

Event Planning Guide

July 2026

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FCA Endurance Mission/Vision

Events are one of the ways that we accomplish FCA Endurance's vision and mission. Through each event we desire for people to genuinely feel and experience Christ's love through our service and joint participation. To accomplish our vision and mission, we have 3 primary goals that we strive to accomplish at each event in which we are involved:

1. **Outreach**: This is our primary objective. Events create an opportunity to impact those who don't know Jesus through witnessing and extraordinary acts of love and service.

2. **Unity**: Events are an opportunity to further unite our FCA Endurance ministry team. Serving together connects people in a special way, and through shared experiences and rallying behind a common mission, we become a more united body that can better be used for Kingdom work.

3. **Growth**: Events provide an opportunity to grow the FCA Endurance ministry team. Through event participation, we have an opportunity to invite other like-passioned people to join our mission.

Few things will inspire people like seeing the Church in action, and events give us the opportunity to show off what God is doing among us.

National Event Ministry Plan

Continue to develop our ministry event presence through low-cost, high impact events that are managed by FCA-E volunteers in the field.

1. Use our current momentum and building network to support events where FCA-E has an official ministry presence (ministry service, exhibits, etc.)

2. Encourage Teammates and Huddles to explore and develop event service opportunities that have the highest probability of starting and/or growing relationships within the endurance community

3. Support local FCA members and Huddles as they take ownership of local ministry events, managing and administrating event details and logistics in their areas

Making Events Count!

Because FCA-E and its dedicated members have limited resource availability, it is critical that we steward our resources well, pursuing opportunities that will have as large of an impact as possible. While being present at an event is a good thing, we must go beyond that and intentionally engage in event activities that:

1. Have the highest potential to form ongoing genuine relationships
2. Have the highest potential to make a lasting impression and significant impact for Christ
3. Have the highest potential to directly share the Gospel and teachings of Jesus Christ

If you're thinking about getting involved in an event, ask yourself if it will accomplish one of the above? If not, perhaps it's time to get creative and consider opportunities that can fulfill one or more of the above objectives. Also, as you consider how to get involved, think back to your personal race experiences. What services, activities, or events have impacted you?

Example: You have the opportunity as an individual or Huddle to run an aid station. Think back to the last 2 or 3 races you've done. Do you remember any of the aid stations or any of the volunteers specifically? If not, you see the point… it's tough to minister to someone through handing them a cup of water as they race by. If you do remember a specific aid station, why do you remember it? What made the lasting

impact in your mind? Just being out there isn't enough to impact someone or accomplish our mission. We must be intentional!

Strategies

As we consider event strategies, we must keep the above-mentioned vision, mission, and objectives in our thoughts and prayers. To help you build a specific strategy, we have broken down events into the following categories:

1. Pre-Race Ministry
2. Serving at Events
3. Expos/Exhibits
4. Owned/Hosted Events
5. General Event Ideas
6. Race ministry- ongoing prayer by both athletes and non-athletes

Strategy 1: Pre – Race Ministries (Fuel Your Faith)
As you consider the options below, there are a number of items to consider when determining which route will be most successful:

- Race Director/Organization Support – What will they support, allow, endorse, or give you access to?

- Athlete Availability – When do athletes arrive for the race? What do their pre-race schedules realistically allow for?

- Marketing Opportunities – How will you invite participants? In order to participate, people need to hear about the event in a timely manner.

- What Venue Options are Available – Convenience is usually critical to getting athletes there. Consider distance, access, parking, the venue itself.

A. *Iron Prayers* –Iron Prayers are non-denominational gatherings of athletes, families, and friends for a time of worship through song, testimonies, teaching, and/or prayer prior to **Ironman-branded events**. These generally take place 1-2 days before the race usually in the late afternoon.

a. Please see page 10 for instructions on how to organize an Iron Prayer.

B. *Fuel Your Faith* - Non-denominational gatherings of athletes, families, and friends for a time of worship through song, testimonies, teaching, and/or prayer prior to any endurance event.

C. *Chapel Service* – a similar concept to the Iron Prayer but done at marathons or other non- triathlon endurance events. The same organization steps apply (see page 10 for details).

D. *Pre-Race Prayers*-There are 3 general types of pre-race prayers:

a. Official Event Prayer: this prayer is supported by the Race Director/Organizer and is usually done right before the race start or as a part of the pre-race athlete meeting. It is done for and with the entire race field and is generally over some type of voice amplification or PA system. See page 8 for a sample letter to a race director and see page 9 for a sample pre-race prayer.

b. Recognized or Endorsed Prayer: this prayer is allowed, recognized, and/or perhaps endorsed by the Race Organization/Director but is not done over the PA. Often, the race will advertise (add to the schedule or allow you to hang fliers) and/or announce a time and location for the optional prayer, but the prayer itself is not said over the PA. This prayer would be done in a convenient location close to the start.

c. Non-Recognized Prayer: the race director does not support the prayer but cannot prevent us from praying as a small group. This means that a few of you may meet right before the start in a pre-determined location. There is no official advertisement, and marketing is done on a grass-roots level before and/or at the event.

E. *Individual Athlete Prayer* – Provide people and a location close to the start where athletes can come race morning and ask for specific individual prayer. In addition to praying before the event, you can take the athlete's name and/or race number and continue to pray for them during the race.

F. *Onsite Praise and Prayer Service*- This may be like or even referred to as an Iron Prayer, but it is done the day of the event. It may be as short as a brief athlete-led devotional or include speakers, a preacher, praise music, or more.

Strategy 2: Serving at Events

As you consider serving options below, remember the goal is personal impact. What gives you the best opportunity to connect with someone relationally at the deepest level? Here are some ideas:

A. *Novice Table at Registration*- Having a specific "Novice Table" at registration gives new athletes a chance to ask questions without holding up the line. Staff this table with experienced racers who can answer general questions, give advice, and ease the minds of newer athletes. Proving personal service gives you ample time to interact with the athlete and make an impact! This also serves/ministers to the other race organizational staff as you keep registration flowing smoothly.

B. *Set up a sample transition area*- Set this up somewhere near the registration area (or next to the Novice Table) or in the expo/transition area if allowed and help novice athletes with their transition set up.

C. *Make note of the 1st time athlete's race # and check on them race morning* – If you are helping with registration and/or the novice table, seek out first time athletes, make a list, and then check on these athletes in the morning. If you have a sample transition area, make note of the athletes you help and go help them in the morning.

D. *Dinner at packet pick up* – partner with a local church or other organization and host a pasta feed. This gives you a chance to interact while serving the athletes and/or while they eat (may have members placed throughout the eating area to specifically build relationships and steer conversations to spiritual things).

E. *Help with the events*: set-up/tear-down a course, work/run an aid station, stuff packets, work he finish line, etc. Just try to think about the intentionality of how you're serving and making an impact when working in one of these areas. How can you be extra-ordinary while doing the ordinary? How can you build relationships and make a lasting difference? Get creative and be bold!

F. *Be a volunteer mechanic* or just bring an extra bike pump into transition in the morning. As a bonus, put some FCA-E decals on your tools.

G. *Race bag drop-off*: more specific for running events- provide an area where athletes can drop off clothes, bags, etc. to be retrieved after the event.

Strategy 3: Expo/Exhibit Participation

A. Need to engage people and draw them into the booth
    1. Sign making
        i. pick your favorite bible verse, and we will plant it on the course
        ii. kids sign making table
    2. Meet a perceived need
        i. Hot chocolate on a cold day

ii. Snow cones on a hot day
iii. Buy freeze pop at Sam's Club – easy and cheap to store in a cooler!
iv. Water with FCA Endurance labels on the bottles
v. Hire a massage therapist
vi. Novice or Q/A table (see above)

3. Give a-ways – something people need and will take
4. Survey – create a survey and ask people to participate
    i. May reward with above
    ii. Simple as "Why Do You Race?", complex as a survey
5. Something in the booth that draws people – high-tech gear, games, etc (get creative)
6. Kid Zone - basically a station where kids can color, use stickers, make signs and/or play games while their parents chat with us and/or fellowship

B. Booth needs to look professional and inviting

C. Need to focus on event/expo attendees

D. Need to have a Ministry Focus
1. Pray for people – directly or prayer request box
2. Hand out Bibles, NT's, or tracts to those who don't know the Lord/own a Bible

E. See Booth Script ideas on page 12

Strategy 4- Race Day Ministries

A. *Gear* – wear FCA-E gear pre, during, and post-race, put fish tattoos on, have body marker put fish on your calf

B. *Know what priority this race is for you*. Is this race your "A" race or is this race a chance for you to focus more on service and ministry. As you lay out your race schedule prioritize your races and then you can go into each race with a plan.

C. *Race Course signs*- Place signs with encouragement and scriptures along race course. See page 11 with specific details on how to place signs.

D. *Spectator Things to Do*—worship music on course, team gear, signs

E. *Race Day rides*- offer rides for people from hotels to race start

F. *Event Bag Inserts*: see page 11 for steps.
a. Priorities for space: (1) invite to race ministry, (2) share Jesus, (3) build team awareness, (4) market other events.

Strategy 5- General/Other Event Ministry

A. Added discipleship with FCA E3 training emphasis prior to and during a specific event which may include a combination of physical and spiritual training prior to an event with a team emphasis.

Strategy 6- Developing FCA Owned or Partnered Races/ Events

Due to the significant commitment of resources required, it may not be wise to host an event simply to create ministry opportunities (it is almost always much more work/time/stress than you think it will be. Oftentimes through partnering with races currently being held, you can gain access to significant ministry opportunities without tying up the significant resources required for event development and management. This allows you to be present at a greater number of events and also provides additional opportunities to

minister to and through endurance race leaders and companies. That said, there are certain circumstances where hosting a race may make sense:

A. Raise significant funds for FCA ministry
    1. This is often a multi-year process as it can take time for races to become significantly profitable

B. Meeting needs in a community- i.e. there are no XTERRA events in your area, and there is a desire/demand for one - you may consider starting one up

C. Some significant outreach opportunity not currently available through current area events

D. You have a personal, burning to desire to host an event

Current Event Opportunities

Race Company	**Region**	**Website**	**Race Director**	**Email Address**
Set up events	South	Setupevents.com	Bill Scott	bscott@setupevents
FS series	South	Fsseries.com		
Kinetic Multisport	Mid-Atl	Kineticmultisports.com	Greg Hawkins	
Alpha Win	NY/CA/FL	Alphawins.com	Tommy Struzzieri	
Endure Ultra Triathlon	VA	Endureultratriathlon.com		
Ironman	WW	Ironman.com	Race specific	
Spartan	US	Spartan.com		
Rival	MD	Rivalraceseries.com		
Trivium	NC	Triviumracing.com		
Rev 3	Mid-Atl	www.rev3tri.com		
Sommer Sports Events	FL	Sommersportsevents.com		
Clash Endurance	FL	Clashendurance.com	Bill Christy	
Premier Event Management	SE	www.pemraces.com	Bill Burke	billpemusa@gmail.com

Pre-Race Prayer Request Sample Letter/E-mail

Dear RD (best to use RD's name and title if possible),

Hello, my name is (name here), and I am entered in (or attending) the upcoming (race name). I am also a member of FCA Endurance, a national endurance ministry of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA – www.fca.org) and am writing on behalf of myself and some of my teammates to ask for your permission to hold a brief pre-race prayer on race morning.

We are seeking an opportunity for race participants to meet before the race and pray together for safety and sportsmanship during the event. To help make sure that all interested individuals are aware of this opportunity, we are asking for permission to post a few fliers around the event and/or for a brief announcement to be made over the PA letting interested participants know when and where to meet.

If you're willing, we would also welcome this opportunity being added to the official morning schedule (print, online, etc.). Again, we just want to serve those who will be attending your event and don't want any interested participants to miss this opportunity.

Please contact me with any questions regarding our request and check out www.fcaendurance.org for any questions about FCA Endurance. Also, if there are any other needs that our ministry team could potentially help you with, please let me know.

Thank you for considering our request!

Sincerely,

HL name
Phone
www.fcaendurance.com

FCA Endurance Pre-Race Prayer Example

Can be given on its own or following the reading of the FCA Competitor's Creed.

Heavenly Father,

We gather here this morning, humbly recognizing you as the creator of the universe and giver of all good things. We thank you for this beautiful morning and the opportunity we have to gather in your name and worship you through prayer, fellowship, swimming, biking, and running. The ability to compete for you is a blessing far beyond what we could ever deserve, and we pray that our efforts today would bring you glory. May we praise and seek you today during both the easy and hard times, and may our praise be pleasing to your ears.

Lord, we lift up each athlete here today, asking for safety, health, and an attitude of love and sportsmanship for each of them as they compete. We lift up the race director and all of the staff and volunteers who are serving to make this event possible, asking that the race run smoothly and that each of them feel appreciated for their service. We pray for our friends and family both at the race and back home, thanking you for putting them in our lives and for their encouragement and support. May they share in our joy of competing for you.

Lord, we end this prayer as we began, acknowledging you as God. May we remember your love and sacrifice for us during this race and always, and may we love and serve you in all that we do, always doing it in your name. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.

Steps to Planning for IronPrayer or Fuel Your Faith Ministry

- Pray and seek the Lord's will for the service!
- Decide on date and time
- Find a location to hold event – the closer to the Registration and Expo Areas the better
- Past Locations: Host hotel; Ironman Banquet Tent; Athlete Village or IM Tri Club Village; Park or Local Church close to Expo
- Note: The ideal location is less than a ½ mile from the Expo/Athlete Village.
- Book this a month or more in advance if at all possible
- Advertising- Get flyers out there…in packets, posted around town, handed out by volunteers
- For information on getting fliers into race bags, please see page 14.
- Good to contact Race Director for more info – Tri Club Village at IM events
- Post on FCA Endurance Facebook Page and public IM FB pages
- Post on the FCA Website
- Secure an MC for event (this could be you!)
- Secure worship band - Contact Local Church
- Secure pastor/speakers
- Contact Local Church
- Check Athlete Participant List to find Pastors/Ministers participating and Christian Pros
- Post on FCA Message Board
- Secure volunteers to help before, during and after event
- BEFORE: Put up flyers around town, hand out flyers at Expo, hang Iron Prayer banner at Ironman
- Registration Tent, hang IP banner at Iron Prayer location, direct people to Iron Prayer, set up IP location
- DURING: Hand out water, hand out song sheets, lead prayer time for a small group
- AFTER: Pray for individuals, pick up bottles/song sheets/other, clean up IP location
- Secure back-up leader(s), speakers and volunteers in case of a cancellation
- Optional - Raise funds to host a booth at the Expo Area

Possible Agenda:

- (10 min) Worship music
- (5 min) Leader greets guests, introduces worship team, announces the sequence of speakers, and says what Iron Prayer is "prayer services before Ironmans. All volunteer. Started by Chad Hawker in 2000"
- (5-10 min) Pastor opens in prayer and short message. Then asks for testimonies
- (5 min) Speaker 1 gives short story / testimony / encouragement
- (5 min) Speaker 2 gives short story / testimony / encouragement
- (5 min) Speaker 3 gives short story / testimony / encouragement
- (10 min) Prayer time. Pastor either takes requests and all pray as a group, or break up into small groups to pray for each other
- (5-10 min) Worship Music
- (5 min) Leader thanks speakers, worship team, and everyone for coming, asks people to sign guest list (with email address if interested), closes in short prayer

Examples of past topics:

- "Being a witness for Jesus at Ironman" 1Peter 2:12
- "Being content with whatever happens" Matt 6:33,
- "Making time for our relationship with Jesus"

Placing FCA Endurance Materials in Event Bag Inserts

Placing FCA Endurance ministry materials within event bags can be a great opportunity to increase awareness of our ministry, our mission, our Lord, and our programs. As you consider race bag opportunities, most event work is done by our committed volunteers in the field. As such, getting info into bags at local, regional, and many national events largely depends on you, your Huddle, and/or other contacts (church partnerships, etc.) in your area.

1. As with all ministry, start with prayer:
    a. For opportunity and effectiveness (Eph. 5:16)
    b. For wisdom, for knowledge and insight to know what is best (Phil 1:9-11)
    c. That God would be glorified in all we do (1 Cor 10:31)
    d. That our “light” would draw others to Christ (Matt 5:16)
    e. That God would draw the non-believers to Himself (John 6:44)
2. Gather information from the Race Director (RD) and/or Race Organizer (RO):
    a. If there are packets
    b. Whether others have access to the packets
    c. If yes, how do others gain access?
        1. Sometimes it's free, often there is a cost
        2. Can Christian or “religious” info be included?
    d. If there is a cost to be included in the bags (in addition to printing/shipping)
        1. How much? Is there a non-profit rate?
        2. Ask them about a trade... volunteers for access
            a. (assuming you've got some willing volunteers)
            b. Most RO's need volunteers so they're happy to trade
    e. Logistics:
        1. When and where they need the materials to be stuffed
        2. When you need to commit by (sometimes there are limited spots available).
3. Commit to the RD/RO if you feel inclusion is possible/likely and need to hold a spot
4. Raise needed funds
    a. For items to be stuffed (bought, printing, etc.) and shipping
    b. For bag access
5. Determine insert purpose
    a. General ministry info (national and/or local)
    b. Market an event (pre-race prayer, pasta feed, etc.)
    c. Tract (WDYR resource, SUTL Triathlon Tract)
6. Design flier or acquire item
7. Deliver/Send item
    a. Hand deliver
    b. Send “return receipt requested” so someone must sign for them
        1. Be sure they got them in time.
    c. Plan ahead! Send them early (but not too early) if possible
8. Prepare to respond to generated interest
    a. If you ask a question (i.e. Why Do You Race?), be prepared to answer it. 1 Pet 3:15
    b. Be sure other volunteers and Teammates are prepared for the opportunity
9. Thanks RD/RO for the opportunity
    a. On site
    b. Send a formal thank you after the event

Expo/Exhibit Booth Training: What and How to Communicate

Expo Priorities:

- *Everybody*
  - o Invite to the chapel/ministry services if one exists
- *Non-believer*
  - o Share Jesus
  - o Provide a loving touch (till the soil, plant and water seeds)
  - o Give a tract or Bible
- *Believer*
  - o If local, connect to Huddle and/or local staff
  - o Give information and invite to join the Team

Our Opportunity: Working an expo is a constant time of evaluating interest and sharing as the Spirit allows. As Ambassadors of Christ, we must be bold. However, we must also be wise, understanding that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. It is our desire to give everyone a loving touch, prayerfully drawing each person closer to Jesus. For someone "hostile," it might be a genuine smile and, "good luck," reminding them that we're here when they're ready. For a believer, it may mean encouraging them to get United and Equipped through FCA Endurance.

* Note: **Our visitors are our priority**! We are serving at the booth to be a loving, genuine touch to those who stop by. As people approach, please engage with them. Fellowshipping with other servants behind the booth is rewarding and a blessing, but please put such discussions on hold as others approach. This also includes all other distractions (things you're reading, your phone, etc.). To feel loved, they need to feel our genuine attention (vs. feeling ignored if we keep talking, texting, reading….).

Potential Action Sequence Examples

1. Athlete walks by - Stays wide, minimal contact (Intentionally avoiding interaction)
   Share a genuine smile and, "hello," and silently pray

2. Athlete comes up to the booth/table (Exploring)
   Welcome them – smile and, "hello."
   As they look at resources, invite them to the athlete's chapel service (while offering an invitation/flier)

3. They do not engage/decline
   As they walk away try to give a loving touch – "have a great race, etc." Perhaps silently pray for this person

4. They accept the invitation
   Give brief event details and answer questions
   If they are still engaged (eye contact and/or demonstrated interest…lingering, etc.) – go to point below

5. Athlete expresses interest (receives invitation and is engaged)
   Ask, "Are you familiar with FCA?"

6. If yes, ask about history (build rapport and determine experience)
   Ask where they are from
   Local Area – give local contact info or have talk with local staff member or volunteer if one is present
   If athlete, give FCA Endurance information (resource/spiel)
   Non-local – give FCA Endurance information and/or spiel, and/or talk with FCA Endurance staff/volunteers.

7. If no, give FCA general information

8. Go to above – Ask where from….
   Invite to take any FCA resources on table
   Try to make sure they leave with something that has our web address on it, inviting them to join
   Reserve the Bibles for those who don't already own one

9. Ask for any prayer requests

10. If during any of the above interactions, you are led to believe that the individual is not a believer…
    - Attempt to share Jesus and/or
    - Refer to someone trained to share the Gospel and/or
    - Give them a SUTL or MTW Gospel Tract and/or
    - Offer them a Sports NT/Bible

Guidelines for Signs along a Race Course

Race course signs are very visible and must therefore be "excellent" along with the other aspects of FCA-E's ministry. To impact athletes, the signs must be readable, taking into account course placement and design.In order to be read, a sign must be in a position where the athlete is going relatively slow, along terrain that doesn't require a downward focus of the eyes. Straight up-hills along paved roads with sufficient visibility from a distance work best. Series of up to three signs are permissible along long hills.

Sign placement relative to the course is also important. Signs placed too close to the edge of the race course tend to be kicked or knocked over by people who object to them, so 2-3 feet from the edge of the course works well. Also, a height of 1-2 feet above the ground provides a good combination of stability in wind and legibility to the racer.

Readability is also determined by sign design. For run course signs letters of about two inches in height are sufficient. Bike course signs require bigger letters due to the higher speeds, probably starting at three-inches in height.

Professionally printed signs will not only further enhance legibility but also present a positive image of FCA-E. Bright signs obviously attract more attention, thus a yellow background with black writing works well. Course signs with FCA-E's logo on them, in combination with a prominent booth at the expo, allows racers to read the signs and know where to go to find the people who stand behind them.

What signs say is also very important. While truth and honesty are essential, the more creative, humorous or catchy they are the better. Some appropriate verses or quotes are listed below.

- I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13
- Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1
- Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28
- Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength…
  They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired…
  They will walk and not become weary. Isaiah 40:31
- The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; Exodus 15:2
- In all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:6
- In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps. Proverbs 16:9
- Why Do You Race?

FCA General Information

- Started in 1954
- Most of history with campus and camp ministry (middle school – college)
- Now focusing on coaches, campuses, camps, and community, including sport-specific ministries.

Local FCA Info (given by local staff member)

FCA Endurance General Information

- FCA ministry dedicated to endurance athletes (runners, triathletes, cyclists, etc.)
- Started in 2005
- Primarily an ADULT ministry
- Unites Christian endurance athletes onto one National Team:
    - Allows them to experience fellowship with like-passioned believers
        - Discipleship, accountability, fellowship, etc.
    - Allows them to have a greater impact on the endurance community (power in numbers)
- Equips Christian endurance athletes to more effectively share their faith through endurance sports
- Free to join - done online in minutes
- Ability to form local chapters (“Huddles”), allowing them to train, race, and serve together