

Lutheran Marriage Encounter

1. **LME REPORT:**

a. **Praises and concerns as an FE going into 2018:**

- i. **Rejoicing in the blessings of a successful International Lutheran Marriage Encounter Family Reunion in July, 2017.** 75 couples, 1 widow, 1 widower, and 10 children shared in a weekend of enrichment, fellowship, and fun. All faith expressions were invited, and several were represented. Clint & Penny Bragg from Inverse Ministries were our keynote speakers. They presented a wonderful program called “Your Marriage, God’s Mission.” We were delighted that the pre-encountered Braggs fully participated in all aspects of the Reunion, including dialogue, small group sharing, meals with the community, and dorm room challenges.
- ii. **We recently completed an update of our GodLovesMarriage.org website.** In addition to now being mobile friendly, the fresh new graphics and ease of navigation make it a user friendly site for married couples seeking to enrich their relationship.
- iii. **Our first Outreach Encounter in Trivandrum, South India is set to take place in May of 2018.** Your prayers (and sharing letters) would be most welcomed. Letters can be sent to: Dean & Marcia Redman, 3615 Amberidge Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 (Please send to arrive prior to May 1st).
- iv. **LME is continuing our Strive to Thrive initiative in 5 key ministry areas:** prayer, personal (leadership) development, and giving our best efforts to Pre-Encounter, Encounter, and Post-Encounter experiences. Next meeting focus: Marriage Encounter Excellence.
- v. **We are seeking ways to better serve and involve encountered Widows/Widowers in community.** We currently offer/encourage community participation, but recognize the need to acknowledge individual needs/desires. Currently widows/widowers regularly participate as Encounter Registrars, Treasurers, Event Registrars, and Prayer Persons on Encounters, as well as participate in various community events. The possibility of opening the door for widows/widowers to present Encounters (who were presenters at the time of their spouse’s death) is being prayerfully considered.
- vi. **Challenges:** Effective inviting/recruiting/Encounter attendance, Post-Encounter involvement, lack of community significant community support in many areas, raising up of new, younger leadership, geographical distances, and a dwindling number of presenters.
- vii. **We are concerned about the increasing number of participants who express dissatisfaction about the length of the Encounter, the length of talks, and repetition in presentations. Folks are consistently requesting more down time/ free time/unscheduled time for interaction with their spouse during the Encounter.**

b. **Agenda Items:** We’d like to learn about each Faith Expression’s unique challenges that we and other FEs may not be aware of, in order that we may successfully work to advance the ministry in a spirit of love and understanding.

c. **Vision:** To energize and unify all faith expressions of WWME, so together we advance the dream of encountering the world.

2. **Rosters:** Attached.

3. **Wildly Important Goals (WIGS):** More encountered couples turned into ME invitation & publicity ambassadors, affectionately known as “wild ambassador machines” (WAMS). This involves inviting every couple met, arranging events for pre-encountered & post-encountered, getting publicity into their churches, workplaces, play places, organizations, radio & TV spots, etc.

The SMART results for 2018 will be more couples at more Encounters, reversing the downward trend of some FEs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen & Sue Rufe and Ed & Emily Kast