



2013 HOC Board

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NEXT STEPS FOR HEART OF CAROLINA

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” *Jeremiah 29:11*

What a roller coaster 2013 has been in the Heart of Carolina! And through it all, the Lord has led us, even when we were blinded and had no idea what was going to happen next. Praise be to God!

In the spring we were initially on the downhill ride of worrying about both finances and about walk contracts/provisions with Short Journey. After much prayer, discernment, community action and negotiation we found ourselves “riding high” again – we were back in the green and with viable contracts for 2 fall 2013 walks.

Our roller coaster experience was not over, however. As summer progressed we did not see the needed sign-ups for the fall walks. The date for committing to Short Journey was looming and we were at risk of losing half of the walk costs. The Board was heartsick and in a very low valley. We did NOT want to cancel any more walks. Again, lots more prayer, appeals to the community, a 2-week extension from Short Journey, and the numbers suddenly started rising. The Lord made it powerfully known that these were HIS walks! God is good – all the time!

So does that mean we are now on a permanent high? Remember that PERSISTENCE Talk on the Sunday of your walk? No one can stay on the mountaintop. Neither can this community. So the Board continues to evaluate options. Despite the strong response to the walks this fall we still have some problems that appear to be common in Emmaus communities as they “age.” Our numbers for walks are still lower than “the early days.” We no longer have a long waiting list of potential pilgrims. Our volunteer pool is shrinking. How should we respond?

After much prayer and deliberation, we are proceeding in 2014 with 3 walks:

Women’s Walk #128 – March 27th - 30th

Men’s Walk #129 – October 16th - 19th

Women’s Walk #130 – October 30th - November 2nd

Our prayer is that each of you will begin NOW to pray for these walks, for discernment of your role in these walks and for the pilgrims that God calls to be there. Pray too for your Board – that we will continue to discern the Lord’s direction for Heart of Carolina and for ways to bring renewal to the community. If you have ideas – contact anyone on the Board and talk with us. We would love to hear from you! And continue to pray, “Come, Holy Spirit...”

BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

They responded to a call; you voted. The incoming members of the 2014 Board of Directors, serving a 3-year term, are Ray & Deborah Murphy, Ted & Dorothy Rogers, Keith & Lynda Stewart, and Danielle West. Bryan Sexton will serve in a clergy position. Outgoing members serve to the end of 2013. Please join us in a round of welcomes and thank you’s! Pictures and a listing of work area assignments coming soon!

POTENTIAL CALLS TO SERVICE

Shhh! Listen. Do you hear His still small voice?

Bilingual Support for HOC – Growing HOC through Latino Outreach

Our May HOC Gathering was indeed a special and inspiring time. The Latino ministry at Apex UMC was responsible for our Fourth Day talk and seven wonderful participants described their journey to Georgia to attend a Spanish speaking Emmaus walk. It was so obvious to all of us that their experience was indeed just like our original Emmaus walks here in Heart of Carolina, the first day of confusion and why here, the gradual closeness of our time with Christ and the impact it made on our lives. Their joyous stories whether in English or Spanish (with interpretation) brought tears to many eyes and just confirmed that we are all children of God and the Emmaus experience is for those seeking a closer walk with our God. At the June 8th Heart of Carolina board meeting, a topic on the new business agenda was “could Heart of Carolina bring the Emmaus walk in Spanish to our own community?” The board endorsed that we could begin an investigation of the possibility and determine what, how, when, etc. As a result of the discussion, one of our first steps is to determine what is available in our own HOC community concerning bilingual members, clergy included. So, we need your help to “find” current members of the community who could participate and encourage others to attend a walk if they are already bilingual and feel the call to attend a HOC walk and begin to use their gifts for this ministry. Send any information to Steve Wood, wood0812@aol.com. If you have further questions, any board member would be happy to help.

The Gift of Sponsorship – A Personal Perspective from Julia Alliger

When I was a student associate pastor in a rural church, a church member sponsored me on the *Walk to Emmaus*. It was an odd time in my life—I had just graduated from Divinity School; I was on crutches after major knee surgery, and I was waiting for my first appointment as a pastor. The weekend is a little bit of a blur, now—but I remember how good it felt to be loved. It was amazing to have someone care enough to drive me to the place where we were gathering, to pick me up afterward, and to shepherd me gently through the process of being a pilgrim on this remarkable journey! She paid for everything and took care of all the details, checking in on my husband to make sure he didn't need anything. It was a gift of

friendship, a gift of hospitality, and a gift of time all rolled up into one. I will never forget her kindness. This is a one of the best gifts we can give to someone. But sometimes, we're not exactly sure how to go about it. Consider the following possibilities:

What if someone doesn't know whether they can do a particular weekend?

Remember—sponsorship does not involve picking particular people to go on particular weekends. Help someone fill out an application, send it in to the registrars, and then pray! Perhaps they can't go on the upcoming walk, but the one after that will work out better. The Holy Spirit will guide and direct everyone in the process. Trusting God—rather than ourselves—to choose the right time for each pilgrim is a part of what makes Emmaus so special.

What if my church doesn't know much about the Walk to Emmaus, or is worried?

Have a group of Emmaus people come to your church, your bible study, or your Wednesday night dinner and give a presentation about Emmaus. There is a Board position for evangelism. People available to help you. The presentation usually involves a brief discussion about what Emmaus is, then a short testimonial about a person's experience, a time of questions and answers and a sample of Emmaus songs. It could be 30-60 minutes, your choice. If interested, contact Rev. Ray Teague at 919-656-5730 or rayteague@nccumc.org.

What if money is a problem?

There are scholarships available to help pilgrims and sponsors who cannot afford the Walk fees. Please speak with the registrars for more information.

Our community requires sponsorship training every 3 years. Don't wait until you have someone to sponsor to update your training! And don't forget your pastor and their spouse! Emmaus is a great gift for clergy, too.

WALKS 126 & 127 NEED YOU!!!

A new set of walks means the “behind the scenes machine” begins what it does best, showing GOD's GRACE to all the new pilgrims – but that requires YOU!

Remember washing your hands in a clean bathroom? Sitting in a clean conference room? The list of things that “magically” happened for you is endless! Please prayerfully consider being God's hands and feet – if not Set up and Clean up, maybe another area. Remember your commissioning? You are counting on GOD and He is counting on YOU!!!

– Leo and Connie, Set-Up and Clean-Up