



While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and walked with them.

Luke 24:15

Upcoming Events:

- Gathering December 30 (December Gathering is changed to 5th Tuesday!)
- Also on December 30th, The Sunshine Community Choir will share their Christmas Cantata—"Hope Has Come!"
- Gathering January 27

Next Community Gatherings at 7:00 p.m. The Maysville Church of the Nazarene 156 Maple Leaf Rd.

If possible, bring a snack to share.

Board of Directors Meeting at 5:45 p.m.

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What is Advent?

"Advent" is a Latin word, meaning a coming or arrival, which refers to the coming of our Lord. "Advent" is the four week season which marks the beginning of each new Christian church year as we await the Lord's arrival at Christmas.

Advent is a season of preparation – preparation of ourselves to receive Christ our Lord – to prepare for Him to come into our lives.

Many symbols and colors are used during Advent as a tangible means of aiding us in Christmas preparations. One of the loveliest symbolic aids to worship is the Advent Wreath. On the first Sunday of Advent, we will light the Purple candle of Hope. The Second Sunday of Advent, we will light the Purple candle of Peace. The Third Sunday of Advent, we will light the Rose candle of Joy. The Fourth Sunday of Advent, we will light the Purple candle of Love. On Christmas Eve, we will light the White candle of Christ.

Understanding the symbolism adds to the spiritual dimensions of Christmas:

Wreath – the round shape symbolizes eternity and the everlasting love of God.

Holly – the waxy, colorful and showy leaves symbolize the crown of thorns

and should be used in abundance.

Mistletoe – symbolic of life eternal since it bears its fruit as it grows over bare, desolate branches in icy weather.

Cedar – used to represent Jesus.

Ivy – symbolic of fidelity and eternal life.

The Colors we use at Advent and Christmas are highly symbolic:

Purple – God the Father, sorrow and penitence.

White – innocence of the soul, holiness of life, purity, Jesus the Holy infant.

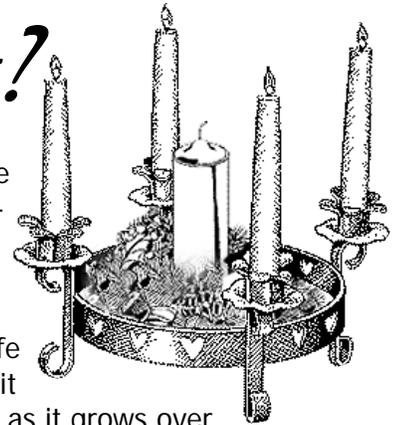
Blue – heaven, heavenly love, truth.

Green – triumph of life over death.

Violet – love, truth, passion, and suffering.

Gold – divinity.

*Submitted by:
 Bob Bennington
 Board Chairman*



Hallelujah

God's Under the Bed!

My brother Kevin thinks God lives under his bed. At least that's what I heard him say one night. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen. "Are you there, God?" he said. "Where are you? Oh, I see. Under the bed."

I giggled softly and tiptoed off to my own room. Kevin's unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very different world in which Kevin lives. He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (he's 6-foot-2), there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will. He will probably always believe that God lives under his bed, that Santa Claus is the one who fills the space under our tree every Christmas, and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them.

I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different. Is he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life? Up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our cocker spaniel, returning to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed. The only variation in the entire scheme are laundry days, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother with her newborn child. He does not seem dissatisfied. He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

And Saturdays--oh, the bliss of Saturdays! That's the day my dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger. "That one's goin' to Chi-car-go!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights.

I don't think Kevin knows anything exists outside his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips. He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth

or power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats. He recognizes no differences in people, treating each person as an equal and a friend. His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working. When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it. He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished. But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax. He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heart is pure. He still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept and when you are wrong, you apologize instead of argue.

Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere. And he trusts God. Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to Christ, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God-- to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an "educated" person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion. In my moments of doubt and frustrations with my Christianity, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith. It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap -- I am. My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances -- they all become disabilities when I do not submit them to Christ.

Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn? After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of the Lord. And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lived under his bed. Kevin won't be surprised at all....

By Kelly Adkins



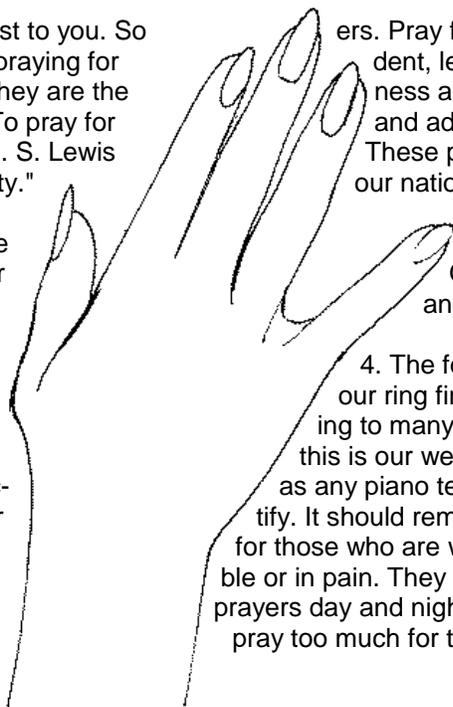
If God brings you to it,
He will bring you through it.
In happy moments, praise God.
In difficult moments, seek God.
In quiet moments, worship God.
In painful moments, trust God
In every moment, thank God.

The Five Fingers of Prayer

1. Your thumb is nearest to you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."

2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

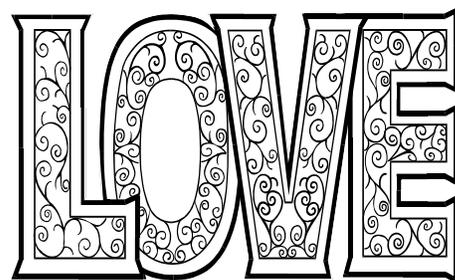
3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our lead-



ers. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all, which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.



The Richest Man

A rich landowner named Carl often rode around his vast estate so he could congratulate himself on his great wealth. One day, while riding around his estate on his favorite horse, he saw Hans, an old tenant farmer. Hans was sitting under a tree when Carl rode by.

Hans said, "I was just thanking God for my food."

Carl protested, "If that is all I had to eat, I wouldn't feel like giving thanks."

Hans replied, "God has given me everything I need, and I am thankful for it."

The old farmer added, "It is strange you should come by today because I had a dream last night. In my dream a voice told me, 'The richest man in the valley will die tonight.' I don't know what it means, but I thought I ought to tell you."

Carl snorted, "Dreams are nonsense," and galloped away, but he could not forget Hans' words: "The richest man in the valley will

die tonight."

He was obviously the richest man in the valley, so he invited his doctor to his house that evening. Carl told the doctor what Hans had said.

After a thorough examination, the doctor told the wealthy landowner, "Carl, you are as strong and healthy as a horse. There is no way you are going to die tonight." Nevertheless, for assurance, the doctor stayed with Carl, and they played cards through the night. The doctor left the next morning and Carl apologized for becoming so upset over the old man's dream. At about nine o'clock, a messenger arrived at Carl's door. "What is it?" Carl demanded.

The messenger explained, "It's about old Hans. He died last night in his sleep."

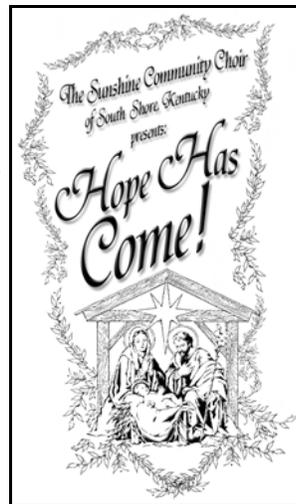
Submitted by Sheila Brown

Special Music at December Gathering!

All are welcome at the Gathering on December 30th as we enjoy a message of praise and worship as presented by the

Sunshine Community Choir. The choir includes eighteen members of the LOVE Community. The Christmas Cantata on December 30th will mark the finale for the choir, as they end a season

that has included 16 performances throughout the Southern Ohio/Northeast Kentucky area. They are eager to share their Christmas blessings with us, and you are encouraged to attend!





Walk to
Emmaus
THE UPPER ROOM

L.O.V.Emmaus Community
Limestone-Ohio Valley Emmaus Community

UPCOMING WALK DATES ANNOUNCED!

MEN'S WALK #8:
APRIL 29 - May 2, 2004

WOMEN'S WALK #8:
JUNE 3 - 6, 2004

MEN'S WALK #9
SEPTEMBER 9 - 12, 2004

WOMEN'S WALK #9
OCTOBER 7 - 10, 2004

www.lovemmaus.org

L.O.V.E. Community Board of Directors

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Stella Hull

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& Sponsorship:**

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Spiritual Director:

Charles Mallory

Music Director:

Roger Cheesbro

Registrar/Membership:

Cyndi Frodge

Newsletter Chair:

Rod Baker
Newsletter@lovemmaus.org

Agape Correspondence:

Dena Pully

Gathering Committee:

Bill Henry

Good Shepherd:

Kirk Tolle

Chrysalis Coordinator:

Debbie Shoemaker

Worship:

Delace Canada

Volunteer Coordinators:

Steve and Kathy Weber

Logistics:

Jutta King

Social:

Bill and Georjean Shelton

Kitchen:

Jennifer Vaden



Walk to
Emmaus
THE UPPER ROOM

L.O.V.E. COMMUNITY
P.O. Box 454
Maysville, KY 41056

Merry Christmas To All