



UME NEWS

ISSUE 8 - DECEMBER 2023 - ANTICIPATION

ANTICIPATING WITH HOPE

BY PAM BEADLE

The Bible tells us that seasons are ordained by God: seasons related to the climate, but also seasons in life. The great book of wisdom, Ecclesiastes, talks about a season for everything: birth, death, tearing down, building up, crying, laughing, lamenting, and cheering. While seasons change, God does not - and I'm so grateful.

When I prepare to flip the calendar to a new year, I often find myself caught between reflecting on the past and anticipating a fresh new start. Both are good exercises for me. Celebrating and remembering the good times come easily; the hard things not so much. Recently, I've expanded my definition of grief beyond the physical loss of a person to any event that disrupts or challenges my sense of normalcy or myself. It could be the loss of a person, a dream, a job, a child moving out, a change in health, aging - really ANY CHANGE in my life.

Celebrating wins and acknowledging grief put me in a much better position to turn toward the future with hope and anticipate what's to come.

I anticipate by asking myself two questions: How did I grow and what am I hoping for? I usually think through my spiritual life, my relationships, and work life. I encourage you to find a little quiet space and time and do some reflecting and anticipating all while anchoring yourself in the unchanging nature of God. "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." Hebrews 6:19

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DAN & PAT VAN VLECK
International Executive Couple

Update from the Executive Couple

BY DAN & PAT VAN VLECK

Anticipation...

It is the precious time between Thanksgiving and the beginning of Advent. This year is one of the special years when we have a week in between the two. We've enjoyed being able to take a deep breath and just wait for a moment before we begin the greatest season of waiting – Advent.

Reflecting on our Thanksgiving, we are using this time to recognize the feelings of anticipation we have in different areas of our lives. Personally, we anticipate family time & sharing Christmas with our first grandchild, Samuel. We anticipate the new year, with new challenges and projects. We anticipate another middle school musical season for Dan. We anticipate time spent in Pat's new sewing/craft studio. We anticipate finishing our next UME Weekend talk.

For the ministry of UME, we anticipate new leadership across many levels. We anticipate Team Renewal in July 2024. We anticipate the birth of a Virtual Weekend experience and celebrate anticipated growth in the Expansion areas of West Tennessee, Sweet Home Alabama,

and Colorado Springs along with continuing to spread the mission of UME to more couples across the globe. We wait with anticipation for UME's 50th anniversary in 2025.

Above all, we anticipate the coming of Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our feeling of anticipation is a baby blue, soft and gentle, like Samuel's smile. It is also red like flashing lights in the rear-view mirror, nervous with excitement and self-doubt and wondering.

Whether our feeling of anticipation is baby blue or flashing red, we know we follow a loving God who is clearing the way for the ministry of United Marriage Encounter to transform, edify, and nurture one-man one-woman marriages, leading to stronger Christ centered marriages, families, and a community of caring couples.

Thank you for serving alongside us in ministry.

Peace, love and joy,
Dan & Pat

expectation



STEVE & PAM CHAPMAN
MESF Executive Director

From the Desk of the Executive Director

BY STEVE CHAPMAN

Anticipation: the action of anticipating something; expectation or prediction.

For me, it is the first cousin of expectation. When I start to anticipate, I start building expectations. I anticipated moving my mom would allow us to spend her final years reminiscing or catching up. What I didn't expect was that dementia would take her mind and she would pass away without many conversations about the past. This year, we anticipated 20 UME Weekends. We budgeted for 20 regular Weekends with 15 couples. We didn't expect Maryland to have a Weekend with six different languages being represented; we didn't expect Australia to have back-to-back Weekends encountering 60 couples, and we didn't expect West Tennessee and Alabama to successfully launch two new areas this year.

I think of God's people anticipating that the Messiah would come and take away their struggles and pains and, in

his spare time, slay the enemies that were giving them so much grief. They didn't expect Jesus, teaching to turn the other cheek, forgiving beyond our concepts, hanging out with the sinners and lowly, and - more importantly - showing hospitality to strangers. I love the line in The Chosen when Jesus says, "get used to different." I don't think they anticipated that.

As we move into 2024, we anticipate this ministry reaching more couples, helping more marriages, and doing the same thing we have experienced in years past. However, in our quest to expect what we think, let us be in the spirit of expecting the unexpected. Anticipating God's presence, but expecting miracles. Let's cry out to God for more. And anticipate more couples, more saved marriages, more community, more trouble, and more leaders, and expect God to surprise us like only He can.

Steve Chapman
Executive Director

Volunteer Spotlight

Paying it Forward for 30 Years

In June of 1993, we were a young couple married for 8 years with 3 small children, with all the stresses and work that comes with raising a family. Out of curiosity we signed up for an event called United Marriage Encounter Weekend. We had only minimal details about what would be involved but it seemed like an interesting concept.

After the weekend was over we were enthused and decided to join a Core group. Over the years we've developed many strong friendships through the core. Through community gatherings we have also become close friends with other marriage encounter couples who belong to different core groups. Aside from our immediate church family this group has become our spiritual circle of friends and supporters. We all share common interests in worshipping God and supporting each others' marriages.

Recognizing the value that the marriage encounter experience has brought to our relationship, early on we decided that United Marriage Encounter should be included in our financial and spiritual giving. In 1993 someone paid forward for us to go on a weekend. Since 1993 we have been helping to pay forward to help other couples go on a weekend and experience the same benefits that we have enjoyed.

We feel that marriage is a vital institution and the support of UME is our way of bolstering marriages and the spiritual growth of the family in our society.

Tom and Kara Ade
Iowa-Illinois Community



Will you help fill the gap?

Building Strong Marriages, Families, Communities

Historically the donations on a Weekend Experience only cover approximately 50% of the costs of the next Weekend Experience, leaving a significant gap. Annual Marriage Builders help fill this gap. Would you partner with us to build strong marriages, families, and communities by becoming an Annual Marriage Builder?



unitedmarriage.com/annual-marriage-builders



50 YEARS
UNITED
MARRIAGE
ENCOUNTER

THANK YOU

GIVING TUESDAY
\$5002

ASIA PACIFIC UPDATE

JOYCE RUDDELL

Anticipations in Asia

Our communities in Asia are excited to see God's goodness in the days to come!

In Indonesia, couples got a taste of UME as they practiced naming feelings and affirming their spouses. Leaders are excited to begin a marriage ministry on the island of Sumatra.

Leadership in Singapore met in October and talked about ways to help other couples see the value of United Marriage Encounter and how to

engage our members throughout the year—simply good old fellowship and having fun together!

In Spring of next year, Singapore will experience the enhancements of the new Weekend outline. These enhancements have greatly helped our new Weekend Couples bond with existing UME members, developing our community! Together, we are making a shift from focusing on Weekends to becoming a community of caring couples who support one another

throughout the year!

In Malaysia, leaders discussed a plan to reach more couples and revive their Weekends in September of 2024. The community had a great day of brainstorming, Core, and a Date Night—all in one day!

Our Asian communities enjoyed these times of fellowship and collaboration and look forward to many more in the coming year!



BOARD UPDATE

The UME-MESF Executive Committee met on November 11-12, 2023. Here's a recap of the meeting from Steve Chapman, Executive Director.

Kendall and Cathy Thomas, our Executive Clergy Couple, traditionally bring to the new year a verse and a song to help us focus on God's direction for us. This year it will be:

- John 15:16-17 (abridged from the NET) "I chose and appointed you to go and bear fruit that remains, so whatever you ask the Father in my name He will give you. This I command you – to love one another."
- The word for 2024 is "fruitful".
- The song they have chosen for 2024: Won't Stop Now by Elevation.

The Financial reports are provided at each meeting. UME and MESF both are on target for the end of the year.

The preliminary budgets are presented and reviewed. The small changes will now be sent to the Board for review before adopting the new budget in January. The Staff is recommending 20 Weekends for 2024.

The New Hope Foundation provided a \$30,000 grant to MESF and was thanked not only for their generous gift but also for the use of Shelly Meyn for administration work and all the in-kind gifts such as free rent, utilities, IT support, and building maintenance.

Annual staff reviews are an important part of the EC responsibilities and were conducted as a result.

Brenda Johnson will join the Staff in 2024 as the Team Support Staff.

Much of the remainder of the meeting was spent on HR issues, recommendations, and reviewing policies and documents.

The UME-MESF Board will meet December 7, 2023. For a list of the UME-MESF Board members, you can go to: Unitedmarriage.com/Resources – Board Resources.



2024: A Blank Canvas in Smoky Mountain Foothills

As the Weekends for 2023 draw to a close, the Smoky Mountain Foothills community looks back and reflects on an eventful year. After an early setback in the spring with the forfeit of our Weekend, we experienced a change in leadership. Not to be deterred, we finished the year with an impactful fall Weekend.

With this transition in leadership, we are now able to look forward to 2024 with anticipation of what is to come. Our anticipation is like a tightly sealed envelope, holding within it the suspense of an unwritten chapter, waiting to be unfolded and revealing the secrets penned by the future. This anticipation is not merely about turning a calendar

page; it symbolizes a chance for growth, renewal, and a feeling of unity throughout our community.

We have a collective optimism as we contemplate the opportunities ahead. 2024 is a blank canvas that provides a chance for us to invest in our relationships and strengthen our community. As we continue this journey into the future, we trust God will renew our spirits and energize us for the work ahead. Our continual hope is for our community to grow, not only in size but in love for one another and for this amazing ministry we so dearly cherish.

Here's to 2024 and all we anticipate in Smoky Mountain Foothills!

New on the Podcast

Grandparenting is a unique God given role with an incredible opportunity to invest in the lives of your grandchildren, while at the same time offering support to your children. Join our conversation with Steve and Pam Chapman as we explore this very rewarding - yet sometimes challenging job of a grandparent. No matter your season of life, you'll glean wisdom for relating to family members with Biblical wisdom and grace.





Endless Anticipations in Australia

October 2022: told by Weekend venue that our preferred August dates were not available, that the whole hotel was booked out by FIFA for Women's Football World Cup....

Anticipation: what the new dates would bring.....

Outcome: we secured a weekend dates in the month of beautiful spring October.

June 2023: Following our fun-filled Valentine's Gatsby Night, and a Vivid Sydney Harbour Cruise in May, we launched 2023 Weekend in June, for new registrations....

Anticipation: How many couples are we gonna get this year? What's the impact of changing to October?

Outcome: Praise the Lord, the registrations just kept pouring in, literally day after day.

July 2023: We presented at East Hill Baptist Church, organised by Rosses.

Anticipation: for the impact of our presentation.....

Outcome: The pastor signed up, and with his endorsement, 4 other couples signed up. He also passed the message to another pastor, he and 5 couples from his church also signed up! We were so encouraged!

Beginning of August: 4 months to the weekend, we already reached 25 registrations, approaching the limit of 30. Anticipation: What to do with the huge number of registrations? How would US head office react?

Outcome: We decided to aim for a second back-to-back weekend. We went searching for a new venue, and we found one at the romantic Blue Mountains within 1 week. Steve Chapman gracefully approved it almost immediately.

Mid-August: we went on a road trip, to regional towns 4 hours from Sydney, to speak at 2 churches.

Anticipation: for the response from these churches.....

Outcome: 4 couples from Orange signed up, and now we have a new UME foothold in the Western region of NSW state. Amazing!

September: Was informed that lay team couple Queks of Singapore cannot make it for the Weekend. Few days later we were told admin team couple Chapmans could not come either.

Anticipation: for last-minute replacement team couples.....

Outcome: Meinerts, Priests and Vynckes answered to God's call of duty, and came to Australia at short notice

Finally the Weekends arrived in October.....

Anticipation: First weekends with new clergy couple Rosses managing; 1st weekend with new revised format; 1st weekend with a new venue; 1st time back-to-back weekends.....

Outcome: 53 couples encountered; Pay-forwards at 85% of facility costs; 85% responded to post weekend surveys; 75% joined the WhatsApp group; and 40% coming to the post-weekend Reunion and Core.

*The BEST weekend- times 2- we ever had !!! * We thank God for orchestrating and planned all of the above!!

Andrew and Jennifer Tan



CELEBRATION 2025

Celebration. Definition? A special enjoyable event; a joyful occasion for special festivities to mark some happy event.

Anniversary. Definition? The annual return of the date of a special event.

In 2025 it will have been 50 years since our founders sat huddled together around a table formulating the plans for what is today United Marriage Encounter. And in 2025, we will have the opportunity and honor to celebrate these trail blazers and their families in the biggest Celebration UME has ever hosted!

Mark your calendars for July of 2025 as we journey back to where it all began in Western New York. Become acquainted or reacquainted with our founding members and the Community that started it all! We will fellowship, we will worship, we will reminisce, and we will party! What are we working on? A welcome reception with plenty of time to catch up with your UME Family, a keynote speaker, a special 50th anniversary banquet, a date excursion, games, and an amazing Celebration party complete with cake! You Do Not want to miss this Celebration!

Registration will open in January of 2024. Fully refundable payment plans are available! Watch your email; watch your snail mail; watch your social media for the announcement of the location, specific dates, cost, agendas, and special surprises.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms." (Psalm 95:2) Most importantly we will be celebrating all God has done in our Ministry these past 50 years and anticipating what He already has planned for us in the next 50 to come.

Can't wait to hug all of your necks and to celebrate alongside each and every one of you!

Until then ANTICIPATE!
Jon and Tammy Fleischer
Celebration Taskforce Chaircouple

Did you
KNOW?

Some have asked what the difference between **AMB** (Annual Marriage Builders) and our **Tribute Fund** is....

Annual Marriage Builders is like it sounds. It is the name of our continuing method of donating after the "Share the Dream" ask on the Weekend. Historically, our Weekend donations only supply 50% of the funds required to have a Weekend. To continue to provide Weekends to couples regardless of their ability to afford a Weekend, we partner with those willing to put United Marriage Encounter in their family budget. We have couples and individuals who generously fund this gift with monthly, quarterly, and annual giving. Our Annual Marriage Builders gifts range from \$10 to \$300 monthly; From \$300 annually to \$3,000 annually. The amount is not as important as the investment to help couples have a better marriage and to help United Marriage Encounter fund Weekends every year.

The Tribute Fund is a permanently restricted fund. That means that UME can not spend the donation to this fund. It is meant to be perpetual and protected. Money is donated to this account through Anniversary Celebrations, Honoring couples for their service, Memorial Donations, planned giving and any other way folks choose to honor the ministry. These help make UME a vital ministry. What does UME do with this money? It is wisely invested, overseen by an Investment Committee, and reported to the Board monthly. Two things can happen with dividends or gains that result: One, it can be reinvested with the intent of growing the fund larger, or two, UME can use the gains and profits to help provide more Weekends. The UME-MESF Board voted in 2016 that UME can use the gains only to fund more Weekends. Just to give you a vision of what this fund can do is a \$500,000 fund well invested and has a 10% gain annually would yield \$50,000 in additional funds or almost 5 more Weekends.

Become an Annual
Marriage Builder



Donate to the
Tribute Fund



2023 UME TRIBUTE FUND MEMORIAL:

HELEN TEEL (HEART OF ILLINOIS)
ED & LORI CRUMP (SOUTHEAST FLORIDA)
RUTH UHRENHOLDT (WNY)
LARRY NAHRGANG (IOWA-ILLINOIS)
JIM HILL (SMF)
MIKE WORDEN (HEART OF ILLINOIS)
DAVE & JEANIE STANLEY (MUSCATINE)
VIRGINIA CHAPMAN (MUSCATINE)



UME MERCH

Many of you ordered UME apparel in the fall through the online vendor provided. Staff heard wonderful reports and requests for more, including other types of apparel; hopefully there will be another opportunity to order apparel in the spring.

Some merchandise is available for purchase from the UME office by communities. These are sold at cost to you. You can find a full list of items in the Community Resources folder online: unitedmarriage.com -> Resources -> Community Resources (password: umedocs) -> 17. Materials available in Office -> a. Supply Order Form

pictured at right: date night book marks, note pads, keychain flashlights, koozie bottle cooler, refrigerator magnets



CHURCH PROMO PACKETS NOW AVAILABLE

Even though It seems your next UME Weekend is far off, it's the perfect time to begin letting others know about UME. The Church Promo Packet, a new resource that can help you educate your church about the ministry of UME is now available to you. This packet explains who we are and is filled with valuable testimonies from church leaders and couples. Contact Pam Beadle for more info on how to get yours: pbeadle@unitedmarriage.com

WELCOME NEW COMMUNITY EXECUTIVE COUPLES

Please join us in welcoming these new Community Executive Couples - let them know how much you appreciate them serving and please pray for them as you think of it.

David and Marci Pampuch - Heart of North Carolina

Buddy and Cyndy Black - West Central Florida

Jon and Tammy Fleischer / Billy and Laura Gribble - Smoky Mountain Foothills

Neil and Kristen Johnson - Maryland

Steve and Gina Cincotta - Aloha



Anticipation is Expectation

BY KENDALL & CATHY THOMAS

Anticipation is the action of anticipating something, expectation, forethought, or prediction. In Hebrew it means expectation, getting ready for what God has told you is coming, ie promises, and it is powerful. Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT) says, "...work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him."

Paul told young Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12 to set an example for believers. It meant to abandon your own ideas of what could and should happen, and instead seek God, listen, and trust in what He says. This reminds me of what we say in UME as we set off on the "Quest", more "misadventure."

This means different than we may anticipate. God has created each of us as unique individuals. Anticipation is not only waiting on God to see what unfolds or what He will do. No! It is not passive but active. Anticipation becomes a verb when used with its object. We collaborate with God. We are co-laborers. We all are part of the body of Christ. We serve the same God who is agape love, who gives the same gifts, and we have the same fruit of the Spirit, but this is lived out in billions of different ways because each person is unique. This is

anticipation, with billions of different variables, angles, looks, etc. Wow! Anticipation, yes, for what God is doing and what is created when we work with Him; walk, live, love in and through Him in our own uniqueness.

Anticipation is excitement, waiting eagerly for something you know is going to happen, like someone who proposes waits in anticipation of the reply and together they wait for the wedding day.

UME is on a quest to build better communication, better marriages and better relationships. We have co-labored with God to see Jeremiah 29:11 come true in 2023. We anticipate and expect to bear more fruit as we who are called and chosen for more work together in 2024. The best is yet to come!

In His Service,
Kendall and Cathy Thomas
Clergy Executive Couple



KENDALL & CATHY THOMAS
Clergy Executive Couple

CORE PRINCIPLES

Wayne & Joy Price

We felt curious with anticipation when Jerry and Carol Webb moved to our region and urged us to form a Core. We had never attended Core, and eventually our Core became a hybrid and included other couples. Core provides a deeper aspect of our relationship and God's plan for our marriage. Here is what you need in a Core.

A healthy size for a Core is 5-6 couples. Cores beyond that should multiply into two. There are three main responsibilities which rotate with each meeting: Host Couple, Program Couple, and Fellowship Couple. The host couple opens their home, while the program couple provides a devotion along with questions for the couples. Lastly, the Fellowship Couple provides the ever-important dessert. Cores are encouraged to meet twice a month.

The Program Couple usually leads the Core, and begins with prayer. Next is Relationship Sharing, where couples answer, "How do I feel about our relationship right now?" As trust builds, couples share a wide range of feelings. We've experienced feelings of acceptance and grace in Core.

After relationship sharing, the Program Couple shares a brief program. We use devotionals for couples, or Core programs on the UME website. The program and question are followed by each couple spending time in 10 and 10 dialogue. The couples then reconvene to share their "now" feelings and thoughts about the program. We feel uplifted by the programs and honesty of the couples in our Core.

There's time to briefly discuss Core/UME business, when we plan future meeting dates and anticipate UME Weekends.

Couples share prayer concerns and joys. The closing prayer is meaningful, as everyone has a chance to pray for one another. We feel blessed by the couples praying for us. After the closing prayer is dessert. Be creative with refreshments, and remember UME doesn't allow alcohol.

Whether or not your Core is in person, virtual, or a hybrid, you will be blessed by encouraging friendships and celebrating God's plan for marriage.

TEAM RENEWAL 2024

When: July 21-24, 2024

Where: St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center
2810 Seabrook Island Road
Johns Island, SC 29455



WAYNE & JOY PRICE
TRC COUPLE

GRATEFUL FOR 2023. . . ANTICIPATING 2024



JON & TAMMY FLEISCHER
CRC CHAIRCUPLE

2023 was an incredible year. The enhancements to the Weekend brought Community more deeply into the Weekend Experience! What a blessing for prayer couples all over the world to have the opportunity to hear from their Weekend Couples about the transformation in their marriages!

And here we are; 2024 rapidly approaching. Could God have even more in store for us? This is His Ministry and He is working in mighty ways, transforming, edifying, and nurturing marriages. If we are to emulate Him, to become the sweet fragrance of Christ, we too must allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in His footsteps.

CRC is excited about what's next in 2024! We are releasing a new Core handbook, including guidelines for multiplication of Cores; a sign of growth in our Ministry. We also started work on a Weekend Coordinator Handbook which will clarify the difference between UME Weekend requirements and our many beautiful traditions to be included in the appendix giving Communities access to Weekend traditions across the globe! CRC will also continue hosting Community Executive Couple (CEC) meetings and hope to begin hosting other Community leadership meetings as well. We want to hear more from you so we can transform, edify, and nurture UME Communities!

"But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me" (Micah 7:7). We eagerly anticipate with joy and hope the work He has for each and every one of us in 2024!

May "the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

Much love and many blessings!

Jon and Tammy Fleischer

CRC Chaircouple

Much love and many blessings,

Jonathan & Tammy Fleischer

jontamume@gmail.com

ONE VOICE UPDATE

On Oct 20-22, 2023, Twenty-two couples completed a Weekend in Maryland. Six of the couples experienced the Weekend presentations in their native or "heart" language.

In July 2022, Chris and Naomi Sicks, an encountered couple from Falls Church VA, zoomed into the UME-MESF Board meeting. Chris pastors One Voice Fellowship where many of the worshipers are refugees and immigrants. Each week his sermon is translated into 15 different languages. Chris and Naomi asked the Board to consider facilitating a Weekend translated into the "heart" language of the couples.

The Maryland Community Board volunteered their fall 2023 Weekend as a testing ground. Team Couples, Steve and Cheryl Swallow, Wayne and Joy Price, Bruce and Janet Adams and Rob and Steph Bandy agreed to having their talks translated. They worked with Chris and Naomi to learn the process for presenting their talks using the One Voice translation method. All the Weekend handouts were translated. With much prayer and hard work, the details came together.

On the Weekend the couples, used Ipads to follow the talks in their "heart languages", Spanish, Mandarin, Uygher, and Arabic. In a report to the UME-MESF Board Chris and Naomi shared, "Thank you for the openness to try new things and take risks, making it possible for six One Voice couples who speak other languages to experience all the blessings God offers through UME. One of our ladies from El Salvador told Naomi: "I was wrong! On Friday I thought, 'Why are we here? We don't need this.' I thought we had a good marriage. But now I see we have some things to work on, and this is really helping." A sister from China said: "There was a difficult area in our relationship we can't talk about, since May. But we talked about it this weekend, and it is better."

One OVF couple came into the weekend with a lot of tension and skepticism about the future of their relationship. However, after their 70-70 they were cuddling and smiling! They reported a big breakthrough and commitment to stay together.

For two of our couples, the husband and wife speak different heart languages. They followed along in different languages on the tablets and had different handouts. But they had to write letters in English! To help them dialogue about feelings, we created tri-lingual lists of feeling words. A highlight for us was laughing and sharing during the Demonstration Core.

The One Voice couples shared some of the sweetest now feelings: "I feel like warm bread, and you are the honey poured on top." "We are like two halves of an orange, and we fit together so good now." God worked in amazing ways for this translated Weekend to happen. We look forward with anticipation to how doors may open in the future to provide translation for couples who can better glean the Weekend concepts when provided in their own language.

We think many couples who have experienced a Weekend will identify with the following statement from one of the One Voice Couples "Before the weekend I felt like we were walking on a dark street...but now the streetlight is on, and we can see the way ahead!"



JERRY & CAROL WEBB
ONE VOICE TASK FORCE CHAIRCOUPLE





PAUL & JOYCE RUDDELL
PRAYER CHAIR COUPLE

PC

STRATEGIES FOR THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE

Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, authorities, and powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12). Satan targets us when we are living effectively for God and serving Him, so we want to do our best to support and help equip you in this spiritual battle. For Prayer Coordinator Couples, it is even more key to stay firmly founded because prayer is the thick of this battle.

1 Peter 5:8 says “Be alert and of sober mind. Our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” Satan is always trying to discourage us, but the Prayer Committee is dedicated to helping our members stay vigilant and strengthening our skills as we fight the good fight along with God.

For this reason, we will be sharing a series about spiritual strategies through the UME News. Though we may all know these strategies; it is helpful to remind ourselves often, so we can stay strong whenever the enemy attacks.

GET PRAYER SUPPORT: Ask others to pray for us especially as we are serving the Lord. They can pray God's protection over our relationships, finances, health—all areas of our lives. Ask God for extra grace, awareness, strength, and perseverance. Reach out to your local community members or submit a prayer request to our UME prayer community through the website: <https://unitedmarriage.com/prayer-request/>

You are not alone in this battle. Many of us feel embarrassed asking for help, but our community of couples cares. Besides, rarely is there a struggle others cannot relate with! We at UME have a stake in each others' marriages, and providing prayer support is one key way we show this love to one another!

With much love,
The UME Prayer Committee
Darren & Rose Thurber, Dean & Paula Ellis, Paul & Joyce Ruddell





DATENIGHT GIVEAWAY DATENIGHT GIVEAWAY DATENIGHT GIVEAWAY

WINTER DATE NIGHT GIVE AWAY

Complete 3 Dates from the list below, email datenight@unitedmarriage.com with 3 dates you completed and you'll be entered in a drawing for a \$25 date night gift card. Deadline to enter: February 29, 2024



1

Bake treats or make a gingerbread house together



2

Decorate your Christmas tree



3

Take a drive to enjoy the scenery



Go to a special outing

4



Have a dance party - stay in or go out

5

6

Make your favorite hot drink and watch a movie



Congratulations to the winners of the S'mores Date Night Giveaway: Nate and Amanda Hoover of Iowa-Illinois



YOU'RE INVITED

Honoring Marriage - It's What We Do!

Join us for a United Marriage
Encounter Weekend!

www.unitedmarriage.com



✉ info@unitedmarriage.com

f facebook.com/unitedmarriage

United Marriage Encounter®
2610 Park Ave
Muscatine, IA 52761

