

T H E E N C O U R A G I N G W O R D

Epiphany Lutheran Church, 6430 Far Hills Avenue, Centerville, OH 45459
Volume I - No. 4 February-March 2001

● In the SPOTLIGHT

The A-B-F-S Christ Care Group

Three of the four couples in the ABFS group (Paul & Dolores Anderson, Curt & Kathy Fellers and Larry & Fran Stockert) were part of a BASIC group that started in 1990-91. Both Dolores & Kathy were trained for BASIC leadership. For several years the group was in flux; members came and went. Consequently the group never developed the cohesiveness that was enjoyed by other groups. When Pr. Becca introduced the Christ Care model, she and others persuaded Larry & Fran to return to the group and recruited Larry to take the ChristCare leadership training. Pr. Becca added two more couples: Ron & Judy Baker and John and Mary Kmet.



That was about six years ago. With the Christ Care Covenant, and Larry's gentle leadership, the five couples did evolve into an effective group. It took time. All of us were busy people. The commitment to the covenant we had made with each other made the

difference. The first year or two were awkward as we tried to develop a rhythm and come to grips with our expectations for the group. What we discovered was that all of us were already active in the church and already knew how to meet our spiritual educational needs. What we were really looking for were Christian friends with whom to share the journey. We gained more by just talking through our life events than by actively pursuing study programs. We did spend about a year viewing and discussing the videos on the Holy Land; we went to spiritually-themed movies several times and enjoyed lively post-movie discussions. One year we spent time reviewing books and tapes speculating about post-death experiences and discussing among ourselves the mystery of death and resurrection.

All of us agreed that service was an important component of a spiritually healthy life, so from the beginning of the Christ Care covenant we have participated annually in the Adopt-a-Family program. For several years we took responsibility for care of the outdoor chapel area. Last year we planned an Empty Nesters program. But by far most of the 'service' has been to one another. It has been a very eventful six years for us. Our group has experienced most of life's top stressors: loss of parents and siblings, serious personal illness, marriages of children and children moving away, births of grandchildren, and challenging changes of residence. It is these occasions where

Christ Care is most meaningful. We have rejoiced and mourned with one another. Perhaps the most meaningful moment of our Christ Care meetings is the end, when we hold hands in a circle and spontaneously pray for one another and our families, for our church, for our friends in our extended church family, always closing with the Lord's Prayer (the King James version!). Eyes become moist; and our commitment to a short meeting evaporates as departing seems to take longer and longer. This year we have committed to meeting every other week instead of twice a month. We think it will be easier to remember and we will work in a few extra meetings over the course of the year.

But—it's not all meetings and service. Much—maybe most—is eating and fun. Over the years we have taken part in a murder mystery train ride, bicycled on the bike trail, attended a season of Wright State University plays, and this past Labor Day weekend most of us traveled to Chicago for Scott Anderson's wedding. Our Christmas season begins with Wright State's Madrigal Dinner and we prepare for Easter by sitting together weekly at the Lenten soup suppers and services. And in between we try to eat out several times a year, trying new places (Yankee Trace & Grand Finale) and returning to old favorites (Thirsty Dog).

This summer John & Mary moved to Cleveland—but we still consider them ad hoc members. Fellers have visited them twice; and we're hoping for a group meeting in Cleveland soon. This year Ron Baker is serving as liaison for the group, succeeding John, who succeeded Larry; but in reality this group neither leads nor follows anyone. We are a group of Epiphany Christians who have come to love one another. We

think that is what Christ Care is all about.
J. Baker

S S S

"The Encouraging Word"

would like to hear from your group even when you're not spotlighted. Let us know if you have had or are planning a special activity or have participated in a rewarding service project. Just e-mail our editor or let Anne Marie know and we'll be certain to get it into our next issue. We want this newsletter to become a good resource of ideas to enhance the interpersonal and spiritual growth in all our small groups.

S S S

In each issue we plan to . SPOTLIGHT one of our small groups. Please let us know when you would like to share your group's story. We are now seeking a . SPOTLIGHT group for June-July 2001 issue.

Please submit your group's . spotlight article via e-mail to dgbonsteel@yahoo.com if at all possible and provide a picture (bmp, jpeg or gif file) in an attachment. OR you may contact us to make arrangements for getting hard copy to us.

S S S

Books and Magazines:

“How Good Do We Have To Be?” by Rabbi Harold Kushner -- Contact: K. Ann Grieco
“Strike the Original Match” by Charles Swindoll – Contact: Matt & Alaisa Harper

Mini Book Reviews

None submitted for this issue.

Videos

AAL Video Tapes, i.e.: “Caring for Older Adults” – Contact: Angela Batterman

Bill Moyer’s Video Tapes – Contact: Joe & Connie Kramer

Ed note: If you find this column helpful, please submit your reviews.

Recommended outside activities:

Please let us know of any resource materials and activities your group has enjoyed. Submit your mini-review of any book, magazine or video. (Nothing submitted for this issue.)

S S S
S “What’s happening with Small Group Ministry – 2001?”

Epiphany's small group team (Ann Marie and coaches) are busy with preparations for new groups and for new leader training. All present group leaders should expect to hear from your coaches, regarding who are your group members? When we looked at time and

talent sheets submitted by members last month, we realized that present group members are mixed with prospective group members. So, we're calling to sort out and identify who prospective members are on our master list. At this time, you could also let us know if you have any new members since last year. We will be offering leadership training in late winter/ early spring. Then we'll be looking forward to a large potluck dinner gathering.

New Groups in the making: Single Again (Donna Tucker) Christ Care group Monthly Outreach group Women's Prison Ministry (TBA) Young Adult Married (5th group) (Ken and Kara Bernsen).

Thanks for a great year of small group ministry in 2000. I'm anticipating another great experience this year too.

**Yours in Christ,
Ann Marie Winters
Pastoral resident**

S S S

If you are interested in starting a new Small Group, please contact Ann Marie Winters at 433-1449 or e-mail to winters@coax.net.

See you in the next issue. Deadline for the Apr-May issue: <u>March 4, 2001</u>.

S S S

S S S

FUTURE ISSUES

Please prayerfully consider helping with this newsletter. I will be serving as Newsletter Editor for The Encouraging Word through its first year, which ends with the June-July 2001 issue. I plan to assist someone with getting that issue ready in May.

The Encouraging Word will also need people to assume the newsletter distribution every two months.

The responsibility for getting announcements in the STAR and the bulletin could be assumed by the same or a different person. In fact the more who help, the more potential for different and additional ideas.

Let Ann Marie or me know of your interest and of any questions you may have.

Georgene Bonsteel, Editor

This is a bi-monthly publication

Newsletter Editor:

➤ Georgene Bonsteel (phone: 433-7177)
email: dgbonsteel@yahoo.com

Distribution & Announcements:

➤ Roger Shoffner (phone: 433-3339)
email: miamimerger65@prodigy.net

Other Assistants:

➤ Pam Shoffner (phone: 433-3339)
email: miamimerger65@prodigy.net

➤

S ...for where two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be also.

-----Matt. 20:18 rsv

Please note: At this time we do not have a spotlight group for the June-July issue of "The Encouraging Word". Please contact Ann Marie Winters, Roger Shoffner or Georgene Bonsteel if interested.

If you wish to receive an e-mail announcement as to when "The Encouraging Word" will be available in the Narthex, please send an e-mail request to the editor: dgbonsteel@yahoo.com

S The Small Group Ministry, lead by Resident Ann Marie Winters, includes a team of five Coaches who are available to small groups.

	phone	e-mail
<u>Angela Batterman</u>	885-5733	battman97@prodigy.net
<u>Joyce Evans</u>	433-9810	HistryBUF@aol.com
<u>Sandy Houpt</u>	885-7093	skhoupt@juno.com
<u>Gordon Williams</u>	293-5408	GSWill3038@aol.com
<u>Shirley Williams</u>	293-5408	GSWill3038@aol.com

Current known Christ Care and BASIC group leaders at Epiphany are listed below.

Please let us know if your group is not represented on the list, if any information is incorrect or if changes occur.

<u>Leader</u>	<u>Group Name / Focus</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>e-mail</u>	<u>Spotlight Issue .</u>
<u>Baker, Ron and Judy</u>	Christ Care Support	434-5853	jmaysbaker@aol.com	02/01
<u>Borchardt, Candy</u>	Borchardt/Jansen Christ Care	878-3739	unknown *	
<u>Burns, Aeron & Jennifer</u>	Christ Care Young Married	885-2032	burns_jennifer_j@lilly.com	04/01
<u>Coffman, Connie</u>	Signing	687-2033	unknown *	
<u>Dietrich, Charlie & Kathy</u>		435-2489	-unlisted-	
<u>Eberhart, Angie</u>	BASIC Scrapbooking	436-1287	DaytonNE1@aol.com	
<u>Havig, Paul & Rhonda</u>	Christ Care	848-2573	phavig@yahoo.com or rghavig@yahoo.com	
<u>Jansen, Wayne</u>	Borchardt/Jensen Christ Care	434-3120	unknown *	
<u>Krouskop, Melinda</u>	Christ Care	885-4153	tedebear55@prodigy.net	
<u>Malley, Mike & Valarie</u>	Christ Care Young Married	225-9590	unknown *	
<u>Middleton, Jane</u>	Christ Care Sr. Singles	436-0946	-none-	12/00
<u>Nesmith, Edye</u>	Bible Study	294-4681	-none-	
<u>Pazitney, Marilyn</u>	Pazitney/Wickert Study	434-6190)	r62rose@aol.com	
<u>Purkey, Tom</u>	Christ Care Fellowship	434-2536	tom_purkey@yahoo.com	08/00
<u>Rathbun, Dick</u>	Smart-Rathbun BASIC	435-9723	unknown *	
<u>Schmellenkamp, Hans & Susan</u>	Christ Care	298-5747	susan61563@mail.com	
<u>Smart, Dave</u>	Smart-Rathbun BASIC	885-5522)	sandysmart@harristhomas.com	
<u>Surdyk, Bob and Peggy</u>	Christ Care	435-9363	unknown *	
<u>Ulman, Wayne & Amy</u>	Christ Care Young Married	433-4832	wulman@attglobal.net	04/01
<u>Wickert, Sandy</u>	Pazitney/Wickert Study	848-8100	-none-	
<u>Williams, Gordon & Shirley</u>	BASIC	293-5408	SGWill3038@aol.com	10/00
<u>Witt, Karen</u>	Christ Care	433-7470	kwitt@sinclair.edu	

We need a SPOTLIGHT group for the June-July 2001 issue. Will it be YOUR group? Please call soon.

Please let us know if any of the above is incorrect. Thanks!

* Please let me know if you wish to be added to the e-mail list of those who receive an announcement as to when "The Encouraging Word" will be available in the Narthex for you & your group.