GOLDEN ISLES

EMMAUS

December 2025 Newsletter

Hello Emmaus Family,

As we enter December, our hearts turn toward the meaning of Christmas—a season of love, hope, and the miracle of God's presence among us.

For many, this is a time filled with joy, celebration, and tradition. But for others,

including many within our own community, this season can bring its own challenges.

We recognize that our community is walking through difficult times—financial hardships, uncertainty of the future, emotional strain, and the lingering weight of a long year. The holidays can magnify these struggles. If you find yourself feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burdened, please know this:

You are not forgotten. You are not alone.
Your Emmaus Family is here to walk with you.

Christmas is not just for the joyful—it is for the weary, the searching, and the struggling. Christ came into a world that was hurting, and He continues to meet us in our deepest need.

For Those Celebrating, we rejoice with all who find comfort and joy in the lights, songs, and traditions of this season. May your gatherings be filled with warmth and gratitude.

For Those Hurting or Struggling, we also extend our compassion to everyone who feels the heaviness of December. Whether you're dealing with: Financial stress, Loss or grief, Loneliness, Health concerns, Pressure to "be cheerful", Or simply the exhaustion of a difficult year, your feelings matter. Our community holds space for the full range of human experience, especially now.

For Our Community as a Whole - Emmaus is a family that leans on one another. Even as we face challenges, we remain committed to lifting each other up. Together, we will make it through this season with grace and hope.

Christmas reminds us that light enters even the darkest places. Jesus came into a struggling world to bring peace, comfort, and hope. If you feel stretched thin this season, may His presence bring rest and reassurance.

To each member of our Emmaus community—whether you are celebrating, grieving, struggling, or simply showing up—may this season bring moments of peace and reminders of God's love.

We stand together, we support one another, and we move forward with hope.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year!

De Colores!
-Angela Dunn
Community Lay Director

COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

Friday December 5th, 2025

Community Church

181 Mall blvd

Brunswick, Ga 31524

Friday January 9th, 2026

TBA

Friday February 6th, 2026

TBA

If you would like to offer your church to host a Gathering in the future, or would be interested in sharing a Fourth Day testimony, please contact **Melissa Bender Moreno** at **mfbmoreno@gmail.com** for more information regarding what is required of a host church.
If you are interested in sharing your musical gifts at Community Gatherings or Walks, please contact **Brian Vigue** at **904-894-6753** or **bikerbrian@tds.net**.

What a Difference a Baby Makes!

Unplanned pregnancy. What comes to mind as you read those words? Teen pregnancy? Inconvenience? Wonder? New life? What comes to your mind could be any of those things or an infinite number of other thoughts. Does unplanned pregnancy cause you to think judgmentally, or compassionately? Sit with that for a minute or two. Then consider this…Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, was a product of an "unplanned pregnancy," at least by human standards.

Mary was a teen, engaged to be married to a carpenter named Joseph. My favorite depiction of the Christmas story from Joseph's perspective comes from *Cotton Patch Gospel*. If you get a chance to watch the play or the movie it takes you all the way from Jesus' birth through his resurrection. It's beautifully done and gives you another way to look at a story that can be so familiar we

come dangerously close to reciting it rather than allowing our hearts to experience it.

The narrator states, “Before they had sexual relations she became pregnant. Now Joe was upset by this because he thought Mary was a nice girl from a nice southern family and he was wondering how he would get his football jacket back from her when he fell into a deep sleep. While he was dreaming he saw an angel!

“ ‘Joe Davidson, don’t you be ashamed to marry Mary because she was made pregnant by the Holy Spirit! Now she’ll give birth to a boy who you will name Jesus because he will save his nation from their Herods. That’s it. Get movin’!’

“So Joe did exactly as the angel instructed. He married his girl, and he decided to call the child Jesus. Of course every cousin, aunt, and great-grandmother objected because no one had heard of the name Jesus before.”

I introduced this song in January:

> Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
> His name is called Emmanuel.
> God with us, revealed in us,
> His name is called Emmanuel.
>
> “Emmanuel, Emmanuel.” (from hymnal.net)

Think about those lyrics again with me. God *with* us, *revealed in* us. I pray that you and I will remember that we are the *us* God is with. We celebrate Christmas as the time Christ came into the world as a helpless baby, so he could truly be one of us. Completely human. Knowing hunger, cold, and loneliness while also knowing love and laughter, parties and sorrow. And miraculously, at the same time, be completely divine – the only begotten Son of God.

We are the *us* that reveal His love to the world we are in. Allow the wonder of Emmanuel to fill your heart to overflowing this Christmas season. Let that wonder splash out of you onto the world you interact with every day.

Trisa Chancey, Golden Isles Walk to Emmaus #2, Table of Mary

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