

New Covenant Emmaus

An Emmaus Community



NEW COVENANT NOTES

Spring 2021

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Monthly Gatherings

LOCATION:

Friendship Church
16479 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611

WHEN:

3rd Friday of Every Month

TIME:

7:29pm—Worship

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A Message from Our Community Lay Director

Jeff Reynolds, Walk Number 78, Table of Paul, and I worship at Cash Point Missionary Baptist Church in Ardmore, Tennessee. First of all, I want to thank you for electing me to be your Community Lay Director for 2021. I remember the Lay Director in 2014, saying at the end of my walk that you serve through progressive servanthood and one day you may be called upon to be the Community Lay Director like me. That thought went blazing through my mind like a bolt of lightning during a spring thunderstorm and I said, “NEVER”, but when I was asked, God said, “Oh yeah... you can do this because I will give you the strength, wisdom, and knowledge to do it.” So, I said YES to God. I want to thank our outgoing Community Lay Director, Robbie Walls, for the outstanding job she has done and to thank her for providing guidance for me as I take the helm of this Emmaus ship.

As we entered into the third decade of the 21st century, what we knew as normal drastically changed. COVID-19 brought our world to a standstill in March of 2020, and as a result halted our Emmaus Walk schedule. For the first time since the inception of the New Covenant Emmaus Community, we went a whole year without conducting any walks and the spring 2021 walks have been postponed until fall, Lord willing. Stay in the know by watching for our emails, find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/164495715554/> or check us out on our website at <https://www.newcovenantemmaus.com/> for more information. Speaking of our website, a new improved and updated platform for our website is coming soon so stay tuned and be watching for it as well.

The election for the Board of Directors was completed last fall. Some board members rolled off and a few resigned due to other commitments. Going forward, we welcome the class of 2021 with Robby Hunt and Daryl Randolph (clergy). Elected to the class of 2022 are Bridget Fox and Mike Powers. Elected to the class of 2023 are Connie Watkins, Jim Bennett, Jesus Lopez, Tina Cook, and Corey Jewell-Taylor (clergy). Welcome Aboard! As I welcome the new members to the board, I want to thank those outgoing board members. I can't emphasize enough of how blessed and fortunate this community is to have such a strong board of directors that are dedicated to making the New Covenant Emmaus Community strong and vibrant and to help make strong leaders in our local churches through the Walk to Emmaus. Thank you to Miranda Green, Billy Caldwell, Harry Richardson, Sheri Richardson, Vicki McCurry, Tom Martin, Tony Jones, and Jamie Rogers. You all have done an outstanding job and have made a difference in this community!

Recently one of my morning devotions told of a lady clearing out her garden in preparation for spring planting and as she reached down to pull up a clump of winter weeds, she noticed a venomous copperhead snake lying in the undergrowth just beneath her hand. Another inch closer and she probably would have been bitten. This devotion referenced the scripture in Deuteronomy 31:8; The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you. God watches over His people and He is always with us. Reflect on this past year of how He has done just that for this Emmaus community.

De Colores! Jeff Reynolds



Spiritual Director's Corner

Reflecting on a Bread and Water Kind of Year . . .

Has it really been a year since we journeyed together with a band of pilgrims or caterpillars and feasted on an indescribably wonderful 72-hour experience?

The time apart is lamentable; but be encouraged that God has been at work in our community even in adversity. At times it has seemed like a bare-bones journey with rations of bread and water, yet . . .

Though all would agree that Zoom meetings can be awkward, and we prefer in-person gatherings, NCEC hosted six virtual gatherings during our pandemic isolation. Between June 2020 and this past February, more than eighty community members attended one or more virtual 4th day gatherings at various times. Wrestling with technology has not been easy, but our music and media teams have been adaptable and gracious in online settings. As a bonus, we have gained valuable technical experience that may strengthen our 4th-day connections in the future. Despite limitations, brothers and sisters in Christ have gathered online for friendly banter, infectious laughter, singing, prayer, 4th-day testimonies, devotionals, and love feasts or holy communion. Let's give thanks!

Love feasts seemed more difficult for engagement than Holy Communion. However, we accepted what was in our hands, simple bread and water, and used these symbols to celebrate the faith in and rich love of Christ we share. We realized that God's Spirit was present even on Zoom as we saw love glowing on beloved faces, the lifting of hands in praise, and heads bowed in prayer. The Love feasts reminded us that we share a deep bond in Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life and Living Water. For an Emmaus community to connect, experience God's presence, and respond to Him in this time of adversity is a stunning reality and a mark of grace, perseverance, and spiritual growth! Let's praise God!

Due to the pandemic limitations, we have become more aware of the vital need for reunion groups and other means of growth and encouragement in our 4th-day journeys. (See Conrad's newsletter article on 4th days and reunion groups.) Friends and loved ones have suffered this past year, and community members have been spurred on to "stir" God's love into our community. They have cared for those in need, driven miles to comfort the bereaved, shared the hope of salvation/healing, and lifted countless prayers. Many have sent encouraging cards and texts and posted prayers and words of encouragement on our Facebook page. We celebrate the gifts of grace that God has lavished upon us through others during this "bread and water" season.

We thank God for the faithful hearts that have persevered, listened to God's voice, and loved well. Our Emmaus community has had to work the hard ground of adversity, but I believe seeds have been planted, and we will see fruit come forth in the 4th days ahead. Australian author and speaker Christine Caine reminds us, "Sometimes when you find yourself in a dark place you think you've been buried, but you've actually been planted." As Easter people, we trust that what was buried this past year will burst forth into fruit in the 4th days ahead. God has not been dormant during this season! Ephesians 1:19 - 20 confidently proclaims that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us--even in a pandemic season!

*De Colores,
Sharon Keffer
Community Spiritual Director*



Lots of good things are happening!



Now there is a safe and secure way to make donations and pay Pilgrim Fees to the New Covenant Emmaus Community. Use your PayPal app on your mobile device to scan our QR code.

Or go to PayPal and send money to
nsectreasurer@gmail.com



Scan. Pay. Go.



The NCEC website needs to be migrated to a newer platform due to age. Until that is completed, we are unable to make updates to share with our community. We are working hard to get the new website completed. In the meantime, rest assured, we will share pertinent information with you via email and Facebook.

Forms and other information are still accessible on our current website.
Link included below.

www.newcovenantemmaus.com

2021 Upcoming Events Schedule

Girl's Chrysalis Flight # 52
May 28-31, 2021

Boy's Chrysalis Flight # 53
September 3-6, 2021

Men's Walk #102
September 9-12, 2021

Women's Walk #103
September 16-19, 2021

Face-to-Face Encounter #6
TBD

Follow-up Gathering Information:

Walks #102 & #103
Friday September 24, 2021

Friendship Church
16749 Lucas Ferry Road
Athens, AL 35611



Men's Walk #102 - Lay Director

Greetings, I hope and pray this newsletter finds you well and healthy; that you and your family have been able to avoid the ill effects of the Covid-19 virus. Men's Walk 102 is again on the schedule for this Fall Sept 9-12 with training the last (3) Saturdays of August. For those of you who were previously on the Conference Room team or the Support team, please check your calendar and pencil in those dates. You will be contacted soon to confirm your availability to serve. Please pray for God's wisdom and guidance as we prepare for the Walk due to the special challenges that will be faced in the coming months. Also, pray that the spread of the virus will continue to decline so the Walk can proceed as scheduled in September.

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace during these trying times.

Jim Bennett

Lay Director Walk #102



Women's Walk #103 - Lay Director

Greetings my brothers and sisters in Christ!

Lately, I feel like I have struggled to maintain the course. For example, I have struggled to maintain my daily obedience to study, something that has so profoundly changed my life that I can't believe I would ever push it to the side. I have struggled to write this note to you all, but I felt a nudge to trust today's devotionals.

From "Streams in the Desert" March 16, the scripture reads: "For our good." Hebrews 12:10. This devotional says, "the blossom is never as beautiful, or the perfume as fragrant, as when they are found blooming in the canyon".

From "The Real-Life Devotional Bible for Women" Day 75, The Prayer of Jabez. 1 Chronicles 4:10 with reference to Luke 18:1 where Jesus tells us to "always pray and not give up" and Philippians 4:6 where He tells us "Do not be anxious about anything but in every situation by prayer, and with thanksgiving, to present your requests to God".

These devotionals led me to these thoughts:

1. Although we/I have been in a "canyon" for over a year, the signs of rebirth, awakening, love and life are apparent everywhere. HALLELUJAH!!
2. There have been a lot of nights I woke up at 3 am and could not sleep. So, I prayed sometimes thanking Him for everything I am grateful for and for healing, and peace and comfort for many of you. I may not have been consistent in my studies, but I have spent more time in prayer for my family, my Emmaus community and my brothers and sisters in Christ than ever before in my life.
3. I have prayed the Prayer of Jabez for years after reading a book explaining it. It helped me to let go of my guilt in asking God for things, to ask him to provide ministry opportunities and to never give up but to give "it" to Him and to not be anxious. I have learned to recognize when I am trying to be in control and instead, to lay it down with thanksgiving. Beautiful things happen every single time I fully give "it" to God and walk in 100% faith vs carrying my burdens like a pack horse and allowing my heart to become weak with discouragement.
4. The struggle was real. Our Father was furthering my dependence on Him and showing me an opportunity to serve others (my prayers) even from a "canyon".

I have new eyes that have come from a long 15 months in the canyon and pray I never take our churches and our Emmaus community for granted again. I hope to see you soon, especially in September. Please keep your Emmaus leadership and upcoming pilgrims in your prayers!

Women's Walk 103 - Sept 16 – 19

Team Meetings – August 14, 21 and Sept 11

De Colores and much love,

Vicki McCurry



An Experience in the Emmaus Tradition For 60 and Older

Face to Face is designed and developed by the Upper Room. It is designed to challenge and equip pilgrims for Christian Action. This short course in Christianity will help pilgrims to become more effective disciples of Jesus Christ and actively engage in God's mission in the world.

This program is for persons 60 and older who have never been on a Walk to Emmaus. It was developed for this age group because their health risks and energy levels require a longer schedule with shorter sessions. It is tailored to meet senior men and women on their terms. Men and women will be together in the conference room.

The eight sessions will offer 15 talks about God's love and grace. The sessions will offer exciting and hospitable opportunities for Christian learning. There will be tasty refreshments, lots of laughs, surprising personal encounters, and spiritual experiences. There will be worship, communion, singing, joking with one another, and simply experiencing an avalanche of God's grace and love.



Thoughts from the Face-to-Face Lay Director

Over a year ago, I was called and asked to lead a Face to Face Encounter in the Athens area. I told our Community Lay Director I wanted a few days to pray and think about it. I really, really planned to tell her “NO” when she called back, but to my surprise, what I heard come out of my mouth was an enthusiastic “YES!” Since that call, I have been praying with joy for the team and the pilgrims who will attend our next Face-to-Face Encounter. I love seeing what God has planned for all of us!

We are finalizing a location and dates but are hoping for the first two weeks of October. Details will follow when we have everything confirmed. In the meantime, please be in prayer for the team that will be forming and for the pilgrims who will be attending. As you look around you, consider who in your church, family, or other areas of connection would love to attend. Applications will be available on the website, or you can contact me, and I will get one to you. Remember pilgrims do not have to have a sponsor-but it sure is a wonderful experience to serve as a sponsor! You will be responsible for answering any questions your pilgrim has, gathering the love letters, and attending candlelight and closing.

Thank you in advance for praying for all who will be part of Face-to-Face Encounter #6!

De Colores!

Cindy Haney, Lay Director

News from the Butterfly Front



Hi everyone,

Chrysalis has been in survival mode for most of 2020. However, now we are allowing God to transition us into thriving mode. It is going to take a lot of hard work and prayer. We have a Covid-19 readiness committee looking at every aspect of a flight weekend and addressing the changes that will need to be made. We are finding many things can be done in a committee specific capacity. Covid-19 vaccines are becoming more readily available and precautions are being put in place, which include wellness checks, multiple hand sanitizing stations, and a dedicated sanitation team to name a few. Therefore, we are optimistic that we will be able to ease the minds of parents/sponsors that their child's health is a priority as well as their encounter with Jesus. As of this moment, we are planning a girl's flight over Memorial Day Weekend, May 28-31, 2021. The Weekend Lay Director will be Angel Harbin, Weekend Spiritual Director will be June Wilson, and they will be led by the Holy Spirit. Our next Boy's flight will be over Labor Day Weekend, Sept 4-6, 2021. The Weekend Lay Director will be Ralph Weaver and the Weekend Spiritual Director will be Scott Kowerduck, they will be led by the Holy Spirit. We are also trying to plan an outdoor gathering for April or the first of May. We are actively accepting caterpillar applications for both Flights.

De Colores! and Fly with Christ!

Missy Weaver



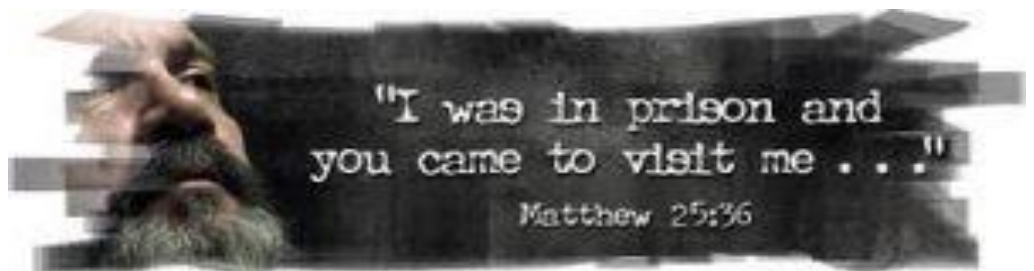
Kairos Update

Kairos has been shut down since March 2020 and at this time does not appear that the Department of Corrections is willing to let Kairos back into the Prison system in 2021.

With that being said, Kairos of Alabama is in the process of Fundraising and Recruiting for the possibility of Starting-up in 2022. Our local Kairos programs are Limestone CF and North Alabama Community Work Center (formerly called Decatur Work Release). These two programs usually work together for a common goal: To establish and develop a Christian Community inside Alabama Prisons. Julia Tutwiler Woman's Prison in Wetumpka AL. is the women's prison that Kairos frequently visits; there has been no movement there since March 2020 according to Ruth Smith who has been tasked to lead the next Weekend.

In the interim, Kairos has participated in several special events to stay involved in developing and encouraging inside the Prisons. The most recent event was held on March 6, 2021. The Kairos Community had a Breakfast-Recruiting-Fundraising-Encouraging Video Production Celebration from 8:30- 12 noon at a local church in Hazel Green. The event consisted of forty Kairos members and future members and we produced three Encouraging Videos to send to the men inside these Prisons.

*De Colores,
Jesus Lopez
Kairos Liaison*





Sponsorship—The Most Important Job of All

Sponsorship is the foundation of a healthy, effective Emmaus movement that is fulfilling its true purpose - the development of Christian leaders to strengthen our local churches.

A “sponsor” is one who takes responsibility for another. The suffix “ship” refers to the skill involved in the activity. Sponsorship is the skill of taking responsibility for another. First and foremost, it requires prayer. Sponsorship is a dynamic partnership between you and God. It will also require your time, energy and dedication.

The sponsorship process begins with prayer. Commit the process to God and rely upon Him to direct you to the individual or couple. You must be open and available to allow God to work through you.

It is important to remember that not everyone is an appropriate sponsor choice. A person with beliefs about God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit that differ from the traditional Christian belief of the Holy Trinity would not be a good sponsor choice. The walk is designed to bring together the body of Christ and controversy over doctrine can lead to divisiveness during the walk. Persons in the middle of an emotional crisis, such as a family breakup or severe grief, or that are psychologically unstable, also should not be considered. Pray for guidance when these circumstances appear to be present.

Those to consider for sponsorship include individuals and couples that are willing to grow and move forward in their journey of faith. They know that God can and has made a difference in their lives and they exhibit an excitement about being a Christian. Another example of those to consider for sponsorship are those that are already leaders in their church, including clergy - those that receive joy from serving God in the little ways and willingly do whatever is asked of them.

This is not a quick and easy process and should not be taken lightly. It may take a long time before you have a response from God about who you should sponsor. Don't be discouraged. God's timing is always perfect.

The aim of sponsorship is to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians who will bring new life and vision to the church, congregation, home, workplace, and community - to build up the body of Christ.

To sponsor someone for a walk, flight, or encounter, look under the

SPONSORSHIP tab on our community website.

www.newcovenantemmaus.com



WILLING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!

If it has been a while since you've been invited to serve on a Walk, or if you have yet to be invited to serve, please be sure you have filled out and submitted a volunteer form.

Visit our website to fill out a form.

www.newcovenantemmaus.com

(Volunteer forms are located under the VOLUNTEER tab.)

If you have already done so, and still have not been invited to serve, please let the Registrar or any Board member know of your interest. We would love to have you join us in serving on an upcoming Walk.



Fortifying Fourth Days

Greetings NCEC, Due to COVID-19, all of us in the Community have greatly missed sharing the love of Christ with one another and our Pilgrims. But there is a shining light down the road coming out of quarantine...and it is long overdue (COVID-19 simply presented the Community an opportunity to see this need and provided the time necessary to develop solutions). Departing a Walk is not the end, but the beginning of our journey. And this is why Fourth Day is vitally

important! Thus, the Board is working towards revitalizing our Fourth Days, so that the glowing love displayed and enjoyed at the camp, continues into our daily lives outside of camp. For that to occur, we established near-term, mid-term, and far-term goals with the intent of having most of these solutions in place by the Fall Walks. And implementing these solutions requires assistance from each of you, by responding to surveys and/or questionnaires coming your way (for your perspective and commitments). This is exciting news! Areas being updated/created/renewed include our Reunion Groups, Newsletters, website, incorporating new technology, and possibly some branding. I look forward to the positive changes this will provide our families, churches, community, and the Emmaus Community. And more importantly, enhancing each of our abilities to glorify God in a revitalized atmosphere by keeping His love alive and vibrant throughout every Fourth Day.

***De Colores,
Conrad Bonner***

As a new member of the NCEC Board and the new Fourth Day Liaison I wholeheartedly agree with Conrad's synopsis of the importance of Fourth Day Revitalization. I am excited to help the Fourth Day Task Force move forward to help rekindle the fire we each felt during the walk. Fourth Day Revitalization will strengthen us as Christ's disciples, which in turn will strengthen our families, our churches and our communities and allow the light of Christ to shine through each of us.

***De Colores,
Bridget Fox***



72-Hour Prayer Tips

Often when passing around the 72-Hour Prayer Vigil for an Emmaus Walk or Chrysalis Flight we hear, “I can’t pray for a whole half-hour.” You’d be surprised how fast that half-hour can go!

Following are some tips to help you focus your prayers during your commitment time. Use this as a guide but don’t limit your prayer time to just these tips. Begin by scanning the list and marking those items that touch you the most. These are the prayer points that the Spirit has led you too. Don’t feel pressured to pray the whole list; trust that God will lead others to pray and He will cover all the points on the list (and more). As you begin to pray for the items you marked, pause at each one and ask God what He would have you specifically pray about that point. When you can think of no more then move to the next item. If you should finish your list before your time is up, then go back and pray about the ones you did not mark. You may want to make these “bullet” prayers as you read down the list. You’ll be amazed at how long you can actually pray when you commit yourself to giving the time! At the end you’ll find that you were a blessing to others and received a great blessing yourself as well.

Pray for the Pilgrims/Caterpillars:

- Pray for them individually if you know their names or as a group.
- Pray that walls would come down and hearts would be opened to understand the depth, the height, the breadth, and width of God’s love for them.
- Pray that each participant would receive a personal touch from God during his or her journey.
- Pray for the participants to be able to leave the world behind and give themselves to the weekend.
- Pray for the families of the participants.
- Pray protection for the participants as they leave the weekend behind and face the world again.
- Pray that they will carry the weekend with them into their world.

Pray for the Team Members:

- Pray for them individually if you know their names or as a group: Meal Service, Logistics, Conference Room, Agape, Worship, Events, etc.
- Pray that each team member would serve with humility and grace.
- Pray that each team member would receive a renewed touch from God as they see the weekend through the eyes of those experiencing it for the first time.
- Pray for the specific duties of teams that you may have participated in working with before. No one knows how hard it is or what could go wrong better than those who have experienced it!
- Pray for protection and strength.
- Pray that grace would abound when hiccups occur...and they always occur.

Pray for Defining Moments:

- Think back to your walk/flight and those events that meant the most to you...your *defining moment*. Allow God to take you back to that time.
- Pray for each participant out of the heart of this memory.
- Pray for the little moments that no one thinks gets noticed but might mean the world to someone else.
- Pray for the weekend.
- Pray that God is glorified by His will and ways being done.
- Pray for protection over the weekend, the grounds, and the people.
- Pray for the community as they gather to support special events.
- Pray that God's Spirit and Truth would abound.

✚ *Pray the Lord's Prayer and think about how you could specifically apply moments of the weekend to it. Example: "...daily bread" Pray that the Bread of Life be broken and received with each talk.*

✚ *Pray about the moments of Communion /Lord's Supper. Pray for mealtimes and snack times. Pray that when it is over everyone involved will be able to say, "I came looking for Jesus and found Him here."*

Online Resources

Bible Gateway - <https://biblegateway.com> - Many translations, plus daily reading plans and other resources

Daily Hope with Rick Warren - <http://pastorrick.com> - Daily devotional and other resources

First 5 - <http://first5.org> - Apps and other resources for personal and group Bible study. Geared toward women, but all can benefit.

Turning Point with David Jeremiah - <http://www.davidjeremiah.org> - Daily devotional and other resources

Desiring God - John Piper - <http://www.desiringgod.org> - Articles, sermons, free e-books and more

Upper Room Devotional - <http://devotional.upperroom.org> - Daily devotional from the organization that sponsors Walk to Emmaus

Insight for Living Devotional - Chuck Swindoll - <https://www.insight.org> - Daily devotional and many other resources

Our Daily Bread - <https://odb.org> - Daily devotional and other resources

Christian Classics Ethereal Library - <https://www.ccel.org> - "The mission of the Christian Classics Ethereal Library (CCEL) is to build up the church by making classic Christian literature widely available and promoting its use for edification and study by interested Christians, seekers and scholars."

The Bible Project - <http://thebibleproject.com> - An excellent source for short animated videos on every book of the Bible, themes and word studies

Bible Broadcasting Network - <http://www.bbnradio.org> - Many resources, including a free "Bible Institute" with many courses available. Somewhat antiquated website, but worth looking into for the content.

A Word with You - Ron Hutchcraft - <https://hutchcraft.com> - Daily inspirational messages and other resources

All Worship - Free Christian Music - <http://www.allworship.com> - Christian music online



and apps, devotions and other resources

Walk in the Word with James MacDonald - <http://jamesmacdonald.com> - Daily devotions, various resources

Seedbed - Daily Devotional - www.seedbed.com - Daily devotional and many other resources

Bible.com - <https://www.bible.com> - Bible online, apps, reading plans and other resources

Days of Praise - <http://www.icr.org> - Daily devotional and many other resources

Christian History Magazine - <https://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org> - Excellent resource for learning about the history of Christianity, various denominations and important historical figures in the life of the Church. Back issues available online.

Christianity Today (monthly magazine) - <http://www.christianitytoday.org> - "Since 1956, Christianity Today has challenged the church with real-world content that is timely, compelling, insightful, balanced - and biblical."

World (biweekly news magazine) - <https://world.wng.org> - News presented from a conservative, evangelical perspective. Insightful commentary in each issue.

****Please note that while the websites listed above were suggested by members of the New Covenant community, their inclusion here does not imply endorsement by the New Covenant Emmaus Board of Directors or the Upper Room Ministries.**

From the Archives

Walk to Emmaus Beginnings...



**Make a friend.
Be a friend.
Bring a friend
to Christ.**

The Walk to Emmaus is an adaptation of the Roman Catholic Cursillo (pronounced cur-SEE-o) Movement, which originated in Spain in 1949. Cursillo de Cristianidad means "little course in Christianity." The original Cursillo leaders designed the program to empower persons to transform their living and working environments into Christian environments.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Episcopalians and Lutherans, along with several nondenominational groups, such as Tres Dias, began to offer Cursillo. In 1978, The Upper Room of the General Board of Discipleship adapted the program for a primarily Protestant audience and began to offer it under the name The Upper Room Cursillo. In 1981, The Upper Room made further adaptations and changed the name of the program to The Upper Room

Walk to Emmaus. In 1984, The Upper Room developed a youth expression of Emmaus called Chrysalis. In 2015, Face to Face began "Encounters" in Emmaus Communities across the United States.