

# EMMAUS

## LEXINGTON COMMUNITY



Lexington, KY

*"Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way...?"*

July / August 2008

### FOURTH DAY TALK BY COREY NELSON

As some of you know, I've had quite the 4<sup>th</sup> day. As a matter of fact, from the moment I arrived at Emmaus, my life has been a whirlwind, but I can hardly talk about without going back in time. Because you see, Emmaus for me was the culmination of one huge chapter in my life and the beginning of another. At Emmaus, I finally quit running from God and His calling. And when I did, God took off with me and I'm still not sure my feet have touched the ground, but I'm getting a little ahead of myself.

14 years ago, at twenty-two years of age, fresh out of the Marine Corps, I was severely injured in an industrial accident that would eventually lead to my being declared permanently and totally disabled by the VA, Social Security, and the Illinois Industrial Commission. I would quickly develop a devastating neurological disease, known among other things as Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy. This is a disease whose hallmark is constant, excruciating, burning pain. People often asked me how bad the pain was and the only way to describe it is to say that the burning is so intense that it can convince your brain that you are physically being burned, which can result in blisters. This is a phenomenon I've experienced on a handful of occasions.

For eleven of those fourteen years I would undergo numerous painful surgeries and be placed on seemingly every medication under the sun, including 240 mg a day of OxyContin. I developed an enlarged heart with untreatable high blood pressure so severe that the doctors were fearful that my heart was on the verge of simply giving out. Through inactivity and all of the medications, I would gain over one hundred pounds and would live my life, as close to being bed ridden as is humanly possible without actually being considered such.

Eleven years after the injury, I was scheduled to have my spinal cord stimulator replaced for the third time. This surgery is incredibly invasive, painful, and dangerous. When I originally had the surgery performed, it involved removing portions of four discs from my neck where a series of wires and electrodes were sewn directly to my spinal cord. The wires were then snaked under my skin where they attach to a battery in my chest. The purpose of this is to overload the damaged nerves with electricity so that they can no longer process pain signals. Great in theory, not so good in practice.

But that didn't matter, I had made peace with God and I had peace with my mortality. I knew that I would not survive the surgery, an opinion I would later learn that was shared by my wife. As I was wheeled down to surgery, I can remember telling God that I was at peace and ready. And that was the truth, at that point, I was ready to be done hurting and suffering, but then I threw in a little extra "If you decide to send me back, my life such as it is yours, no strings attached."

I thought it was weird that I had felt the need to say that simply because if I did come out of the other side of this surgery the likelihood of me being any good to anyone, much less God wasn't good. So, I arrive in the OR and they are preparing to put me under when I was reminded of the most bizarre conversation I've ever had with my wife. Three years after my injury, just when things had really gotten

bad for me, we were sitting in my parents' backyard watching our son swimming, and without rhyme, nor reason, nor thought, I turned to look at Rickelle and said, "I think God wants me to go into the ministry." I'm sure like me, she was probably thinking, "That medicine is a bit too strong."

That was the last thing I remembered before going out. Sometime later, much to my surprise I awoke and I knew immediately that things had changed. First off, there was no pain. The last time I had had this surgery was the worst time of my life, I spent three days in the fetal position. Secondly, my heart for the first time in years did not feel like it was about to pound its way out of my chest. Within an hour of returning to my room, I was doing laps in the hallway. Keep in mind I had just had a bunch of hardware pulled from my spine and replaced with new.

Within a year of that surgery, I had lost all of the weight I had put on with the injury. Against doctor's orders, I quit taking all of the medications I had been prescribed, including the OxyContin. I did this without rehab, methadone, or anything else, but God. Most important of all, my blood pressure had returned and remains at a normal, healthy level.

Within two years of that surgery I was virtually symptom free. This just does not happen with RSD. It's very nature is to continually worsen and I had been told numerous times that I had one of the worst, most aggressive cases my doctors had ever seen. Beyond that, I started and continue to walk ten miles every morning and shadow box gripping fifteen-pound weights. This from someone who could barely get out of bed and lift a full glass of water to his mouth.

In the time since that surgery, I had begun to be asked a question. This question would pop in the strangest of places, in conversations where it seemingly had no place, "Are you in the ministry?" At first I would hear it sporadically, but as time went by I heard it with more frequency, to the point where it was really beginning to annoy me. Which leads me to Emmaus.

By Saturday morning, much to my chagrin, I had been asked this question twice. I'm not sure if it showed to the guys around me, but it was absolutely eating at me. But I held it together for the rest of the day, until Saturday night, in Estes Chapel. We had just finished with one of the most incredible experiences of my life, the Candlelight service and we were in there in the dark, praying. Now, I think I can safely say my discomfort had become evident. I couldn't sit still in the pew, I couldn't get comfortable, I was bouncing all over the place. I kneeled, I sat, I kneeled, finally I feel an arm around my shoulder and it's Howard Rosewell.

"You doing okay?" He asked me. At this point, I'm not even sure what I replied, but I was thankful for Howard's presence. And I proved it by promptly going up to the altar. When I got there, I was met by Chuck Beighle. Now I should add right here that I emailed Chuck about tonight, to tell him that I was giving the speech, and that he would be mentioned. It's probably a good thing he couldn't make it because I still don't know if I would have hugged him or punched him in the arm, really, really hard, because I no sooner told him what I wanted to pray about and he asked me, "Are you in the ministry?" I wasn't exactly sure what it meant at the time, I only knew that God had won and I was done running. By the time I got back to Howard, I was smiling, yet absolutely terrified on the inside.

I'm thirty-six years old, legally disabled. I dropped out of college as soon we found out were expecting. What in the world was God thinking? Four years of college? Four years of seminary? I'd be really; really old by the time I was done, like Marty Wright old. It took me a week to work up the nerve to tell my wife. I had no clue what her reaction would be, but I figured it would border on, "Are you back on your medication?" Much to my surprise, she was not only excited, but emphatic that I pursue it.

So, a week later, she experiences Emmaus and everyone gets their first glimpse of me in a tutu. After the closing ceremony, I figure she is going to regale me with stories of her walk, but she is bursting at the seams to tell me about a friend that she had made. Her new friend, Amy attends Asbury and is roommates with someone who works in the admissions office. Amy had told Rickelle that she thought

given my story that I might be able to go straight into seminary. Now, I'll admit, I feigned excitement for Rickelle's benefit, but the whole time I'm thinking, there is no way.

The following morning, Rickelle has an email waiting on her from Amy. She had talked to her roommate and found that there was in fact a remote possibility that I could be admitted directly to seminary. Once again, I met this news with quiet indifference. There was no way. I was resigned and prepared for eight years of school to fulfill God's calling on my life. I emailed my pastor figuring she'd kill it immediately and that'd be the end of it. She emailed me back saying that it was rare, but it was worth pursuing, so I did.

I went down to Asbury and got the lowdown on it. I would have to score fairly high on a graduate school entrance exam, write an essay, submit for a background check, collect references and then make it through a committee. I did some research on the test I would take and it did little for my confidence. I kept reading how hard and difficult it was, and the whole time I'm thinking, "Well, that'll be the end of that." I did however go out and purchase a preparatory book, which only seemed to damage my confidence more.

By the morning of the test, I knew I was going to fail that test. There was just no way I could pass it. When I arrived at EKU, I had made myself physically ill worrying about it. I took the test on a computer and submitted my answers knowing that I had come up short. Within seconds the unofficial results were starting me in the face, I had scored in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile. Far beyond Asbury's requirements.

I spent the next couple of weeks preparing my essay, praying, bugging everyone to pray for me, and then bugging them some more. The morning that the committee was to meet, I was pretty confident and I waited not so patiently by the phone. I had heard nothing by mid-afternoon, so I called. I quickly found out that my background check and transcripts did not make it in time, so I was not even considered I was devastated. I truly thought that was the end of the road. This committee only meets twice a year and the next time they would meet was November.

Admitting defeat, I began making phone calls, only to eventually learn, that I was by no means out. My file had been submitted and the committee would in fact consider my case the next time they met, in June. They were originally supposed to meet this coming Monday, which kind of threw me for a loop as to how I was to prepare for this speech. Funny how God works sometimes, they moved it up a week, to this past Monday and I was accepted straight into seminary.

There are two things I want you to take away from my story. First and foremost, never hesitate to submit yourselves to God and His calling, no matter how crazy or absurd it may seem. I am proof positive that God can and will move mountains to get you where He wants you if only you are willing. Secondly, my story speaks to the importance of both Emmaus and sponsoring new pilgrims. You never know what kind of doors God may be waiting to open for someone through Emmaus. If Marty Wright had not sponsored me, and I can assure you, she had no clue the way God had been chasing me, who knows where I'd be in regards to my calling at this point God led her to sponsor me for a reason and I am so thankful that Marty took advantage of that opportunity. Do not miss an opportunity to do that for someone else. DeColores.



Chrysalis Flight #30 is scheduled for February 14 – 16, 2009.  
Boys' Lay Director: Norm Galloway  
Girls' Lay Director: Peggy Wells

## 2009 WALK SCHEDULE

**SPRING** - Men's Walk # 103, March 12-15, 2009  
**FALL** - Men's Walk # 105, November 5-8, 2009

Women's Walk #104, March 19-22, 2009  
Women's Walk #106, November 19-22, 2009

# THE LEXINGTON EMMAUS COMMUNITY

Proudly Welcomes

"AMERICA'S FUNNIEST PROFESSOR"

**CARL HURLEY**

To Immanuel Baptist Church on Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> 8:00 p.m.

**TICKETS ARE \$20.00. Contact any board member and/or Bruce or Liz Maybriar (contact info below).**

**Please join us in sponsoring this fun, family-oriented event!!**

Three levels of sponsorship are available:

- **Rainbow--\$500.00:** Sponsor receives 8 free tickets (\$160.00 value), front row seating, program advertisement, emcee acknowledgement and thank you the night of the event, and permission to set-up a kiosk at Immanuel at the entrance of the event. NOTE: Only 10 Rainbow sponsorships will be sold!!!
- **Rooster--\$250.00:** Sponsor receives 4 free tickets (\$80.00 value), program advertisement and preferred seating.
- **Butterfly--\$125.00:** Sponsor receives 2 free tickets (\$40.00 value) and preferred seating.

We are expected to seat up to 1,500 guests. On behalf of these guests as well as the Emmaus Community of well over 1,000 believers, THANK YOU for your support!

***BLESSINGS!! THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING THE CARL HURLEY EVENT!***

Sponsorship Level:      \$500.00                      \$250.00                      \$125.00  
Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Name & Number \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Company information presented in program and from stage \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Questions or Concerns Contact:      Bruce Maybriar at 229-6642      [b.maybriar@insightbb.com](mailto:b.maybriar@insightbb.com)  
Liz Maybriar 229-6642                      [e.maybriar@insightbb.com](mailto:e.maybriar@insightbb.com)

**THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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## **WANTED! INFORMATION SHEETS!**

WANTED, YOUR INFORMATION FORM for the Emmaus Directory! If you need another form, you may email me at [trumills@aol.com](mailto:trumills@aol.com). Our Directory is not complete without YOU!

## **RECOMMENDED BOOK OF THE MONTH**

***Making Ripples by Mike Breaux***

Breaux, former pastor at Southland Christian Church in Lexington, challenges his readers to make a difference with the one life God has given them to live. Like a cannonball into a swimming pool, he believes our lives can have a ripple effect on many others. Breaux says, "It's about living a life that touches a life, that touches a life, that touches a life..." This short easy read may be just what you need to elevate the impact your life can make on others.

**Grace, Chuck Beigle, Literature Chairperson, Lexington Emmaus Board**

## UNCLE BRUCE WANTS YOU!

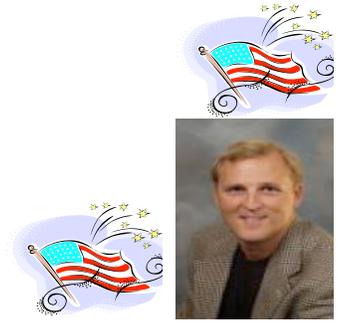
My pledge is sincere: **This is going to be great!** My platform is simple: **HELP!**

Our Emmaus board has embarked on an ambitious matching fund plan, which includes a concert featuring **Carl Hurley, "America's Funniest Professor."** This event is scheduled for **Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 p.m.** and will be held at Immanuel Baptist Church 3100 Tates Creek Road.

How can you help? Do one or all of the following:

1. **Sell tickets.** Tickets are \$20.00. All you need to do is post the flyer at your church, include yourself as contact, and talk up the event to family and friends. I can deliver tickets and posters to your door.
2. **Find Sponsors.** This month's newsletter includes a sponsorship form. If you know of an individual or business that would be interested, please pass this information on.
3. **Volunteer:** An event like this needs manpower. I'll need help with marketing and facilities as well as assistance the night of the event. As an added incentive, all volunteers will get to see Carl Hurley for free!

And so, my fellow Emmausians: ask not what your community can do for you, but what can you do for your community. Inspired? Contact me at (859) 229-6641 or [b.maybriar@insightbb.com](mailto:b.maybriar@insightbb.com).



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## YARD SALE UPDATE

I wanted to extend my thanks to everyone who helped with the Emmaus Yard Sale. We raised \$911.65 plus \$170 in cookbook sales. Special thanks to the Sunrise Sisters, Tuesday Night Tootsies and The Thursday Morning Irregulars for collection, setup, manning the sale and cleanup. There were so many people who donated items, time and prayer support that I can't name everyone individually for fear of leaving someone off the list. But I do want to thank Bob Riggs for donating the hotdogs and everyone who donated drinks. The sale of hot dogs and drinks brought in over \$100. I also want to thank Merlene Davis for placing the newspaper ad for the Community. Continued thanks go to Beckie Sigmon for all her hard work with the cookbook.

I truly enjoy the Upper Room devotional delivered to my email inbox. The scripture for Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup> was: "It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God." --2 Corinthians 3:5, NLT

We could not have accomplished any of this apart from the Creator of all things (including Yard Sales) and our Brothers and Sisters in the Emmaus Community.

**De Colores, Kathy and Howard Rosewell**

## BE IN PRAYER FOR OUR 2008 FALL WALKS

**Men's Walk #101-October 2-5, 2008**

**Lay Director: Joe Martin**

**Women's Walk #102-October 16-19, 2008**

**Lay Director: Connie Coppings**

**Registration forms should be sent to:**

Lexington Emmaus Community,

ATTN: Registrar, P.O. Box 23554, Lexington KY 40523-3554

**Registration forms may be obtained from**

**the address on the left or our Web site:**

**[www.lexingtonemmaus.org](http://www.lexingtonemmaus.org)**

## CARL HURLEY INFORMATION INSIDE! COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### JULY

- 4 NO GATHERING IN LEXINGTON
- 11 NO GATHERING IN PAINTSVILLE
- 14 NO Emmaus Board Meeting

### AUGUST

- 1 Gathering at St. Luke UMC, 2351 Alumni Drive, Lexington, 6:30 PM Potluck, 7:30 Worship
- 8 Gathering at Paintsville's Mayo UMC, 705 Court Street, Paintsville, 7:00 Worship
- 11 Emmaus Board Meeting, St. Luke UMC, 2351 Alumni Drive, Lexington, 7:00 PM
- 23 **CARL HURLEY**, Immanuel Baptist Church, 3100 Bates Creek Road, 8:00 PM

## GATHERINGS

**LEXINGTON:** AUGUST 1, 2008, 6:30 PM potluck, 7:30 Worship, St. Luke UMC, 2351 Alumni Drive  
*Everyone bring a dish to share: veggie/side dish, main dish, or dessert. Drinks, plates, cups, and utensils will be provided. Everyone will help clean up, so the work will be light*

**PAINTSVILLE:** AUGUST 8, Mayo UMC, 705 Court St, 7:00 PM **Worship, Fellowship & Food follow**

**CHILD CARE**-Child care is available at all Gatherings. Sponsors assist finding childcare for Walks.

**CHRYSALIS**-Jennifer at [jbarberartist@windstream.net](mailto:jbarberartist@windstream.net) Myspace: Lexington Chrysalis Community

**COMMUNITY PRAYER MINISTRY**-E-mail request to Judy Seitz at [prayers@lexingtonemmaus.org](mailto:prayers@lexingtonemmaus.org)

### LEXINGTON EMMAUS COMMUNITY

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Lexington, KY 40503

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