

EMMAUS MINISTRIES

AUSTRALIA

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021

Greetings in the Christ's Name,

As we enter the frenetic journey towards Christmas, I am thankful that I live in Australia. Even with the impact of the pandemic, we can still praise our Lord in meaningful ways. Our path to the "normality" will no doubt be impacted by interesting decisions.

It is great to hear that many communities are meeting for gatherings regularly and events are being held. I heard recently that wearing masks did not detract from the message of Emmaus – God loves each and everyone of us. We look forward to gathering together in Toowoomba early next year.

The National Board has continued to meet throughout the year and respond as best we can to any challenges. A mighty thanks to all National Board members for their service to our communities. As you will know, we are still accepting nominations to various positions because time marches on and we need to provide each other with opportunities in leadership. Please carefully consider you or someone you know as National Secretary Elect, National Treasurer Elect and National Lay Director Elect. All incumbents have served more than one term.



Please pray for each other this Christmas, the communities and their leadership and your families and hope that 2022 will be a great year in serving our Lord.

De Colores,

David Nivala

National Lay Director

2022 National Secretariat

Friday 1st April—Sunday 3rd April 2022

[See Page 7 for details](#)



BRUCE CORNISH

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

“Christmas is a time to love”

“Christmas is a time to love” is the title of a song that I sing with my year two RI classes each year during the last term.

It is a song that comes from “Psalty’s Christmas Calamity”. Pсалty is a singing song book cartoon character created by Ernie and Debbie Rettino in the 1970s to share ministry with children and families. It is a very catchy tune and a very important message. The chorus is sung a number of times and really gets stuck in your mind. The verses remind me that “stuff happens”, sometimes especially at Christmas time when families gather with differing expectations.

*Christmas is a time
Christmas is a time
Christmas is a time to love.*

*We often start to worry
And people get upset
If things don't go alright on*

*Christmas day.
What we should remember
In all the push and shove
Christmas is a time to love.*

*Christmas is a time
Christmas is a time
Christmas is a time to love.*

*Maybe things don't sound right
Or look the way they should
And maybe they're not perfectly in
tune.*

*It really doesn't matter
Lets keep our eyes above
Cos' Christmas is a time to love.*

*Words and Music by Ernie Rettino
& Debby Kerner Rettino.*

This Christmas across Australia there will be many families gathering for the first time in couple of years. It may well be a very special time but can also be a stressful time. This little song helps me put that all in perspective. Even in the midst of “calamity and chaos” as in the animated movie this song comes from, **Let's keep our eyes above, Cos' Christmas is a time to love.**

As I write this short reflection, once again the news feed etc is full of reference to Covid 19, this time the new variant Omicron which seems to be rapidly spreading. (I wish that the news would not highlight all this so much). A ministry colleague recently shared a reflection in which he articulated his Christian response to the vaccination mandate which highlighted our responsibilities to our family and community to be vaccinated as well as respecting our individual rights. He concluded his reflection with a prayer he wrote which I have chosen to share with you all for your contemplation.

*O God,
We look to you for guidance and
hope.*

*As your prophet Amos called us to
spiritual righteousness,
He also called us to real acts of justice
in our society.*

*Lord, we often fail to see beyond
ourselves.*

*We are blinded to Your call to care
for each other.*

*We stay silent and allow people to
remain incarcerated
with no hope of release on Nauru,
While we noisily protest about*



wearing a mask in a shopping centre.

*We consume foods containing un-
intelligible chemical preservatives,
but fear a proven vaccine.*

*We blame the government for our
woes
and yet forget what we take for
granted.*

*We overstate our outrage
and understate our thankfulness.*

*So Lord, as we reflect within this
Advent Season,
May our hearts be prepared for the
coming of Jesus.*

*That all people may see His glory
and that
every knee will bow in the presence
of Your glory.*

*Travel with us, dear God
into futures uncertain yet filled
with hope.*

For you are always with us. Amen

May we all continue to know the love and presence of Jesus with us and our loved ones this Christmas and into 2022.

**God Bless you all,
Bruce Cornish**

PHIL JENNINGS NATIONAL SECRETARY

“Blessings to all”

As I write this, most states of Australia are anticipating or already experiencing the easing of some Covid restrictions as vaccination rates increase.

The National Board, together with the Darling Downs Community are planning the 2022 National Conference with cautious optimism and trusting God’s provision of a safe environment. It seems we have lost count of the number of times this live event has been postponed.

The Glennie School in Toowoomba has now been booked for Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd April 2022.

Registration details will be announced soon. We will look at providing virtual links for delegates unable to travel to Toowoomba due to ongoing Covid restrictions or other reasons.

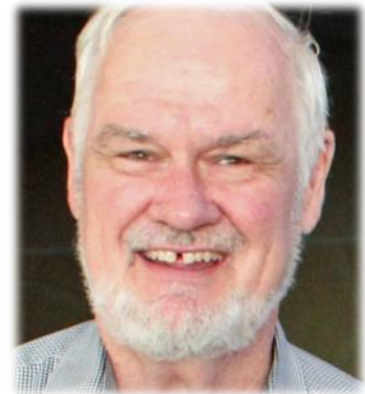
The next National Zoom Gathering is planned for Saturday 26th February (a little later than the previously advertised date) and will be hosted by the Canberra-Monaro Community. These events have proved to be quite popular and we hope to continue them post-Covid, with a different community hosting and arranging each gathering.

Nominations are still being sought for the following national board positions starting early 2020:

- **National Lay Director elect**
- **National Secretary elect**
- **National Treasurer elect**

Details are provided elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally I look forward to a more “normal” year for Emmaus Ministries in Australia and indeed worldwide in 2022,



with most communities hopefully able to run Emmaus walks and some able to organise Face to Face encounters and/or Chrysalis flights as well.

God’s richest blessings

Phil Jennings



Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

2 Corinthians 9:15



It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas---oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it... overspending... the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma--- the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else. Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike.

The inspiration came in an unusual way. Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended; and shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church, mostly black. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat. Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly,

"I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them."

Mike loved kids, all kids, and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came.

That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church.

On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me.

His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years.

For each Christmas, I followed the tradition--- one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys,

would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there.

You see, we lost Mike last year. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more. Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as their fathers take down the envelope. Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

Author: Unknown



Emmaus Ministries News



Going Forth Central Queensland



Hi there
We recently had a Going forth day gathering .
It was held at Campbell Street Uniting Church Rockhampton Central Qld
20 or so people attended over the days events .
There were 3 speakers , 3 table groups, posters , summaries and lots of laughter .
Of course , lunch was a hearty affair and was followed by communion service .

Cheers

Meredith, CLD



Community Notices!

Welcome to our new NSD Elect

The National Board is pleased to announce that Christine Rose is duly elected by the Secretariat as our National Spiritual Director-elect. Congratulations Christine!

Christine was nominated by the Brisbane South Community and will succeed Bruce Cornish as NSD at the April 2022 national conference.

MERRY
Christmas
and
HAPPY NEW YEAR

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

We would love to hear from you!

Remember how you found encouragement on your Emmaus journey,
why not share and encourage others with it.

- Please include your name, and a photo would be great, but optional.
- When and where was your Emmaus Ministries event? (and your community.)
- Please share the way the event impacted your life.
- Growth in Piety – how you are further opening yourself to God?
- Growth through Study – what you have been reading/studying recently that has contributed to your ongoing spiritual formation in significant ways?
- Growth through Christian Action – What ministries you are involved with and how they are impacting your world?
- Please share any book(s) or writing(s) that you have published.
- Tell us about your hope for the future.

Please send all stories to: newsletter@emmaus.org.au

Upcoming Events!



National Virtual Gathering

Saturday 26th February

3pm – 5pm EST,

Open to all community members.

Hosted By:

Canberra-Monaro Emmaus Community

Meeting Link will be emailed to all people on the EMA National mailing list.

Mailing list sign up can be found at the bottom of the National website homepage.

<https://emmaus.org.au>



2022 National Secretariat

Toowoomba, QLD

Friday 1st - Sunday 3rd April

Save the date and help spread the word!

Meeting information will be provided once meeting details confirmed.



Active Prayer Vigils

Please support your Emmaus Communities in Prayer!



Prayer Vigils

Thankyou.

National Board Nominations

The Emmaus Australia Secretariat is the governing body of Emmaus Ministries in Australia and consists of two representatives of each community, plus National Board members. It meets once a year, in the national conference normally held in April or May. The Emmaus Australia National Board (EANB) is the executive arm of the Secretariat and handles the month-by-month business of the movement on behalf of the Secretariat. Officers generally serve for a three year period.

The Emmaus National Board is now seeking nominations for the following positions starting 2022:

- ◆ NLD elect
- ◆ Treasurer elect
- ◆ Secretary elect



for a three year term to take office in 2021-2022, and attend National Board Meetings (Zoom) and understudy the respective roles for the remainder of 2021 – early 2022.

It is preferable that nominees have held similar positions in an Emmaus Community. They must have given their consent and, nominations must be endorsed by the Board of their own Community.

Nomination Forms have been emailed to community CLDs, CSDs and Secretaries and are also available on the website: [Nomination Forms](#).

For further information please contact:

David Nivala (National Lay Director):

nld@emmaus.org.au or,

Phil Jennings (National Secretary):

secretary@emmaus.org.au



Written nominations should be sent to the Secretary, Phil Jennings, at secretary@emmaus.org.au or post to 29 Ruthven Avenue Glandore SA 5037.

Please prayerfully consider how you may be involved in this important service to Emmaus Ministries in Australia.

Community Connections



<https://emmaus.org.au>



<https://www.facebook.com/AustralianWalkToEmmaus/>