

WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP?

Each person who attends The Walk to Emmaus has a sponsor. A sponsor is a person who has been through an Emmaus experience and is willing to share that experience with another new Emmaus participant. The sponsorship of a previous participant frees the current participant from any personal responsibilities that might distract him or her while on the experience. Sponsorship also undergirds each participant's 72-hour experience with prayer and other expressions of God's love.

According to the dictionary, a sponsor is one who takes responsibility for another. The suffix "ship" refers to the skill involved in the activity. So sponsorship is the skill of taking responsibility for another.

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THE AIM OF SPONSORSHIP

The aim of a sponsor should not be "to get all my friends to go," to fill up the weekend, to fix people's problems, or to reproduce one's own religious experience in others. Rather, the aim of the sponsor is to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians who will, in turn, 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.

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A SPONSOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Sponsorship is an act of love for God, for the participants in the Walk to Emmaus, for the Emmaus Community, and for the church. It is a demonstration of agape love. A sponsor will:

- * Pray for the participant's openness to God's call to discipleship.
- * Make an appointment with the participant (or participating couple) to discuss his or her participation in Emmaus.
- * Invite the participant to take part in Emmaus for the sake of a more vital relationship with Jesus Christ. The sponsor shares his or her faith, explains the basic purpose, elements, and follow-up dimensions of the Walk.

* Ask the participant to make a commitment by filling out a registration form. If the participant is married, the sponsor will speak with both partners and encourage an equal commitment by both spouses.

* Support the participant's Walk through prayers and otherwise. The sponsor will also support the participant'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 or support is needed.

* Support the participant's Walk by coordinating the travel to and from the Walk as well as making a commitment to attend Send Off, Closing and other Special Services.

* Encourage the participant in his/her continued journey and take the participant to Emmaus "gatherings" after the Walk weekend is over.

* Help the participant re-enter his or her church and consider ways to act out new commitment and enthusiasm.

* Help the participant identify and sponsor others.