



## Wilmington Area Walk to Emmaus

# WILMINGTON EMMAUS

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"They look  
up and are  
greeted by  
angelic  
faces that  
begin to  
sing..."

### QUICK MESSAGES

**Welcome  
JIM WEST  
as new  
community  
chair!**

## Blossoms from Bloom

**B**eloved...this is their eyes capturing every mally this would have been the last letter. movement. The mother cr- unsettling for all of them, It has been a joy dles her child and lovingly but instead, the warmth of to write to you wraps him in cloths and the light fills them with a each month, to remind you places him inside a manger. peace and gladness! The of God's love, His sacri- They see her tender gaze animals peer at this child fice, His Grace. We are a fall upon him and her facial whose purity melted the blessed people...with so expression radiates the joy division between them and much potential to make a in her heart. They ease they too are filled with difference in this world. back into their places of awe. Shepherds, who had We simply must be willing rest with a breath swelling seen the light and heard to think outside the box sigh of relief for her, un- the heavenly host came to and learn to surrender our derstanding the fullness of visit the child. They left all for His, and encourage her heart. rejoicing, spreading the one another into action The child softly good news and praising God for our Jesus. cries again and they are un- for all the things they had

*Jesus.* Isn't that a expectedly encircled by a heard and seen. beautiful name...for a bright light coming from Beloved, this hap- beautiful Christ child? above! They look up and are pening is more than just a Does it amaze you as it greeted by angelic faces story. It is a carving of amazes me that He will- that begin to sing... "Glory our history, a sculptured ingly left his home in glory to God in the highest and on love affair from a Father with the Father to be earth peace to men on whom who loves his creation be- born so humbly in a place His favor rests!" yond measure. He longs for where animals lay resting? The soft joyful sing- you! He desires a relation-

In my imagination, ing swells into jubilation at ship with you because it is as I place myself inside the birth of this one! Nor- you, on whom His favor rests! the scene...the farm girl in me can hear the soft, rhythmic, breathing puffs of each animal as they lay and listen, watching as yet another "young one" of God's creation is brought into the world. Startled... as the child cries...they perk up and listen closely;



For unto us this child is born, unto us, a Son is given. For us! :o) He gave up His all to come to earth as a babe. He gave us *the gift of himself*. Each and every one of us can contest that there is (continued on page 2)

The story behind the song.

no greater gift that we have ever received.

May Christmas Joy be displayed in all that you say and do this Blessed Season. And may the light of heaven be seen in you wherever you go... changing lives, melting division, loving beyond measure...giving the gift of yourself. You will find that it will cut into your human nature more than the money you spend will cut into your pocket...but I promise you, Beloved, the joy you will reap will make it all worthwhile!

Thanking God for the "light of heaven" I see in each and every one of YOU and for the warmth of His love I feel whenever I am in your presence.

Cindy  
Community Chair

DEVOTION MOMENT

2 Peter 3:11-18 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of person ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness?

Nicholas Ferrar founded a short-lived religious community in 1626 at Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire, England. T. S. Eliot made the name Little Gidding famous in his Four Quartets. Ferrar, his family, and a handful of friends lived a spare life and dedicated themselves to prayer, fasting, and care of the poor. A member of the community could be found kneeling in prayer at any time, day or night, to fulfill the words, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Ferrar's memory is uplifting as we hurtle into the secular Christmas season. It can be a

struggle to find the quiet time and place to prepare our spirits for the Lord's nativity. While it may not be practical to decamp from our hectic lives to form or join a religious community, it's worth the effort to carve out some time for prayer and reflection.

You are here to kneel  
Where prayer has been valid.  
And prayer is more  
Than an order of words, the  
conscious occupation  
Of the praying mind, or the  
sound of the voice praying.

-T. S. Eliot (from "Little Gidding" in Four Quartets)  
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The Story Behind "I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day"

The words to this wonderful hymn were written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. 1861 was a troubling year as the Civil War broke out, tearing the nation apart. That same year, Longfellow's wife died tragically when her dress caught fire in a freak accident in their home. Two years later, his son ran away to join the Union Army. During the battle of New Hope Church in Virginia, the son

was shot in the shoulder and nicked his spine. A few days later, after word reached Longfellow, he left for Washington, where his son had been taken to recuperate. He stayed with his son for weeks, nursing him back to health. On Christmas Day, 1863, Longfellow wrote the words which would become this wonderful carol. Taken in the context of the nation's suffering during the

war which sometimes even pitted brother against brother, some of the lesser known stanzas are understandable. The speak of the cannons thundering in the South and of hatred tearing apart "the hearthstones of the continent." When the writer reaches the point of despair, he hears the Christmas bells, reminding him that "God is not dead, nor does He sleep."

"And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,  
For hate is strong, and mocks the song Of peace on earth, goodwill to men.

Information from THEN SINGS MY SOUL, Book 2 by Robert J. Morgan;

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## Tabor Talk



The other evening, I was preparing to leave the house and raised the garage door to discover what has become a not-so-amazing sight: a young doe (that's a deer!) standing just across the street in our neighbor's front lawn! In the years we have lived in this location, this has happened on more than one occasion, but this one was interesting in that, with the sound of the garage door going up, and the light from the interior shining outward, the deer did not immediately run off. Rather, she stood there, almost like the deer-in-the-headlights look they so often demonstrate on the highways. While I am not a hunter, I would have been the envy of my hunter friends, as this deer was no more than 50 feet away from me, facing me broadside, and for about 30 seconds, watching me closely before she ran off into the woods behind my neighbor's home.

In thinking about that deer, I sometimes get the feeling that many of us are like her. We go about our daily routine, just sort of like allowing the days and weeks and months to pass, when all of a sudden we are caught off guard, and the holiday season is upon us without any warning, and we find ourselves, like a deer in the headlights, immobilized by it and unprepared for it.

This past summer, I read about a Swedish couple looking for the pristine waters of the popular island of Capri, off the coast of Italy. They ended up some 400 miles away in the northern industrial town of Carpi, near Modena, after misspelling the destination on their car's GPS. Apparently, the cou-

ple drove into the square last week and asked the local tourist office how to reach Capri's famed Blue Grotto sea cave. One town official said "we thought they might mean a restaurant. Capri is an island, they did not even wonder why they didn't cross any bridge or take any boat." He said the couple, who were not identified, arrived from Venice and later set off to their planned destination at the other end of the Italian peninsula.

The season between Thanksgiving and Christmas is one of the best times of the year. This is the season of Advent, which refers to the time of coming, the time of preparation for the birth of the Christ child, the Messiah, the Savior of all mankind. Yet it often seems that this annual occurrence sneaks up on us, and we are caught unprepared. Just like that deer across the road, we are paralyzed by the lights and sounds and the hectic busy-ness of the season and as a result we do not get to enjoy it to its fullest. Or perhaps even worse yet, we set our "seasonal GPS" for the wrong destination, somehow looking for a holiday island of tropical beauty and sun-drenched mystique, in this case bound up in the holiday cheer and gifts, and hope for the new year, and the like, but never even considering the fact that we would have to cross a bridge to get to that island. We have misspelled and misunderstood our destination.

I was reminded of this when I read Jan Richardson's comments in her book, Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas, where she said: "The season of Ad-

vent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before... . What is possible is not to see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. And you begin to grasp what it was you missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's [back] fade in the distance. So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon."

I know that it is easy for me to say, especially to those who are programmed otherwise, but may I encourage you to slow down this Advent season. This year, when the urge to go out and shop strikes you, when the challenge to go all out for the decoration championship of the world is laid before you, when the desire to get the best, to be the best, to do the best seems to overwhelm you, take that advice: Stop. Stay. Sit. Linger. Wonder.

In Galatians 4:4-5, we read: "But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children."

I am caught by the phrase, "when the right time came." People had been waiting for centuries for the Messiah, and yet God was not seemingly in any hurry. He knew just when the time was right. The same is true for us now. God seems to have enough time. Why don't we?

God bless...

*Chuck Tabor*

SLOW DOWN FOR ADVENT!



Walk to  
**Emmaus**  
THE UPPER ROOM

Wilmington Area Walk to Emmaus—WUMC  
PO Box 191  
Wilmington, OH 45177



SEE YOU AT THE GATHERING!  
December 13  
**ALL CHRISTMAS MUSIC!**  
Bring a snack to share after the Gathering



*Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia*

*"Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head."*

- Watts

**MUSIC FOR GATHERINGS**

**MUSIC FOR GATHERINGS**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>SPECIAL MUSIC</b>	<b>PIANO</b>	<b>SONG LEADER</b>
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Thanks to all who have shared their talent with the community during the past year. Jennie Harner will be contacting folks to fill the Gathering spots for 2012. Why wait? Give her a call now and speak up for the month you'd like to either play piano, lead singing or provide special music!

Planning ahead! Do you have musical talent you would be willing to share with the Emmaus Community? We typically have two music specials at a Gathering and need a song leader and an accompanist. Although "piano" is listed, we can have guitar accompaniment...or any other instrument able to lead group singing.

*Don't miss the Christmas Gathering!  
Carol singing and special music, along with a  
communion meditation and communion.*