

## **MF 09 Keynotes, Workshops & Presenters**

### **Elder Benjamin Jones, Jr.**

Pastor Jones has been a pastor in the South Central Conference of Seventh- day Adventists for the last 36 years. He is a graduate of Oakwood College and Southern Adventist University. He holds both a B.A. and M.A. in Religion.

He presently is the senior pastor of the First S.D.A. Church here in Huntsville, and teaches part time in the Oakwood College Religion Department.

He has been married to the former Carol Vanderhorst for the last 39 years. They have two children and one grand daughter, and one grand son.

His goals in life are these: To be the best husband any woman could pray for, the best father any child could wish for, and the best worker that God has on the planet.

He loves, God, family, people, and life in that order.

**Keynote: Developing, Nurturing and Maintaining Healthy Marriages FOR OUR FUTURE:  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2009: 6:20 p.m.**

### **Tracie Donahue**

Tracie Donahue's career has been spurred by life experiences. After a heart wrenching divorce that left her with 3 children, no job and in poverty she knew a college degree was the only answer. She obtained a Journalism degree at California State University, Sacramento. While attending college, she opened her own production company that specialized in topics that made a difference to our society. She focused on short documentaries, commercials, and public awareness campaigns, some of which have been featured on the worldwide network Current TV. She also wrote and produced reports for Filmfestivals.com, interviewing Hollywood stars like Oscar winner Helen Mirren, Award winning Actress Joan Allen, and Actor Jeff Bridges.

Donahue's divorce motivated her to write and direct her most recent film "Secrets To Love." The award winning, full-length feature documentary "Secrets to Love," has been captivating audiences around the world in the film festival circuit and changing many lives in the process. Her goal for this film was to educate the public about marriage, and now marriage education experts, teachers and counselors are using "Secrets To Love" as an educational tool in 12 states and 21 cities. Donahue is the 2008 recipient of the Life Heroes Extraordinary Person Award for her work using film to help others. Currently she is working with the California Healthy Marriage Coalition using her film Secrets To Love to raise public awareness about marriage education and how couples can have a happy, healthy relationship.

### **Luncheon & Session 3: "Secrets to Love: A Journey to find the Happily Ever After"**

Tracie Donahue searches for the answers to finding (and maintaining) a healthy, happy love, by asking *real couples* and relationship experts the most important questions:

- What draws us to people?
- How has marriage changed over the years and what does that mean for us today?
- Do certain Communication patterns contribute to the breakdown of relationships?

- How do skills such as Empathy contribute to a healthy, functioning relationship – and can these skills be taught?

This is a film about how real couples learned to get the marriage and relationship they hoped for. It all starts at home – but if applied globally, just think where it could lead!

### **Kenneth Anderson**

Is a nationally certified counselor with almost three decades of experience as a mental health professional. He has earned psychology degrees from Oakwood University, and Alabama A&M University, and is completing a doctorate degree in Human Services at Capella University. Presently, he is the Dean of the Humanities and Social Sciences Division at Calhoun Community College, as well as a small business owner and entrepreneur, a community activist, and his live, weekly radio talk show 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance has been broadcast on WJOU Praise 90.1-FM, Oakwood University's radio station, for the past 18 years. Kenneth is an ordained elder, and he and his wife Sonya are members of First Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **Kenny will be the Facilitator for the 2/14/09 Plenary at 9 a.m.**

This will be a Panel comprised of 5 couples, representing "The Lifespan of a Healthy Marriage." The couples will be an engaged couple, newly wed, and 10, 25 and 50 years of marriage. We will all be impressed at the responses to Kenny's questions, and be encouraged to have stable, happy marriages!

### **1 & 2: "Recession-Proof Your Marriage: Creating a Financial Partnership with Your Mate"**

In marriage, couples often have different perspectives regarding financial matters. One partner may be more frugal while the other partner is more wasteful. These differences can produce marital strain and emotional distress. Differences in money matters don't have to result in financial and marital ruin. The key to financial harmony in marriage is to learn how to understand and respect each person's approach to handling finances and to communicate more effectively in the process. This seminar will present a model for success.

### **Kathryn T. Lettieri, D.Phil, CFLE**

Kathy is a Professional Certified Family Life Educator, National Association of Families, Registered Mediator, Civil and Domestic Relations, Divorce. Practitioner Member of the National Association of Conflict Resolution, Family and Workplace Sections Member. Mediator, Madison County, Civil Court.

### **1. Pre-Marriage/Re-Marriage Preparation**

Family Background, traditions, the position and statement of the father, mother, and siblings, uncles and aunts, and grandparents each fit into the suitcase of baggage brought into a new marriage. Some of the baggage must be thrown out, some need to be mended, and some kept and treasured. Every topic that can be thought of to be discussed needs to be forefront. Education, careers, money, spending traits, God and church, children, health, good traits, ugly

traits, friends, favorite foods, tidiness, decorating styles, dress styles, jealousy, what marriage means, and why do you want to get married?

### Luther Kramer

Is the Owner/Founder of: The Key – North Alabama Center for Pastoral Counseling  
He is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marital And Family Therapist.

He maintains a general psycho diagnostic and psychotherapy practice working with individuals, couples, and families. Clinical subspecialties include the treatment of: marital and family problems, stress and burnout, anxiety and depression, addictions, and co-dependency, childhood sexual abuse and adult trauma, sexual disorders, and adult child of alcoholic syndrome.

#### 1. Couple and Conflict: Preserving and Enriching Marriage-Managing Differences Well

Having openly expressed differences and managing conflicts can be great for cultivating a higher probability for a long-term successful and loving marriage.

The best, most current, research on long-term marital success is best predicted by how a couple manages conflicts and then reconciles.

We'll present strategies for:

- Using the “decision diamond” process
- Understanding “temperament differences”
- Knowing the importance of “I’m sorry” and “I’ll look at the “grain of truth” in what you say.
- Why discovering “mutually beneficial solution” is so important.
- And more

#### 2. Marriage Vows-More Than a Symbolic Moment-The Deeper Meaning Psychologically and Spiritually.

- The vows that take less than 2 minutes have significant spiritual and psychological implications for the long term (years) success of your marriage.
- We'll open up the deeper meaning of what we are promising when we say “I Do”. (“Do What?”) This is a moment of “truth” that is typically overpowered by hidden psychological learning's, patterns, and wounds.
- Uncovering and resolving these unconscious beliefs and patterns enables our vows to take on deeper meaning and power.

#### 3. Wall Socket Sex

- Wall Socket sex is sexual intimacy that “lights you up and turns you on”.
- My approach is to help create a marriage of robust, fun sexuality with spirituality. “Religion is for people who do not want to go hell; spirituality is for people who have already been.”
- A central theme is the basic biblical question. “Who invented and equipped us physically and emotionally to experience our sexuality as a gift from God?” Only the sacred whom Christians call God (embodied in Jesus Christ).
- We'll look at 4 basic “No's” and 4 basic “Yes's” to “wall socket” marital sex.

## **Drs. Belvia and Calvin Matthews**

### **1 & 2: The Five Love Languages**

The importance of being able to express love to your spouse in a way that your spouse can understand and accept. Chapman's Five Emotional Love Languages include: Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Gifts, Acts of Service, Physical Touch

## **Kenneth L Mitchell**

Mr. Mitchell recently retired from the NASA/MSFC government agency where he served for approximately 40 years in the Huntsville, Alabama area. He has significant experience in the management of programs and projects where a coalition of people was always required to accomplish the nation's space exploration goals and objectives. He has considerable experience in working in a multi-cultural environment because many of his assignments were with "international partners" working on a common program or project. He served two years in Moscow, Russia (1994-1996) as the International Space Station Program Manager for the Moscow Office (diplomatic service). He spent years traveling to Europe to work with the European Space Agency on the Spacelab Project (1973-1979). He also was the Project Manager for two major elements of the International Space Station Program being built for NASA by the Italian Space Agency (1997-2004). In these positions he has been responsible for the management of millions of dollars annually and has much experience in the financial accounting and reporting of large budget expenditures to accomplish a mission. He has considerable administrative skills and was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Madison County Coalition of Healthy Marriages in 2007.

### **1 & 3: Seven Spirits of a Marriage**

The purpose of this workshop is to make attendees aware of the spiritual forces needed in a marriage to fulfill what God instituted for mankind. God instituted the "marriage" concept. The concept is presented at the beginning of the Bible (Genesis) and concluded at the end of the written scriptures (Revelation).

When a couple learns the seven spirits needed in their marriage they will have discovered how to participate in eternal matters.

## **Jane Bloemetjie**

### **2. Commitment**

Happy ever after must become more than just words. It has to be the credo of the marriage. That is not to say problems won't arise, but that when they do, couples can resolve them together. Also when problems occur that the couple thinks are beyond their means, that they will get the help they need to resolve the problems..

### **1. Communication Tools: Happy Talk: Keep Talking Happy**

Happy talk is at the root of happy, lasting relationships and marriages. After all, wasn't it just that "happy talk" that helped stir the emotions and finally helped you choose each other "till death do us part?"

How do we restore the "happy" talk and get the joy back into our relationship, after engaging in negative communication for so long?

Come learn/relearn some useful tools to say what you mean and mean what we say. And for those of you who have good skills, just come and sharpen them!

Relationships and marriages thrive on healthy communication.

### **Marty Tipton**

**Personal Mission Statement:** To Empower and Equip Individuals Living on the Frontline of Spiritual and Physical Warfare (i.e. Adultery, Fornication, Substance Abuse, Illegal Drugs, etc.), Through the Preaching and Teaching of God's Word, and the Economic Development of the African American Community.

Since accepting his clarion call to the ministry of proclamation in 1995, Rev. Tipton has been intimately involved in ministry. In February of 2003, he joined the full-time ministerial staff of First Missionary Baptist Church as Manager of Ministries.

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In 2006, Rev. Tipton was promoted to the position of Staff Minister of Young Adults and Youth Ministries. In this capacity he is charged with ensuring the steady and consistent growth of this demographic.

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Marty is married to the former Melody Ramsey of Flint, Michigan and they are the proud parents of three: a son, Morris III, and two daughters, Shayla Ramsey-Overton (Michael) and Morgan, and the joyous grandparents of Michael Overton, Jr. and Maxwell Overton.

### **2. Do you know what you're getting yourself into?**

Marriages often times fail, because people don't know what they're really getting themselves into. They don't know the commitment it takes, the sacrifice necessary, and what it really means? An even bigger issue is people don't really know what God has to say about marriage.

### **3. Will the REAL YOU please EMERGE?**

People get married under false pretense. They involve themselves and prepare to commit to someone they often times don't really know. They don't know because both parties present the image they think the other person wants to see. For a marriage to succeed, we must be upfront and honest about who we are, who we've been, and all the quirks that are a part of us as individuals.

### **Phil and Dottie Densford.**

They have been married 46 years, have two grown and happily married daughters and 6 grandchildren. Phil is a radar engineer. Dottie a retired ER nurse. They have taught classes in church settings for over 40 years. They are eager to share this DVD and have a lively discussion with you.

### **3. HisBrain/Her Brain**

"Mark Gungor is a pastor, speaker, author, musician and producer. With 30 years of speaking all around the globe. Mark is one of the most sought after speakers on marriage and family in the country today." He combines truth with humor to make it stick.

In "The Tale of Two Brains," Mark presents a humorous and memorable description of the differences in the way that men and women think.

### **Debbie Preece**

Has been the Executive Director of the Madison County Coalition for Healthy Marriages since its inception in 2005. She is a trained Marriage Educator and has been teaching marriage enrichment since before her position with MCCHM. She has been married to Rob for 25 years and has a grown daughter and son.

### **1. How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk/Jerkette**

Great marriages begin long before the wedding. Learn what singles (and parents) should know about the 5 keys to successful mate-selection, and how to avoid the "love is blind" attachment-syndrome. For singles, or single again.

### **Todd Gangl**

#### **1. Scars: Healing The Hurts of Relationships Past (Friday Evening)**

Scars, by their very definition, are the sight of past traumas. We all have scars, physical and emotional. When we carry these scars into a new relationship, such as a stepfamily, we can cause untold hurts in our new spouse and children. This workshop will help you to identify the major scars in your life and learn healthy and fun ways to deal with them. This workshop gives you practical insight and plans to help you walk free of your scars and to help others to overcome their own traumas.

#### **2. Discipline From the Inside Out (Saturday Morning)**

One of the major hurdles in any stepfamily is discipline. How far do I go in disciplining my stepchildren? When should I start to discipline? How do I get the rules in my ex's house to more closely reflect ours? Do I have to work with my ex on discipline for my children to be healthy? These questions haunt most stepfamilies and are a source of major conflict within many relationships. Let us help you to see a practical and effective course of action to get you, your new spouse, and your ex on the same sheet of music in the critical area of children and discipline. We will give you practical strategies and worksheets that will guide you every step of the way through the minefields of disciplining stepchildren and working with fiery ex's for the sake of raising healthy children!

#### **3. The Priority of Marriage (Saturday Afternoon)**

No issue has caused such a stir as setting your marriage as a priority in your stepfamily! Is it possible to have a great remarriage and raise wonderful children at the same time? Absolutely!

If you are willing to walk on the faith side and put child raising and marriage in their God ordained priority. Join us as we have an open and candid discussion of how to set your marriage as a priority without losing your children. We will laugh, we will cry, we will struggle through this tough issue that leads to more stepfamilies failing than any other issue. If you can conquer this one issue, you will cement the foundation of your stepfamily in the rock that will never be moved!