LIGHTHOUSE STORY

Let me tell you this little story. It was in the magazine "Proceedings" from the Naval Institute.

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities.

Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow."

"Is it steady or moving astern?" the captain called out.

Lookout replied, "Steady, captain," which meant they were on a collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, "Signal that ship: we are on a collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees."

Back came a signal, "Advisable for you to change course 20 degrees."

The captain said, "Send, I'm a captain, change course 20 degrees."

"I'm a seaman second class," came the reply. "You had better change course 20 degrees."

By that time, the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send, I'm a battleship. Change course 20 degrees."

Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse."

They changed course.



A PARABLE

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur, there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Some of the members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely, because they used it as a sort of club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions so they hired a lifeboat crew to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration and there was a liturgical lifeboat in the room where the club initiations were held. About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick, and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwrecks could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit the sea coast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown.

A Parable, adapted from an article by Theodore Wedel, "Evangelism—the Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life". THE ECUMENICAL REVIEW. October, 1953, p. 24.

BRIEF HISTORY OF WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

The story of Marriage Encounter began in 1952 when a young priest in Spain, Father Gabriel Calvo, began developing a series of conferences for married couples. Their focus was on the development of an open and honest relationship within marriage and learning to live out a sacramental relationship in the service of others. Each presentation ended with a question designed to encourage the couple to look at the concepts presented in terms of their own relationship. For approximately 10 years the "marriage teams of Pope Pious XII," as the presenting teams were called, traveled throughout Spain with this series of conferences for married couples.

In 1962, Father Calvo presented the conferences as a weekend retreat to couples in Barcelona. The experience was very successful and rapidly spread throughout Spain.

In 1966, Father Calvo and a couple addressed the International Confederation of Christian Family Movements in Caracas. The weekend spread to Latin America and to Spanish speaking couples in the United States.

In 1967, a couple and priest presented the weekend to seven couples and a few priests at the Christian Family Movement convention at Notre Dame University. By the summer of 1968, 50 couples and 29 priests were presenting weekends in the United States.

By January of 1969, a national executive board was formed to coordinate the development of the movement in the U.S. and Canada. In New York state, under the leadership of Father Chuck Gallagher and a couple, the movement was growing rapidly. Philosophical differences with the national leadership began to appear. In New York, stress was placed on the follow-up to the weekend, as well as on the weekend itself. There was strong emphasis on the development of a Marriage Encounter "community" to provide support for living the values learned through the weekend, especially for dialogue. In addition, the renewal of the Sacrament of matrimony was a strong focus, as a means for renewing the Catholic church. Thus developed Worldwide Marriage Encounter. As a result, Worldwide and National Marriage Encounter both exist today as two different expressions of the original weekend developed by Father Gabriel Calvo.

In the fall of 1971, the decision was made to spread the WWME experience throughout the United States and to other parts of the world. Teams traveled first to Grand Forks North Dakota with the assurance of financial support, personnel and training from the New York family, until the new unit could support itself. The only condition was that once self-support was realized the same assistance would be given to other areas. The weekend reached the west coast in December at Santa Barbara.

At about the same time, Worldwide Marriage Encounter began its international expansion with team couples being sent to Belgium and England. The expansion continues today and our worldwide weekend is now offered in numerous languages and dialects in over 80 countries.

BRIEF HISTORY OF MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER UNITED METHODIST

In March 1975, a United Methodist couple, Ron and Carol Wheatley, went on a Catholic Marriage Encounter Weekend. Before this weekend Ron and Carol shared they had become disillusioned with each other, God and the church. Something special happened on their weekend. Ron described it as a miracle or an impossible dream coming true. They left that weekend on Sunday evening with the kind of closeness they had shared in the early years of their marriage, an enthusiasm to return to their church and an appreciation for the rich heritage of the United Methodist Church. They began almost immediately recruiting their pastor and spouse, Walter and Euna Vaye Brant. In November 1975, Walter and Euna Vaye made their weekend. Together the Wheatleys and Brants had a dream to offer United Methodist Marriage Encounter Weekends. With God's help and blessing Marriage Encounter United Methodist was born.

In July 1976, 17 couples from Colorado, New York and Missouri-Kansas went on a Deeper weekend held in Kansas City and presented by a Catholic Team from New York. On the Monday following that weekend the 17 couples met and elected Ron and Carol Wheatley and Walter and Euna Vaye Brant as the first National Executive Team for Marriage Encounter United Methodist. The first National Board Meeting was held in January 1977 in Atchison Kansas and the first United Methodist Deeper was held in Denver in April 1977, along with another in September 1977, and 4 more in 1978.

The first United Methodist weekends were given in October 1976, in New York, Colorado and Kansas. These weekends were possible because of the excitement, enthusiasm, prayers, dedication and hard work of many couples in those areas. Texas became the first new state with a weekend in September 1977. In 1978, weekends were held in California, Arizona, Oregon, Georgia and Ohio. Our movement was growing. Soon Indiana would be giving weekends, then Illinois, New Jersey, Delaware and beyond. Today there are 39 states offering Marriage Encounter United Methodist. In November 1999, the first weekend was offered to 50 couples in Puerto Rico.

There is a spirit that has under girded our movement that was powerfully expressed by the late Ron Wheatley back in 1984:
"Those years were a beautiful experience for Carol and me. It's like nine years ago we looked at the horizon and saw a beautiful rainbow. Off we went, hand in hand, searching for a pot of gold. Many couples have joined us along the way. At times our views became distorted, and we lost sight of the rainbow. All we could see were clouds. Rainbows can be very illusive, and with a sudden weather change, our rainbow has completely left the sky. But then a warm cleansing rain would come, and the sun would light up the sky with radiant colors. The weather changes don't bother me as much any more, and maybe some of my tomorrows will be hazy and the rainbow will again be gone. But I know another rain will come, and bring a bright, clear rainbow again. We need you to hold hands and come after the rainbow, and then our dream of renewing couples and the church will again be bright and clear."

BRIEF HISTORY OF ENGAGED ENCOUNTER UNITED METHODIST

Engaged Encounter began in the Roman Catholic Church in Detroit in 1968, as an outgrowth of the Marriage Encounter experience. Engaged Encounter for United Methodists began in Tucson, Arizona, in 1981, where four couples who had attended a Marriage Encounter—United Methodist Weekend, met with some Catholic couples, and with their help adapted their outline to United Methodist traditions and theology. The first United Methodist weekend was held there in 1984. It is the vision of Engaged Encounter to have weekends available to all engaged couples.

THE STRUCTURE OF MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER & ENGAGED ENCOUNTER UNITED METHODIST

Marriage Encounter Couples

⇓

Local Flames

Engaged Encounter Couples

⇓

⇓

State/Area Communities

⇓

State/Area Boards

⇓

Jurisdictional Boards

⇓

ME/EE UM National Board

⇓

Interfaith Board of Worldwide Marriage Encounter

BRIEF HISTORY OF LUTHERAN MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

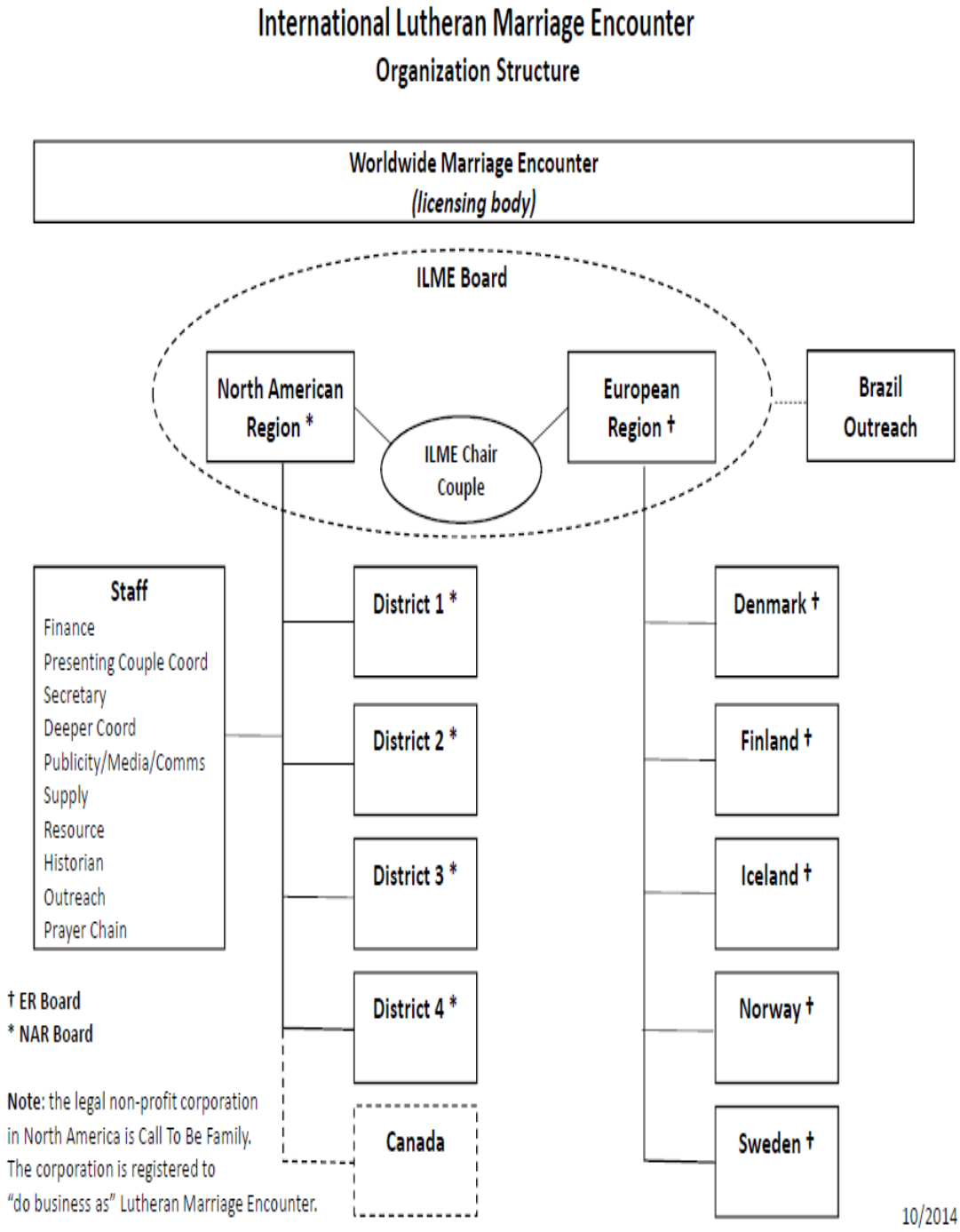
Worldwide Marriage Encounter was at its peak when Lutheran Marriage Encounter (LME) came on board. Its organizational roots began in May, 1975, in Cheney, WA with Don & Karen Kurtz. There were, however, many other areas in the country where couples were having similar ideas about beginning LME. The incorporation Board members were: Don & Karen Kurtz, John & Sally Duenow, Phil & Doreen Maakestad, Tom & Patty Steen (all of Cheney, WA) Carl & Maureen Ogren (Spokane, WA), John & Bev Lang, (Milpitas, CA) and Bruce & Andrea Maynes (Valencia, CA).

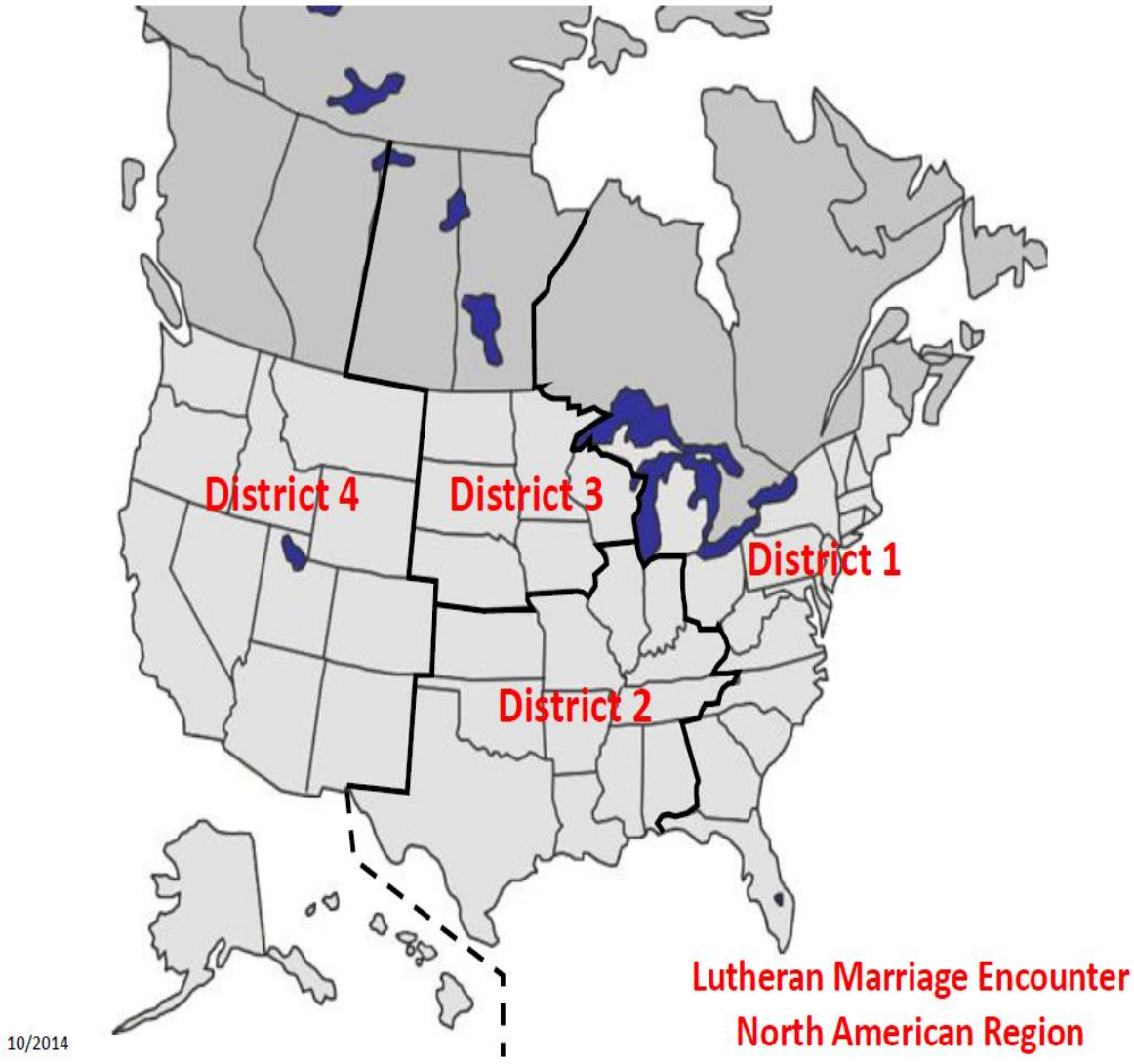
All along, we were encouraged by our Catholic Marriage Encounter family to be the best of who we were as Lutherans. They supported us emotionally, physically and even financially. They workshopped talks, supplied notebooks, pens, and provided prayer couples for that first weekend. They even paid for the plane tickets from San Jose to Spokane to fly in the fourth Lutheran team needed on that first weekend! Their enthusiasm and encouragement from all over the country reinforced us again and again. It is a story line you will find often as you read about the beginnings of International Lutheran Marriage Encounter (ILME) in each area.

On Friday, October 17, 1975, the first LME weekend began in Spokane WA. Four couples sat in a dining room large enough to seat 200 and dined on sandwiches they had brought with them. They were about to present the first LME weekend that was ever given...anywhere. None of them had ever given a weekend before, even the Admin couple.

The National Board was set up in Cheney, WA. In June, 1976, we had our first International couple encounter...a couple came down from Canada. We had our first convention in June, 1977, at Long Beach, CA. We had our first Encountered Enrichment Experience weekend in October, 1977. Nationally we reached out to all other denomination expressions of Marriage Encounter who asked for help.

LME grew and grew and became ILME. From a few dedicated couples with a dream, LME spread from Cheney, WA to all over the U.S. and is now holding weekends in Australia, Canada, Brazil, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Sweden, Denmark and in the European continent. Those first four presenting couples were: Don & Karen Kurtz, John & Sally Duenow, Phil & Doreen Maakestad (all from Cheney) and John & Bev Lang (from CA)


International Lutheran Marriage Encounter
Organization Structure
Worldwide Marriage Encounter
(licensing body)
ILME Board
North American Region *
ILME Chair Couple
European Region †
Brazil Outreach
Staff
Finance
Presenting Couple Coord
Secretary
Deeper Coord
Publicity/Media/Comms
Supply
Resource
Historian
Outreach
Prayer Chain
District 1 *
District 2 *
District 3 *
District 4 *
Canada
Denmark †
Finland †
Iceland †
Norway †
Sweden †
† ER Board
* NAR Board
Note: the legal non-profit corporation in North America is Call To Be Family. The corporation is registered to "do business as" Lutheran Marriage Encounter.
10/2014


District 4
District 3
District 1
District 2
Lutheran Marriage Encounter
North American Region
10/2014

THE PILLARS OF OUR MOVEMENT

The Marriage Encounter/Engaged Encounter Movement has four pillars - as in the word "columns" or supports. Try to visualize it as a table top, with each pillar being a leg. A strong table depends on four strong legs. If one is missing, or broken short, the table will be unstable or fall. Likewise, the four "pillars" (or legs) of our M.E./E.E. movement must be equal and strong to continue to have a strong Movement. Our four pillars are: the Marriage Encounter Experience, Presenting Couples, our Community and our Structure.

1. **The Marriage Encounter Experience** – This is the experience we all hold in common. It is our rediscovery of each other - our learning the dialogue technique - our hearing and responding to the call to live responsibly with each other and as a sign for the Church. Our call here is a continued and constant motivation to invite other couples to the Marriage Encounter Experience.
2. **Presenting Couples** – Our Presenting Couples are called to be a visible sign of God's love. Being a Presenting Couple is more than just helping to present Marriage Encounter Experiences and following up on couples after the Experience. It involves risk - it is stepping out in faith to live a different way of life - a radical lifestyle of intimate, communicating, responsible relationship with our spouse and our brothers and sisters. It's having a spirit of openness and continually reevaluating the way we are living to see how we can do better in relationship. It means being visible to the rest of the community as holy lovers. Part of this is being leaders in the Church - leaders in the sense described by St. Augustine: a leader is one who recognizes gifts and uses them for the good of the community. As Presenting Couples, we are called to be leaders in our Church, to recognize and accept our gifts and use them for the good of the Church.
3. **Community** – We as Presenting Couples are called to stay in touch with community and other dialoguing couples to continue to tell our story. The point is that M.E. and E.E. are not, in any way, separate from the Church - that is, from the lives of people. WE ARE THE CHURCH. Some couples will make their first choice to return to the Church during their M.E. Experience. Others will make their first decision to serve their church at the end of their M.E. Experience. Thus, they are entering into "leadership" as described above - the process of recognizing gifts and using them for the good of the Church. Although the gifts they use and the roles they fill may be different from those of the Presenting Couples, they, too, are called to be leaders in this sense. This is as it should be. This is part of what we say "yes" to - renewing our Church.
4. **Structure (The Way We Organize Our Love)** – See Faith Expression histories.

PRESENTING TEAM NON-NEGOTIABLES

At the basis of the term "family" are certain non-negotiables. These are common to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter family throughout the world and are fixed by the World Council of Worldwide Marriage Encounter and the North American Secretariat of Worldwide Marriage Encounter. No other board or leader within our movement is free to change them independently. These non-negotiables are:

1. Fidelity to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Outlines and Mentalities in every detail. The text of these outlines may not be changed without verification by the World Council of WWME.
2. Fidelity to the Deeper Common Protestant Outline. The Deeper is an experience of at least two full consecutive days as part of the process of training and formation of any Presenting Team. This means that all couples must attend the Deeper Weekend before becoming a Presenting Couple.
3. The Worldwide Marriage Encounter will continue its vision and mission as a Catholic experience, with license given to other faith expressions.
   A. Marriage is a covenant that exists between one man and one woman. (*1)
   B. The experience is intended for all married couples.
   C. The experience is presented in such a manner that our identity within our Faith Expression – as manifested by our values, teachings, and attitudes – can be proclaimed readily, without fear of offending and without apology.
   D. All Presenting Team members on any Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience or Deeper shall be a presenting team of a WWME licensed faith expression.
   E. Fidelity to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience and Deeper Outlines requires that a Presenting Team of one clergy couple and one lay couple be part of all presentations.
4. As a movement, commitment to the value of daily dialogue is an indispensable means of living a dialoguing way of life.
5. As part of every local Encounter, a support community will become available to every couple who has completed a Marriage Encounter Experience. The impossibility of establishing such a community is always a contraindication for conducting an Experience in any area.
6. Interdependence is required at all levels of our movement. It is expressed by a sense of belonging to one another. We cannot make independent decisions without regard to other parts of our movement since they isolate, separate, or divide.
7. Fidelity to the Vision and Mission Statements of Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

Note: (*1) "Fidelity to the belief that marriage is a faithful, exclusive and lifelong union between one man and one woman, joined as husband and wife in intimate partnership in life and love." – Article II of the Articles of Incorporation, Worldwide Marriage Encounter – USA. Added by WWME U.S. Board, August 2003.

DEEPER WEEKEND INFORMATION FOR LUTHERANS

(Adapted from the WWME Deeper Weekend Workbook dated August 10, 1997)

Our commitments as a presenting couple are not something new. We heard about them at our first Kickoff and said "yes" to them before the second Kickoff. Being a presenting couple entails living out these commitments. Each is part of what keeps our Lutheran Marriage Encounter going and strong.

A. The Weekend

The original ME Weekend is an integral and vital part of our Lutheran Marriage Encounter. Providing the Weekend to couples is part of our mission. Every member of the local ME community shares responsibility with the local area Contact couples for the Weekend. However, presenters have a special role and responsibility because of their closeness to the Weekend.

Commitments to the Weekend:

1, Presenting Weekends - We have a commitment to present Weekends on a regular basis, on a schedule that is reasonable for our area. Presenting Weekends is a privilege and one we are expected to accept whenever it is offered. We do not lightly ask to be excused from presenting a Weekend or to be re-assigned from an assignment we have accepted.

2. Writing Weekend Talks - This is obviously essential to presenting Weekends. Every talk we will present on a Weekend must be written, workshopped and typed 30 days before the Weekend.

3. Having Our Talks Workshopped - An essential part of writing the Weekend talks is having each talk workshopped by an experienced couple. This is one way we live out our commitment to ensure that the Weekend talks are faithful to the outline. But workshopping is more than just ensuring that talks are on target. It is also part of the process of learning to relate to others and growing in relationship with them.

4. Contacting Couples Registered for the Weekend - This is a very widespread practice, though not universal. It is a good practice, very beneficial, as it begins the process of building rapport with the couples. And it can help sharpen their desire and solidify their intention to attend the Weekend.

B. Weekend Presenting Couples

Weekend Presenting couples are leaders in the local ME community and the local Church. All presenters share responsibility with the local area Contact couples for the health and growth of the community.

1. Daily Dialogue - This is bedrock! The very foundation of our values of intimate communication and responsible relationship. Hence, a foundation of our approach to renewing Marriages.

2. Regular Attendance at General Presenting Couple Meetings - These meetings are set by local custom and circumstances. Many presenting couple communities have general meetings once a month, or every other month. Regular attendance is vital! It is part of information flow, part of individual and couple growth, and part of building a strong and intimate community.

3. Attend "Sweeps" of the Weekend Talks - These meetings cover one or more of the Weekend talks, exploring the concepts in the talk(s), their significance and inter-related concepts. It is always possible to deepen our understanding of the Weekend talks, enrich our knowledge of how they fit together and how they address contemporary concerns, and quicken our love of the Weekend and our desire for couples to experience it. That's what these meetings are for.

4. Inviting Others to the Weekend - This should be a natural outflow of our living the presenting couple way of life - that is, from the experience of intimacy with our spouse and with a loving community. It should flow, too, from our love of the Church - the people of God - and our knowing what a gift the Weekend is to the Church. And it should flow from our love of or attraction to certain couples (this includes your clergy couples) we know and our desire for them to experience the Weekend.

5. Presenting Information Nights - This is a particular way we can share our enthusiasm for the Weekend and testify to its effects in our own lives and our family. Many couples just need some basic information about the Weekend for them to decide to go; others may need to see someone else's enthusiasm.

6. Sharing Our Values by the Way We Live Our Life - We are called to live a life different from the norm. We must do that and do it in such a way that others can see us and we can thereby share the values which prompt us to live differently. "You must let your light shine for all to see." This means we must engage others in a basic faith community and be active in that community.

C. Commitments to the Community

1. Attending Weekend Renewal after Each Weekend We Present - We tell the couples on the Weekend, we expect them to attend the Weekend Renewal. So, it is vital for us to attend and be there for them. This continues the relationship we built before and during the Weekend with them. And it begins the process of extending the relationship to one of community. The Weekend Renewal gives them a deeper look at the possibilities of continuing to live a new lifestyle, and we are part of that vision.

2. Following up Couples from Weekends We Present - We owe it to the Weekend couples to follow them up, to contact them after the Weekend and see how they are doing with dialogue and a new way of life. Some of them will go home to a community of support for their new life. Many of them will not, and their Weekend Presenters are their primary link with the vision they got on the Weekend and at the Weekend Renewal. Through follow-up we continue to offer them the hope of a new way of living.

3. Involvement in Post Weekend Programs in Our Area - Our Mission Statement commits us to a post-Weekend community of support for those who attend the Weekend. Hence, each local encounter is responsible for providing such support for those who attend their Weekends. We as presenters must be a spark for the program in our area through our whole-hearted support and intimate involvement.

4. Regular Attendance at a Dialogue Support Group - That means we need support for our Dialogue and our values. We need to be intimately involved with others who share our values and who are also striving to live according to God's Desire. We simply cannot have that without regular attendance at a dialogue or sharing group in our home post-Weekend community. We cannot get all the support we need just from the presenting couple meetings. And others look to us to provide leadership in support communities.

5. Regular Attendance at Community Night or Community Renewal - Most local encounters have regular community nights or monthly community "renewals" - it's part of what makes a healthy ME community. It is vital for us as presenters to attend those regularly - the couples from our Weekend will look for us and they will not be encouraged to attend if they see that we don't.

D. Structure

The Structure of Lutheran Marriage Encounter refers to the way we organize ourselves and our activity to follow our vision and accomplish our mission. Some organization is a practical necessity to meet the needs of a movement that spans the globe. We do belong to a Worldwide organization. And we belong in many ways.

1. We Belong By Sharing Responsibility

We all share responsibility in working for our mission, which is part of our personal and couple commitment. We are not expected to act like sheep being lead around without question, but to be partners in leading with the area contact couple or Executive Couple. It means continual open dialogue with our leaders. And it means dealing with issues, questions and concerns as they occur, and not letting hurts or barriers build up. At one time or another, each couple serving in Marriage Encounter has had a struggle with some of the policies or methods of doing things that we use in Marriage Encounter. These struggles are perfectly natural. Since our specific call is to belong to one another, it is very important that we behave responsibly in this area. We are called to share our concerns with those in leadership and to continue to work together for our Mission.

2. "Non-negotiables" are a way we belong

One way we belong to each other is through knowing that we all live out specific values no matter where in this world we find ourselves. These values are called "non-negotiables." They are common to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Family throughout the world and are fixed by the International Council. No other board or leader within Marriage Encounter is free to change them independently.

The non-negotiables of Worldwide Marriage Encounter are printed on a separate sheet.

In addition to these requirements, there are district and local values which have been established by the leadership of those boards. These local practices cannot be spelled out here because they differ somewhat between district and areas. You can learn them from your local leadership.

DEALING WITH ANGER IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Anger and its effects on our behaviors are areas of concern often shared by couples during a M.E. Experience. Therefore, it is important that we, as presenting couples, be aware of how anger can lead to irresponsible behaviors in our everyday lives.

Remember, a feeling is a spontaneous inner reaction to a person, place, or situation. When we hold onto our anger, it is no longer a feeling; it is a behavior.

Unhealthy behavior can take many different forms such as unwillingness to verbally admit to my spouse that I am hurt, proud, afraid, angry, etc. There are several ways that we typically deal with feelings of anger.

- ♥ One is to blow up – to get angry. This can be coupled with the selfish attitude of, "I have a right to be angry." But there is a difference between feeling angry and holding onto anger as a right or acting in ways to show my spouse how angry I am.
- ♥ Another common practice is to pretend we are not angry, to swallow our anger or hold it in. This can take the form of the "silent treatment" or a defiant, "I am not going to share this with you" attitude.
- ♥ A third way is to express our anger through sarcasm and/or critical comments.

All of these are destructive ways of dealing with anger and will damage our relationships. **In order to get in touch with this aspect of your own relationship, consider and discuss the following questions:**

- ♥ What are unhealthy ways I deal with anger and how does that damage our relationship? How does it keep me from asking for forgiveness?
- ♥ What are healthy ways I can deal with my anger that lead to healing in our relationship?

Now, consider the following statement and then dialogue on the questions given.

Something to think about:
My angry feelings are God's gift, but my angry behavior is often wrong.

DIALOGUE QUESTIONS:

What are my thoughts about this statement? How do I feel as I reflect on it?

Angry Feelings vs. Angry Behavior

Angry Feelings are:

- ♥ Neither right nor wrong.
- ♥ Spontaneous inner reactions.
- ♥ Secondary – they cover other feelings.
- ♥ Often very powerful and can energize us.
- ♥ Able to be expressed without "getting angry."
- ♥ God's gift to let us know something in our heart is out of kilter.
- ♥ Often dangerous physically, emotionally and spiritually when ignored or rejected.

Angry Behavior is:

- ⇨ Different from angry feelings.
- ⇨ Acting out angry feelings.
- ⇨ Inappropriate behavior.
- ⇨ Aggressive or passive aggressive.
- ⇨ Detrimental to a relationship.
- ⇨ Often hurtful, intimidating, manipulative or abusive.
- ⇨ Usually the reason we say or do things we later regret.
- ⇨ Just plain wrong.

Examples of Angry Behaviors

Aggressive

- ⇨ Shouting
- ⇨ Screaming
- ⇨ Slamming doors
- ⇨ Hitting objects
- ⇨ Swearing
- ⇨ Throwing objects

Passive Aggressive

- ⇨ Sarcasm
- ⇨ Criticism
- ⇨ Self-pity
- ⇨ Glaring; Pouting
- ⇨ Blaming
- ⇨ Refusing to talk; Silent treatment
- ⇨ Claiming a right to be angry
- ⇨ Deep sighs

Healthy Alternatives to Angry Behavior

- ♥ Become aware of the feelings we avoid when we become angry.
- ♥ Admit at least to ourselves we are angry.
- ♥ Let go of blame and criticism of others and look into our own hearts.
- ♥ Write and dialogue on our anger.
- ♥ Remember angry behavior can be passive.
- ♥ Look at anger as a gift from God to warn us that something is out of kilter in our hearts.
- ♥ Journal on our anger.
- ♥ Make the decision to love.
- ♥ Take a walk or some other active form of exercise.
- ♥ Take time to be alone to reflect and think.
- ♥ Avoid reacting out of our anger.
- ♥ Learn to express our anger by simply saying "I am angry," without behaving angrily.
- ♥ Forgive the other person.
- ♥ Ask for forgiveness.
- ♥ Offer our anger to God in prayer.
- ♥ Deal with frustrating situations a little bit at a time rather than all at once.
- ♥ Learn what triggers our anger and ask God for healing.
- ♥ Make a gratitude list.

WRITING AND WORKSHOPPING

Something to think about:
Every presenting couple is a work in progress. The tools we teach couples during a M.E. Experience are the same tools we use at home as we strive to make our relationship all it can be.

WRITING BASICS

1. **Dialogue**
   - ♥ Effective writing grows out of our practice of daily dialogue.
   - ♥ Every presentation has a list of dialogue questions – using these will make writing easier and more focused.

2. **M/O (Mentality/Outline)**
   - ♥ Read the M/O before writing each presentation.
   - ♥ Cover all points in M/O.
   - ♥ Cover ONLY points called for in M/O.
   - ♥ Personal examples make the M/O come alive and relatable.
   - ♥ Instead of generalizing - Personalize!
   - ♥ Always begin with SELF - it is the cornerstone of all presentations.
   - ♥ Be honest and real with your feelings.

3. **Time**
   - ♥ Listed times are **absolute maximum**. You can be up to 10% shorter.
   - ♥ When timing, read aloud as if you were presenting.

4. **Other**
   - ♥ Short, simple sentences are easiest to read and easiest to listen and relate to.
   - ♥ Dialogue and sharing of feelings is at the risk and confidence level.
   - ♥ Choose a font and point size that is easy for you to read aloud.

Something to think about:
The most important gift we have to share is not our proficiency in dialogue but rather our faithfulness to dialogue as a part of our everyday lives.

8 THINGS TO AVOID WHEN YOU'RE WRITING

1. **Saying "felt (feel) like, felt that or felt… because."** *(These are judgments not feelings.)*

2. **Using "made (makes) me feel."** *(This is blaming, refusing to be responsible.)*

3. **Saying "I feel good or bad."** *(Feelings are neither right nor wrong, good or bad.)*

4. **Saying "my spouse, my wife."** *(Instead, use their name; it's more personal, intimate.)*

5. **Using the word "phase(s)" to refer to any portion of a presentation or part of the weekend.** *(The weekend is holistic and synergistic in a way the word phase contradicts.)*

6. **Being teachy or preachy; using the word "you" to refer to couples.** *("We" is much more inclusive and more accurate since we are all on a journey and none of us has arrived.)*

7. **Stating scripture passages other than the ones referred to in the outline.** *(This can easily become a distraction to couples.)*

8. **Absolutes such as "always" or "never."** *(The simple truth is absolutes are hardly ever accurate. More importantly, they tend to create walls that block loving communication.)*

Something to think about:
The more we let other couples see the real "me" and the real "us" through our writing the more we empower them to see who they really are as individuals and as a couple. This is especially true for clergy.

4 THINGS TO USE WHEN YOU'RE WRITING

1. "Presentation Room" not "*conference room."*
2. "Presentation" not "*talk."*
3. "Presenting Couples" not *"team."*
4. Scripture taken from The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is to be written into presentations but read from the Bible during the actual presentation.

Something to think about:
God uses our honesty and vulnerability far more effectively to touch the hearts of persons and couples than our eloquence, logic or wit.

THE PURPOSE OF WORKSHOPPING

- ♥ To assist a presenting couple in the understanding, internalizing, and personalizing of the Marriage Encounter concepts into their lives and relationship.
- ♥ To assist a presenting couple in the articulation and sharing of these M.E. concepts with other couples through lived examples.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A WORKSHOP COUPLE

- ♥ To affirm and validate people writing presentations.
- ♥ To act as a guide rather than a leader.
- ♥ To help form the couples in how to live the concepts of M.E. so they can write the presentations.
- ♥ To help the writing couples discover their lived examples of the M.E. concepts.
- ♥ To ensure the concepts of the outline and mentality are brought out in the presentation clearly and completely.
- ♥ To debug presentations, eliminate ME/EE jargon, repetitiveness, etc.
- ♥ To help create a high quality Marriage Encounter Experience.
- ♥ To give and get a better understanding of the presentations and flow and scope of the Marriage Encounter Experience.

FEELINGS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE DURING WORKSHOPPING

Angry	Confused
Anxious	Apprehensive
Afraid	Nervous
Uncertain	Uneasy
Scared	Fearful
Understood	Misunderstood
Loved	Anxiety
Confident	Worried
Nurtured	Devalued
Sad	Tense
Overwhelmed	Argumentative
Excited	Tentative
Frustrated	Vulnerable
Satisfied	Irritated
Worthy	Unworthy
Stressed	Relieved
Challenged	Comfortable
Appreciated	Recognized

Something to think about:
The Writing/Workshopping process is a wonderful opportunity for growth both as individuals and as a couple, if you decide to make it so.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR PRESENTING COUPLES

1. As presenting couples we are committed to dialogue on a daily basis.
2. It is helpful if we can come into the experience well rested. We can better serve the couples if we are not worn out.
3. Remember what we are giving the couples is the gift of ourselves, our vulnerability, and our willingness to share. God will take this and use it.
4. Also remember we are giving the gift of the M.E. Experience to ourselves as well as to the rookie couples. We must do what we are teaching and asking them to do. **DIALOGUE!**
5. Be natural and be yourself. We are not perfect couples and we do not have all the answers. No matter how long we have been giving Marriage Encounter Experiences, we continue to learn and grow.
6. We bring two 3 ring binders (one large and one small) – one in which to keep all of our presentations and another to use for the particular presentation we are giving in the presentation room.
7. It is best if we practice reading our presentations out loud prior to each M.E. Experience we present. It is a different experience from reading them silently.
8. Projection of our voices is important: sometimes we may need to read louder than we think is necessary.
9. Except for painful and difficult sharings, it is helpful to read our presentations with energy and enthusiasm.
10. We are to be authentic and let our feelings come through as we read.
11. We strive to make eye contact with other couples when we read our presentations.
12. Making a mistake in reading is not the end of the world. We correct it the best way we can and move on. Every presenting couple has and will make mistakes from time to time.
13. We pay attention to the other couple up front with us. If it appears we are not interested in what they are sharing then neither will the couples be interested.
14. We discover what our weaknesses or fears are with presenting M.E. Experiences. Face them, work on them to the best of our ability and let God take care of the results.
15. The Marriage Encounter Experience belongs to God. We are expected to dialogue, give our best and trust God for the rest. **God will use our dialogue on a daily basis to give our presentations power and authenticity**.

DEEPER WEEKEND FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback as we seek to make this the best Deeper weekend experience we can. You may print your name or remain anonymous.

Weekend Concepts and Presentations

Weekend Small Group Experiences

Weekend Workbook

Other