



# The Grapevine

## Community Humble Servants

**Terrie Alexander**  
Lay Director

**Gary Formby**  
Spiritual Director

**Teresa Holderfield**  
Asst. Lay Director

**John Simmons**  
Asst. Spiritual Director

**Angel Rait**  
Community Coordinator

**Jim Sims**  
Treasurer

**Donna Ambrosius**  
**Debra Baker**  
**Linda Case**  
**Karen Cotton**  
**Tami Glenn**  
**Teresa Holderfield**  
**Sherry Lockhart**  
**Dianna McQueen**  
**Jackie Mize**  
**Brian Moore**  
**Randy Nelson**  
**Kay Parker-Phillips**  
**Jaime Rickert**  
**Deanna Shotts**  
**Melanie Skillman**  
**Paul Webb**  
Board Representatives

**Patricia Bush**  
Literature

**Bob Manney**  
Supplies

**Bruce Parris**  
Community Agape

**Dan Bell**  
Name Tags

Holderfield to take reins

## *New year brings new director*

**By TERRIE ALEXANDER**  
Lay Director

Dear Alabama Emmaus Family,  
I am praying that your holiday preparations are moving along in a wonderfully blessed way even though they may look totally different this year.

I have said my good-byes as your 2020 Alabama Emmaus Community Lay Director, but I would like to take this time to ask you to help me say a very special "Hello" to our new Alabama Emmaus Community Lay Director for 2021, Teresa Holderfield, who went on her original Walk #326, Table of Mary, in 2007.

She has a deep and devoted love for Emmaus and has served on 20 plus walks. With the Holy Spirit, she led Walk #466 as Lay Director in May 2017.

Teresa is a widow with two grown children, Philip and Melissa, and one grandson, Callan, who is 7 years old and the apple of her eye. Melissa has

attended an Emmaus Walk and Philip will hopefully attend one soon.

Teresa leads Women's Ministries and small group Bible Studies at First Baptist Church of Ashville.

She has a heart for Christian action and loves working with Lovelady Center, Operation Christmas Child, Ashville Community Mission, and many other non-profits.

She is looking forward to serving next year as your Alabama Emmaus Community Lay Director.

It warms my heart, and I am so excited to introduce Teresa Holderfield as your Alabama Emmaus Community Lay Director for 2021.

I truly believe that she is the person to lead us into this new season with God's guidance.

DeColores!

Terrie Alexander

2020 Alabama Emmaus Community Lay Director

## Christmas ... last and first

**By GARY FORMBY**  
Spiritual Director

You've probably heard your pastor or Bible teacher say at some point, "We really don't know Jesus' actual birthday."

As I imagine the first followers of Jesus putting the story of his life together, I suspect the first question was, "Who is this that God raised from the dead?"

I suspect the second question was, "Why did he die like a criminal on a cross?"

His ministry and teachings

probably came next. Eventually they asked, "How did all this start?"

Matthew and Luke tell the stories without much interest in birth dates. John was content to simply announce that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Graham Kendrick in his wonderful Christmas Musical *Rumors of Angels* has some great lyrics that strike me afresh every time I hear them.

I hope it resonates with

you as well: "That God should come as one of us, I'll never understand. The more I hear the story told the more amazed I am!"

While I may never understand the incarnation, I'm overcome by the message that God, having been one of us, knows intimately what we are going through and has promised to have the last word in every one of our stories, just as he did with Jesus.

Merry Christmas!

Gary Formby

With the 2021 Walks suspended, there will be no income for the Community until walks resume. If you would like to give a love offering, please make checks to the Alabama Emmaus Community and mail them to Community Treasurer Jim Sims at 535 Sims Road, Oneonta, AL 35121.

# This season reminds us of hope in Jesus Christ

By ANGEL RAIT  
Community Coordinator

In my home church we have an Advent wreath, and we light the Advent candle every Sunday, the four weeks before Christmas. Advent means arrival or coming, and each Sunday the wreath reminds us to remember why Jesus came.

Usually there are four purple candles in a circle on evergreen branches with a taller white candle in the center.

A circle symbolizing the eternity of God, the white candle symbolizing Christ and each of the purple candles symbolizing Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

The Christ Candle will be lit on Christmas Eve, symbolizing that Christ is the light of the world. This wreath is a reminder of who we are called to be as followers of Jesus.

Each week as we light a candle, there is a brief message on that specific candle. The first candle is HOPE. The dictionary defines hope as: "a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen. A feeling of trust."

November 29 was the first Sunday of Advent. Before the first candle was lit, there was a little video of our church children telling us what they thought hope means:

- It is a present
- It's being excited over something that will happen
- It's belief in something or something you want, like what you want for Christmas
- Hope is something that you are waiting for and you are excited about it.
- When we hope we wait and when we wait, we hope.

Is your heart filled with hope? What happens when your path is filled with loss and stress?

How can you walk in hope when you feel helpless inside? 2020 has been challenging and has even caused us to lose some of our hope.

But there is hope in Jesus, the one who came to earth as a baby to save us. Hope in Him is something deep within you that holds and secures you through the storms of life. He gives us HOPE to overcome and HOPE for eternity.

"May the God of HOPE fill you with all joy and peace, as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Merry Christmas!  
Angel Rait, sjc #173



## Board suspends Walks until at least August '21

At its Dec. 5 meeting, the Alabama Emmaus Board of Directors opted to suspend Walks as scheduled and will tentatively consider resuming in August 2021. When Walks are rescheduled, the numbers will be moved as a block and will remain in order. Plans are in place to make decisions and give notice to Lay Directors and teams with ample time for preparation.

In addition to this change, Camp Sumatanga Executive Director Tony Jones has offered the use of the Lodge to the Community for Walks as an option in addition to McKinney-Atkins and the Retreat Centers. The Board has chosen to accept the offer of the Lodge. The necessary updates to material will be made as the schedule becomes known and in accordance with Camp renovations completed at that time.

In recent Board Meetings the number of Pilgrims per Walk was reduced to 21. This could vary according to space available when Walks begin and according to whether any COVID-19 restrictions remain in place at that time. Additionally, the number of pieces of agape requested for Walks was historically dropped from 80 to 60.

*The Grapevine* will continue to be published electronically and will be available to all Cluster Leaders and on the Community website.

### Praying for You

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to members of the Emmaus Community and their families in the loss of loved ones.

To **Paul (241)** and **Jolynn (254)** Claborn in the loss of their son, Warren Claborn.

To **Dona Patterson (152)** in the loss of her husband, Doug Patterson

To **Susan Howard (163)** in the loss of her husband, **Mike Howard (196)**

To **Willie Johnson (302)** in the loss of his wife, **Ruth Johnson (303)**

To **James Dodwell (146)** in the loss of his step-mother, jo-Ann Dodwell

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Alabama Emmaus Office, P.O. Box 38  
Cropwell, AL 35054  
205-812-0345  
Web: [www.AlaEmmaus.org](http://www.AlaEmmaus.org)  
email: [Office@AlaEmmaus.org](mailto:Office@AlaEmmaus.org)

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Address changes should be sent to: David Hall, 1016 Sedgefield Dr., Sylacauga, AL 35150, or emailed to [DHall92727@aol.com](mailto:DHall92727@aol.com).

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