



PME CONNECTIONS

Volume 2

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A Message from Your National Executive Lay Couple



Dear Ones,

2008 has started off to be a very tough year. At Presbyterian Marriage Encounter, we have had to cancel more Weekends due to insufficient registrations than we ever have done in the past. Fewer Weekends, fewer couples on the Weekends, and fewer dollars flowing into PME have caused your Board to have great concern about the ability to provide strong and powerful Weekends in the future.

Nationally, people are concerned about the economy. Some of that is "fueled" by the high cost of fuel, the high cost of some food staples, and the high cost of doing business, (i.e. taxes and interest rates). A silver lining in that is the economic stimulus package may provide a little relief, and to be frank with you, we pray that some of that 'Tax Rebate' might flow into our ministry.

This is probably the most vital time in the history of Presbyterian Marriage Encounter. We urge all of the couples whose marriages have been touched and strengthened by attending a Weekend, recommit to bringing this movement to as many couples as they can, which means to EVERY couple they meet. It is a time when we can no longer be selfishly quiet and not share

with others the gift that was given us. It is a time when we not only need to re-dedicate ourselves to bringing God into our marriage, but bringing His power and presence into ALL marriages.

And it is a time for everyone touched by this movement to support your Board, not only with your prayers, but with suggestions and advice as to what we can do 'to make a difference'. Please email us at nationalexecs@presby-me.org with your suggestions. We will read each and everyone of them to our National Board when it meets June 29 - July 2.

Consider yourself hugged,

Gary and Ann

See You at Convention in Ontario

Tickets for two opportunity quilts and items for a silent auction will be available. You do not have to be present to win. All ME families are encouraged to attend the WWME Convention. Bring your family and enjoy the fun. While you are there be sure to stop by, say hello and look at the items. You will find us next to Gifts From the Heart in the vendors room, #107 ABC.

If you would like to donate an item for the silent auction, please contact your Regional Executives or Gene & Nancy Robinson (geneandnancy@presby-me.org). Suggestions include, but are not limited to, arts & crafts items, gift baskets, gift certificates. All proceeds will go directly to support Weekends and any item not receiving the minimum bid will be returned.

It is the African themed, hand quilted throw (or wall hanging) made by Marlene Estelle and donated by Walter and Marlene. It is hand-quilted and just the right size to snuggle under while enjoying a movie or a good book. We also have hand crafted art work from Indonesia and Africa, a gift basket filled with travel goodies (airline acceptable); hand knit-ladies' socks (washable); and more.



ONE WORLD • ONE FAMILY • 40 YEARS

June 27 - 29 2008 • Ontario Convention Center • Ontario California

For Convention info go to: <http://convention.wwme.org/>. For hotel rooms, contact the PME Southwest Facility Couple, Gene & Nancy Robinson (geneandnancy@presby-me.org).

Marriage in Today's World

This is the second of a series of articles briefly revisiting the concepts of your Marriage Encounter Weekend. You might consider these to be either a mini-refresher course or an "Aha! Now I get it".

The first concept in this series is "Marriage in Today's World". This presentation helped us understand that periods of disillusionment are normal and that even when we are disillusioned, we still can make the decision to love.

The world teaches us that we are responsible for our own happiness and that marriage is only one of the many ways we can achieve fulfillment. When the romance in our marriage gives way to disillusionment, society teaches us through magazines, TV, and in many other ways, that we can be happy if married by living as if single. Unmet expectations in marriage lead us back to the attitudes and behaviors we had as single people.

This presentation shares how we can break out of the downward spiral of disillusionment by making a decision to love, or to be loved, even when we don't feel loving. Our society is based on winning. We bring this into our relationships. By allowing ourselves to be loved is also an example of the decision to love, especially when we feel angry, tense or hurt. Sometimes this requires action, change or fighting. One of the decisions

to love is to fight for the sake of our relationship. We call this fighting fair. This presentation shares some of the ways to fight fair.

The result of making the decision to love is the stage of joy. The stage of joy is the mutual awareness of the awe inspiring realization that we are loved, cherished, honored and respected for who we are even with our flaws and imperfections. Making the decision to love in our relationship breaks the cycle of romance and disillusionment. We can learn to trust enough to make the decision to love day in and day out, leading to shorter disillusionment stages and longer stages of romance and joy.

Most of us only know of the two stages of marriage – romance and disillusionment – but there is a third stage – joy – the joy that comes from after the decision to love.

Dialogue Question: WAMF (What Are My Feelings) when I realize you are not the person I thought you would be in this marriage?

Additional Insightful Dialogue Question: WAMF when I realize I am not the person I thought I would be in this marriage?

Nominating Committee Report PME National Board



After careful consideration and prayer the Nominating Committee is recommending to the PME National Board that Gary and Ann Long be appointed for a one year-term for the year 2009. The committee is also nominating Rev. Walter and Marlene Estelle for a one-year term for the year 2009.

This is in compliance with the changes to the By-laws made at the February 2008 meeting.

Both couples have discerned and have agreed to these conditions.

Love and blessings,

PME Board Nominating Committee,

Jack and Penny Runyan, Chair
Walt and Marlene Estelle
Gene and Nancy Robinson
Herb and Jean Ward

Dialogue Questions

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. You will find easy to use questions, alphabetized by categories.



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."

News from PME in Kenya

If you have followed stories in earlier issues you know that Kenya and Cameroon have been thriving and both have established teams and provided weekends for many couples. In Cameroon they recently gave a Weekend in Buea, a city that is an 8-hour drive from where PME was first established. See next page for that report. An economic reality in both Kenya and Cameroon is that most couples (certainly not clergy couples) could ever afford to attend a weekend. Recently, our National Board sent some financial support for each country to make it possible for couples to attend. This commitment was made with the realization that our resources are limited here, but with the desire to see that the original investment in time and energy continues to succeed and couples are supported in countries where violence and economy threatens marriages and family. Below is a recent response from Daniel Mwaura, who with his wife provides outstanding leadership as National Executive Lay Couple in Kenya. They had just completed a weekend in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. Parentheses are our edits.

Hello Servants of the Lord,

We extend our heartfelt greeting and regards to you all for the support in both financial and prayers. We cannot repay, say enough thank you, and words cannot be sufficient but our prayer is "May the lord of bounty whose reaches are limitless bless you in your daily lives - in your going out and coming in".

We have completed our most recent weekend and the following are the results:

1. Total couples on the weekend 10 (2 clergy and 8 lay). Very interesting thing we have not witnessed before is one clergy couple had both spouses as clergy. There were 5 last minute dropouts - our follow-up revealed that this was due to very genuine reasons. We have encouraged them to join the 22-24 August 2008 weekend.

2. Composition - 7 couples were Prebyterians and 3 were from other faiths.

3. The presenting teams were:

a) Rev James & Hannah Kahenya

b) Rev Mary & Peter Gichuhi

c) Daniel & Ann Muranga

d) Daniel & Florence Mwaura

4. By the time of recessing on Friday after the two introductory talks, all the couples had been affected and we could judge the positive mood. By the close of the weekend there were very encouraging testimonies. Two couples (1 clergy and lay) shared openly with the teams that had it not been the gift of the weekend it was just a matter of time before they quit.

5. The weekend re-union is scheduled for 24-May-08. We request your prayers too.

I am at work today after the busy weekend program but trust that the spirit of the Lord will carry me through the day despite the fatigue.

Daniel & Florence Mwaura

2008 PME Weekends

Aug. 22–24	Kenya
Oct. 10 –12	Ontario, CA
Oct. 24 – 26	Delaware Valley, DE
Oct. 31 – Nov. 2	Houston, TX

You hold the key to changing the world in a way that will make it a better place for your family.

We were very surprised on our Weekend to hear that people were praying for us— people we didn't know and were not likely to ever meet. Amazing!

The first time we were asked to pray for a Weekend, we felt inadequate, couldn't think how to do that. And, what if we forgot? And on and on. . . .

Here are some suggestions that helped us:

1. Say a prayer, brief or long, that God will remove all obstacles that might prevent any couple from attending.

Read I Corinthians Chapter 13.

2. Email Nora Goetz so she can add your name to the prayer scroll given to each couple on that Weekend. (If you forget this step, pray anyway.) Nora will email you a guide or you can use your Weekend journal or notes. (ngoetz@comcast.net).
3. Light a candle and keep it burning during the Weekend (when you are at home). Each time you see that candle, send a prayer.
4. Our favorite suggestion is to have yourselves a date night or a romantic evening at home and remember what a difference your own Weekend made in your marriage.

Invite your friends and family to attend an ME Weekend and unlock some doors for them. If our dates and locations do not work for them, go to WWME.org. Most Weekends are listed on the



PRESBYTERIAN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER IN CAMEROON EXPANDS – AFRICA SUCCEEDING

Since first established in 2005, Presbyterian Marriage Encounter in Cameroon (PMEC) has been centered in the city of Bamenda in the northern part of the country where it has thrived. But from the beginning they have planned on stretching out. With two team members (one lay and one clergy) having moved recently from Bamenda to Buea to the south, the opportunity came up to start weekends in a new part of the country. Buea is where the church headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon which has direct oversight of PMEC. So it was a double opportunity to reach into a new area and to solidify their connection to the church.

So, after much preparation, writing, inviting and recruiting an initial weekend was held in Buea. Along with local team and community, there were two presenting couples and 8 people from Bamenda that drove the 8 hour drive do Buea to cheer on and assist the local folk. Those that were not presenting came at their own expense which speaks for their commitment and excitement. The weekend couples had a tremendous experience and already there is another weekend being planned for August. Besides the local couples there was a clergy couple from the capitol city of Yaounde who attended and they are committed to starting a community and having a weekend there before the end of the year. So the opportunities and determination keep growing.

You can be directly involved in these thriving communities and in Kenya and urge you to do so. First, you can be sure your names are on the prayer scrolls that are presented to the couples on each weekend. You can do so by contacting or responding to Nora Goetz at ngoetz@comcast.net. Nora serves PME by organizing prayer scrolls for the US and Africa. Second, you can make a donation to PME and designate it for outreach either here in the US or in Africa.

And there is a specific opportunity if you will be at the Worldwide Marriage Encounter convention in Ontario, June 25-27. PME will have a silent auction booth with African and US arts and crafts. Each item has been donated with love and can be your treasured keepsake to take home, while also contributing to the survival and thriving of PME in Africa.



These two couples attended their Presbyterian Marriage Encounter, Cameroon Deeper Weekend in 2005. They helped present on this last Weekend and were instrumental in starting PMEC in Bamenda and in Buea. Left: Henry and Olivia Enoabane: Right, wearing traditional dress: Reverend Abraham and Patience Akih.



Little Known Fact: 1. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) began its participation in God's work in Africa when the first American Presbyterian missionaries arrived on the island of Corisco (present-day Equatorial Guinea in West Africa) in 1869.

LKF: 2. There are more Presbyterians in Kenya than there are in the United States.