

Greater Fredericksburg Emmaus

Community Newsletter--March 2025

Greetings! This month we have messages from 2 of our newest board members

Richard Leeper-Assistant Community Lay Director

I was born, raised and spent most of my life in Oklahoma (and am a diehard Oklahoma STATE fan). Although in the mid 80s I worked for the DoD in Germany for five years, and I have lived in Virginia since 1999. Here, he met the love of my life and we began our life odyssey in 2001. Deb and I live on a small "farmette" we call Peaceful Point Farm, where we raise a variety of barnyard recuse pets, along with the required dogs and cats to make it official. Opa and Oma also enjoy getting to spend a much time as possible with their three grandsons, who live in Nashville.

I am a life-long Methodist, and we are currently members of Rehoboth United Methodist Church. Over the years we have greatly enjoyed serving on mission trips and on numerous Emmaus and Epiphany teams. From those experiences we have been given the mission to establish HOPE3 Ministries, Inc. which is an outreach program that offers a weekly Bible study, a monthly family fun, Bible giveaways at area events, and HOPE3 Weekends for people wants to learn about and experience the love of Jesus Christ.

Professionally, I am is a retired faculty member having taught sociology and psychology classes in community colleges for more than thirty-five years. Although I have served on the Emmaus board some years ago, I am truly excited and honored to be starting a term as a newly elected Emmaus board member.

Bob Pickett-Face to Face Board Rep:

My name is Bob Pickett, I worship at Fredericksburg United Methodist Church, walked on Emmaus 51 and sat at the table of Luke. Now that is over, I want to introduce myself as your Face to Face Board Member.

Face to Face (FTF) is designed for an audience of people aged sixty and older. FTF is an adaptation of the Emmaus retreat model tailored to meet senior people on their own terms. The sessions offer exciting and hospitable opportunities for Christian learning. The sessions feature systematic theology, tasty refreshments, lots of laughs, and several surprising personal encounters, memorable spiritual breakthroughs! Just as most of you experienced on your Walks.

The FTF program became a passion of mine when I participated in the establishment of the Fredericksburg Emmaus FTF process. This passion was energized when I participated in FTF training provided by the Emmaus Upper Room staff.

Afterwards while participating in several walks, I realized that the weekend walks could not effectively serve some of our older folks in our churches. I learned that FTF is designed to do just that.

Folks over 60 live unique lives often made challenging due to the need to take care of older parents, spouses who need day to day care, and/or themselves have a physical condition that precludes them from participating in a Walk. These people often withdraw from serving their churches because they feel they don't have anything to contribute.

FTF Encounters help these pilgrims to find that there are places in their church communities in which they can effectively serve at their time of life. It also helps them to understand how to continue to live a faithful life that is Christ centered and helps them think through what life may have in store for them in the future. This is quite different from a normal Walk with the FTF encounter tailored to address the needs of our seniors. This is why this is my passion. It definitely serves a group of our fellow Christians in a unique way that is needed.

I look forward to working on our Community Board to help ensure we have a FTF Encounter each year so our Fredericksburg Emmaus Community can serve all the members of our churches.

Upcoming Walks

If you are interested in participating on a team, we would love you to complete an updated teaming application. You can do that online at this link: [Fredericksburg Emmaus & Face to Face Application for Teaming](#) or you can print and complete [Team Application \(Updated 2-2017\)](#). Clergy can indicate interest with this form: [Clergy Team Application](#).

Face to Face Encounter 5

What is Face to Face?

The goal of Face to Face – 5 (FTF-5) is to provide an Emmaus experience for persons 60 years or older. FTF-5 is an adaptation of the Emmaus retreat model tailored to meet senior people on their own terms. The sessions offer exciting and hospitable opportunities for Christian learning. The sessions feature systematic theology, tasty refreshments, lots of laughs, and several surprising personal encounters, memorable spiritual breakthroughs! Just as most of you experienced on your Walks.

When is the next Face to Face Encounter?

The FTF-5 is being held at Carmel United Methodist Church in Kinsale, VA. Our teaming dates are April 21, 23, 28, and 30. The Encounter dates are May 12, 14, 19, and 21.

How can I get involved?

FTF-5's Encounter Lay director is Bob Pickett, the Coaches (like assistant lay directors) are Alice Harding and Barry Dillon. Two other important positions, Logistics Lead and Music Lead are being filled by Donna Haynes and Cindy Flickinger respectively. We are in the process of

finalizing the leads for Agape and Prayer Room. We have three women's table leaders identified and need one more woman willing to take on this important and fulfilling task. As this is written we are waiting to confirm the two men's table leader positions.

As with a Walk to Emmaus weekend, we need our Fredericksburg Emmaus Community support. We need folks who are willing to assist the leaders of the Encounter. We need folks to help with logistics, agape, and prayer room. If you can even give us one day of assistance it will be greatly appreciated. This is a great opportunity for those of you in the Northern Neck area to participate in an Emmaus Encounter in your local area. If you can help just show up between 10:00 AM and 4:30 PM on the dates listed above and we will put you to helping bring Christ to the pilgrims. Please contact Bob Pickett at 540-834-3068 or at bob.pickett1@verizon.net if you have any questions.

We also ask the Community to participate in our Candlelight event on 19 May at 1:30 PM and in our closing session at 1:30 PM on 21 May.

You will find a flyer and registration forms at the gatherings. You can also contact Bob Pickett to obtain them.

FE-124 and FE-125

We have confirmed dates for our next walks! Praise God! FE-124 and FE-125 will be at Camp Rappahannock (formerly known as Camp Happyland) from October 9th-12th. Teams are starting to form now with our Weekend Lay Directors, Pam Hiller (FE-124) and Mike Wilson (FE-125).

Now is the time to also consider sponsoring a pilgrim. It's never too early to talk to potential pilgrims and start getting them committed to the dates and registered. Use this [Pilgrim Application](#) and [Pilgrim Sponsor Kit](#) to get your pilgrims ready!

How can I help with the upcoming F2F5 and FE-124 and FE-125?

Please prayerfully consider ways you can support the upcoming walks through things such as:

- Agape for the pilgrims (and team)—We've included some info on Agape below
- Serving on our servant team, either for the weekend or part of the weekend
- Sponsor a pilgrim (or donate to help sponsor). This is a great opportunity for a small group or Sunday school class.
- Come out to the camp for Sponsor's Hour, Candlelight and/or Closing
- [Sign up to pray during for Face To Face - 5](#)
- There are lots of other ways to support and we will be featuring those in our newsletters until the walk dates!

Upcoming Community Gatherings

Our next gathering is this Saturday, March 8th at Colonial Beach UMC! Fellowship begins at 3:30 and our gathering begins at 4:00. Come early and bring a snack to share for fellowship time!

Future gatherings will be:

- March 8th -Colonial Beach UMC, Colonial Beach, VA
- April 12th -Carmel UMC, Kinsale, VA
- May 10th -Stafford County Christian Church, Stafford, VA (rescheduled from February)

If you are interested in hosting a gathering at your church, please reach out to David Whitmer at wd40ss@aol.com.

Agape guidelines and suggestions

Sometimes, Emmaus weekends go by in a blur for both the Pilgrims and the Team, but there is one tangible piece of evidence to remind us of great memories and lessons of the weekend . . .

The abundant Agape Letters, Notes, and Gifts! Here is some helpful information on Agape for the walk!

General Agape

- Agape should be the same, or as close to the same as possible and be given to everyone (at least to the Pilgrims)
- Do not sign your Agape
 - It is best if the Pilgrims don't know specifically who Agape comes from so they don't thank one Team member but not others
 - Agape is about service to the Pilgrims and not about glorifying the Team
- You can get Christian items like . . .
 - Pins, buttons, bookmarks, key chains, small books, crosses and other "stuff" . . . but remember . . .
 - It's not about the fanciest or most expensive gifts
 - It's about acts of love done out of a Christian heart for service
 - Remember that not all Team members can afford fancy or expensive gifts and we're not in competition with one another
 - Some of the best gifts are the simple ones done by hand, out of love for one another
 - One of the highest and most important forms of Agape is Prayer, before, during, and after the Walk

Other contacts

Reunion Groups

If you are looking for a reunion group or would like to start one and need guidance, please reach out to Betty Laster at iokilaster@aol.com

Newsletter information

If you have information you would like to see included in the newsletter, please contact Joanne Wilson at wilsoninfred@verizon.net or 540-220-1299.

2025 Board Members

Greater Fredericksburg Emmaus Community Board members

Class of 2027–Ava Hangar, Betty Laster, John Blosser, Richard Leeper (Assistant Community Lay Director) and Bob Pickett (Face to Face member)

Class of 2026–Brad Phillips (Community Spiritual Director), David Whitmer, Chris Czubowicz, Jenn Bumbrey and Karen Campbell (Community Lay Director)

Class of 2025–Rosemary Blankenship (Spiritual Director), Chris Campbell, Pam Hiller, Dan See and Joanne Wilson