

WALK TO EMMAUS SPONSORSHIP GUIDELINES

SPONSORSHIP: THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF ALL

- *Good sponsorship is the first act of Agape*
- *Good sponsorship undergirds the whole weekend with sacrificial love on behalf of each pilgrim embodying the personal commitment of the community to each pilgrim*
- *Good sponsorship is the foundation for a healthy, effective Emmaus Movement that is fulfilling its true purpose: the development of Christian leaders and the renewal of the church in ministry*

WHY DO WE SPONSOR? WHAT IS OUR AIM?

- It is NOT trying "to get all my friends to go" or to "fix people's problems" or to reproduce one's own religious experience in others.
- Rather, IT IS the aim of the sponsor to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians who, in turn, will bring new life and vision to the work of the church in the congregation, home, workplace, and community. The AIM of sponsorship is to build up the Body of Christ.

WHO DO WE SPONSOR?

- It IS for active Christians and members of churches whose own renewal will mean new energy, commitment, and vision in the church and everyday environments for Christ's sake. Those sponsored could include the following:
 - Church leaders (pastors and laypersons) who will bring vision, commitment and understanding back to their congregations and who need the renewal and grace Emmaus channels.
 - Dependable church members who are the quiet backbone of the church.
 - Less active members who need their awareness of grace rekindled and their commitments renewed.
 - Christians who are hungry for "something more" and who want to grow spiritually.
 - Members and leaders who represent a cross section of the church and who will help Emmaus remain theologically sound, centered on the essentials of our common faith, and open to different perspectives.
 - Respected laypersons and clergypersons whose participation, support, and leadership will encourage others to take the Walk and will be a sound, balanced leadership base for the movement in the community.
 - Members of diverse congregations, denominations, and ethnic groups.

WHO WE DO NOT SPONSOR

- Christians whose theology and/or practice is so notably different or incompatible with the traditional theology and practice by The Walk to Emmaus: Christians who have specific dietary restrictions and Sabbath celebrations that the Emmaus experience cannot provide.
- Persons undergoing an emotional crisis (for example, family breakup, job loss, severe grief) or who are psychologically unstable.
- Persons who decide not to make a Walk after being presented the opportunity. It could be timing...
- "Church hoppers" - members who always have an axe to grind against the church.
- Persons who are always looking for another spiritual high or another experience to help them "arrive".

Emmaus is right for many people BUT not for everyone. The religious background or emotional condition of some people may make Emmaus an improper discipleship tool for them.

TWO KINDS OF SPONSORSHIP: WISE AND UNWISE

WISE sponsorship is purposeful and prayerful.

UNWISE sponsorship is haphazard and undiscerning.

WISE sponsorship eventually will produce a balanced theologically centered movement of the Holy Spirit, which is integrated into the life of the church in the community which is honored by a variety of churches as an effective instrument for conveying God's grace, the call to committed discipleship, and our unity in Christ.

UNWISE sponsorship eventually will produce a harvest that becomes a burden than a blessing for the church. It will develop small para-church or small isolationists groups.

HOW DO WE SPONSOR?

1. Pray for the person's openness to God's call to discipleship, not for how to get him or her to go on a walk.
2. Make an appointment with the person or couple for the person of discussing participating in Emmaus.
3. Extend an invitation; invite the prospective pilgrim to attend for the sake of a more vital relationship with Jesus Christ, not just an event to go to. Share your faith; explain the basic elements of the Walk, its' purpose, and follow-up dimensions that help us live in grace for the rest of our lives. Take the attitude that you are giving the person a wonderful gift rather than that he or she needs to go.
4. Ask the person to make a commitment by filling out the registration form. If the person is married, speak with both partners and encourage equal commitment by both.

5. Continue to pray for your prospective pilgrim, prepare agape letters, and enlist the support of their pastor. Collect 8-12 personal agape letters. Do not ask the team to deliver personal gifts during the three days. Mark an "F" on the immediate family letters for them to be read first.
6. Support the Walk through your prayers during the 72-Hour Prayer Vigil and your presence at Send Off, Sponsors' Hour, Candlelight, and Closing. Support the pilgrim's family by house sitting, baby sitting, watering plants, picking up mail, feeding pets, or just checking in with a spouse to see if any help is needed.
7. Encourage the pilgrim in his or her Fourth Day involvement. Give your friend an opportunity to talk through and appropriate the experience. Help the pilgrim find a group, or be prepared to start a group with him or her for a period of time until others join the group. Take the pilgrim to Gatherings as your guest for a couple of months.
8. Help the pilgrim reenter his or her church and consider ways to act out new commitment and enthusiasm.
9. Inform the pilgrim reenter his or her church and consider ways to act out new commitment and enthusiasm.
10. Help the pilgrim sponsor others

Sponsorship is an act of love for God, for the pilgrims, for the Emmaus community, and for the church. It demonstrates agape love, making us instruments of prevenient grace.

WHO CAN SPONSOR?

1. Any persons who have participated in Emmaus can sponsor another person as long as they understand the aim and responsibilities of sponsorship and can fulfill them for the person they would sponsor.
2. Persons who have participated in chrysalis can also sponsor adults to Emmaus under the same conditions. The same conditions for sponsorship apply also to persons who have participated in Cursillo, Tres Dias, or another valid expression of the recognized fourth- day movements.
3. Sponsors should not serve as a team member on Walks with persons they are sponsoring. If persons choose to serve as team members on Walks, they should find others who will sponsor the particular persons they would otherwise sponsor. Sponsors must be able to fulfill the responsibilities of sponsorship for any person they would sponsor. Confusing the roles of team member and sponsor in one's relationship with a pilgrim diminishes the value of both roles.

INTERPRETING THE EQUAL COMMITMENT RULE

THE REASON FOR THE RULE

Husbands and Wives are encouraged to make an equal commitment to participate. The rule reflects a concern and hope about the effect of Emmaus on marriages and families.

First, the equal participation rule guards against the Emmaus experience becoming a divisive influence in marriage. Emmaus can be the occasion for commitments to new life directions that one's spouse may understand or appreciate the time. The Emmaus Movement attempts to strengthen marriages and to avoid practices that may have the potential to affect a marriage adversely.

Second, when the rule is followed, Emmaus can indirectly strengthen the spiritual bond in a marriage and family. So sponsorship of married persons involves approaching both husband and wife together and encouraging them to make an equal commitment to participate. It allows them to grow together as a Christian family while actively supporting the Emmaus Movement and the church as families, not only as individuals.

Third, the equal commitment rule results in increased participation of many grateful husbands and wives (usually husbands) who probably would not have attended an Emmaus weekend otherwise but did so in order to make it possible for their spouse to participate. While their initial motivation for going on a Walk may not have been personal, they came to realize the course of the Walk that the three days was meant for them.

WHAT THE RULE DOES NOT MEAN

The equal commitment rule does not mean a wife can never go to Emmaus unless her husband has gone first. It is always best to schedule spouses' participation in the same set of Emmaus events so they can share their experience and support each other. It is the practice of this community that every effort is made to allow the mate to be on the next walk as a priority.

WHY MEN'S EVENTS PRECEDE WOMEN'S EVENTS

Men's Emmaus experiences do NOT precede women's Walks for theological reasons. This scheduling pattern does not reinforce a belief that men are the spiritual heads for the household and that wives should follow their lead. The reasons for this scheduling pattern are historical and practical. History shows that the likelihood of those husbands participating increases when the men's Walk precedes the women's.

LOCAL EMMAUS TRADITIONS OF A SPONSOR

1. The sponsor (Sunday School class, friends, reunion group) may consider paying the total fee of the pilgrim as a gift of Agape.
2. The sponsor brings enough Agape for the Team and Pilgrims {usually 75 pieces allowing for damage, etc.}. Keep out of sight of the pilgrim.
3. The sponsor brings Agape food/snacks for the Walk and Closing.
4. The sponsor will meet or pick up the pilgrim for a dinner and drive to the Walk. Family, Sunday school Emmaus members, children, etc may attend. Children can not go to the Walk unless they have been on some type of Walk accepted by the Golden Spread Emmaus.

5. The sponsor can explain any and all parts of the Walk without exception.
6. The sponsor insures all the Agape letters are provided NO later than Candlelight.
7. The sponsor helps the pilgrim with baggage to and from the Walk and stands with the pilgrim during registration for any questions/clarifications.
8. The sponsor will walk with the pilgrim to the assigned room and help in any procedure to unpack, make a bed, etc.
9. An emergency number (how to contact the sponsor) should always be clarified during registration for any type of emergency.
10. Re-clarification of clothes, bedding, personal hygiene, pagers, phones, watches should be discussed with the pilgrim.
11. No special gifts, flowers, etc. are permitted until Fourth Day events. The message of Emmaus is the God loves each person with the same love; God does not have favorites.
12. There are absolutely no children at ANY Walk activities or those who have not attended a Walk.
13. Be on time, prompt, and listen to the instructions of the Lay Director for the Pilgrim Send-Off Prayer Service and times to return to the Walk for Candlelight and Closing.
14. The sponsor (or anyone else) is NOT to reach out during Candlelight and touch their pilgrim.
15. WHEN IN DOUBT ask. Remember some traditions and past Walk activities does not guarantee it was correct.
16. Have fun and make this as Memorable for You as for the Pilgrim.

DeColores!