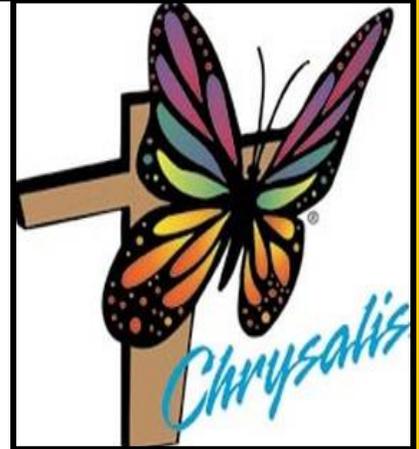


The Rooster Crows



Seaside Emmaus Spring Walks
Men's Walk – 149
2/27/19 thru 3/1/10
Lay Director: Rob Kayton
Spiritual Director: Mike Henderson
Women's Walk – 150
3/5/19 thru 3/8/19
Lay Director: Betsy Phillips
Spiritual Director: Ann Kovan



Chrysalis Spring Flights:
Girls Flight 56 March 21 – 23 Lay Director Hailey Melton
Boys Flight 56 March 28 – 30 Lay Director Brent Richardson

Seaside Emmaus Community www.seasideemmaus.com
December 2019

Message from Community Lay Director

Steve Chapman says, in his book
A Look at Life from a Deer Stand

I'm not sure what it is exactly about Southern folk conversation that makes it a little extra fun to hear. Maybe it's a mixture of a humble demeanor with the delivery and the distinctive rise and fall of Vocal volume that sets the Southern talker apart. One of the best examples is in the following song: A Country Boy Testifies

Just like my old muddy pickup truck
Sittin' in the rain
He washed me and He cleaned me up
And made me new again
And just like my old blue tick hound
Hot out on the trail
He sought me til he caught me
And I'm glad he never fails
He keeps me on His line
Like my old Zebco
And when I try to get away He reels me in

He won't let me go
He keeps me in his sights
Like my old 30-30
And when it comes time to check me in
He'll make me worthy
I remember when my heart was hard like a field
That hadn't been plowed in years
He came 'long and turned that ground
Like I do with my John Deere
And when I ask He shows me where
These boots they ought to be steppin'
And I know He'll lead me down this long dirt road
To the golden streets of heaven

And all the saints say, "Yee haw!"

May I wish you a beautiful Holiday Season that sparkles with the Joy of Christmas and glows with the warmth of love. Jim Witten

From the Community Spiritual Director

The Christmas Gifts

I am not a street preacher. I have never considered myself one, nor wanted to be one. And, to be honest, I've never really thought much of them. But it was on Christmas Eve of 1994 that I found myself street preaching. And it was there that I received the best Christmas gift.

I belonged to the Charleston Ministerial Alliance, an organization composed mostly of African-American ministers. I was one of the two "anglos" in the group. The group met to work on problems in an area of Charleston known as "The Neck," a narrow area on the peninsula between Charleston and North Charleston. It is a very poor area, and has lots of crime and drug dealing. The members of the ministerial alliance either have churches in The Neck or members living there or are just concerned for the area. We met each Wednesday morning to have breakfast, discuss issues and ways our churches could work together, and to pray. At one of the breakfast meetings we started talking about the corner of Echo and Cosmopolitan.

The corner of Echo and Cosmopolitan is the center of the drug dealing area. It is the hub of the neighborhood, and is probably the worst corner in all of Charleston. Drug dealers sell from the corner twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. I have been there when a police car has come up and the officers jump out to chase a dealer. As they disappeared around the corner, other people actually sat on the hood of the police car and sold drugs from there. Many fights and occasional shootings happen there. We had talked with the county police about the corner, but they were tapped out in terms of manpower. So we were talking about what we could do. Finally someone said, "Why don't we start preaching out on the corner? We might get some of those people saved, and who knows what else. It couldn't hurt."

As I said, I am not a street preacher. But everyone else seemed to think that it might be a good idea, so I reluctantly said I would join in. We divided into two groups and would alternate Saturdays preaching on the corner. We would start at 11 a.m. and go until 2 p.m. Sometimes a choir would come to join us, but usually it was just one or two of us ministers, walking around on the vacant lot there, reading from the Bible, preaching, and exhorting the people to come to a new way of life. We did not get any converts. I do not know if any of the people there started attending any of the neighborhood churches. We were mostly entertainment. Saturday morning cartoons were over, so kids and adults would come out to watch the preachers and to listen. There is not much else to do if you live on The Neck and have no money.

But one good thing did occur. During those three hours we would be street preaching, the drug dealers would stop selling. They would get into their cars and watch and wait, but they would not sell, and people would not buy. For 3 out of the 168 hours of the week, you could not buy drugs at the corner of Echo and Cosmopolitan. We were never harassed by the dealers. I guess they knew they would start up again at 2:01 p.m. But for those three hours, the corner was clean. I'll take my miracles where I can find them.

Christmas Eve 1994 was on a Saturday. My Saturday. My not-quite three year old niece Megan was spending the weekend with me. After eating our traditional breakfast of pancakes I asked her if she would like to go with me to The Neck, where I had to preach. She said, "I'd like that, Uncle Mitel." I bundled her up and we went off.

She was amazed! Megan had never seen anyone preach outside on the street before. Nor had she seen people come around to watch. So for three hours she just joined in with the crowd and enjoyed the mid-day entertainment. She stood there in the brisk breeze, her blonde hair blowing out behind her. At the end of the three hours, when all the preaching, reading the Christmas story, and singing Christmas songs were over, I asked all the children to come forward. A couple of the ministers in the Alliance had gathered stuffed animals and bags of fruit to give to all the children. Megan and I began distributing them. There were probably fifty kids there. As the last kid came forward Megan and I gave him the last toy and bag of fruit.

Megan and I started breaking down the boxes, to put them in the trunk of the car, when a young boy, maybe ten years old, walked up to us. I had not particularly noticed him before, but when he came up I realized that he had been there the whole time. He walked up to Megan and said, "Oh, little girl. You don't have anything. Here. You can have mine." And he gave her his toy, a small purple teddy bear, and his bag of fruit. Megan had the grace, and the greed, to reach out her little hands and take the gifts offered. "Thank you," she said, then turned to me and said, "Look, Uncle Mitel!" "That's nice, Megan," I said. "Did you thank the nice young man?" "Yes," she said, then turned back to him and thanked him again. I watched as he walked off to one of the apartments in the run down row that faced the vacant lot. I watched for the door he went in.

After packing the boxes in the trunk, Megan and I raced down Rivers Avenue to a toy store. We bought a lot of gifts, some wrapping paper, and some tape, then raced back to the corner of Echo and Cosmopolitan. I went up to the door where the young man had entered and knocked on it. An elderly woman came to the door. The young man was her grandson, whom she was raising. I looked past her into the room and saw a scraggly Christmas tree with a few lights on it. I did not see any gifts under the tree. I told her what her grandson had done, and said I wanted him to have these gifts, giving her the bags with the toys, wrapping paper, and tape. I asked the grandmother if she could wrap them and put them under the tree, and to not tell her grandson where they came from, or why. She said she would and thanked me.

Christmas Day came and went. A week later Megan was back at my house, and that night I read to her from her "Bible book" the story about the prophetess Anna seeing the Christ Child at the temple in Jerusalem, pointing to him, and saying "This Child is the hope of this city." I thought back to the young man on the corner of Echo and Cosmopolitan in The Neck, and I wanted to go find him and point to him and say, "This child is the hope of this city."

A lot of gifts were given and received on the corner there on Christmas Eve. Megan got a purple teddy bear, an orange, a tangerine, an apple, and a banana. The young man got to give a gift, as well as receiving a bunch of toys he did not expect. But I received the best gift of all. I got the gift of sight. Beforehand all I saw was poverty and hopelessness. Then I saw deep in the eyes of a ten year old boy holding a purple teddy bear and a bag of fruit the reflection of the One who is the "hope of this city." I received the best gift.

This year I look into the eyes of each person I meet, hoping to see the same reflection. I almost missed it that year, and I don't want to do that again. Merry Christmas, Michael Henderson

Housing

Hope that everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with safe travels for those who are traveling. Happy Birthday, Jesus! Bob Elwood

Next Gathering DECEMBER 6th 2019
Union UMC- 4491 U.S. 701, Conway, SC 29527

Board Meeting 6:00 PM Gathering and Fellowship 6:30 Worship 7:30

From Florence: head into Conway on 501. Turn left on Wright Street. See directions below.

From Myrtle Beach: 501 toward Conway. Turn right on to Wright Blvd. See directions Below

From North Myrtle, Little River area: US 17-S to 90 W towards Conway turn right on 501 Bus S. Turn Left on 701 S. Go 5 miles church on left.

From the South: Take 544 to 501 Turn right on Wright Street. Turn Right on south Hwy. 701. Go 4.4 mi. to 4491 Highway 701 South. Church is on the left.