

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

The sponsor plays a critical role in the Walk to Emmaus and Chrysalis programs. There are many important things the sponsor must do to help the participant (pilgrim or caterpillar) have a meaningful experience. Being a sponsor isn't simply paying the fee or performing administrative tasks. It is sharing a gift with someone and creating a bond.

The aim of the **Walk to Emmaus** is to strengthen leadership within the local church. The aim of **Chrysalis** is the spiritual growth of young Christians as disciples of Jesus Christ through churches and their youth groups. Neither is intended to "fix" anyone or anything. No one "needs" to go and not everyone "should" go. A person should go on a Walk or attend Chrysalis in God's time, not our time.

Below are some guidelines to help you in that role and to help you set the groundwork for a meaningful and worry-free weekend for both the participant and their family. Please use the **Sponsor Checklist** to help with completing all the various responsibilities. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Chair or Vice Chair of the Emmaus/Chrysalis Board of Directors.

Topic	Page #
Who can sponsor a Pilgrim or Caterpillar?	2
Who to sponsor?	2
Talking about the Walk to Emmaus or Chrysalis with a candidate.	3
Completing & Submitting an Application for a Walk or Chrysalis	5
Agape	7
Two Weeks Before the Event	9
The Week of the Event	9
Day 1: Check-In/Send-Off/Sponsor's Hour	10
During the Event	11
After the Event	11

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

WHO CAN SPONSOR A PILGRIM OR CATERPILLAR?

- Anyone who has attended a Walk to Emmaus, Chrysalis, or other comparable three-day weekend, such as Cursillo or Tres, Dias may sponsor a participant on a Walk to Emmaus or Chrysalis.
- The sponsor must be an active member or interested in becoming a member of a Christian church.
- The sponsor should not serve as a team member on a Walk or Chrysalis with the persons they are sponsoring.

WHO TO SPONSOR

- The sponsor's first responsibility is to spend careful, intentional time in prayer in an effort to discern whom God wants you to sponsor.
- Walk to Emmaus: Christian adults age 27 and over.
Chrysalis Flight: High School Students (Age 13 – 18)
Chrysalis Journey: Age 18 – 26
- Each person experiences the Walk to Emmaus or Chrysalis differently. The invitation to attend should be personal – someone you know who would accept, benefit, and enjoy the experience based on your knowledge of who they are and where they are on their faith journey.
- Make sure you know what church the candidate attends so there are no conflicts in their beliefs (receiving Communion, Women clergy, etc.).
 - As a program of the United Methodist Church, Holy Communion is understood to be open to Christians of all denominations. If your participant is from another denomination, be sure they understand Holy Communion is served daily, and ask them if this poses a problem for them. Advise them to discuss this with their priest or pastor if they are uncertain of their denomination or church's understanding of Holy Communion or the Eucharist.
- EMMAUS CANDIDATES
 - Must already be a Christian
 - Have potential to be leaders in our churches and communities
 - Have a desire to be better Disciples
 - Are seeking to strengthen or renew their relationship with Christ
 - Be a member or interested in becoming a member of a church
- If someone requests to go on a Walk weekend that you don't know or don't know well, look for another Community member who DOES know the person and ask them to consider being the sponsor.
- It is recommended that you only sponsor one person at a time and never more than two. When you divide your time among several participants, none receives the full benefit of your sponsorship. Ask someone else in the Emmaus Community to sponsor your second candidate.

**Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET**

- CHRYsalis CANDIDATES
 - Learn about God and build their relationship with Christ.
 - Realize they are precious to God.
 - Want to discuss with nonjudgmental peers and mature Christian adults their questions and struggles.
 - Strengthen their decision to follow Jesus to better prepare themselves to live as Christian witnesses in home, school, church and community.
 - Make friends with other youth who share their faith and will support one another in living as Christians.
 - Develop relationships with mature Christian adults, relationships that might extend beyond the three days.
 - Learn what goes into building their lives and relationships on a solid foundation.
 - Bring new vitality to the church youth group.
- If someone requests to go on a Chrysalis weekend that you don't know or don't know well, look for another Community member who DOES know the person and ask them to consider being the sponsor.
- It is recommended that you only sponsor one person at a time and never more than two. When you divide your time among several participants, none receives the full benefit of your sponsorship. Ask someone else in the Emmaus/Chrysalis Communities to sponsor your second candidate.

WHO NOT TO SPONSOR

- Persons who would find a discomfoting experience which might extend to beliefs about God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit that differ from the traditional Christian belief of the Holy Trinity.
- Persons who are not members of a church or interested in becoming a member of a church.
- Persons who are in emotional situations, such as: death of a loved one, divorce, work downsizing, protracted health problems.
- Only 6 people can come from one church on one Walk.

TALKING ABOUT THE WALK TO EMMAUS OR CHRYsalis WITH A CANDIDATE

- You are encouraged to obtain a copy of the "What is Emmaus?" booklet or the Chrysalis brochure and let your candidate read it in addition to personally explaining the event. These can be acquired at community functions, from various Blue Ridge Emmaus/Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Board Members, or by ordering them directly from the Upper Room at 1-800-972-0433. You may also go to the Upper Room website (www.upperroom.org or Amazon.com) for this and other printed material.
- Explain the Walk to Emmaus or Chrysalis so there aren't any misconceptions about what it is and what it isn't.

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

- Candidates should not feel pressured to attend by anyone. They may feel nervous or hesitant because it is something different, but they should NEVER feel pressured.
- Share what your weekend meant to you and how Christ has used that experience to bring you closer to Him and to empower you for ministry.
- Answer all questions simply and directly. You may need to choose your words carefully about certain aspects of the weekend, but do not lie. Refer to “surprises/gifts” NOT “secrets.” If pressed, answer all questions completely.
- Here are some things you can tell your candidate:
 - The weekend consists of a series of fifteen (15) talks, ten (10) by lay speakers and five (5) by clergy. The talks are based on God’s love and grace, and they outline how His love and grace works and fits in our lives. The talks follow prescribed outlines to ensure essential content is consistent on all weekends, but are customized by the life experiences of the speakers.
 - Most of the time is spent in the conference room and you will be at a table with 5-7 others throughout the Walk. You will not be at a table with someone from your church unless you do not know the person.
 - There is time to pray, share, sing, laugh, cry, and receive Communion. There are extremely solemn moments and there are extremely silly moments. There is some time for solitary prayer and meditation.
 - The food is delicious and plentiful. If you have a special diet, please bring this food with you. The kitchen staff is happy to store perishables and warm up any dish. Regarding normal diets, there is enough variety to satisfy everyone’s taste.
 - The atmosphere is casual. Pack comfortable clothing. No one will care if you don’t put on make-up (women) or shave (men).
 - The weekend is an opportunity for the participant to step away from day-to-day busyness for a personal time with God. Strongly encourage them to leave cell phones, watches/clocks, and all electronic devices at home.
- Make sure you don’t set false expectations about what the weekend will mean. Remember, their experience will not be your experience.
- Do NOT tell people they will come back “a different person” or “changed”. Don’t use phrases like “you have to go”. Some people might perceive you think their walk with Christ is not what it should be, and that they need to go to be a “real” Christian. If they express doubts, encourage them to talk with others who have been on a Walk to get alternative perspectives.
- It is highly recommended you encourage spouses to sign up at the same time. It works best if both attend within the same general time frame, and for them to make their decision together. If only one is interested in attending, it is imperative their spouse be supportive of their decision. In these cases, it is important not to treat the non-attending spouse as an “outsider.” Be sure to offer your assistance to the spouse while the participant is away for the

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

weekend. You might encourage them both to attend a Gathering service so they can see what Emmaus/Chrysalis worship entails.

- For youth attending Chrysalis, be sure to include their parents or guardian if at all possible. Explain the connection between Emmaus (Adults) and Chrysalis (Youth).
- Tell the candidate the general history of the Walk to Emmaus and Chrysalis.
 - Organized by the United Methodist Church through the Upper Room
 - Scripture Reference: Luke 24:13-35
- Let them know that you will provide transportation to and from the event location.
- Explain the sponsor is to provide help to the family so the person can go on the Walk with a worry-free mind.
- Explain the WHY behind the rules:
 - Bringing them and helping them with their suitcases, registration, and sharing in the Send-Off is a form of prayer and sacrifice.
- No cell phones, watches or electronic devices are allowed. The participant is encouraged to forget the outside world and fully experience the weekend (it is NOT about control).
- There are some special surprises that we normally don't want to share with the participants ahead of time just because they are so special ... BUT if your candidate really wants to know and you feel that the lack of this knowledge will negatively impact their weekend, go ahead and tell them whatever it is they want to know.
- Just like we as sponsors make a commitment, the candidate also makes a commitment. Candidates should be aware that they have to commit to the full 72-hour weekend. Coming late or leaving early (unless there is an emergency) negatively impacts the relationships and benefits of the weekend.
- Dates for the Emmaus/Chrysalis weekends can be found on their respective websites www.blueridgeemmaus.org or www.mountainridgechrysalis.org or by contacting any member of the Community Board of Directors.
- IMPORTANT: Candidates should always be told that the use of tobacco is prohibited anywhere on the grounds of the host facility due to their regulations.

COMPLETING & SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR A WALK OR CHRYSALIS

- Make sure your candidate knows the exact dates, times, and location for the weekend and that they can get off work or out of school (if applicable).
- Recommend to your candidate that they take the Monday following an Emmaus weekend off from work if at all possible – Rest and reflection.
- If a Chrysalis event is held on a school day, be sure to get the parent or guardian's permission for the student to be absent.
- Have your Candidate complete the CANDIDATE PORTION of the application form.
 - "Reservation Request for a Walk to Emmaus" PART I ONLY for an Emmaus Candidate.

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

- “Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Application Form” PAGE 1 ONLY for a Chrysalis Candidate.
- Sit with your participant while their portion of the application is filled out (if possible).
- REVIEW THOROUGHLY
 - Make sure application is legible.
 - Pay special attention to medications, food allergies and physical health.
 - If your participant has special needs, please know that the leadership team is eager to do as much as possible to make sure your participant is comfortable and worry-free throughout the weekend. You can note special needs (lifesaving medications, transportation between buildings, visually impaired, etc.) on the application. You can also contact the Lay Director and discuss your participant’s needs. S/He will be grateful for the opportunity to plan accommodations in advance. Remind the leadership team of your participant’s needs at check-in also.
- Have the participant bring all medications necessary and have a WRITTEN note that details when the medication should be taken and what dosage. This should be given to the Registrar at registration.
- If any new concerns come up after the application is submitted, contact the Registrar ASAP.
- Complete the SPONSOR PORTION (Page 2) of the application.
 - For Chrysalis Candidates, Parent/Guardian Permission is required for applicants under Age 18. If submitting a paper application, the Permission Form information is found on Page 2 of the application. If submitting an application ONLINE, the Permission Form must be completed separately and mailed to the Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Registrar.
- FEES
 - The participant NEVER pays the fee for the weekend.
 - It is strongly suggested that you, as the sponsor, take responsibility for paying the fee for your participant as the primary form of agape.
 - Some Emmaus Reunion Groups/Churches donate to their own fund, which is used to cover the fees.
 - No one will ever be turned down for a Walk or Chrysalis weekend due to lack of funds. Scholarships are also available through the registrar.
- SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION/FEES
 - Send application and fee in as soon as possible. This allows the Community to determine if there is sufficient participation for the Walk or Chrysalis weekend to occur and helps with the preparation and planning. Some events fill up quickly; so the sooner an application is submitted the better. You can’t send an application in too early.

**Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET**

- Each church can send a maximum of 6 participants.
- Keep in regular contact with your Participant to make sure they still plan on attending. Answer all their questions. If possible, help resolve any problems arising that might prevent them from attending.
KEEP PRAYING FOR YOUR PARTICIPANT.

AGAPE

- There are several different forms of agape for which you, as the sponsor, are responsible:
 - **Agape Letters**
 - Discretely contact family members, close friends, and even co-workers to get agape letters for your participant.
 - Start this about **TWO MONTHS** before the weekend.
 - Obtain a list of at least 12 people to contact regarding writing a letter. Get name, relationship, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number if possible.
 - Use a spouse or parent as the point of contact for obtaining this list if applicable and possible.
 - If you have to go directly to the participant for the list, try not to spoil the surprise of the letters. Ask them for a list of people you can contact to have them pray for the participant during the event.
 - You can also ask these people for other contacts.
 - In addition to family and personal friends, ask church pastors, fellow church members, and Emmaus/Chrysalis community members to write letters.
 - Provide a deadline for receiving the letter prior to the weekend. This gives you time to follow up on letters you haven't received but are expecting.
 - **Be sure to let them know the letters are a surprise.**
 - Be sure you ask your participant's spouse or parent to write a letter. It is also good to get letters, drawings, etc., from their children.
 - Write a letter, an e-mail, or call the people on the list and ask them to write an Agape letter. You will need to explain what an Agape letter is, and what it's for.
 - Let them know these are letters to encourage the participant. The writers are may wish to share in their letters those things which have made the participant special to them, to share memories, to thank the participant for things they may never have thanked them for, to point out the participant's good qualities and attributes, etc. Be sure to let them know that only the participant will read the letter.

**Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET**

- Use the included Agape Letter Request Sample as a guide for your request for letters. This sample also includes instructions for how to submit the letters to the sponsor.
- Write a personal Agape letter to your Participant.
- Make sure all letters have the Participant's First and Last Name on the envelope and the relationship of the sender is notated in the upper corner.
- Agape letters should be brought to Send-Off and provided to the team responsible for Send-Off/Sponsor's Hour. They can also be delivered to the Dining Hall PRIOR TO Candlelight. Letters can also be taken to Candlelight but this is the latest letters can be received in order for them to be taken to the Agape Room and sorted before they are given to the participants.
- You may want to consider writing an extra short note to your Participant for them to open the first evening of the weekend when the Participants return to their rooms. This letter should thank the Participant for trusting you to be their sponsor and offering your prayer for the weekend.
- **Prayer Vigil**
 - Sign up for the 72-hour prayer vigil on the Emmaus (www.blueridgeemmaus.org) or Chrysalis (www.mountainridgechrysalis.org) websites (whichever is applicable).
 - If you cannot use the website, you may also sign up during Sponsor's Hour or you may contact the Board member in charge of the prayer vigil and ask them to add your name to particular date/time slots.
 - It is very important that your participant see your name on the prayer vigil.
 - Write down the days/times you are scheduled to pray and be sure to stop whatever you are doing, even if serving during the weekend, to pray for all the people attending the Walk/Chrysalis (both Participants and Team Members).
- **Gift Agape**
 - You and your Reunion Group should begin making gift agape for your Participant's weekend. The gift agape should be given anonymously (i.e., from the church or reunion group, not from an individual). Sixty-five (65) pieces of each type of agape are needed in order for each Participant and team member to receive a piece. Forty (40) pieces of each type are needed for pillow agape (Participant's only).
 - Your gift to the pilgrim is to help the family if needed.
 - Continue praying for your pilgrim from the time the application is submitted.

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

- **Food Agape**
 - Find out your participant's favorite snack and/or drink (non-alcoholic only).
 - Bring some to Send-Off and, if possible, bring extra so it can be available during the weekend. Specify what should be delivered to the Agape Room for the weekend and a team member will take care of it.
 - This can be especially meaningful if your participant has dietary restrictions or a unique snack they are fond of. Having it available during the weekend can be quite a treat.
- **Transportation/Luggage**
 - You are encouraged to take your pilgrim to dinner on Thursday night before registration. This is one of the first acts of Agape the Participant will visibly receive as part of their experience.
 - As previously mentioned, the Sponsor is responsible for transporting the Participant to and from the host facility. If you are unable to do this, make sure you arrange for someone else to take care of it. Assure the Participant they will have a ride home so they don't worry throughout the weekend about how they are going to get home.
 - Carry your Participant's luggage from their home to the vehicle and from the vehicle to their room at the host facility.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT

- Begin arranging detailed plans for transportation to the event. What time, where, and by who, etc. will the Participant be picked up? Be sure to allow time to go to dinner beforehand and still arrive at the host facility at the time designated by the Registrar in your Sponsor letter so your Participant will have plenty of time to check in and get settled in their room before the weekend officially begins. It helps to not begin the weekend "rushed."
- Follow up on agape letters you have not yet received and be sure YOU write one.
- Make certain the Participant and their family understand the Participant may not be returning home until late on the last day of the event, depending on traveling distance.

THE WEEK OF THE EVENT

- Make sure the Participant's family will be "taken care of" during the weekend (invite them over to dinner, call to check on them, see if they have any needs, etc.). If you can't contact them, make sure someone else who knows them does.
 - Provide the family with the Emergency Contact Information Form.
 - Assure them that if the need arises, the Participant can be contacted.
 - If the Participant's spouse or parents have not attended Emmaus or Chrysalis, be sensitive to their feelings and needs. Make sure they have

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

all of the information they need in order to feel at peace while their loved one is away.

- Remind the Participant to check the letter they received from the Registrar and be sure they bring any listed items.

DAY #1: CHECK-IN/SEND-OFF/SPONSOR'S HOUR

- The first day of the weekend begins on Thursday evening for Emmaus but varies for Chrysalis based on the school schedule, which determines when the Chrysalis weekend starts.
- Take pilgrim to dinner.
- Be sure you have your Participant at the host facility at the time designated in your Sponsor letter received from the Registrar.
- **Check-in**
 - Help the Participant check-in and pick up nametag.
 - **IMPORTANT:** Deliver **WRITTEN** instructions to the Registrar for any medication that needs to be taken during the weekend. Be sure this includes the name of the medication, its purpose, the dosage, and the time it is to be taken.
 - Remind the Registrar of any physical limitations or special requirements.
 - Carry the Participant's luggage to their room and help them get situated.
- **Send-Off**
 - Find out the name of their roommate and introduce them before Send-Off gets started. Quiet time can be uncomfortable if they have not met their roommate.
 - Introduce your Participant to other members of the Community and help them feel welcome.
 - Remember that Send-Off can get pretty busy and noisy. It can be overwhelming for someone who has never experienced it and may not know anyone other than you.
 - Discretely deliver any agape food items, agape gifts, or letters to a Walk Support Team Member.
 - After the names of the Participants are read and they are ready to head to the Conference Room, the Community gathers to sing "DeColores".
- **Sponsor's Hour**
 - Sponsor's Hour will start immediately after the Community sings to the Participants.
 - Sponsor's Hour is very important, as this is where you will have the opportunity to pray over your Participant's cross.
 - Each Participant's name will be called. The Sponsor (or the Sponsor's Representative) and any additional members of the Community will stand and say a personal prayer for that Participant.
 - You will be directed by the Sponsor's Hour Support Team on the details of how this time will proceed.

Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET

DURING THE EVENT

- Pray for the Participants and the Team during your prayer vigil time, and throughout the weekend.
- Serve behind the scenes during the weekend. Remember: After Send-Off, your Participant should not see you during the event until Candlelight. This is so they do not feel compelled to say “thank you” or that you may be watching to see their reaction to the weekend.
- Contact their family to see how they are doing, and ask if they have any needs you can assist with.
- Attend both Candlelight AND Closing. If you cannot make either, arrange for a delegate or consider having a co-sponsor.
- At Candlelight, you will again have the opportunity to say a personal prayer for your Participant.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Help your Participant pick up their final items in the conference room and carry their belongings to the car.
- While driving the Participant home, tell them about follow-up opportunities and answer any questions, but most importantly, let them share their experience with you.
- Invite them to visit your reunion group, help them find one that suits their schedule, or help them start a new group. Helping them become involved in a reunion group is a part of your responsibility as a Sponsor.
- Contact your Participant on the first day following the weekend to find out how their first Fourth Day (Emmaus) or Next Steps (Chrysalis) has been.
- Another important responsibility of the Sponsor is to insure the Participant attends the next Gathering following the walk.
- If and when they are ready to sponsor a Participant, be a resource to help them become a responsible Sponsor.
- Encourage your Participant to serve at future events. Invite them to serve WITH you so they can be introduced and guided.
- Stay in contact with your Participant. You have established a wonderful relationship and it is one that should be nurtured.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

1. Follow-ups and Gatherings are the only events that can be attended by people who have not been on a Walk to Emmaus/Chrysalis (or other comparable 3-day weekend).
EXCEPTION: Parents ARE allowed to attend Chrysalis closings if desired.
2. Youth who have attended a Chrysalis weekend are also a part of the Emmaus Community and welcome at all events.

**Blue Ridge Emmaus and Mountain Ridge Chrysalis Community
SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION PACKET**

3. The cross received on the last day of your weekend should only be worn at future Walk to Emmaus/Chrysalis CLOSINGS. It should not be worn at any other events.