



DECEMBER NORTHERN KENTUCKY EMMAUS NEWSLETTER

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU
FROM YOUR NORTHERN KENTUCKY EMMAUS BOARD.**

**May the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Bless You and Yours! , DeColores**

Who are you going to sponsor in the upcoming Walks?

Submit your pilgrims name early and avoid the rush.

Men's Walk #29 Mar 19-22, 2009

Women's Walk #29 Apr 23-26, 2009

Perhaps you would like to serve on a Northern Kentucky Emmaus Walk team. To serve on a team is a fantastic experience. If you would like to serve, let me know and I will give your name to the proper persons.

Who are you going to sponsor on the upcoming Chrysalis Walk?

Now is the time to submit your Caterpillars name!

Girls Flight: January 17th-19th, 2009

Boys Flight: February 14th-16th, 2009

**Don't Forget The December 13, 2008 Northern Kentucky Emmaus Community
Gathering.**

**Immanuel United Methodist Church
2551 Dixie Hwy Lakeside Park KY
Worship & Fellowship Begins at 7:15 p.m.**

Pete Linstruth, Emmaus Board Sponsorship/Outreach representative, will be conducting a half hour "**Sponsorship Training**" class after the December 13th Gathering.

Feelings are like clouds that hide the sunshine

From the Community Lay Director - Pat Naughton

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With the Thanksgiving Season behind us it is time to reflect on the Christmas Season. We all have so many things to be thankful for that it would be impossible to mention them all here. I am thankful for each of you and your involvement in this community. I so much look forward to Christmas and the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus. He loves me for who I am. He forgives me for the things I have done. May each of you find it in your heart this Christmas Season to heal a relationship that may not be so easy to do. Jesus Loves you, Jesus is counting on you no conditions only grace. Won't you do it for Him?

As we draw closer to the Chrysalis Flights please remember the team as they prepare and the Caterpillars that are being called to participate. Be prayerful for the sponsors as they begin to handle their responsibilities. Lastly consider sponsoring a youth from your church who might benefit from this experience.

The Spring Walks are right around the corner. Please remember in your prayers the Lay Directors for the Walks Mark Shackelford and Denise Prescott as they begin the process of assembling the team as God calls them to.

Merry Christmas to you and your families. May you enjoy the healing power of forgiveness as you forgive. Jesus is the reason for the season! Have His Peace! Your Brother in Christ,
Pat Naughton

From the Community Spiritual Director - Linda Kemp-Baird

A CHRISTMAS STORY

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A father, in this story about his son Shay who was mentally and physically disabled, demonstrates the love, which God brought to us in the gift of the Christ Child –

“Shay and I were walking past a park where some boys Shay knew were playing baseball. Shay asked, 'Do you think they'll let me play?' I knew that most of the boys would not want someone like Shay on their team, but as a father I also understood that if my son were allowed to play, it would give him a much-needed sense of belonging and some confidence to be accepted by others in spite of his handicaps.

I approached one of the boys on the field and asked (not expecting much) if Shay could play. The boy looked around for guidance and said, 'We're losing by six runs and the game is in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team and we'll try to put him in to bat in the ninth inning.'

Shay struggled over to the team's bench and, with a broad smile, put on a team shirt. I watched with a small tear in my eye and warmth in my heart. The boys saw my joy at my son being accepted. In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shay's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three.

In the top of the ninth inning, Shay put on a glove and played in the right field. Even though no hits came his way, he was obviously ecstatic just to be in the game and on the field, grinning from ear to ear as I waved to him from the stands.

In the bottom of the ninth inning, Shay's team scored again. Now, with two outs and the bases loaded, the potential winning run was on base and Shay was scheduled to be next at bat. At this juncture, do they let Shay bat and give away their chance to win the game?

Surprisingly, Shay was given the bat. Everyone knew that a hit was all but impossible because Shay didn't even know how to hold the bat properly, much less connect with the ball. However, as Shay stepped up to the plate, the pitcher, recognizing that the other team was putting winning aside for this moment in Shay's life, moved in a few steps to lob the ball in softly so Shay could at least make contact.

The first pitch came and Shay swung clumsily and missed. The pitcher again took a few steps forward to toss the ball softly towards Shay. As the pitch came in, Shay swung at the ball and hit a slow ground ball right back to the pitcher. The game would now be over. The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could have easily thrown the ball to the first baseman. Shay would have been out and that would have been the end of the game. Instead, the pitcher threw the ball right over the first baseman's head, out of reach of all teammates. Everyone from the stands and both teams started yelling, 'Shay, run to first! Run to first!'

Never in his life had Shay ever run that far, but he made it to first base. He scampered down the baseline, wide-eyed and startled. Everyone yelled, 'Run to second, run to second!' Catching his breath, Shay awkwardly ran towards second, gleaming and struggling to make it to the base.

By the time Shay rounded towards second base, the right fielder—a small guy who now had his first chance to be the hero for his team--had the ball. That right fielder could have thrown the ball to the second-baseman for the tag, but he understood the pitcher's intentions so he, too, intentionally threw the ball high and far over the third-baseman's head.

Shay ran toward third base deliriously as the runners ahead of him circled the bases toward home. All were screaming, 'Shay, Shay, Shay, all the way!' Shay reached third base because the opposing shortstop ran to help him by turning him in the direction of third base, and shouted, 'Run to third! Shay, run to third!'

As Shay rounded third, the boys from both teams, and the spectators, were on their feet screaming, 'Shay, run home! Run home!' Shay ran to home, stepped on the plate, and was cheered as the hero who hit the grand slam and won the game for his team.

'That day', said the father softly with tears now rolling down his face, 'the boys from both teams helped bring a piece of true love and humanity into this world'.

Shay didn't make it to another summer. He died that winter, having never forgotten being the hero and making me so happy, and coming home and seeing his Mother tearfully embrace her little hero of the day!"

During this Season of Advent and Christmas, may you also have opportunities to share the gift of God's love with all you meet. God is SO good! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

DeColores!
Linda Kemp-Baird
Community Spiritual Director

Gregg Hughes, Food & Kitchen Board Member Writes:

1. Food preparation help is needed for both the Men's and Women's Spring Walks. There are open slots on Fridays and Saturdays on the weekends of each Spring Walk. If you can serve in this area, please contact Greg Hughes at GregHughesSr@aol.com or on his cell 859-801-9889.
2. The Community is looking for a person(s) to be in charge of arranging for snacks, drinks, etc. at the Monthly Gatherings. This person would contact others to arrange for snacks, etc to be brought to the Gatherings and to set up any such items for the Gatherings. If you would like to serve in this area please contact Greg Hughes at GregHughesSr@aol.com or on his cell 859-801-9889.

The Lord will give us strength for each new battle.