

Sponsor Handbook



*The Walk
With Christ*

The Walk With Christ Sponsor Handbook

The real focus of The Walk With Christ community is not on itself, but on the local church. Our objective is to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, places of work, and communities.

Selecting an applicant for The Walk With Christ is not something to be taken lightly. Following are the questions that fit in with the purpose of The Walk With Christ and should be answered when considering someone as an applicant for Walk:

1. Do you know this person as a friend?
2. Does this person have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?
3. Is the person active in a local Christian church?
4. Is the person someone who will work to improve his or her environment by bringing Christ into the work place, home, church and society-at-large?
5. Is the person a mature, responsible adult of at least 21 years of age?
6. Is the person in good health so the weekend will not be a physical hardship?
7. Is the person mentally and emotionally stable and free of stress that might interfere with the Walk experience?
8. In the case of a married couple, are both husband and wife willing to make a Walk?

If you find yourself answering "No" to any of these questions, this person may need more time and nurturing before a Walk will benefit him or her the most.

TALKING WITH A PROSPECTIVE APPLICANT

Be open about The Walk with Christ weekend when talking with a prospective applicant. Explain to the prospective applicant the purpose of the weekend: The Walk With Christ is a short course in Christian leadership training to enable persons to transform their environment by bringing Christ into their home, work place, church, and society-at-large. You may describe the talks, experiences of communion and prayer and the fun, good food, singing and fellowship. Leave the Palanca, Agape, Mananitas, and Closura to be discovered on the weekend. Don't make it secretive so that it takes on the flavor of an exclusive group. "Trust Me" will not be possible if you are not honest in everything you do and say.

Give your prospective applicant time to seriously consider making a Walk, just as you have hopefully taken sufficient time in considering Sponsoring the applicant. The Walk With Christ weekend is not for everyone.

If you are considering sponsoring a couple, talk with both husband and wife at the same time. That way you can answer any questions that either might have. Let both husband and wife make the decision together with the same information available.

Leave an application form with the prospective applicant. It has information about the weekend and follow-up activities after the weekend. It also lets them see what they will be signing if they decide to apply and serves as a reminder to continue to consider making a Walk.

WHAT IF ONLY ONE SPOUSE WANTS TO GO?

In the excitement we feel after making our Walk, we want to sponsor all our dearest friends and family members. Sometimes one spouse wants to make a Walk, but the other spouse doesn't. Our Governing Body, The Secretariat, requests that we will encourage both husbands and wives to make their Walks together as a couple.

To rush a married friend or family member into a Walk and leave the spouse out of it may be to deny that couple one of the richest experiences they can share together in their lives. It may take a year or two before both spouses are ready to make that commitment. If that is the case, please pray for at least a year before sponsoring only one spouse.

The Walk With Christ has a personal effect on everyone who attends but many times we have heard new Pilgrims say at Closura that they came only because their spouse wanted them to, but are they ever glad they did! Be patient! The Lord is!

IF YOU DO DECIDE TO SPONSOR A PERSON WHOSE SPOUSE WILL NOT MAKE A WALK, the Secretariat asks you, after much prayer, to talk with your Pastor or one of the Pastors on the Secretariat and also the couple together. Try to explain that it would be something that would enhance their marriage and shared faith. You may also explain that not going together would not allow the other to understand or share in the experience of helping out on Walks or other Walk With Christ activities in the future. You should discuss this matter with everyone involved before getting the applicant all primed to make a Walk. Then, write a letter to the Candidate Registrar, explaining why your candidate would benefit this

experience without their spouse. This letter must state that it is in the best interest of the applicant to make a Walk at this time without his or her spouse and would be taken under advisement by the Secretariat and Candidate Registrar.

FINANCES - THE COST

The cost of each Walk is covered by donations from those who have already made their Walk. **It is not the responsibility of the Sponsor to "pay" for his or her Candidate. Likewise, it is not the responsibility of a Candidate to "pay" for his or her Walk.** Team members and Candidates are given an opportunity at each Walk to make donations in support of future Walks. The suggested amount for a donation for future Walks is \$75.00. This amount covers the cost of supplies, food, and facility use for the weekend.

No Team applicant is turned away from a Walk because of the inability to make a donation. The opportunity to contribute is there. Fortunately most people working a Walk are enthused about the experience and able to make a donation. If the Team applicant is unable to pay the entire \$75.00 at one time, then he or she could contact the Treasurer to make arrangements for payments.

Sponsors should be careful in the way they handle the finance issue with prospective Candidates and it should be dealt with early in your discussions with them. Most people expect there to be a cost associated with a weekend like this. Please let your Candidate know their Walk has already been paid for.

Some Sponsors may like to make a gift of a contribution on their Candidate's behalf. Make sure you understand that it is a voluntary donation toward future Walks. If you do this, it is important to convey to your Candidate that

this is something you want to do but is not a normal part of Sponsorship. Do not imply through words or actions that the amount donated is the responsibility of the Sponsor. This may prevent your Candidate from being a Sponsor in the future, because he or she may feel the need to pay the suggested amount for a donation.

Make sure your Candidate knows that he or she may Sponsor someone without any obligation regarding the cost of future Walks.

Although you know that it doesn't have to cost them anything if they so choose don't leave them in the dark about the how Walks are financed.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

Fully Complete The Forms Please. Applications must be properly completed before they are accepted. Candidates are placed on Walks in the order the properly completed applications are received by the Candidate Registrar. If the application is incomplete, it cannot be processed until the missing information is obtained. Please make sure your candidate answers all the questions (Church they attend, Church Activities and/or Christian Ministry they are involved in, Medication needs, etc.), check for signatures from both the candidate and the candidate's pastor, and send both pages of the application. The purpose of the Pastor's signature is to make sure that the applicant's Pastor knows that the applicant plans to make a Walk. It is important that the application is complete when you send it in.

So We Can Be Fair To All. The duties of the Director(a) do not include accepting applications for the Walks. Please don't call them to see if there is still room on a particular Walk. If a Walk is close to being full, it is possible that the Candidate Registrar could receive a

completed application from someone else between the time you talk to the Director(a) and the time your application is received. If you ever have questions about the availability on a Walk, please give the Candidate Registrar a call.

Closing Dates. The Walks are closed a day or two before the Rooster Tales goes to print. One of the reasons for this is that it is important to present the names of the candidates to our community as a whole. Our community is an incredible prayer chain that lifts these individuals up constantly in prayer - before, during and after the Walk weekend. It is also important that the community have their names for palanca reasons. If an application comes in after the Walk is closed, you will be contacted with the dates of future Walks with openings.

And Please Remember. The Walk With Christ is designed for active church members with a vital faith in Jesus Christ. The objective of the “Walk” is to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, places of work, and communities. The TWWC weekend is not intended for those who do not know Christ as Savior, and does not consider itself an evangelistic outreach. The Lord always works in wonderful ways on a Walk weekend and lives are always touched and changed, but it is not a physical healing ministry, nor a place for marriage counseling, or therapy for those with emotional or social dysfunction or illness. It is not intended to be a time to work through grief or psychological problems, as those present are not trained for personal or group therapy. If your candidate tends to be preoccupied with working through personal dilemmas, it may be beneficial for them to seek counseling from professionals, and wait to go on a Walk

weekend when they are freer to focus on the message of the Walk.

ACCEPTANCE AS A CANDIDATE

Application for The Walk With Christ is just that. It is an application process with no guarantee that the applicant will be accepted as a candidate.

Here are some things that will raise questions if they appear on the registration form:

1. “Church is left blank or lists a non-Christian church such as Mormon, Unitarian, etc.
2. “In what church activities are you involved in?” is left blank. The applicants should be active in their local church.
3. “Signature of Pastor” is left blank or appears to be the signature of the Sponsor’s Pastor rather than the applicant’s Pastor.

PLACEMENT

Applicants for The Walk With Christ weekend will be placed in the next available Walk or later according to the Candidate’s preference.

There are “Couples” Walks (Walks where there are men’s and women’s Walks consecutively) and “Women’s Only” Walks. Single men and women and those who are attending without their spouses can attend a “couples” Walk but in most cases, only about 30% of “couples” Walks can be “single” candidates.

Sponsors will receive a confirmation letter from the Candidate Registrar when their completed application has been processed. This letter will confirm that your application has been received, and let you know the Walk

your candidate has been placed in. Please do not tell your candidate, their family, or the community they have been accepted until after you have received this confirmation letter. If the Walk is full, or the application is not complete, your candidate may not be placed in the Walk you were expecting.

PALANCA

You are responsible for acquiring Palanca for your Candidate. From your own experience, you know how important this is. Arrange for Palanca from the Candidate's family and community. Be creative in finding people in your Candidate's life whose Palanca would be very meaningful. A sample letter you may use when requesting Palanca is included in the handbook.

Mark Palanca to indicate on which day your Candidate should receive it: Faith, Love, Hope. You can help the Palanca Team if you package it in three bags, one for each day, with your Candidate's name and the day clearly marked on the outside.

Palanca should be limited to letters, notes, cards, bookmarks, small pins, etc. Palanca should not include gifts such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, and other large gifts. Large gifts to one or two people at a table can hurt the other people at the table, making them think that they are being slighted in some way. It also makes it difficult for the Palanca Team to handle the gifts.

Please do not make any special requests of the Palanca Team for delivering Palanca. Past requests have included delivering Palanca to the Candidate's bed Thursday night, and delivery of Palanca at other special times. Such requests are inappropriate and will not be honored by the Palanca Team.

Always address Palanca directly to the Candidate. Do NOT address it to a team member and ask them to deliver it in some special way, such as with a hug. Again, this is inappropriate and the Palanca may not be delivered.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE WEEKEND

Keep your Candidate informed. Give him or her information about what to bring for the weekend. Encourage your Candidate to be as well rested as possible going into the weekend.

If your Candidate has special dietary or medical requirements, make sure the information is included on the application. Also, you could follow up with the Chef and/or Cha Cha after the team list comes out.

Encourage your Candidate so he or she has a positive attitude going into the Walk.

WHAT IF YOUR CANDIDATE CAN'T MAKE IT

It is the Sponsor's responsibility to notify the Candidate Registrar that their Candidate cannot make the scheduled Walk. This notification should be made as soon as the Sponsor is aware of the situation. The Sponsor may request that the Candidate be placed in the next available Walk or a future Walk. If the Candidate does not show for a Walk and the Sponsor has not contacted the Candidate Registrar, the applicant will need to reapply.

RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE WEEKEND

Provide or arrange transportation to the Walk location for your Candidate. (The best person to take your Candidate to the Walk is yourself.)

If appropriate, take your Candidate to dinner before the Walk begins on Thursday evening and then help him or her get situated in the sleeping area when you arrive at

the church. Help him or her to relax and feel at ease if at all possible.

See if there is something you can do to help your Candidate's family during the weekend, if applicable. Are there meals to be cooked, baby-sitting, transportation problems, etc.? It is very important that the spouse not feel abandoned while the other is on the Walk.

Attend Mananitas. If you cannot make it, try to arrange for a personal representative to contact your Candidate at Mananitas.

Attend Closures to greet your Candidate as he or she comes off the walk or arrange transportation for your Candidate.

If your Candidate is the husband of a woman who will be making her Walk 2-3 weeks later, offer to store your Candidate's palanca until after his wife makes her Walk.

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE WEEKEND

The Walk With Christ experience is a four day event. The first three days occur on the weekend itself, while the "Day Four" is the rest of your Candidate's life after the Walk weekend.

Remember that the weekend experience doesn't end after Closures. That is what the "Day Four" is all about. If we concentrate or focus our energies only on the three days of the weekend, we do ourselves and our Candidates a disservice. The purpose and focus of The Walk With Christ is Day Four.

Responsibility to your Candidate does not end with the weekend but continues into the Fourth Day. As such, you should:

Anticipate your Candidates Day Four needs. Talk with your Candidate about the weekend if he or she desires. Your Candidate may still have many questions!

Explain the Day Four opportunities of Ultreya and Group Reunion which are offered by the community and help your Candidate to become involved in these activities.

Encourage your Candidate to work on a Walk. Working on a team is considered part of the complete “Walk” experience. Explain the need to submit a work request.

Encourage your Candidate to consider Sponsoring others.

Consider yourself responsible for your Candidate's spiritual well-being for a year after making his or her Walk. Indeed, maybe for the rest of his or her life. That is how serious Sponsorship responsibilities are.

Continue to pray for your Candidate.

SPONSORSHIP CHECKLIST

CANDIDATE

1. Before Application:

- a. Review The Walk With Christ Sponsor's Handbook before each Candidate possibility.
- b. Serious consideration and prayer time about Sponsoring Candidate.

2. Application:

- a. Fully completed in a timely manner
- b. Forwarded to Candidate Registrar

3. Information has been given to my Candidate about the weekend:

- a. What to expect on the weekend
- b. What to bring - clothes, etc
- c. Sleeping arrangements
- d. Transportation to and from the weekend arranged

4. Special help my Candidate may need:

- a. Baby sitter
- b. House sitter
- c. Mail/newspapers
- d. Animal care
- e. Support of spouse in Candidate's absence
- f. f. Other needs

5. My Palanca: What will I do:

- a. Prayers, special intentions, fasting, etc., Thursday PM _____ through Sunday
- b. Written Palanca:
 - 1) My own
 - 2) From Candidate's friends and family
- c. Food Palanca considered

6. Sunday, the 3rd Day, Attendance at or arrange for personal representative:

- a. Mananitas and flowers for Candidate
- b. Closura

7. Post-Walk, Day Four:

- a. Contact with Candidate the day after Closura
- b. Dates of Ultreyas attended with Candidate
- c. Assist Candidate in Group Reunion involvement
- d. Review of Service Sheet with Candidate
- e. Continued prayers for Candidate
- f. Assist Candidate in own Sponsorship efforts
- g. Encourage sending in a work request

8. Notes:

A SAMPLE PALANCA REQUEST LETTER

Dear

(Candidate's name) is going to attend The Walk With Christ on (dates of the Walk). This weekend is a time of spiritual renewal when those attending both learn about and experience God's love. Lay persons and Pastors from a number of churches participate and provide leadership. The purpose is to renew and nurture faith in Christ.

The Walk is a positive enjoyable weekend. During the weekend, those attending receive mail from their close friends and loved ones for encouragement. As (Candidate's first name) Sponsor, I am responsible for contacting his/her family and close friends and asking them to write a note or letter to be given to him/her during this special weekend. Since we want this mail to be a surprise we sometimes have to do a little detective work in order to get the names and addresses of persons from whom to request letters. After you write your letter, you can help by passing this along to someone else you know who is close to (Candidate's first name) and from whom he/she would enjoy receiving a note or letter.

The letter you write is a letter of friendship and love. It will be read only by (Candidate's first name). It is an opportunity for you to express your appreciation for (Candidate's first name) and what your relationship with him/her has meant and means to you. You might want to recall some event that has been special to the two of you or a humorous incident you shared. Please help make (Candidate's first name) Walk weekend special by doing the following:

1. Write a letter or note to him/her and sign it.
2. Put it in an envelope and seal it.
3. Write (Candidate's) **first and last** name on the envelope.
4. Put the envelope in a larger envelope and mail it to me prior to (date at least one week before the Walk weekend) so that I can get it to the proper person in charge of mail.

This is to be a complete surprise to (Candidate's first name), so please help make it special by keeping "mum" until it's all over. Thanks for assisting in making (Candidate's first name) spiritual renewal weekend special.

(Closing of your choice)

As the sponsor, you can choose which day "*Faith (1), Love (2), or Hope (3)*" the candidate will receive the Palanca letter. Please write it plainly on the envelope to make it easier for the person stuffing the bags to know which day you would like it to be delivered.

Notes

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