

OUR INTERNATIONAL

Call to be Family



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International Lutheran Marriage Encounter

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Don't believe everything you read in the newspapers.

Dear Lovers,

What has happened to marriage?
Or more accurately, the perception of marriage?

In our morning paper, the other day, we read "Americans are less likely to marry than ever before, a new study finds, and fewer people who do marry report being 'very happy' in their marriages." The article continued with the same negative message about marriage.

I (Hal) thought of the discouragement some engaged couple must have felt when reading this. Once again, the modern world is attempting to discredit one of our God ordained institutions – aided greatly by the predominately secular media.

So what can we do? It is a big problem requiring a big solution, but all big solutions begin within ourselves. So the question is, "What can I do? Well, I can renew my commitment to the Lord and to Marilyn. The Lord's light can shine in the way I show God's love to her and to everyone in my life – in my work,

at church, everywhere. That's very easy to write and admittedly, much harder to do. But through God's grace and our Marriage Encounter weekend, we have been given the gifts to reflect the Lord's love in our lives.

I remember when we first were invited to a Marriage Encounter weekend, we had been married for 25 years. I agreed to go but my inner thought was, "I don't need this, after 25 years of marriage, I *know* how marriage is supposed to work."

We had what I considered a good marriage. But on that weekend God opened my eyes to a whole new dimension in our relationship that I will cherish always. This is the message I would like to communicate to encourage those in the study who were not happy in their marriage.

In a column in Parade Magazine, a L.A. Times supplement, the question "Do you expect fidelity when you marry?" was answered by an 18 year old girl from New York. In her answer she struggles with whether her ideal of two people marrying and remaining

faithful to one another is realistic. She questions, "Is it natural to be with the same person for 50 years—or is it against our animal instincts." What a sad message our young people are getting from the world around them!

That girl's answer reflects what I (Marilyn) perceive as a growing fear and even a sense of hopelessness among younger people, both married and unmarried, as to whether marriage CAN last for a lifetime. In fact that fear has been expressed to us more than once by younger couples who at the moment are happily married. Does that fear, that expectation of failure, actually create an option for them? Will it be easier to give up when the disillusionment sets in, rather than to work through it together, thus strengthening their relationship? What do you think?

How can we as encountered couples give them a hope for their future? Let us hear from you.

Much love,
Hal & Marilyn



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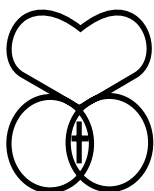
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From Your
NAR Execs

**“Our GOD is
an
AWESOME
God”**



Pam & I and Dan & Judy have been extremely busy since the last NAR Board Meeting in February. We have presented the second “Seminary Weekend” in St. Louis. On June 25th we will be attending an advanced LTR training in St. Louis to sharpen our skills and help develop this process for Lutheran Marriage Encounter.

This July we will be attending the Interfaith Board Meeting, the NAR Board Meeting and then traveling to Europe to attend the European Lutheran Marriage Encounter Board Meeting.

All of these meetings are important as we gather and share

with “the family” that the “fields are ripe for harvest.” We need to get ready, to get involved, to work, to share, and to be available so that the Lord can use us to help change the world. There are literally thousands of couples throughout North America that deserve to attend their Weekend. They are waiting for you to invite them to their Weekend.

Are you ready?

Please remember to continue to pray for the new Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend. There is still much writing, workshopping, and fine-tuning that needs to be accomplished.

Lots of hugs,

Jim & Pam Bush Dan & Judy Teuscher
NAR Lay Contact Couple NAR Clergy Contact Couple

Psalms 47:2a “How awesome is the LORD Most High...”

District I is first to present the ILME "New Outline Weekend" April 16-18

The Maiden Voyage

Eighteen months after the process began, the first Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend given using the new outline was held at Black Mountain, North Carolina on April 16 - 18, 1999. While the weekend presenters were aware of the changes in presentations, the 25 couples completing the weekend were only aware of the miraculous changes that had occurred in their relationships. Which proves that the "new" weekend has all the power of the "old" — the songs or the format may change, but our Awesome God remains in charge, and He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Weekend presenters were Tom & Robin Cogan, clergy; Jake & June Rabatin, admin; Don & Amanda Ledbetter, mid; and Al & Cinda Williamson, rookie couple presenting their first weekend.

Before the weekend's beginning, Mike & Nancy Handzo, presenters from the National Capital Area and participants on the weekend, gave the presenting team toy boats to commemorate LME's "maiden voyage" with the new outline.

The presenting couples were very pleased with the new talks. All agreed that they liked the lack of

repetition and the shortened form of the presentations. At no time on the weekend did we feel rushed or behind schedule, and the weekend was completed on time. This weekend has enough lag-time built in that it's going to be easy to finish

the new weekend presentations. While the old familiar LME spiral notebooks are still the repository for weekend loveletters, the couples now have the workbooks as well to help them keep the weekend concepts clearly in mind.

Couples responded strongly to the new weekend songs (Celine Dion's "Because You Loved Me"; Bette Midler's "The Rose"; Garth Brooks' "If Tomorrow Never Comes"); and the presenters were surprised to find themselves affected as well when they heard these songs in the weekend context. While we miss our old friend Don Quixote, we judge the couples on the weekend will be just as affected when they hear the "new" songs on the radio in future days, as we were by Dulcinea, Sancho, and Company.

The road to the New Outline Weekend began in Denver, CO, in the midst of an early-winter blizzard in

October, 1997, with a Workshop Weekend attended by 2 couples from each district. After that, the Outline Committee put in long hours changing the Worldwide (Catholic) outline to reflect our Lutheran heritage. Once approval of the changes was given by Worldwide, the outline was introduced to presenting couples



promptly. (Note to prayer couples: if you're used to arriving a tad late for sing-offs, you'll probably find that you'll be left behind!)

The workbooks, another innovation introduced this weekend, were well-received. Many couples found them useful for taking notes and all were intensely involved in the written exercises that are part of

across the country in the summer of 1998, and writing began. Beginning in September, all weekends presented in the North American Region of LME will be to the new outline.

If it's been awhile since you experienced a weekend, we encourage you to consider attending one this fall or winter. Many already know that an Anniversary Weekend is a glorious experience; with the new talks, you can enjoy an even greater time — sort of like a date with your dearly-loved spouse... all decked out in new finery, and changed his or her "look" from 70's to 90's. What you loved is still there, but Wow! What an exciting change!



Weekend presenters with their commemorative maiden voyage toy boats.



The "crew" of the District I New Outline maiden voyage.

District V says 'Wow!' to New Outline

The response of Mike & Sharon Farnsworth, to the April 23-25 weekend in Pleasanton, CA was "WOW, The New Outline Weekend is wonderful!

"With presenting weekends back-to-back, one on the new outline and then one on the old outline gave us two different perspectives. It reconfirmed that we are God's tools and He uses the weekend to enrich the couples attending the weekend, whether you are attending the weekend or presenting the weekend. IT IS HIS WEEKEND. The goal of the weekend remained the same, opening doors to better communication and enhancing the couples' relationship with God and each other, but presented with new material and different structure.

"We found the new weekend more relaxed, refreshed and alive. We compare it to having a new baby. We love our first born, and

we also love the newborn. The pace of the weekend is truly a blessing. It is more couple focused. The weekend really becomes their weekend. They are given the time to get to know each other and develop their relationship. The new material seemed less redundant and repetitive. The music is refreshing and also very relatable to the couples. They really listened, sang along, and took more from the message of the music. The couples were not busy concentrating on what the music was about, but focusing on how the message relates to them and their relationship.

"Overall, we feel God has given us two gifts, like the old weekend material, a comfortable sweater that we feel very comfortable in; and then the new material, a brand new sweater that we also just love."

New Outline Presented April 23-25 in Norway

Three lay couples from Norway and Ebba and Carl Eric Svensäter from Sweden presented, and the weekend was run as an ordinary weekend. But it was a special experience for us to present with so many dear faces in front of us. 23 couples attended of which 12 were presenting couples. (Denmark-3, Finland-2, Iceland-2, Norway-3 and Sweden-2)

The new weekend was well received by rookies as well as veteran couples. All the presenting couples appreciated the shorter and more focused talks.

District IV Presents New Outline In San Diego June 18-20

Well, we just came off the new outline weekend in San Diego. After a year and 8 months of a great deal of hard work, we were able to see the results of all the effort that has been put into this new outline weekend. Having less repetition cut down on time for each presentation. They were crisp and clear and very understandable. The couples had more time in their room for each other. That was very good news. We did not hear the comment, "we didn't have enough time." Couples liked the new music. The weekend was excellent for the presenters as well. It was less stressful; we were more relaxed and less tired by the end of the weekend. We were on schedule all weekend and had no problem ending at 4 p.m.

We were very fortunate in San Diego to have 6 new banners. They were designed by Lennie Sirota and a committee headed up by Kate and

Joe Walter brought the ideas into reality. They are beautiful and added to the newness of the weekend.

One very nice thing, *a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend is still a Lutheran Marriage Encounter weekend.* Although the weekend is more streamlined, the weekend itself really hasn't changed. The concepts are still the same. The comments we received about the Personality Style Assessment were very positive. We can't say enough good about this new outline weekend.

We hope you will consider attending the New Outline Weekend.

Hugs - Marian & Bill Hooper
Bill & Marian were serving as NAR Presenting Couple Coordinators when the work on the new weekend commenced.

District III Reunion-

And The Dream Goes On (Into The 21st Century)

The last ILME District Reunion of the century was held as a tribute to Marlon & Mary Lou Meyer. Marlon went home to the Lord in August 1997. They were considered to be the ME father and mother of their area because of the hundreds of couples who accepted their invitation to go on a weekend. It was Marlon's expressed desire that the District III Family Reunion once again be hosted in Grand Island.

The reunion took place on July 9-11, 1999 in Grand Island, Nebraska and was the result of the tireless dedication of the Nebraska/Western Iowa Lutheran Marriage Encounter Community. Key couples were: Elwyn & Linda Fitzke, Joel & Ellen Janik, and Doug & Leanne Fox.

1999 Worldwide M.E. Convention July 29-Aug. 1

Los Angeles is the place to be this summer, as we come together for another convention.

We dream of moving "beyond NICE" to challenge and enthuse; to expand our horizons and open our eyes to what could be for our relationships. We dream of you going forth on Sunday on fire in your relationship with your spouse, your family, our Church, and God! Through it all, we will celebrate who we are as a

movement, and where we are headed in the new millenium. And so the theme of the convention, "Journey Together to the Father" will be true, both for your relationship with your spouse and your Marriage Encounter family.

Know that you are loved and cherished

Dan & Teresa Quam
Worldwide Marriage Encounter Convention Coordinator Couple

You can download a registration form on the internet at www.wwme.org/conv99/appw

For questions you can call 909-494-4097

Mailing address: WWME Convention 1999, P.O. Box 722711, San Diego, CA 92172-2711



ILME

What a Great and AWESOME God we Serve!

This is the second in a series of articles on our Vision for the North American Region of Lutheran Marriage Encounter. If you remember from our last article we shared about our I.L.M.E. Vision for International Lutheran Marriage Encounter.

The acronym stands for

- I Invited by God**
- L Leading through Relationships**
- M Maximizing Weekend Registrations**
- E Encouraging One Another**

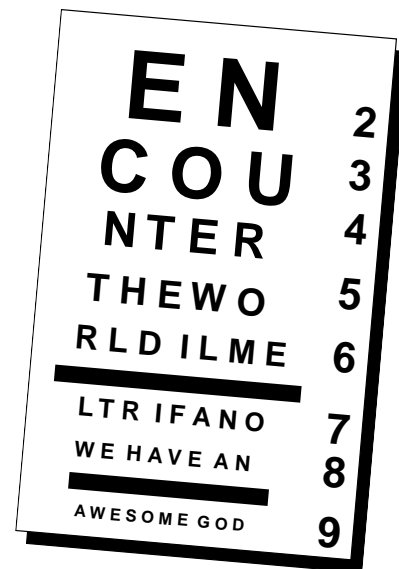
In February 1997, Pam & I and Dan & Judy had the wonderful privilege to attend the first LTR training at the North American Region Board Meeting in San Diego, California. It was the first opportunity we had in all the years we have been involved to experience just how to lead in this wonderful ministry called Lutheran Marriage Encounter.

Some of the key concepts that we learned are as follows:

1. **The Lord has Called Us To This**
2. **Effective Leadership**
3. **Be Proactive**
4. **Begin With The End in Mind**
5. **Put First Things First**
6. **Seek First To Understand**
7. **Think Win Win**
8. **Confrontation**
9. **Delegation**

One of the wonderful and yet humbling concepts we learned during that Weekend was that God does not call the qualified, but he qualifies the called. That concept has helped all four of us to understand that this is God's Ministry and He is leading us in our Leadership. A footnote to that is that God needs us to LEAD, not just convene. That's what Lutheran Marriage Encounter needs to do, we need to get out in front and lead couples to deeper more intimate marriages through God's Weekend.

One of the great disservices we have done is to not train our new leadership for a number of years. We believe that LTR can help



prepare us for the harvest that God is going to give us in the twenty-first (21st) century. We need this training so that you can lead your district, area, love circle, spiral and any other small group that comes together in Lutheran Marriage Encounter.

This July 22nd through 24th at the North American Region Board Meeting in St. Louis, we will be adapting our 1999/2000 Budget. A key part of that budget will be approximately \$10,000 to start the training of all leadership in the North American Region of Lutheran Marriage Encounter. We will be looking at the training process and how best to spread LTR training throughout the North American Region.

This training process is designed to equip the local leadership team (Lay and Clergy) in each area of the North American Region. It introduces a special dialogue called "quadralogue" that the leadership team can use to communicate more deeply and intimately. They write, "love letters" to the other members of the

leadership team. They share what is called the I.F.A.N.O. method of dialogue. I.F.A.N.O. stands for Ideas, Feelings, Actions, Attitudes, Needs, and Options.

The LTR Weekend also helps each of the Leadership Team to identify their leadership styles, strengths, and weaknesses. That's important because we do not want to ask any couple to do something they are not equipped to accomplish. We want to use what Gifts that God gave each of us to change the world with God's love. This is one proven method to accomplish that goal.

There is an additional three-part focus in LTR training. Those three parts are:

- 1. Maximizing Weekend Registrations**
- 2. Providing Quality Weekends**
- 3. Providing Quality Post-Weekend Follow-up.**

One of the great needs that we have is to accomplish these three additional goals in each area in the North American Region. We need to raise our vision and develop boldness and a deep passion to help change how the world looks at marriages. We have something wonderful that needs to be shared. With LTR training, we know we can

take another step in our "Dream" to help "change the world" for Christ sake.

May our AWESOME GOD be with each and every one of you.

Jim & Pam Bush
NAR Lay Contact Couple

Dan & Judy Teuscher
NAR Clergy Contact Couple

Psalms 47:2a "How awesome is the LORD Most High,"



The first ILME Leading Through Relationships (LTR) training was given in San Diego, February 1997.

LUTHERAN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

MISSION STATEMENT

Lutheran Marriage Encounter is a ministry dedicated to assisting married couples to live intimate and responsible relationships by providing an Encounter Weekend experience as well as ongoing community support.

VISION STATEMENT

The Lutheran Church renewed and our world changed through strengthened couple relationships and stronger personal relationships with Christ.

Proposed at the August, 1998 NAR Board Meeting

**Tear out this page as a reminder.
Place it where you will see it often.**

Make plans to attend.

CELEBRATE MARRIAGE



ILME 25th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

July 21-23, 2000
Concordia University
St. Paul, Minnesota

**Plan to celebrate the Gifts of Love
in the next millenium!**



- The gift of Kindness
- The gift of Caring
- The gift of Forgiveness
- The gift of Hope
- The gift of Commitment
- The gift of Humility
- The gift of Spirit.

That the world might know... God's Plan for Marriage

Report of the Interfaith Awareness & Publicity Committee

The Interfaith A&P Committee of Worldwide Marriage Encounter has a simple goal: tell the world about God's plan for marriage.

That the world might know of God's plan for marriage, the Interfaith Awareness & Publicity (IFAP) is developing a broad range of media strategies.

Gathering in St. Louis the weekend of May 14-16, IFAP focused on accomplishing the priorities established by the Interfaith Board of Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Inviting...

Based on data gathered by the Catholic expression, IFAP approved a strategy for the development of future inviting materials. This work will result in the development of

specific ads for major publications (including visuals), church bulletin copy, radio spot text, bumper stickers, and local advertising messages to be used throughout Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Specifics of this strategy will be unveiled at the Interfaith Board meeting in July. If, adopted, IFAP will develop portfolios for distribution throughout all faith expressions.

Looking ahead

Among other efforts, original music is being written to support the tagline, "A Weekend of Discovery, A Lifetime of Love." The objective is to develop a message, look, and sound that listeners and viewers will identify with Marriage Encounter.

As this is implemented throughout all of the ME expressions, activity by one group will help all faith expressions.

Calling on Oprah

Contact has been made with the Oprah Winfrey Show staff, with the goal of a face-to-face meeting to discuss the mission of Marriage Encounter and its inclusion on the show. Messages to Oprah through the Internet are still needed, so keep those messages coming!

We are asking that you send an e-mail message to Oprah. To those who don't use the Internet, we are asking for participation by phone, fax, or mail.

To e-mail, access www.oprah.com On the left of the screen look for "e-mail Oprah" Click on that; another screen will appear. Scroll toward the bottom to find an address box. Fill that out, then: "Click on arrow to select subject." Select "Show Topic Suggestions." Enter a message encouraging Oprah to offer her audience a show featuring WWME. Include a short message about what ME has meant to you.

If you don't have e-mail, write to:

Ms. Oprah Winfrey
The Oprah Winfrey Show
1058 West Washington
Chicago, IL 60607-2151

An important by-product of this effort is the development of a strategy that can be used to target other public venues for proclaiming the ME message.

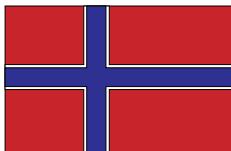
Rich & Jan Schleier
Interfaith A&P Coordinators



International NEWS

Norway

The spring has been a busy time in Norway preparing for the pilot weekend based on the new outline.



The weekend took place April 23 to 25. Three lay couples from Norway and Ebba and Carl Eric Svensäter from Sweden presented, and the weekend was run as an ordinary weekend. But it was a special experience for us to present with so many dear faces in front of us. Twenty-three couples attended of which 12 were presenting couples. (Denmark-3, Finland-2, Iceland-2, Norway-3 and Sweden-2)

The new weekend was well received by rookies as well as veteran couples. All the presenting couples appreciated the shorter and more focused talks.

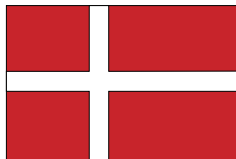
We are also impressed by the redesign of the Worldwide Marriage encounter web site. A lot of material is available. You should take a look at <http://www.wwme.org>. We just downloaded a list of 1000 dialogue questions.

We had wonderful and warm weather during the pilot weekend in April, but now temperatures are almost down to zero, and there is snow in the air. Quite unusual for May, but nevertheless we are sending warm greetings and love from Norway.

Anna Kristine and Tor

Denmark

Denmark was the last country to join



the European ME family. The first weekend was given in 1995. Since then more than 160 couples have experienced the weekend. By now we have couples to fill all loving tasks. This year we have also introduced our own "Du og Jeg" (You and I), which is the name of all the Scandinavian ME newsletters.

In the fall we will have our first all Danish team weekend. Up to now we have had presenting couples from Norway and Sweden to help us, but we are looking forward to having our own Danish speaking weekend team. In the fall we will also have our own Internet homepage including dialogue questions and resource material.

In November 99 we are responsible for the Nordic Deeper which is offered in one of the countries every second year. We hope and pray that also Danish couples will be ready to attend.

The startup in Denmark has been a Nordic project, and it has been great for us to experience the fellowship across the country borders including practical help as well as prayers and support from couples far away. We still need your prayers to reach more Danish couples with information about the weekend and the best marriage enrichment program in the world.

August 28 we will have a community day for all encountered couples in Denmark, and if you should be around, please come and join us. A project group of ten couples is preparing the program.

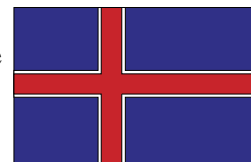
Inge and Niels Jørgen Lassen,

njlassen@inet.uni2.dk

Jeanette and Ejnar Larsen,
upholste@post.tele.dk

Iceland

Due to the long waiting list, the Icelandic



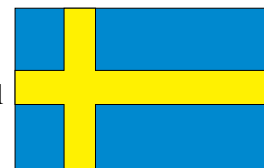
community cannot be too active in recruiting new couples to the weekend. But this spring they offered an information night in one of the Reykjavik churches. And incredible things happened: 330 interested persons showed up and 150 couples signed up for the weekend, a result which brought the waiting list up to more than 500 couples. This is solid proof of the standing and the positive profile that the ME movement has in Iceland.

We want to congratulate the Icelandic community with the result, and we pray for strength and wisdom to cope with all the challenges ahead.

But the presenting team is growing as well. The last two years there has not been any new couples, but now six couples, of which three clergy, will be prepared to attend the Nordic Deeper in Denmark in November.

Sweden

We had a telephone call yesterday from Hans



Joachim and Agneta Franze, clergy contact couple of Sweden.

(agneta.franze@gislaved.se). They are sending their love.

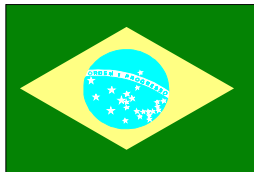
In Sweden they have had two

weekends so far this year with a total of 37 couples attending. Two more weekends are planned in October and November, 1999.

There is some concern because the waiting list as well as donations have gone down. But on the positive side: three new lay couples have started writing and will be ready for the Deeper in Denmark in November.

Brazil

Despite the financial difficulties in the world's



economy, the Lutheran Marriage Encounter's year in Brazil was full of God's blessings. At first we had scheduled four weekends to the year of 1998, but unfortunately because of few registrations, we had to cancel one weekend, which would take place in Brusque- SC. But after that we had the first weekend in Joinville - SC, with more than 26 couples and with 7 support couples. In our point of view, that was the best weekend ever. And it's not just because the number of participants, but because of all they got to learn that weekend.

In September we did a weekend in Curitiba, with 9 couples and 4 support couples. That was another retreat full of God's presence, and we enjoyed it a lot. Of course we got a little bit sad with the number of participants. It should have been bigger, but we can just have those who God sends to us.

In the year of 1999, we are asked to do a weekend in

Florianópolis - SC, but we're still taking a look at it, without giving any answer, because we don't have many pastors to lead us and we depend on their schedule, which is very busy. We are now praying and asking prayers in this direction.

On the 6th and 7th, we did a family retreat, which has always been in Timbo - SC. We had full house!! We had Pastor Orlando and his wife as our presenting couple, and the theme was "Human being Spirituality". There was also one woman working this theme with the kids and teenagers in the retreat. Lino and Lorita Sasse, the organizing couple, led us with love and disposition into a lot of different activities. We thank God for them.

On the 19th and 21st we did our first ILME encounter of this year. There were 12 couples participating plus 6 support couples. In our final evaluation we concluded that it was a very good retreat. We'll have other weekends in August and September and we ask your prayer for it.

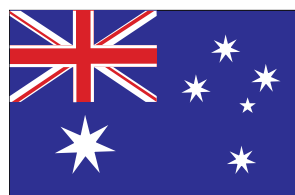
With Love

Ibarir & Ilka Leyser Cordeiro - executive couple

Ottokar & Karin Brühmüller - Lay couple

Australia

...we held a half yearly meeting of our planning team to discuss what we're doing in the future.



It was a positive and productive time. All the team were greatly encouraged by the recent weekend held in Sydney. After having to cancel three previous weekends due

to lack of registrations we were all feeling rather discouraged. However the Sydney weekend had 14 couples participating and this was our strongest weekend for quite a few years. As always the program was so helpful to the couples and made us feel our efforts were very worthwhile.

At our meeting we decided that we would stick with our resolution to take a two year break from offering weekends and would begin again in May 2000 with a weekend in Sydney. This break gives us a chance to work as a team on a few other things, especially the writing of talks to the new outline which we have not begun yet.

In the two year break we are planning some community building events, including a "Romantic Weekend" away for previously encountered couples. We hope through this to strengthen our support base and encourage couples in their relationships and dialogue. Also we are planning for our presenters to work on their talks. This is going to be a huge job, as I'm sure you are aware.

We'll also be trying to strengthen our spirals somewhat and offer some "seminars" on marriage as an entree to the weekend so as to improve our recruiting.

God bless you all and we send greetings to all in the ILME family.

Love from

Mike & Narelle Fulwood,
Clergy Execs (Australia)



Our Blessings are 10 times 10 —because of our 10 & 10

By Marge & Con Terr

Marge: Wow! It's been almost eight years since we started dialoguing! It's hard to believe.

Con: Yep, time flies when you're having fun.

Marge: You joker! I was serious.

Con: Well maybe "fun" isn't the best choice of words, but dialogue certainly has brought blessings into our life.

Marge: You can say that again!

Con: O.K. Dialogue certainly has brought blessings into our life,

Marge: You're certainly on a roll tonight! Tell me, what do you think of as the greatest blessing that has come out of our dialogue?

Con: No question in my mind. It is trust. Trusting you has become such a habit that it is easy for me to tell you things that used to be pretty scary. I remember before our Weekend when I would sometimes walk around for two or three weeks with something I wanted to say but I never could find the right time when everything was right.

Marge: I remember that. I used to wonder what was bothering you, but when I asked, you would say, "Oh nothing." I knew better, but I didn't know how to get you to talk to me except to nag at you until you would blow up. Either that or keep quiet and hope for the best.

Con: OK, your turn. What is the biggest blessing for you?

Marge: Knowing that you are really listening when I tell you how I am feeling. When I tell you I need to talk to you, you put down the

newspaper or turn off the television and really listen to me. When you do that, I know that I am important to you. I feel loved and respected.

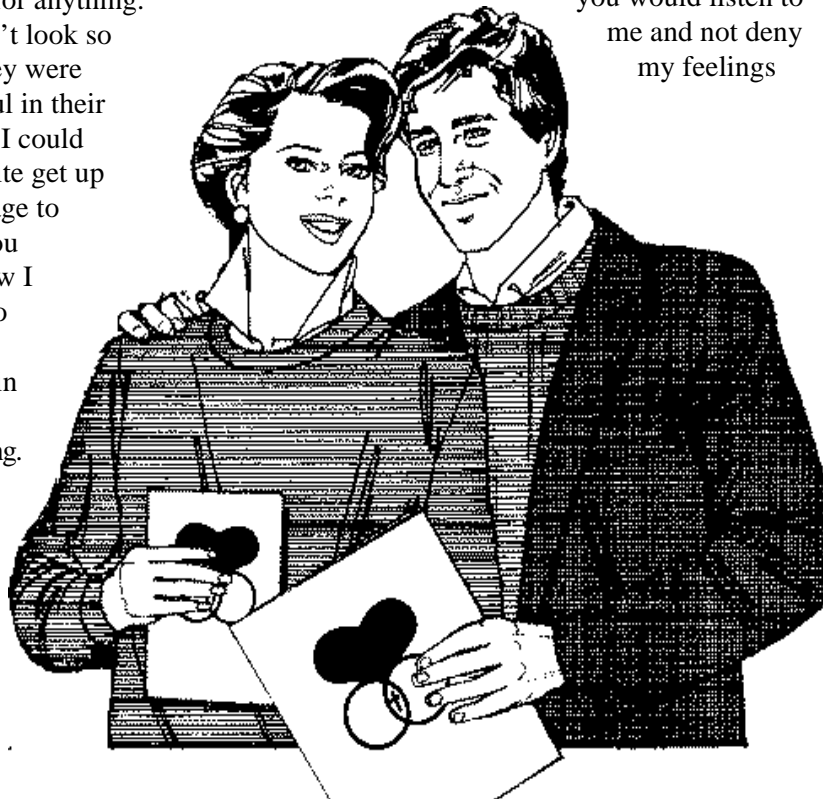
Con: It's another major blessing to me that I can listen to your feelings and not feel so threatened by them. Before our weekend, when you would start to talk about your feelings, I would hide behind jokes or work. If we were in bed, I would fall asleep. I felt overwhelmed because I couldn't do anything to help you "feel better." I sure missed out on a lot. When I started to really listen to your feelings, I discovered that there was even more to my Marge than I knew. It was almost like going back to our newlywed days.

Marge: Speaking of going back to our newlywed days, I wouldn't go back for anything. Hey, don't look so hurt! They were wonderful in their way, but I could never quite get up the courage to talk to you about how I wanted to make changes in our lovemaking.

I wanted you to go slower and romance me more but it always seemed to come out sounding like I was criticizing you.

Con: Yeah, I guess you're right. I know that if it weren't for dialogue, we probably would never have gotten around to talking about God's presence in our lovemaking. Our dialogues about what it means (to have God present) gave our lovemaking a whole new dimension. It gets better and better as the years roll by. The physical excitement is reinforced by our spiritual closeness to each other and to God.

Marge: Another time that dialogue was a blessing to me was when I was feeling so depressed. I had no reason to feel that way but I did. It helped me tremendously that you would listen to me and not deny my feelings



by trying to prove that I shouldn't feel that way. Even when it seemed like weeks went by with me always writing about how bad I felt. I always knew that it was better than it might have been because you were listening to me.

Con: That was a hard time for both of us. Thank God for dialogue. Without it, I probably would have thought that you were angry with me or disappointed in me. When I began to realize just how bad you felt. I was amazed at your courage and determination to keep on going. It is a side of you I might never have known otherwise.

Marge: Wow! We have a ton of blessings that have come to us through dialogue. We should make that a regular dialogue question,

Con: That's a good idea. How about once a month? On the last day of the month we can use the question "How have we been blessed through our dialogue this month? How do I feel about my answer?"

Marge: Leave it to an Organizer to come up with a plan like that! It's a date!

Questions to help discover the blessings in your dialogues.

What do I see as the greatest blessing to come to us through our dialogue? How do I feel about my answer (HDIFAMA)?

How has our lovemaking been affected by our dialogue? What are my feelings about my answer?

What area of our relationship do I think we most need to explore in our dialogue? HDIFAMA?

What have I learned about you through our dialogue HDIFAMA?

What have I learned about myself because of our dialogue? HDIFAMA?

Loving thanks to the WWME magazine "Matrimony" for this meaningful and very helpful sharing about the value of dialogue.

Australia will use Internet to distribute "Call to be Family"

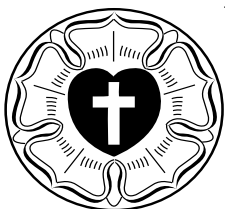
At the Australian Regional meeting in Sydney on June 14, 1999, a decision was made regarding the distribution of the "Call to be Family" ILME newsletter. Since it is now available on the Internet, "Call to be Family" will be downloaded, printed and distributed to couples within Australia rather than having copies shipped from the U.S. This will reduce NAR printing and distribution costs and will get the magazine out more quickly to Australian couples.

According to email received from John & Lois Grosse, Gaidis and Marja Zids will undertake downloading, printing and distribution of "Call to be Family" in Australia.

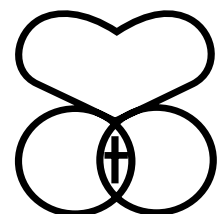
(Editor note: The cost to mail outside of the U.S. is over 13 times higher than domestic postage—\$2.11 versus \$.16 based on mailing costs of the last issue. Thanks to the Australasian Region for helping to reduce NAR shipping costs.)

YOUR GIFTS TO THE ENDOWMENT-DREAM FUND WILL HELP KEEP ILME ALIVE

*There are many ways to give: Life Insurance, Real Estate, Securities,
Memorial Gifts, Wills, IRAs, Personal property.*



For details contact: Endowment Dream Fund
Lutheran Marriage Encounter
P.O. Box 510-335
St. Louis, MO 63151
314-846-2490



With a Baby on the Way, We Wanted to Strengthen our Marriage

Rose and Richard Gorgart

It started last August. We looked into going on a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend. At first, all we knew is that we wanted to go on some type of retreat to strengthen our marriage. We were pregnant, due in late October.

Before we were married we attended a Catholic Engaged Encounter. That was the best thing we had ever done for each other (until our Marriage Encounter weekend). We knew we wanted to get closer, once again, and build a strong foundation to start our family on. Rick is Lutheran and Rose is Catholic, so when we found the Lutheran Marriage Encounter, we thought everything was perfect. We had already attended a Catholic version and now we could attend a Lutheran version. We definitely made the right decision.

Our weekend was the best weekend we have ever had. Our relationship was strong before our weekend, but we left Los Angeles on a totally different level, stronger and closer. We went there with the purpose of helping us start a family, and we left with the skills and knowledge that we are good people and that we CAN have a healthy and spiritual family life with our new child.

We completed our 90 day challenge right after our daughter, Rylie was born. That in turn, gave us the determination to make dialogue a part of our lives. We knew when we had decided to start a family that life would not be the same and that there would definitely be challenges ahead of us. We had



Rose, Kylie and Rick

the faith in God and the belief that dialogue would help get us through the difficult times, and it has.

We can't say that we dialogue every day, like we would like to but, we do dialogue whenever we can. We add to our bucket of questions when we encounter new things as parents that we need to discuss. There have been some frustrating times in our new roles as parents and dialoguing has helped us to communicate and understand one another in the different roles we play. Rick is working and encounters times when he feels that he doesn't get to spend enough time with Rylie; and Rose is being a stay-at-home mom and encounters times when she feels that she is spending all of her time with our baby, and not having any "adult" time. By taking time and doing a 10 & 10, we can connect again and put ourselves in each others shoes.

Dialogue has also helped us maintain our patience with the dilemmas of raising our little one. We both have the hopes of one day, when Rylie is old enough, to bring

her in on our dialogue sessions. We plan on having a couple of days a week that is family dialogue to teach her the importance of communication and learning the importance of understanding others' feelings and also the importance of expressing to others how she feels; because "Feelings are neither right nor wrong, they are just your feelings."

Richard and Rose live in Nevada and attended their Marriage Encounter weekend in California

Focus on the Family Book of the Year

This review of a book on marriage is shared by the District IV CTBF Associate Editor couple, Dick & Jane Knecht.

"ALWAYS" was written by Mike Yorkey, Contributing Editor was Gary Smalley and is published by Tyndale House. (Gary Smalley and his wife attended a Marriage Encounter weekend a many years ago.)

Chosen by Focus on the Family as their major marriage book of the year! In this timeless collection of inspirational stories from the marriages of Les and Patsy Clairmont, Dave and Jan Dravecky, Steve and Terri Largent, and others, couples will learn the value of commitment through the conflict and crises that exist in every marriage. With helpful commentary from Gary Smalley, "ALWAYS" captures the stories of 17 couples that emphasize the importance of the permanence of marriage.

Available at your local Christian bookstore in October.

(Our) Ministry of Love

by Gordon & Grace Hendrickson,
Starbuck, MB, Canada

“June’s the time for roses. June’s the time for love.”

On a beautiful June evening we pledged our love and became husband and wife. Our families and friends cheered us on as we set off on our journey of love. We planned to dedicate ourselves to our chosen careers as “Pastor” and Pastor’s Wife.” Our dreams were coming true, dreams of a lifetime of love, joy and intimacy as we dedicated ourselves to our vocations.

During those first honeymoon years we marveled at the deepening of our love and commitment to our relationship. Our dreams of family were fulfilled as we were blessed with two daughters and two sons. That honeymoon glow however, began to fade and in its place, tarnish and cracks began to appear. The busyness of work and the cares of family and finances gradually took over. There was little real communication between us. Being so busy doing for others, we scarcely had time for each other. The result was a distancing in our relationship. Loneliness and disillusionment spawned feelings of bitterness and resentment. Our beautiful dream was fast becoming a faded memory.

Then, after thirty years on our journey, a miracle happened! A couple from our congregation came to see us, brimming over with excitement. They had just returned from a Marriage Encounter Weekend which had given their relationship a real boost. We attended a Marriage Encounter information evening and decided to register.

That weekend became a significant milestone in our marriage journey. Our love and commitment were rekindled. We learned techniques which showed us how to put God and each other at the center of our lives. The results had such a positive impact on our marriage that we were sorry we had not found out about Marriage Encounter sooner.

Because of what that weekend meant to us, we decided to become a “Presenting Couple” with Lutheran Marriage Encounter. Our mission is to pass on the gift which we received. We share the story of our love and our experiences in order to help other couples revitalize their marriage commitments and experience the joy and love that this can bring.

Lutheran Marriage Encounter is part of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter which began in Spain in the 1960s. Now, 30 years later, over three million couples have attended Marriage Encounter Weekends in countries all over the world. From the beginning, Marriage Encounter has had a history of miracles and renewals in the lives of couples who have been married anywhere from a few months to fifty years.

The purpose of Marriage Encounter is to help individual couples know each other more completely and to love each other more deeply. It is based on the conviction that the marriage relationship is the most intimate, the most important and the richest in potential that any person will ever have.

It is difficult to give an objective description of the Marriage Encounter program. That’s not



because it is a deep, dark secret. It is simply something that each couple must experience to understand.

Marriage Encounter is the best thing we’ve done on our marriage journey. However, we don’t have it made! As in all things in life, we’re never done learning. It is important to us that we keep striving to make our marriage the best it can be. Although we can never love one another perfectly, we seek to carry out Christ’s command that we should “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12)

In Canada, Marriage Encounter Weekends are presented by Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite and United Church expressions. Lutheran Marriage Encounter is a volunteer organization that is completely self-supporting, with no funding from any Lutheran church body. Lutheran weekends are held in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Look in your church for a poster and brochures.

*(Reprinted in part from *Espirit*, the magazine of Evangelical Lutheran Women in Manitoba Canada.)*

Celebrating our years together

By Mark & Rosann Sanderfeld

Solon, IA

One of our most memorable anniversaries was three years after our Weekend and it included the whole family. It was our 15th anniversary. We were planning to go out, but our girls wanted to serve us dinner,

(Mark) I decided to make it a very special occasion and with the insistence of our three daughters, bought live lobster. I also decided to pick up Rosann's favorite wine and some flowers for her as a surprise.

We had been very busy with Marriage Encounter and I wanted to celebrate our new found love with a very special meal. Our girls, then 11, 6 and 4, wanted to cook and serve us in our candlelit dining room. They were into the excitement and wanted us to enjoy our 15th anniversary.

(Rosann) I had my own special plan with the girls. I mentioned to them that it would be neat to surprise Dad wearing my wedding dress, if it fit! The girls of course got very excited in getting me ready for our special anniversary date.

As I started to get ready, I reflected on our wedding day and how my mother and sisters assisted with my dress and hair. I felt that same excitement. It was a joyful, special feeling, like I felt when Mark asked me to marry him. The girls' excitement added to my own.

Their giggles, laughter and joy affirmed me as well as their words. "Oh, Mom you look so pretty. Wow, Mom! Is this what you looked like when you got married?" All of their questions added to the

*"After our dialogue,
we enjoyed each
other's love and
passion."*

memories and feelings I had on our wedding day. I remembered how handsome Mark looked as I started down the aisle toward him. Now I was really getting excited for Mark to arrive home from work.

I shared with the girls about our wedding day and my excitement grew. I told them how important our wedding was to us and how much I value each day Mark and I have. This was a special time for me and our daughters.

I told the girls that when Dad got home I wanted to sweep him away

for some quiet time alone before dinner so we could talk, listen to some romantic music and dialogue. They said they'd get the table set and prepare dinner.

(Mark) After work I stopped at the store and picked up all the ingredients for our special dinner. As I drove home from the store I was thinking about our wedding day. I remembered driving to the church and the groomsman's tie that was lost and then found, and how our wedding began late, details, details, details.

But all that faded as I remembered Rosann walking down the aisle. How beautiful and ravishing she looked. I remembered our day, and then our night, and the nights that followed. I thought about our passion for each other and all the great moments over the last 15 years.



As I pulled into the driveway, I caught a glimpse of Rosann running up the stairs in her wedding dress. I was all smiles as I saw the girls excitedly trail behind her all bubbly and giggling about what they and Rosann had been planning for me when I got home. I smiled and chuckled inside.

The girls were just like a Christmas all excited, waiting for the unveiling of the surprise. I, too, was excited as I wondered just what these four had in store for me. My mind was on the meal and I wondered why they were so giddy. I was expecting some surprise in the dining room, but the surprise was a big hug and a hot passionate kiss from Rosann. She followed this with a glass of chilled wine and then invited me to go to our bedroom for some time alone for us.

I asked about the meal and the kids. She said, looking at the girls, "The girls are going to get our dinner ready and our appetizers are upstairs." Needless to say I didn't argue, but quickly agreed. I was ready for this course of our meal!

Our question for the day was "My most vivid memory about our wedding day is _____. How do I feel sharing this with you?" After our dialogue, we enjoyed each other's love and passion. We then rejoined the girls and they escorted us to our table. Jennifer, our oldest had the two younger ones busy preparing the rest of our dinner. After cooking the lobsters, we sat down for our special meal as the girls served us.

(Mark) As I reflected on this special anniversary, I saw how the girls were so much a part of this memory.

I often stop on my way home from work to buy Rosann flowers or pick up dinner to surprise her. These "special" occasions are usually not any special day, but a time to celebrate our love.

(Rosann) this was a very special anniversary. Not only did Mark and I celebrate our marriage and our love for each other, but we included our girls as well. God has blessed us with a wonderful marriage and three beautiful daughters.

Yes, we have our share of ups and downs, but our weekend gave us the gift of dialogue and the motivation to make each other a priority each and every day of our lives. We are on a journey and our love for each other continues to grow. We have learned that God joined us together, not to compete, but to complete.

I feel blessed to have Mark as my husband as we celebrate 22 years of marriage this year. My blessed feeling is one of being gifted — it's a true gift from God. It's blessed like a feeling I experienced at the birth of each of our girls, true gifts of the Lord.

Take time to enjoy one another, and to reflect the many gifts God has given you.

Heartfelt thanks to "Matrimony" magazine, the official publication of Worldwide Marriage Encounter. For subscription information, contact

*Ralph & Karen Lewis
PO Box 1385
Pollock Pines, CA 95726
(530)644-2067*

Some Dialogue Questions for you...

I remember when I first saw you. What are my feelings about that? (WAMFAT?)

Do you remember our first date? Describe fully in loving detail. (DFILD)

I remember our courtship. When did we start falling in love? DFILD

When did I first think about being your spouse? WAMFAT?

What is my strongest feeling about our wedding day? I feel_____ DFILD

How did we spend our first anniversary? WAMFAT?

How were we introduced to Marriage Encounter. HDIFAT?

When we have recruited a couple to go on a weekend, how did I feel as the weekend progressed? DFILD

How do I feel about going on another weekend? DFILD

What would our married life be like if we had never experienced Marriage Encounter? WAMFAT?

Has our relationship with Jesus changed since our weekend? DFILD

Has our relationship with our children changed since our weekend? DFILD

Has our relationship with our parents changed since our weekend? DFILD

I love you! DFILD

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** Laird & Winnie Engle
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Email: jdehnel@hamline.edu
- ** Chan & Midge Pauling
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Fremont, NE 68025
402-721-5931
- ** Bruce & Ila Zellmer
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SO. IDAHO/NO. UTAH UNIT

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or
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- * Lay
- ** Clergy

For advice and assistance if you have sight impaired couples going on a weekend - contact:
Alan & Ruth Anne Wheeler
9636 South Brandt Ave.
Oak Lawn, IL 60453-3025
708-424-0537
email: da2ofus@couple.com

REMINDER!
SEND ALL UPCOMING WEEKEND DATES & CHANGES TO:
Dale & Carol Ure
1818 E. 37th
Spokane, WA 99203
509-747-7964
Fax: 509-456-7994
hdclure@juno.com

SEND POST-WEEKEND LISTS TO:
Dan & Tammi Hoeger
9702 221st SE
Snohomish, WA 98296
425-788-8206
danhoe@microsoft.com

ILME FINANCE COUPLES

NAR Finance Couple

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618-656-6645

ILME Donations

Lutheran Marriage Encounter welcomes and needs your additional donations. ILME Weekend donations alone are not enough. Send a ME love donation often to your District Finance Couple to be used for the ongoing expenses of ILME.



**A Wedding Day
is a Day...
A Marriage
is a Lifetime**

DO YOU KNOW OF A COUPLE PLANNING MARRIAGE?

Please share the good news of Engaged Encounter with them.

For more information contact:

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Mike & Corrine McVee
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California

John & Cindy Baylis
(562) 596-8464

Colorado

Frank & Fran Hall
(303) 279-2130

Illinois/Wisconsin

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National Capitol

Marty & Cheryl Roberson
(301) 824-6278

Nebraska/Iowa

Mike & Connie James
(402) 492-9590

Ohio

Joe & Alice Strieter
(419) 893-1993

Oregon

George & Barb Winterfeld
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Washington

Luke & Donna Lucas
(253) 927-9232

**Lutheran
Engaged
Encounter**



For general information regarding LEE or for information about beginning LEE in your area please contact:

Dave & Sue Edwards

1509 S. Forest St., Denver, CO 80222
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Order from:

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Your Gifts to the Endowment-Dream Fund will help keep ILME alive

There are many ways to give: Life Insurance, Real Estate, Securities, Memorial Gifts, Wills, IRAs, Personal property.

For details contact:

Endowment Dream Fund
Lutheran Marriage Encounter
P.O. Box 510-335
St. Louis, MO 63151

Need Ideas to use for your community, circle, spiral or IMAGE?

Contact one of these District Resource Couples for ideas.

District I

Al & Ellen Gee
328 Fenton Ave.
Conneaut, OH 44030
440-593-2914

District II

District III

Larry & Coke Guilfoile
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Lindstrom, MN 55045
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District IV

District V

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JFKimball@juno.com

N.A.R. RESOURCE COUPLE

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nguthrie@suite224.net

Area leadership:
Your Community makes a change in the Weekend Schedule as posted on the ILME Homepage.

What do you do?

When a change occurs, (date, location, postponement) be sure that Dale & Carol Ure are notified. They are the NAR Telecommunications Couple and are responsible for keeping the ILME weekend schedule accurate.

First, they answer the 800-235-1010 telephone number and give weekend dates and locations to couples inquiring about Marriage Encounter.

Second, when they learn of a change they make the correction on the ILME Homepage weekend schedule. That information must be current as many couples are using the internet to get information about Marriage Encounter weekends. We risk losing credibility when the information is inaccurate.

When a schedule change occurs, be sure to notify:

Dale & Carol Ure
East 1818 37th
Spokane, WA 99203
509-747-7964, FAX 509-456-7994
hdclure@juno.com



More help for your daily (or occasional) dialogue—
Order Your ILME Dialogue Calendar

We want you to have the tools to reinforce your daily dialogue for better relationship between you and your spouse.

For 1999 we have a series of questions to give us all the chance to dig a little deeper into new or difficult areas.

Our wish is that you will all order and enjoy the calendar. Then tell everyone in your community about the calendar.

Don't forget to order extra calendars for those special friends and for those couples on your weekends. They make wonderful prayer couple gifts.

In His love and ours,
John and Anne Borgelt
947 E. 1st. ST.
Peculiar, MO 64078
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jaborgelt@freewwweb.com



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“Call to be Family” Online

Call to be Family is now available on the Internet for all encountered couples.

1. Go to the ILME Home Page (www.ilme.org)
2. Click on “Resources for Couples who have been on a ME weekend”
3. Click on “ILME Postweekend material”
4. Click on “Download some Documents, get dialogue helps”
(User name: ILME Couples, password: 1010)
5. On the second page: go to

“Misc stuff that didn't quite fit other categories,” and you will see “Call to be Family Spring 1999 Newsletter.”

After downloading, you will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader to open it. The Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from the Resource page or from www.adobe.com

Your editors have received many emails from couples all over the world who are using the internet to access “Call to be Family.” We will try to simplify the process.

