

**Family Life Ministries  
2008 Constituency Report  
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***To the Delegates of the 2008 Constituency Session:***

The need for relationship ministry in our congregations is a challenge that must be addressed. Individuals, married couples and families are all under attack. The post modern period is confronting the traditions and removing old fashion values. Many believe that the Bible has changed with the times. However, it is important to note that the Bible and its unchanging principles are the glue that keeps relationships balanced and intact.

Most of us believe in the African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." This proverb has been echoed on all levels of society with determined persistence and unwavering tenacity. However, there is another old saying that demands our attention. The saying is simple, "There are two sides to every coin." Thus while raising the standard of the African proverb, many have ignored the fact that there is another side of the coin. So, many homes are now reaping the negative benefits of allowing others to contribute to the raising of their children and they are stepping back from their responsibility. Some are allowing the government to determine how they pray, permitting the television to shape their values, sanctioning pop culture's influence on their character, and giving consent to the Harry Potters of our communities to shape the spiritual foundation. These things have eternal consequences. The village today says yes to same sex marriages and relationships, motivates men to be irresponsible and inattentive, and encourages couples to reach for a big house without developing a home.

In order to raise a child in this society, it takes a godly parent, or parents who understand the Bible and are applying its principles for living; individuals who value eternity above immediate gratification; parents who begin and end their day with family worship. Look at what our prophetess says about the influence of the family. ***"The well-being of society, the success of the church and the prosperity of the nation depend upon the influences of the family,"*** (White, 1952, AH) It has been the primary objective of the Family Ministries Department, to develop seminars, workshops, retreats and weekend revivals that would enhance the quality of life and instill skills for living.

This report consists of three departmental listings containing accomplishments that cover this term session and projections for the prospective years to come.

## **FAMILY MINISTRIES:**

### Accomplishments

- Provided confidential counseling services that consist of professional Christian counselors and therapists in most areas of the conference.
- Conducted four conference-wide marriage retreats and two hundred-two marriage seminars/workshops.
- Conducted three Family Ministry Leadership Seminars for local coordinators.
- Provided training for Family Ministries directors in the Southern Union.
- Provided and conducted parenting, divorce recovery seminars within the conference territory.
- Conducted pre-marriage counseling for 82 couples.
- Held six spiritual Family Revivals

### Projections

*The Family Ministries Department is developing a more creative approach to ministry, not depending on the traditional retreats and weekend workshops, alone, to enhance skills that will contribute to a quality of life.*

- Continue to invest time, energy and research to the Family Ministry conference website.
- Attend conferences that address marital and family issues among the general population, including intense focus on the African American marriage and family.
- Investigate the programs and processes that are being used in other denominations as they address family needs and marital concerns.
- Encourage individual churches to have marriage retreats.

## **MEN'S MINISTRY:**

### Accomplishments

- Conducted four annual Men's Ministry Retreats.
- Conducted three conference-wide seminars for the local Men's Ministry leaders.
- Conducted and provided 36 seminars/workshops that addressed men's issues such as father-son relationships, responsibilities and roles of husbands and fathers, the absentee father and male mid-life crises.
- Conducted Conference Area Men-only joint prayer meetings.
- Restructured the AEC Men's Ministry organization.

### Projections

*The Men's Ministry Department will assist in the development of a more cohesive, cooperative working relationship amongst the men that will model positive values to our sons and daughters and teach men how to be better husbands, spiritual fathers and godly mentors.*

- Provide more spiritual events that would encourage spiritual surrender and personal responsibility.
- Provide better tools for relationship building.
- Develop a mentorship program.
- Teach the local leaders how to instruct the men in their congregations to be spiritual leaders and God-fearing fathers.

## **SINGLES' MINISTRY:**

### Accomplishments

- Provided two Singles' Ministry Retreats and a cruise.
- Provided and conducted three conference-wide Singles' Ministry Training Programs.
- Conducted 24 seminars/workshops that focused on singles' issues.
- Provided workshops and activities at camp meeting that addressed concerns of singles.

### Projections

*The Singles' Ministry Department (S.O.U.L. Ministry) is working toward becoming a stronger department in terms of creativity, structure and spirituality.*

- Having activities that would connect to singles in other conferences.
- Continue to have an inclusive approach to ministry that would involve singles from different categories.
- Develop an atmosphere and process that would encourage more input, exchange, and personal involvement.
- Develop activities that would connect AEC singles to other conferences.

