



# Sonshine Emmaus



May 2008

## Spiritual Director's Message

Dear Friends,

I write this for four reasons: (1) I am one of your 3 elected Spiritual Directors on the SonShine Board of Directors (2) I am a believer in and supporter of The Emmaus Ministry because of the ways God has used this ministry to [a] reclaim, bless, and use me to fulfill His Call on my life (Walk = Southside #1 and 18 Teamings) [b] bless my wife (Richmond #16), my daughter (Richmond Chrysalis #5) and my son-in-law (SonShine #42) [c] bless you and many others of SonShine based on your participation, comments, and service to this community and its ministry as well as your service to your local church (3) I am one of the original members of SonShine and (4) I am a concerned member of SonShine. The undeniable facts are that we all are wrestling with "the reality of small attendance" at our monthly Gatherings and community events and "the cancellation of walks" (too few applications—both Pilgrim and Team.) These 2 concerns consume much of the time and energy of The Board as it strives to carry on the administration, planning, and work of/for the community while striving to be faithful stewards to [a] our commitment to The Emmaus Ministry out of Nashville and [b] the faith, trust, service, and resources of the community and each member of the community.

Where are **we** as SonShine Emmaus? Where are we headed? What does our future hold? Will there continue to be a SonShine Community? I don't know what the community will say/decide. But I do know the answers, direction, life, and function of SonShine is (will be) determined by the commitment and support of each member of the community because **we are the community. We will own or disown Emmaus by our support or non-support of its ministry** (regular attendance, service, talent(s), gifts, "sponsoring," "teaming," working behind the scenes, etc.).

While doing sermon preparation the other day I read the story of "the fall of man" as recorded in Genesis 3. The story says that when Adam and Eve heard the sound of God walking in the garden, they hid among the trees. And it also records God's call—"where are you." I had this same scenario on Saturday afternoon of my walk in 1992. During "free time" God asked me—"Where have you been?" And after the third time it dawned on me I was going to have to give an answer. I blurted out "You know where I've been. I've been living in, by, and from **the woe is me point of view—the victim's mentality—the place of low self-esteem.** You know that I'm no good and I can't seem to do anything correctly. I've been having a **pity-party for one.**" And God said, "Your call is still valid." And again I blurted out, "Right. How can that be? I'm a wreck—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I have this gigantic, open wound. I don't walk too well and it's quite difficult to get around with the wheelchair and/or walker. I have to rely upon/lean on my wife, kids, family, and friends just to make it through a day. Don't you understand I am no good to my family—I'm not the husband, father, son, uncle, or friend I need to be or that

they deserve? And I'm also not the pastor/preacher I need to be or that You called me to be." And God said, "I'm not through with you yet. And by the way, your mouth is not broken." I repented, reclaimed my call, and rededicated my life to go and to speak whenever and wherever He opened a door (presented an opportunity). Where was I? I was among the trees, feeling sorry for myself, making excuses, blaming, and refusing to be real, to live, or to try.

I ask you—"Where are you?" I don't think you are hiding among the trees, **but are you**—burdened or overwhelmed by, buried in/by, and/or steaming in the pressure cooker of life—as you deal with an overfull calendar ("too busy"), a clock that reads 23:59 ("no time"), an exploding financial scene (gas and grocery prices, inflation, recession, debt, college expenses/planning, etc.), job security ("is it still possible?"), health issues (health care, sickness, disease, disability, care-giving, etc.). Are you disappointed, disenchanted, hurt, angry, and/or in disbelief? Are you living in the midst of what I call the "**TODO LAND: Got to Do** (schedules/appointments/expectations/job descriptions), **Ought to Do** (expectations, job descriptions, things that help fulfill the roles you perform), **Want to Do** (desires, choices), and **Called to Do** (becoming, being, the person you must be/were made to be and fulfilling the purpose/tasks that are yours only to do)?"

I am not suggesting that you are hiding from God, your calling, your purpose, or your membership in SonShine Emmaus. I am not suggesting that what you "are doing" or "not doing" is sin. I am acknowledging the real pressures of daily life we American Christians face. I am challenging SonShine, you, and me to decide where SonShine Emmaus ranks on our list of priorities and then to act accordingly. These things I am sure of (1) the Board can't be SonShine Emmaus (2) those who attend SonShine events can't be SonShine Emmaus (3) if there is going to be a living, vital, active SonShine Emmaus **it will only be due to you and me (all of us) being SonShine Emmaus together.**

Where are you? Where will you be May 17 and every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday (Gathering)? Where will you be July 1 as the deadline arrives for applications to sponsor and to team for the next set of walks? Where will you be when it's time for the fall walk(s)? SonShine's ministry and future truly is up to you and me!

Gratefully alive,  
Bob Gibson

## Pilgrim Application Deadline

The Board has set a deadline date of July 1<sup>st</sup> for Men's and Women's applications. Please be sure to have your applications in the mail in a timely fashion to reach the post office before that date. Please prayerfully consider who God wants on the upcoming Walks!!

## Reminders

- *Please note the change in the Calendar for the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner. The date was changed from the June Gathering to the July Gathering due to a scheduling conflict.*
- Don't forget to bring your odd and end Agape to the next Gathering to be donated to Camp Rainbow. Suzy Verbeke is collecting these miscellaneous Agape items. You can call Suzy at 272-4618 to arrange pick up or delivery. Your gift of love would be greatly appreciated!!
- Suzy Verbeke, the Community historian, is still looking for some items for our scrapbook. Her list is getting shorter, thanks to the folks who have responded to her recent request. Please call her (272-4618) if you have any of the following-
  - Pictures- 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 25
  - Team List- 20,21
  - Closing Programs- 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, 13,14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26
  - Walk Dates- 3, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14
  - Lay Directors-13,14,15,18,20,22, 23, 24, 31, 32, 34
  - Spiritual Directors-14,15,18,20, 22, 23, 31, 32, 34
- The Community approved the new bylaws. If you would like to have a copy of the new bylaws, please contact Tammy Van Gils at 798-7802.

## Calendar

<b>May 17-</b>	<b>5:00 Pot Luck 6:30 Gathering</b>
<b>June 21-</b>	<b>4:30 Board Meeting 6:30 Gathering &amp; Snack A-L*</b>
<b>July 19-</b>	<b>5:00 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner 6:30 Gathering</b>
<b>August 16-</b>	<b>5:00 Board Meeting 6:30 Gathering &amp; Snack M-Z*</b>
<b>September 20-</b>	<b>5:00 Board Meeting 6:30 Gathering &amp; Snack A-L*</b>
<b>October 11</b>	<b>at Abbey- Women's Walk Times TBA</b>
<b>November 15-</b>	<b>4:30 DDU 5:30 Pot Luck 6:30 Gathering</b>
<b>December 13-</b>	<b>To be determined</b>

**\*Snacks provided by last names beginning with A-L or M-Z**

**All meetings and Gatherings at:  
Mechanicsville United Methodist  
Church**

**Sonshine Emmaus Community  
P. O. Box 55  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111**

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