



# PME CONNECTIONS

Volume 2

Issue 1

January/February 2008

## Happy New Year!

### A Message from Your National Executive Lay Couple



Dear Ones,

*Where did 2007 go? It seems like yesterday that PME started this bi-monthly newsletter. For those reading this now, maybe for the first time,*

*consider sharing the availability of this newsletter with your friends. Give them the PME web site address of [www.presby-me.org](http://www.presby-me.org) where they can read any past issue on-line, or sign up for a subscription emailing. While at it, if they haven't been to a Weekend, ask them to check us out and register for a Weekend convenient to them. As you know, it is a gift.*

*Back to 2007. As your National Execs, we have had a memorable 2007. We judge your National Board has begun the task of revitalizing PME with enthusiasm and diligence. We teach on the Weekend that communicating with our spouse, reflecting God's Love for us, is the cornerstone of Marriage Encounter. Your Board has undertaken the charge of extending the commitment to communicate with past Encountered and all of the un-Encountered, giving each renewed energy to work on their marriage. We still have a long way to go, and with limited resources, it will not be an easy journey. We ask for your help in "talking up" Marriage Encounter with your Pastors, your family, friends (both new and old), neighbors, couples on the street... well, you get the idea.*

*So as 2008 starts, we offer this challenge (in addition to dialoguing daily). See if at least once EVERY day, you can't bring the concept of Marriage Encounter to someone, anyone. You can do it by words, and especially by action. Live the lifestyle, Love One Another. As your National Execs, our Dream is to make "Marriage Encounter" a household name. Why not start in your house?*

*Consider Yourself Hugged,*

*Gary & Ann Long*

### Aren't you glad someone invited you to go on a Weekend?

This is a good time to return the favor.

1. Invite a deserving couple to attend one of the following Weekends. Help them register.\*
2. Be a prayer couple for one of the following PME Weekends in 2008.

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| February 15 - 17    | Ontario, CA         |
| April 4 - 6         | Houston, TX         |
| April 4 - 6         | Spokane, WA         |
| October 10-12       | Ontario, CA         |
| October 24-26       | Delaware Valley, DE |
| October 31 - Nov. 2 | Houston, TX         |

3. Pray for the Weekends: e-mail Nora Goetz at [ngoetz@comcast.net](mailto:ngoetz@comcast.net) so she can add your names to the Prayer Scrolls that are given to the couples on Sunday. Couples are awed by this visual proof that couples all over the world are praying for them.

4. If you know couples who want to go on a Weekend and the PME Weekends don't fit their schedule, go to [WWME.org](http://WWME.org) and click on the link to locate Weekends. Find a Weekend that will work for them and help them register. Be their Prayer Couple and love them into becoming an encountered couple.



\*Registration information is available online at [www.presby-me.org](http://www.presby-me.org) or in a PME registration form.

## World Marriage Day February 10, 2008



World Marriage Day honors husband and wife as head of the family, the basic unit of society. It salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily, married life.

This is a good time to plan an ME community event; give a pulpit talk at your church; schedule a Love Circle get-together; give an Information Talk.

Your celebration can be as elaborate as you want it to be. You may wish to devote the entire theme to marriage, including a renewal of vows, or you may wish to simply recognize this special day. Whatever you do will bring the goodness of the Covenant of Marriage to center stage for this important day.

### Dialogue Questions for Celebrating Marriage



1. HDIF about the way I want to celebrate Valentine's Day?
2. HDIF about celebrating our anniversaries?
3. HDIF about celebrating our wedding anniversary this year?
4. Is our life together a celebration of love? HDIFAT?
5. I am lucky to be married to you. HDIFAT?

To find nearly 200 more dialogue questions relevant to marriage, go to "<http://www.cs.bgsu.edu/maner/dialogue/>" or click on the link on our web site: [www.presby-me.org](http://www.presby-me.org). You will find easy to use questions, alphabetized by categories.

## Family Vacation 2008

Been wondering where to take the kids for a vacation this summer? Do you want a place where they will be entertained, supervised, meet new Christian friends, be close to you but still have their own programs?

Register now for the WWME International Convention in Ontario, California. Ontario is close to Disneyland, Universal Studios, Huntington Library, Nethercutt Museum (antique luxury cars), beaches, mountains, and Hollywood.



### ONE WORLD ONE FAMILY 40 YEARS

June 27 - 29 2008

Ontario Convention Center, Ontario  
California

<http://convention.wwme.org/>

<http://www.ontariocc.com/>

Don't miss this great chance to rekindle your own relationship, celebrate your marriage. Meet other couples and clergy from all over the world who will be coming to celebrate their love and the 40th anniversary of Marriage Encounter. Start thinking of old friends who have moved away that you will want to invite. Or, is there someone in your community who also needs to be invited?

PME South West Region has reserved a block of rooms at a nearby hotel. The rate is the same as for our Weekends. To reserve a room, contact the SW Facility Couple, Gene & Nancy Robinson ([geneandnancy@presby-me.org](mailto:geneandnancy@presby-me.org)).

### Mission Statement

"Presbyterian Expression of Worldwide Marriage Encounter's mission of renewal in the church and change in the world is to assist couples to live fully intimate and responsible relationships by providing them with a Christian experience and ongoing community support for such a lifestyle."

## E-mails are Great

How did we ever manage in those pre-computer days? E-mails are fast to write, easy to send and get the point across almost as soon as we know what it is.

Conversation is even faster and, by definition, allows for almost instant feedback. Birthday and special event cards provide a lovely/funny/compassionate message or otherwise appropriate message and we can add a little personal note like, "Love you" or "CYH".

Have you ever run across an old letter you received from someone close to you – someone who has passed away? How did you feel when you saw that familiar handwriting?

We have a few letters and cards from our mothers, both of whom died years ago. We also have memories and gifts but rereading those loving words gives us a special, warm-heart feeling.

Some time back we read an article written by William Shaw, a widower. His words have stayed with us. The article was in the April 17, 2006 NEWSWEEK.

He told of the love he and his wife shared for nearly 50 years and recalled memories of good times (and, surely there were memories of getting through the not-so-good times that are inevitable in life).

Mr. Shaw said that he could not remember any time when they sat down and wrote each other a letter. Photos and souvenirs bring back wonderful memories but what he doesn't have, and wishes he did, is a letter from his wife in her handwriting, from her heart to his. And he regrets that she never received a letter from him. He wonders if she wanted one. He wished he'd written her a letter, even though his handwriting is "nearly indecipherable".

This man realized on his own what those early priests and couples understood as they developed Worldwide Marriage Encounter concepts and outlines – "that there is not much that is more personal than a letter, particularly a love letter."

As ME couples we are blessed that we will not have to feel the regret Mr. Shaw expressed so poignantly when he wrote, "I know that what I'm sorry about is that I don't have a letter from her to read and reread."

So, each time you exchange your dialogue books, be aware that you are giving each other a priceless gift and share a kiss and a hug. You will have letters to read and reread.

Gene & Nancy Robinson

## Twenty-Five Years of Love



It seems like only yesterday that we met at a beach party in September. We dated awhile, met each other's families, went on a trip to Hawaii for thanksgiving and were engaged during a hurricane while there. We married in April, and now it has been twenty five years ago.

Time has flown by, but it has been lots of fun, laughs, tears, and fears. Like all couples we have had our ups and downs. We have raised a family of four, gone to all the dance recitals and baseball games. We have bought houses, changed jobs, had medical emergencies, and have had deaths of family, friends, and co-workers.

Through it all we have had each other. Our love, friendship, faith, friends, and marriage encounter have helped us through. Life isn't easy but it is an adventure.

Don and I have had a great adventure so far. We have been blessed with lots of friends that support us and love us through Marriage Encounter. Every time we are around couples who have been in Marriage Encounter we are encouraged by their love and commitment.

Don and I are now on the National Board of Presbyterian Marriage Encounter. This gives us a chance to meet even more couples who devote time and effort to their marriages. It is so encouraging that there are so many devoted people who want to spread the word about this worthwhile endeavor. Marriage Encounter has enriched our life together not only as a couple but in many aspects of our life. We participate as a couple at home, in church and whenever the opportunity lends itself.

It is so much better when we do things together. Maybe that is why twenty-five years have flown by. We are really looking forward to the next twenty-five after this April. We hope you are making the most of your love to each other too.

Don & Joanne Hathaway,  
Southwest Regional Exec



## Kenya PME



On January 4th Walt and Marlene Estelle received an email response from an ME couple in Kenya. It is rare to have first-hand information about a current situation and the Estelles have graciously shared this information with all of us. We invite and encourage you to pray specifically for Marriage Encounter couples in Kenya in these difficult times.

“Dear Walt & Marlene

New year greetings. Thank you very much for your prayers during this time of our fluid political situation. You see, the presidential elections had attracted nine candidates and were hotly contested particularly between two candidates - Kibaki and Raila. During political campaigns supporters of each of the two leading candidates had been assured by their candidates that they would win.

Some opposition leaders had incited their ethnic groups against one particular community. The results (of the election) were very close and there were allegations of rigging which were not verified and when Kibaki was declared the winner, the opposition supporters broke into riots, beating and killing those who had voted for Kibaki. The riots occurred in opposition areas and many people have been killed and a lot of property destroyed. Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Eldoret and many parts of western Kenya, Rift Valley and Coast provinces have been affected but there have been no incidences in our province. It is a very sad and worrying affair.

All leaders from both government and opposition sides are calling for calm but killings are still going on. Some very respected personalities from outside Kenya including Desmond Tutu are working pretty hard to reconcile the opposition and the government but the opposition has gone on calling for mass action and the government has banned all political meetings and processions. There has been stand off causing more chaos. We are praying hard that these senseless killings and destruction of property will come to an end.

Once again, thank you very much. Please continue praying for us.”

Editors’ Note: We intentionally omitted the names of the Kenyan couples.

A few days later Walt and Marlene received an email from another couple in Kenya. The Estelles sent the following email:

“Dear friends, We thought you may wish to hear the appreciation of prayer and an update of the situation in Kenya. As you would expect, there is a love for their nation and it hurts deeply when they find the troubles they have. As we have seen, there is a great faith in the people of Kenya. Please continue with your prayers.

God bless, Walt & Marlene”

The text of the second email follows:

“Praise the Lord dear one.

How re-assuring it feels when a caring friend lifts another in prayer. We count it a blessing to hear your great concern for us and our lovely nation. The scripture says that the prayer of a righteous and faithful person touches the heart of our most high God and he honours the requests/petition. Thank you so much and pass our regards to the others joining hands to lift this our nation to the Lord in prayer.

It has been bad especially in the town of Eldoret in the Northern part of Rift valley province and the town of Kisumu in Nyanza province. In other places it has been mild. In Nairobi the skirmishes have only been in the congested suburban areas but by and large we are safe and thank God that he is able to restore and sustain.

In Central and Eastern provinces where Chuka falls it has been quiet and calm.

The marriage encounter community is still alive and well and pray to God that the family keeps growing.

God Bless You”



Reverend Walter and Marlene Estelle on one of their trips to Kenya.