steam yet, you can still view it on the following YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLK9GsG6TOY>. The gathering starts at the 2:28 minute point so you can drag the red circle to that time and the video will start. It still is a quite different feeling to speak to a very empty sanctuary! We learned a few things from the first live stream, and we continue to improve the live streams each time. The next live stream is at Pflugerville First UMC on Saturday January 9, 2021 at 6:15pm. The format will be the same as the Hope Presbyterian gathering.

The link will be by YouTube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC29oL_NPuyr2YtUxYIY_WiA and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pflugervilleumc/>. We look forward to you attending the Pflugerville First UMC gathering Saturday, January 9th at 6:15pm.

With the hope of Jesus, we continue to step forward one day at a time. Thank you for all you are doing to keep hope alive, and continued blessings on you and all those around you.

De Colores!
Steven Scott Lay Director GAEC

<u>OFFICER ROLE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>
Lay Director	Steven Scott	2021
Assistant Lay Director	Dennis Perryman	2021
Past Lay Director	Fred Widmer	2021
Secretary	Harold Sundbeck	2022
Treasurer	Patti Bizzell	2023
Upper Room Support	Mel Chambers	2022
Assist Upper Room Support	George Scherer	2021
Communications Support	Lauren Moffatt	2023
Walk Support (Sign-up/Trailer)	Jeanne Randall	2022
Assistant Walk Support (Agape)	Jo Peters	2021
Gathering Support	Chuck Tencer	2023
Spiritual Director	Rev. Sylvester Chase	2021
Team Selection Support	Susan McMillan	2021
Reunion Group/POC Support	Christian Nelson	2023
Training Support	Nelda Carpenter	2022
Database/Website Support	Rick Seifert	2023



Term Expiration 2021-4, 2022-4, 2023-5
Top three Directors expire every year.
Officer roles and terms expire on May 31st of the above years.



Next GAEC Board Meeting

Saturday, January 9, 2021 3:00 p.m.

The above Board meeting will be held online.

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 at
ReunionPOC@austinemmaus.org.



GAEC Facebook Group



Lauren is working diligently to ensure that the Upper Room devotionals for each day are posted here as we know many of you are not able to get your copy from your respective church.

The latest information regarding our Live Stream gatherings as well as WalkTalk issues and any other important information are posted as well.

If you are not already a member of our Facebook group, we invite you to join us by clicking the link below!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/GreaterAustinEmmaus/>

Clergy Corner

Community clergy, would you like to write an article to share with the Greater Austin Emmaus Community?

It can be as long or as short as you would like, and on any topic of your choice. Just send your musings to:

Communications@austinemmaus.org

We will all be blessed by your words of wisdom!



GIVING THANKS 2020

As I write this, Thanksgiving has passed, but not the leftovers. Lee and I will be having turkey and dressing tonight as we work our way through the Tupperware in the fridge.

Speaking of Thanksgiving, this year it has definitely been different, but it is still a time to give thanks. My wife and I are healthy, I get tested weekly for Covid-19 in order to visit my Mom at the skilled nursing center where she lives, and our extended family is also healthy. So, I give thanks to God for these blessings.

Another blessing is that I was able to retire this year, and even with the pandemic and the lock-downs in place, I have been able to start spending limited time, twice a week, with my Mom again.

When we are together, we sit and talk, and mostly we reminisce about what she calls “the old days”. We talk about my Dad and how much she misses him, and we talk about growing up in the Crestview neighborhood, which is where my spiritual journey began.

To quote the great Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”. Well, my journey to where I am today started at Crestview UMC. My parents were charter members of the church and for the majority of my early life, my fondest memories were centered on the church. I attended Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Boy Scouts, church bazaars, pancake dinners; you name it and if it involved church I was there. It was a life rooted in Christian ideals and principles; preparing me for life. That was my life up through high school, and then I moved away to attend college. Like the Prodigal Son, I left home to experience all that life had to offer; marriage, family, and several career changes.

Twenty plus years ago I made a final change in companies and found myself in a small company where 5 of my 15 coworkers had been on a Walk to Emmaus. Now I had heard snippets in conversations at church about a Walk to Emmaus but I really didn't have any idea what it was about. But those that I could identify as having been on a Walk all seemed to exhibit a certain “presence” or “attitude” that I also wanted to possess. My supervisor came to me one day and told me that when I was ready, he wanted to sponsor me. Well, the time finally came when I felt a need to make that journey and I asked him to sponsor me. That was all I needed to say. He did the rest.

And what a powerful experience it was. It was the best walk ever. But I would not say I had a “mountaintop” experience or found myself suddenly being filled with the Holy Spirit. I did feel a weight, a great weight, had been removed that I had been carrying.

The weight I had been carrying concerned the death of my Dad. He had shown his love for me all my life, even during the times I acted just like the Prodigal Son. Every time I came back from whatever adventure I had been on, squandering time and money, he welcomed me with open arms. After his passing I missed him deeply, but I couldn't say that I had truly mourned his passing. That had me questioning myself and if I had truly loved my Dad as much as he loved me.

As I said, when I went on my Walk I didn't have any expectations as to what was about to happen, I just knew that I would be open to the moment. Over the course of those three days through the bond that formed with the men at my table, I found that love for my Dad that I thought was missing. Through my renewed relationship with God and the knowledge in the security of his love for me, I released that weight I had been carrying since my Dad's death. I no longer questioned myself, my love for my Dad was there! His passing had just been so unexpected that I had been numb from his loss. But strengthened through my renewed relationship with God, I was able to find that missing love; no longer was I lost, I was found.

**De Colores,
Harold Sundbeck
GAEC Secretary**

GAEC Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

November 21, 2020

The November Board Meeting was held by Google Meet due to the current limited gathering size directives to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following members were present: Steven Scott, Lay Director; Harold Sundbeck, Secretary; Patti Bizzell, Treasurer; Mel Chambers, Upper Room Support; Chuck Tencer, Gathering Support; Christian Nelson, Reunion Group POC/Coordinator; and Rick Seifert, Database/Website Support.

Steven Scott, Lay Director, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and opened the meeting with a prayer.

QUORUM: Seven Board members were present providing a quorum for the meeting.

MINUTES: The Board of Directors Meeting Minutes were sent by email for the previous meeting held on September 12, 2020 and were approved by email.

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 will finalize the Board job descriptions. Steven will also send a letter to Upper Room concerning the finalization of the Eagles Wings Merger. Due to the on-going Covid restrictions Steven suggested rescheduling the planned Walk for March 18-21. He has been in contact with the Eagles Wings Retreat Center and they will get back to him as to open dates. Harold Sundbeck made a motion to delay the March Walk and Mel Chambers seconded the motion. The motion passed. Tentative future dates are April 29-May 2, 2021 or May 13-16, 2021.

Pflugerville UMC has offered to host our January 9, 2021 Live Gathering. Chuck Tencer made a motion to accept their offer. Mel Chambers seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Board has a new email address for future communications. gaec_board@austinemmaus.org

TREASURER'S REPORT – Patti Bizzell reported the Frost Bank balance reconciles with the Aplos balance of \$34,839.49.

DATABASE/WEBSITE SUPPORT – Rick Seifert reported our website is now working and email forwarding from Improvmx. Rick will also move our data from Kristin's Dropbox account to Amazon S3 Storage.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT – Lauren Moffatt has been putting information onto our Facebook page.

GATHERING SUPPORT – The November Gathering will take place today at Hope Presbyterian at 6:15 with a live-stream showing and Rick Seifert will be the 4th Day Speaker.

Pflugerville UMC has offered to host our January 9, 2021 Live Gathering. Chuck reported the future Gathering plans will include Bethany UMC for the March Gathering, Northwest Hills UMC for the May Gathering, Cedar Creek UMC for the July Gathering, Round Rock Presbyterian for the September Gathering and Hope Presbyterian for the November Gathering.

Continued on
next page



REUNION GROUP/POC SUPPORT – Christian Nelson is gathering updated information for our Reunion Group listings. Christian will send the current reunion group information and the Church Point of Contact info to Rick Seifert who will help update the website with this information. Steven will use Mailchimp to send out request for Reunion Group info to the community.

NEW BUSINESS – Our next Board meetings will be held January 9, February 13 and March 13, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS – Harold Sundbeck and Mel Chambers will submit articles to the WalkTalk.

Christian Nelson closed the meeting with prayer and the meeting adjourned at 4:00 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 November 25, 2020.

Minutes written and respectfully submitted by GAEC Secretary, Harold Sundbeck.



**Kairos Prison
Ministries**

Kairos Prison Ministry

Kairos Prison Ministry is a lay-led, interdenominational Christian ministry in which volunteers bring Christ's love and forgiveness to prisoners and their families. The word Kairos is a Greek word meaning in "God's Special Time" or in the "Fullness of Time," indicating an opportunity for participants to reconsider their life choices. Kairos Weekends are typically held in the June/July and December/January time frame at the Ferguson Unit near Huntsville, Texas.

There are several ways you can participate in a Kairos weekend. One of them is by baking cookies.

Watch this video on YouTube to see how Kairos cookies change lives:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXV_lgVWwA4

For more details on preparing cookies, or other ways you can support Kairos, contact Randy Nettles at 512-636-0832.

“ . . . I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Matthew 25:36

What I learned about Me in 2020

Happy New Year! I hope God blesses you even more than he did in 2020.

At the start of a new year, we reflect on the past year. My reflection on the year 2020 is that it is not as bad as people make it. However, it was a test of our faith! I know match.com says 2020 is a perfect match for Satan in their commercials, but 2020 made my faith stronger.

The COVID issues of 2020 brought about the start of micro-ministries. You know that little thing “The Changing Our World” talk asked us to do. One of my micro-ministries is taking food to three older ladies. On Sunday they know they have a good meal.

Another micro-ministry is the check in or wellness check. I check in on members of my church and members of the Emmaus Community. The quick chat lets people know that someone is thinking about them. Some calls could be considered a reunion group meeting as we talk about life. I bet there is that couple you have shared a pew with most Sundays, that you could call and brighten their day. What micro –ministries have you started? The ones we start in 2021 will make it a better year for the world.

I can ramble on about micro- ministries, but 2020 has brought families closer together. That could be a micro-ministry! God and Gin Rummy or Monopoly or your family’s thing can make 2021 a great year.

Once again, I pray that God bless you with more of his love in 2021. I know I said more prayers in 2020 than any other year until 2021 because I am praying harder for you!

May God bless you!

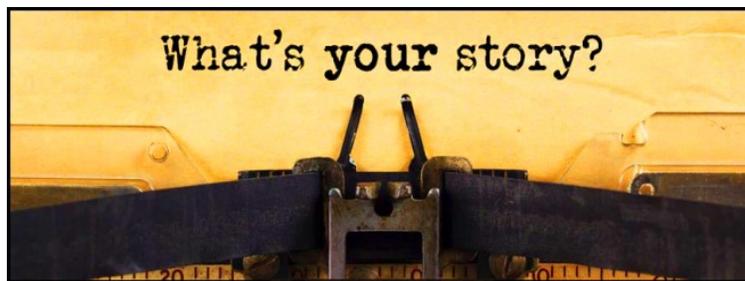
“The Real” Melvin Chambers.
GAEC Upper Room Representative

TESTIMONIES

Do you have testimonies or 4th Day experiences you would like to share with the community? Perhaps a reflection on your spiritual life before you attended the Walk to Emmaus, or your spiritual journey since your Walk? Or maybe sharing your answers to the two questions asked at Closing: What has this weekend meant to you? What are you going to do with it?

Send your reflections and testimonies to:
Communications@austinemmaus.org

We will all be blessed by your sharing!



Upcoming 2021 GAEC Emmaus Community Gatherings



Pflugerville First UMC

Music and Worship
at 6:15 p.m.
4th Day Speaker:
Kenny Kant



Details regarding this event will be sent out via MailChimp when they become available!

To view the video of our November Gathering from Hope Presbyterian Church please use the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLK9GsG6TOU>

Fourth Day Speakers Needed!

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

We will all be blessed by your sharing!

