



COMMON VALUES

tam-tam: the Emmaus news wall

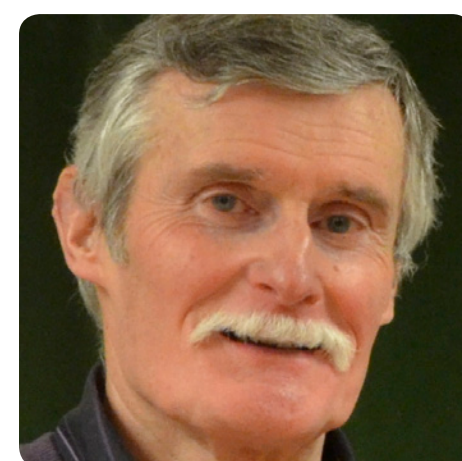
“All structures decay if they have no soul, if they have no inner life. Safeguarding must come from within.”

Abbé Pierre



Emmaus on the move

Ahead of the 2016 world assembly, the first stage of the consultation highlighted five common values. The wise persons who summarised the groups' contributions give us their vision of each of these values.



Régis Thimoreau,
Wise persons' committee, Emmaus France

WELCOMING

“Anyone arriving at Emmaus must be welcomed, whatever his origins, religion, circumstances or state of health. Since the movement's inception, this has been its golden rule. Abbé Pierre welcomed Georges, and Georges in turn welcomed Abbé Pierre's proposal. Together, they welcomed the first companions and created the first communities. Abbé Pierre said that if Emmaus ceased to be, all it would need would be for one person whose circumstances are good to welcome another whose circumstances are not, saying 'Come and help me to help', and the movement would be reborn.”



Véronique Ghanih
Values committee, Africa

SOLIDARITY

“Emmaus was created because Abbé Pierre and his first companions came together to help others who were in need. Solidarity is the point of departure for the movement. The Emmaus groups continue to prove that by pooling their resources, they can carry out great projects which improve the lives of thousands of people. Solidarity has helped us put into place health-insurance schemes and the Nokoué programme. It allows our regions to live and deal with challenges. Solidarity is at the heart of the Emmaus movement. It is key to constructing a world of peace and justice.”



Luis Tenderini
Values committee, the Americas

OPENNESS

“Abbé Pierre said that in each community we must always leave at least one window with a broken pane so that we can feel the cold and remember that there are people who live outdoors. Openness means first and foremost being aware of others, but it is much more than that. In a world of intolerance, it means being open to difference. In a world of selfishness, it means demonstrating proof of brotherhood and altruism. In a world of corruption, it means prioritising transparency, honesty and collective management. In the Americas, the Emmaus groups try to lead by example against a background of inequality, exploitation and social exclusion.”



Alexander Sawarimuthu
Values committee, Asia

RESPECT

“Respect means honouring people, their ideas, their points of view and their cultures, without discrimination. Emmaus shows that it is possible to cross borders and bring together people from all backgrounds into a single family. This is an essential value within the movement. Today, growing selfishness creates problems and conflict in our countries. The only way to live together is to understand and respect people. We believe that this concept is central to the core values of Emmaus, such as welcoming, solidarity and transparency.”



Birgitta Göranson Ilste
Values committee, Europe

SHARING

“In order to construct a world of fairness and solidarity, sharing must be central to our thoughts and actions. It implies both a way of coexisting with others and a way of acting. Sharing is essential, not only for Emmaus but also for the world. Unequal access to resources has always been a source of conflict. By sharing, we make sure that everybody's fundamental needs, whether material or moral, are fulfilled. This is the only way to construct a world of peace and justice.”



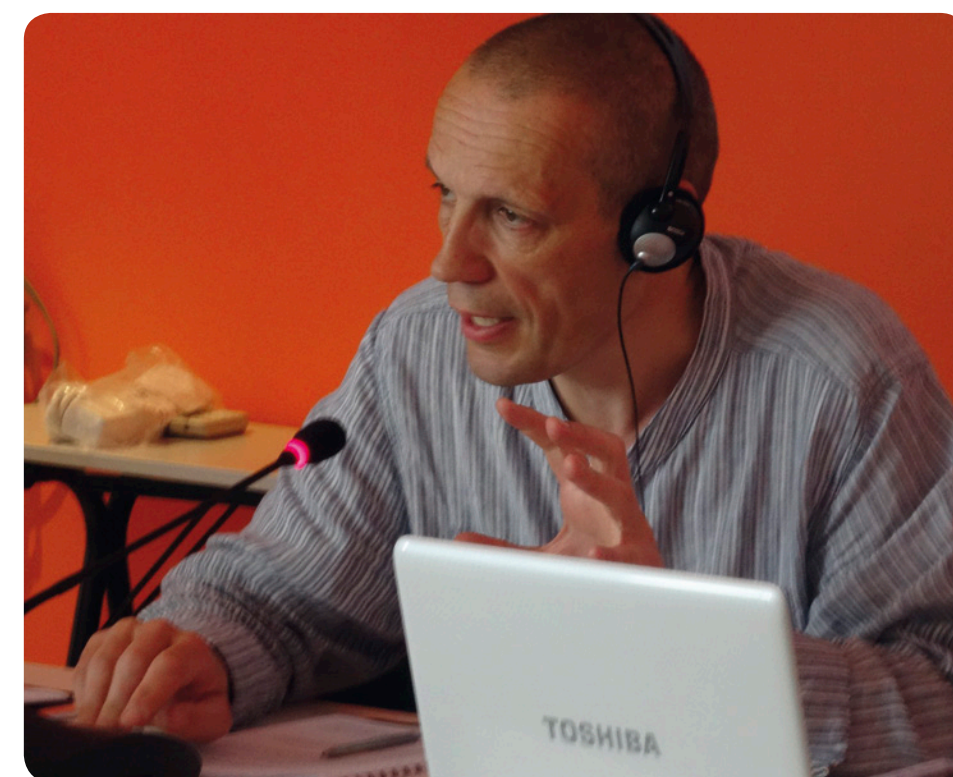
Next port of call... Cambridge (UK)

Simon Grainge is a member of the executive committee and Vice-Chair of Emmaus International. He is also a member of the committee leading the consultation on our values at Emmaus, in preparation for the 2016 world assembly.

Why launch this reflection process on Emmaus International's values? The board wanted to see whether our values were still understood in a rapidly changing world. It's not that we doubted our values but whether we are still able to interpret them effectively in a movement doing many different things across different countries and cultures. For example, what do our values mean to a group in Peru? And do they mean the same to someone from a group in Ukraine?

What do you expect from this work on our values? I expect affirmation that our values are the single most important element that binds us together. I also would like to see this develop into a document that becomes one of our fundamental texts providing guidance and clarity for everyone including those who join us in the future.

Which values influence the executive committee's decisions? The executive committee always has to consider the Emmaus values when working and making decisions. We know that we will be considered irrelevant by the movement if we fail to do so. The value I consider most important is 'respect for people, their dignity and their environment'.



Which value struck you the most when you arrived at Emmaus? The value that struck me most was the unconditional welcome. I came to Emmaus from a very different environment and I had not experienced this kind of value before. It took me a while to get used to it but now I have experienced it for myself I understand why it's so important.

By Jean Rousseau, Chair of Emmaus International

Editorial

Since Emmaus International was founded in 1969, we have held World Assemblies, opportunities to reflect and look to the future. The first world assembly, in 1971, marked the 25th anniversary of Emmaus, and its theme was “Emmaus, its past and future”... The choice of theme for 2016, made by the Board, the representatives

of our vital forces, is underscored by a long tradition, promoted by Abbé Pierre, of basing our work and development on our original values. The theme for 2016, «Emmaus: common values – tomorrow's actions», aims to affirm the supremacy of inspiration over action, to take account of the renewing of generations, to awaken sleeping passions, to allow new member

groups to become integral to our Manifesto. We must not lose sight of the fact that, faced with rampant exclusion, the only values of any worth are those that are adopted wholeheartedly, and the only actions of worth are those that genuinely respect the aspirations of the poorest people. Our shared solidarity and political strength will be transformed!



All aboard

→ Reread the founding texts

To prepare for the world assembly, it is a good idea to go back and reread the founding texts of the movement. You will find them on our website under *About us > History > Founding texts* (www.emmaus-international.org).

→ Share your contributions on our values

Has your group worked on our values and guiding principles? If so, send us your photos, texts or any other contributions. We will share them on the dedicated website: <https://sites.google.com/site/assemblemondiale2016/>

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