



MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

## December 2022 Newsletter from The Marriage Education and Resource Center (MERCY)



In a time of great darkness, Isaiah 9:6 shared the following:

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

This was a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. Therefore, may your heart be more open this year, than ever before, to our Lord.

Grace and peace,  
Penny and David

### The Worst Thing You Can Do When Someone Is Hurting

### Upcoming Marriage Events

The Marriage Experience  
Friday, January 20, 2023  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m. - Free

MERCI Barn  
8510 Hwy. 111  
Memphis, IN



Join Ryan and Jenny Brown for a free workshop at the MERCI Barn. They will provide practical tips and hands-on application to having intentional conversations that will lead you through a more fulfilling and fruitful year in



For many people it is NOT the most wonderful time of the year. Do you know someone who is struggling this season? If so, Debra Fileta, Christian, author, podcast host and licensed professional counselor, shares some things those she has counseled says were more hurtful than helpful. We're sure that wasn't their intent. However, these were eye-opening to us:

- Merry Christmas - We take this term lightly, but it may not resonate with those who are wounded, grieving and desperately hurting.

- Don't Ignore It, Acknowledge It  
When someone is hurting, we often don't know what to say so we say nothing.

Fileta said when she was going through heartache and grief, this is the absolute worst decision someone can make. Silence often communicates, "You don't care" or "You are not concerned."

Just saying a simple, "We're praying for you." Or, "I'm so sorry you are hurting." Or, an affirming hug, a quick email, or a thoughtful text let's the person know you care.

- Don't Dismiss It, Validate It - Don't say something invalidating like, "Look on the bright side." Or, "At least you have another child to enjoy." Divorce? "Better to have known love and lost than never to have known love at all." How about someone who just lost everything? It is not

your marriage and in your home.

Ryan and Jenny have a love for marriage and a longing to give married couples a space to connect on a deeper level in their relationship through gospel-centered conversations. Ryan is Executive Pastor of Gatherings at Graceland church. Jenny is a stay at home mom. And they love serving together in marriage ministry.

To register, [click here](#)

## CHOICES



FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

### **Choices for a Successful Marriage - January 27 - January 29, 2023**

**Agape' Wilderness Retreat Center  
831 Barebone Rd  
Bedford, KY 40006**

Come explore how to make choices everyday to enhance your marriage and make it so much more than just long lasting. Daily choices for love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control will give you a partnership that leads you to a truly successful marriage where two become one flesh.

This retreat is limited to 10 couples so call (502)255-7676 to book or email

recommended you try to cheer them up by saying "Try and count your blessings."

- Don't Offer Something, Do Something - Don't say "Let me know if there's anything I can do." More than likely they won't. Instead go ahead and do something. Bring a meal. Send a card. Plan a prayer vigil. Schedule a visit, etc.

- Don't Try to Make the Hurt Go Away You can't. The best thing to do is to be present, be available and to mourn with those who are mourning.

susan@agapwilderness.com.  
or visit their web **click here**.

Price: \$300.00 per couple  
(This includes two night lodging, five delicious meals and a workbook.)

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Love and Respect  
Starting Thursdays, February 2  
6:30 p.m. - (5 Sessions)

Southeast Christian Church  
Blankenbaker Campus -  
WC 329

### Spiritual Intimacy in Marriage



A great deal of impressive research proves that married couples who engage in spiritual activities, such as praying together, attending workshop services or reading Scripture at home report much higher levels of satisfaction.

So here are some tips from One Extraordinary Marriage to enhance your spiritual intimacy in marriage.

- Pray Together - You probably pray for your spouse, but praying **with** your spouse takes spiritual intimacy to a new level.
- Read The Bible Together - Reading the Bible or a devotional



Join Joe and Toni Rose, from Growing Your Marriage, as they walk through Love and Respect Building Blocks. This video series is based on Emerson Eggerich's bestseller, *Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; the Respect He Desperately Needs*. Over five sessions, you will learn why spouses react negatively to each other and how they can deal with such conflict quickly, easily and Biblically.

To register: [click here](#)

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New Beginnings  
February 17-19  
Nashville, TN

Online Program -  
March 17 - 23



together has many benefits. It can encourage you both in your faith. It allows you some specific time to be together. If you discuss what you've read, you'll learn more about one another.

- Attend Church Together - Being part of a community of faith allows you to meet new friends and mentors. As a result, you can encourage one another, pray for one another and be there for each other.
- In addition you may want to choose a Christian radio station to listen to together.
- Talk About Faith Together - This allows you to be vulnerable and open as you share thoughts and ask questions about your faith.

See our Couplettime Activity below.

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### Blended Families of Louisville



Couples in blended families face unique challenges and often wonder if anyone else is going through similar circumstances.



A New Beginning is a turn-around weekend designed to help couples who feel stuck in an unhealthy marriage, couples who are frustrated and unhappy, and couples considering divorce.

Over 75% of couples stay together and report finding happiness and satisfaction in their marriage.

For more information and a video of a testimony from a couple, [click here](#)



If you wish your spouse was more romantic; or perhaps he/she would plan a date night or surprise you and flirt with you like they used to, check out The Dating Divas Challenge that can go straight to your phone or email.

They will send a challenge to you and your spouse's

Did you know there is a group of Christian couples who are blended families in the Louisville area that meets on a monthly basis?

They have a meal, focus on a marriage topic, fellowship, pray and support one another as blended families.

Pat and Elizabeth Stotler are a blended family and host this group. They are a wonderful couple who have a heart for couples in blended families. They have led blended couple's groups for many years. They have been married for 28 years and know the ups and downs blended couples often encounter.

This is a friendly group of couples and they want to invite you, if you are a blended family, to join them.

Their next meeting is  
**January 15, 2023**  
**4:30 p.m.**

**They meet at 8709  
Banbridge Road**

And a bonus is children are welcome. The children meet in a separate part of the location.

If interested, please contact Elizabeth Stotler at 859-536-5124. If someone does not answer please leave a message or email her at: [pandestotler@gmail.com](mailto:pandestotler@gmail.com)

phone/email that tells you exactly what you can do in 10 minutes to add more fun, passion and romance to your relationship.

It may be the best \$60 you spend. For more information, [click here](#)

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### **Respect for Marriage Act - Redefines Marriage in Federal Law**

**H.R. 8404 repeals the  
Defense of Marriage Act, a  
bipartisan measure signed in  
1996 by President Bill Clinton  
that defined marriage as  
the union of one man and  
one woman.**

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### **Upcoming Broadcasts from Focus on the Family on Marriage**



*Helping Families Thrive*

12/20-21 - Encouraging Your  
Husband A Hero I & II - Dr.  
Juli Slattery

1/3 - Creating a Marriage  
Full of Love and Laughter -  
Mrs. Lisa Jacobson and Mrs.  
Phylcia Masonheimer

1/10-11 - Making Helpful  
Changes to Your  
Communication - I & II -  
Dr. Mike Bechtle

Listen to the broadcast on  
your local radio station,

mobile device or online at  
FocusOnTheFamily.com/Ra  
dio.

## Couplettime - Worship and Your Spiritual Journey



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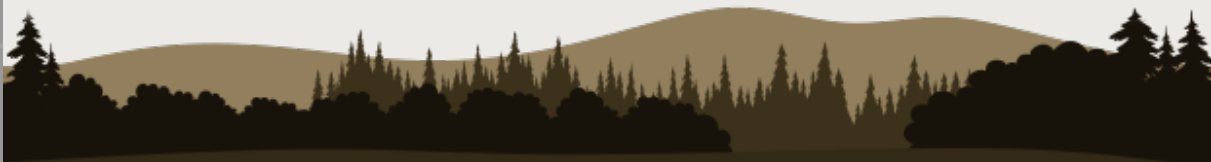
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Given the benefits of spiritual beliefs in a relationship, we'd love for you to discuss the following questions as a couple:

- What were your feelings about going or not going to church growing up?
- What meaningful or unpleasant experiences did you have?
- What person had the most influence when it came to your faith?
- How has your understanding of God changed over your life?
- How similar or dissimilar are your current spiritual beliefs compared to the family in which you were raised?
- How does your spiritual life affect your values and the decisions you make?
- What are your prayer concerns for today?



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