

# Connections

LINKING RHEMA GRADUATES AROUND THE WORLD



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What the Church Needs to Know

Fall/winter 2011

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## The Bottom Line

Is Half Your Church Single?

KAREN JENSEN | RMAI/RAA Staff Minister

### To Pastors and Leaders:

One of our main goals in this issue of *Connections* is to give you a broad perspective of the singles in your church.

Singles, it turns out, are all sorts of people! They're young, they're middle-aged, and they're older. They're divorced, or widowed, or they've never been married. Some *want* to be married—either again, or for the first time—and some don't.

Some are raising kids, all on their own or with an ex. Some are in college . . . some are successful, seasoned professionals . . . and some are struggling to make ends meet.

In other words, they're a big, diverse group! They come in all shapes, sizes, and ages, from all walks of life, with all kinds of giftings, perspectives, and needs.

And here's the really big news: **today more than half of U.S. adults are single . . . which might mean that more than half of the adults in your congregation are single too.**

So apparently it's time to ask some questions. Is the church ministering effectively to singles? Do we want to? Are we geared mostly toward married couples and families? Who are these singles, how do they think, and what do they need?

First of all, it seems that one basic need all singles have is a place to belong.

And just like every other Christian, they need to have a sense of purpose. They need fellowship (maybe more than anyone else in the congregation). They might need help with their kids, or help in moving past a death or divorce. They need to mix with married couples and families.

As Chris Cutliffe says on page 5, they need to be told, **"They're a big part of our church,"** rather than, **"They're a bunch of people with issues until they find someone."**

Hopefully this issue of *Connections* can give you a new understanding of this large, wonderful, complex group of

people with diverse needs, and help you tap into their potential as you minister to them more effectively. If anyone can do it, you can . . .

### To Singles:

The second half of this issue is for *you!* We've got some good information for you—from finding "The One" and making the most of your single season, to living a godly single life and learning practical tips for single parents.

Be sure to check out the Resources section on page 19 for great reads and websites that can be a help to you.

We're so *excited* about the upcoming Singles Conference here at RHEMA! (See page 2.) This is your official invitation to *come*. Do whatever you can to get here, and bring your friends. We look forward to seeing you!

A fellow laborer,

Karen Jensen  
RAA/RMAI Staff Minister

It seems that one basic need all singles have is a place to belong.



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# A look at how some churches are ministering to singles . . .

## Including Singles of All Ages



### Brent Bailey ('92, '93)

Brent Bailey and his wife, Jodi, were youth pastors at RHEMA Bible Church for 11 years and have recently become leaders of the church singles ministry, Synergy. [www.SynergySingles.com](http://www.SynergySingles.com)

Like many churches across the nation, RHEMA Bible Church found that more than half the adults who attend are single. That makes singles a vital area of ministry.

Singles minister Brent Bailey recently conducted a survey (see right) which revealed a broad range of ages and needs, requiring a broad range of activities. Synergy holds two singles services each month and also has at least one fellowship activity aimed at relationship-building. But Brent says **the hardest thing is trying to reach all the vastly different needs.**

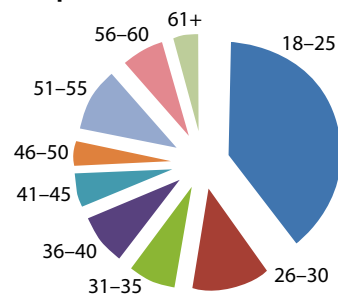
"It's hard to hit everyone," he says. "So you just have to understand that the over-30 group (very often single again) is going to want certain kinds of activities that the younger group won't come to. And when you do things the younger (most often never-been-married) group wants, the older group won't come. We try to provide both kinds of activities and do our best to reach everyone."

## Survey Results

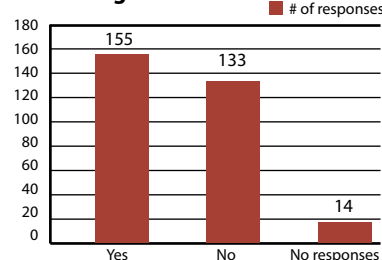
Over 300 singles were surveyed at RHEMA Bible Church and the following results were tallied:

| Age of Responders | # of responses | response ratio |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 18-25             | 120            | 39.7           |
| 26-30             | 37             | 12.2           |
| 31-35             | 23             | 7.6            |
| 36-40             | 25             | 8.2            |
| 41-45             | 16             | 5.2            |
| 46-50             | 12             | 3.9            |
| 51-55             | 31             | 10.2           |
| 56-60             | 21             | 6.9            |
| 61+               | 13             | 4.3            |
| No response       | 4              | 1.3            |
| Totals            | 302            | 100.0          |

### Age of Responders



### Current College Student



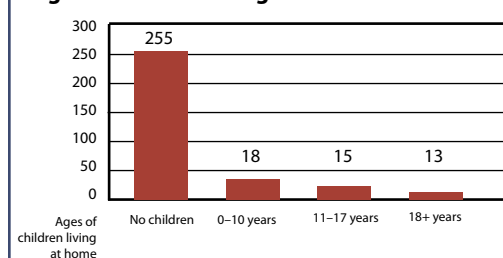
### Current college student

|             |     |       |
|-------------|-----|-------|
| Yes         | 155 | 51.3  |
| No          | 133 | 44.0  |
| No response | 14  | 4.6   |
| Totals      | 302 | 100.0 |

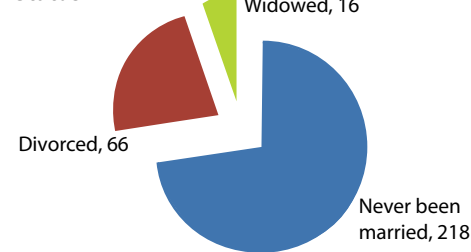
### Ages of children living at home

|             |     |       |
|-------------|-----|-------|
| No children | 255 | 86.1  |
| 0-10 yrs    | 18  | 6.0   |
| 11-17 yrs   | 15  | 5.0   |
| 18+ yrs     | 13  | 4.3   |
| Totals      | 296 | 100.0 |

### Ages of children living at home



### Status



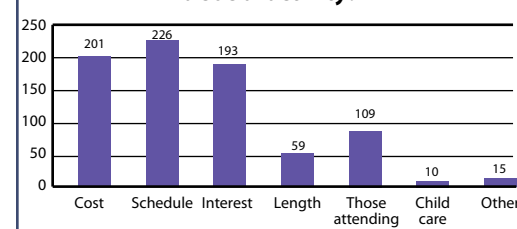
### Status

|                    |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-------|
| Never been married | 218 | 72.9  |
| Divorced           | 66  | 22.0  |
| Widowed            | 16  | 5.3   |
| Totals             | 299 | 100.0 |

### What determines whether you attend a social activity?

|                 |     |       |
|-----------------|-----|-------|
| Cost            | 201 | 67.6  |
| Schedule        | 226 | 76.0  |
| Interest        | 193 | 64.9  |
| Length          | 59  | 19.8  |
| Those attending | 109 | 36.7  |
| Child care      | 10  | 3.3   |
| Other           | 15  | 5.0   |
| Totals          | 297 | 100.0 |

### What determines whether you attend a social activity?



## Reaching College-Age Singles

### Eric and Erica Giesow ('08, '09)

Eric and Erica Giesow are Middle School and College Pastors at Valley Family Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan, for Pastors Jeff ('87, '88) and Beth ('85, '86) Jones. [www.ValleyFamilyChurch.org](http://www.ValleyFamilyChurch.org)

Studies show that once someone graduates from a high school youth group, they very often leave church altogether if there's not a group setting for them.

Studies also show that if churches can retain members in the 18-24-year-old range, they'll stay in church the rest of their lives.

So reaching them is crucial. "Investing in this age group is a win/win situation," says Erica Giesow. "We've found that they are eager about the things of God and eager to serve the church. The church benefits from their youthful energy and insight, and they benefit from investing their lives into Kingdom purposes!"

## In Smaller Churches

### Brad and Gigi Allen ('91, '92)

Brad and Gigi Allen pastor Victory International Church in San Mateo, California.

[www.victoryic.org](http://www.victoryic.org)



Very often in smaller churches, singles can feel even more isolated. So Pastor Brad and Gigi Allen work hard to integrate singles into the church family.

"We've started putting monthly activities on the calendar for all church members," says Brad, "and it turns out that it's mostly the singles who come. **We're aiming at the singles, but we make it open to all and it just works better that way, so that singles don't feel 'singled out.'**"

### Connections says:

Single people often benefit from being around couples and families, and they don't always need to be sequestered into separate groups. When it comes to all-church activities, make sure your words from the pulpit sound inclusive for singles as well as married people.

### TIPS: ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Walks / hikes on weekends
- Miniature golf / bowling
- Barbecues / picnics / potluck
- Game nights / theme parties
- Dinners / "dress up" evenings
- Concerts / museums / theater / movies
- Retreats / road trips / tours

### TIPS: WHAT WORKS

**Start with the Word.** "We believe that everything must start with God and His Word. We spend time teaching singles that God loves them and that He has a plan for their lives."

**Help divorced singles and single parents.** "We mostly have older singles in our church, so we focus on dealing with divorce and children issues. We also deal with dating, which is different for older singles."

## A (Single) Senior Pastor Weighs In

### Chris Cutliffe ('90, '91)

Chris Cutliffe is the pastor of CityLife Church in Glendale, Arizona. [www.CityLifeNow.com](http://www.CityLifeNow.com)



Pastor Chris Cutliffe has an interesting perspective on singles in the church—he's one of them.

"After 18 years of being single again, I can tell other singles that God truly *can* fill their lives with joy and fulfillment," he says. "In a healthy church environment, singles can find healthy friendships and opportunities to help others."

Chris says, "If churches approached the singles ministry with a mindset like 'They're a big part of our church' rather than 'They're a bunch of people with issues until they find someone,' singles could help their churches in greater ways."

### Connections says:

Consider helping single parents with child care or child-raising costs (clothing, food, school supplies). Make sure your singles ministry events consider the single parents, either by providing child care or making frequent kid-friendly events. Possibly consider having a ministry JUST for single parents, and also holding divorce recovery classes (see Resources on p. 19).

# Singles . . . Who Are They? What Are They Thinking?

In an effort to show the diversity of singles and to help leaders better understand their thoughts and needs, we asked the following questions of a wide range of single people. (They are all regular churchgoers in various U.S. cities.)

## Q. What's it like being single at your age?

*Male, age 26, never been married*—"It's frustrating at times. I'm ready for that next step."

*Female, age 26, never been married*—"Very enjoyable, but awkward as more of your peers pair off."

*Female, age 32, divorced, no kids*—"If I'd never been married and divorced, I think I'd have a tendency to be lonely. But now I'm just thankful for the freedom to do the will of God for my life."

*Female, age 37, divorced, no kids*—"There are years to look back on with lessons learned, and there are a lot of years ahead of me. Being single allows me a certain freedom. When you're married, there's more than just yourself to consider."

*Female, age 38, widowed, four kids*—"With four children, it's a lot of work. I need to be focused, on schedule, and always planning ahead. While grieving I found this to be a tremendous challenge."

*Male, age 36, divorced, three kids*—"Weird."

*Male, age 40, never been married*—"Freedom. I really love life, I keep improving, I have many friendships."

*Female, age 50, widowed*—"I find it rather lonely. I don't want to grow old all alone."

*Female, age 71, widowed*—"It means I can have a freedom that I had never experienced married. I was very young when I married, so I'm enjoying having hobbies and serving the Lord."



## Q. Would you say you're happy being single? Would you rather be married?

*Male, age 26, never been married*—"Nah, I would love to be married."

*Female, age 26, never been married*—"I love being single right now. I have time to devote to my relationship with God, volunteering, studies. I look forward to marriage, but I value this season."

*Male, age 27, never been married*—"I would rather be married."

*Female, age 32, divorced, no kids*—"I'd rather be married—if someone who fit me came along (where we balanced each other, communicated well, worked and played together well). I'm okay where God has me now, but I really do want to build a life beyond what I have."

*Female, age 37, divorced, no kids*—"I am very content in being single, but without question I have a desire to be married."

*Female, age 38, widowed, four kids*—"I am happy being single, and content with this stage of my life. I have definitely noticed in taking care of kids single, the balance is off regarding how God ordained the family. I would rather be married, because I believe it's God's plan for families to be complete. I also cherish the gift of marriage and the relationship between a man and a woman."

*Male, age 40, never been married*—"Yes, I'm happy being single—but yes, I would rather be married."

*Female, age 45, divorced, two kids*—"I'd rather stay single."



## Q. What is your biggest struggle as a single?

*Male, age 26, never been married*—"Keeping my hands to myself."

*Female, age 26, never been married*—"Feeling out of place among all the couples. Sometimes it seems like people who are married wonder why you aren't yet."

*Male, age 32, divorced, no kids*—"Finding Christians who want to hang out."

*Female, age 32, divorced, no kids*—"Missing a special companionship that I haven't found even in any of my closest friendships."

*Female, age 33, never been married*—"People telling me to be content being single, when the longing in my heart is to be married."

*Male, age 36, divorced, three kids*—"Dealing with people thinking I'm 'broken' or 'incomplete' because I'm not married."

*Female, age 37, divorced, no kids*—"Fellowship and community with people who are married as well as single. I often feel compartmentalized, thrown into the 'singles' box."

*Female, age 38, widowed, four kids*—"The workload is huge with four kids—not only physically, but emotionally, when you're the sole person responsible for all decisions and general happiness. I miss having someone to help with those things."

*Female, age 45, divorced, two kids*—"The thought of never having sex again."

*Female, age 51, never been married*—"Supporting myself."

*Female, age 52, widowed*—"None of my married friends want to hang around with me anymore. My life makes them sad, both because they miss my husband and because it makes them think of how this might happen to them."

*Male, age 55, never been married*—"People who find out I've never been married and their constant well-meaning remarks."

*Female, age 71, widowed, four grown kids*—"Being alone in family matters with no one to stand beside me in the face of controversy. Being respected and accepted, not someone that everyone feels they need to take care of. Without a husband, family members can overlook what you say."



The answers within pages 16–17 are in response to a questionnaire for informational purposes only, to help leaders understand how some singles may think. The views and opinions are not necessarily representative of the views of Rhema/RAA/RMAI or Kenneth Hagin Ministries.

## Q. In your opinion, what more could the church be doing for singles?

*Male, age 26, never been married*—"I'd love to see a younger age demographic. I feel like I go to an old person's church."

*Female, age 26, never been married*—"More networking events, so we could meet people we wouldn't otherwise connect with. Sound teaching is also needed on how to date/court/have a proper romantic relationship as a Christian, at different ages and stages."

*Male, age 32, never been married*—"Although my church has singles events, I think it needs to have more social events (not church services). I don't feel like there are enough opportunities to just get to know people."

*Female, age 37, divorced, no kids*—"Be careful not to label or generalize when speaking from the pulpit (i.e., referring to all singles as if they're in their 20s and never been married). I'd also like to see community encouraged between singles and married people. Psalm 68:6 says God sets the solitary in families. Many times the only thing offered to singles is with other singles."

*Male, age 36, divorced, three kids*—"Have more events that consider the child care needs of single parents. If there's no child care, I can't attend, period."

*Male, age 40, never been married*—"I think it's silly to put all singles together from 18 to 80. The church should reflect the heart of the people. Find the breakdown of ages and go with that. Find someone with a heart for singles and let them run it."

*Female, age 45, divorced, two kids*—"Help promote a culture that doesn't view singles as though something is wrong with them."

*Female, age 71, widowed*—"I think in order to have an effective program, there would have to be an ongoing system of pastoral care for singles. Singles are always overlooked, and fellowship is so needed by people who are alone. They are an untapped source of great potential in the church, if they would be inspired to be involved."



## Q. What is the best thing your church does to meet your needs?

*Female, age 26, never been married*—"We have a singles ministry, not just a singles group. Our services provide an atmosphere that has no pressure to perform or conform; it's not like a 'dating service.'"

*Male, age 27, never been married*—"I'm not aware of anything they do."

*Male, age 32, divorced, no kids*—"Singles Sunday school (consistency)."

*Female, age 33, never been married*—"My church does nothing for singles."

*Male, age 36, divorced, three kids*—"My pastor and his wife have taken a personal interest in me and my kids."

*Female, age 37, divorced, no kids*—"Our church really works hard to be sensitive to the wide range of needs among singles. It's not an easy task."

*Female, age 38, widowed, four kids*—"My church has people available to assist me if I let them know I need help."

*Female, age 45, divorced, two kids*—"Provide different types of fellowship and volunteer opportunities."

*Male, age 55, never been married*—"Our Life Groups (special interest groups) for both marrieds and singles really helped me meet a lot of people."

*Female, age 71, widowed*—"I do not see any effective provision in my church."



## Some ideas they came up with . . .

- Singles conferences
- Teaching on dating / relationships / finding a mate
- Divorce recovery classes
- Help for single parents (both practical and teaching)
- Grief recovery classes
- Singles groups meeting together (one age group with another)
- Church and community service projects
- Mentorship programs, even with married folks (the older teaching the younger)
- Financial classes

## A Place for Singles to Belong

### Robert and Linda Carr (both '90, '91)

Robert and Linda both were divorced before they were Christians, so they have a heart for those who are "single again." They head up the Singles 36–55 School of the Bible class at RHEMA Bible Church.

If you asked most singles in Robert and Linda Carr's class (nicknamed the "Champions"), they would say this group is more like a family than anything else.

"When I first came here, I was newly single, my extended family was far away, and I felt lost," says one woman, age 49, who attends regularly. "The Champions welcomed me with open arms, and I found a place to get involved, learn the Word, meet friends, have fun, and serve. This is my family."

Older singles often have completely different needs from younger ones, which makes ministering to them a whole different concept. "The biggest difference with singles in this age group," says Linda, "is that they've lived a life already. Some have been widowed or divorced, or have never married. Others want to be married or never want to be married. Some are parents or grandparents, and some have never had children. It's a broad spectrum."



### ▶ TIPS FOR MINISTERING TO OLDER SINGLES

**Promote interaction.** "When you meet, it can't just be teaching—people need to interact. Encourage them to build relationships, not look for dates. Get them involved in doing something within the group or at an event so they have personal ownership. If they have responsibility, they're more apt to come and stay, so their relationship with God can increase."

**Use name tags.** "At every event! It's the only way people can get to know each other and remember names."

**Have fun!** "If the leaders aren't enthusiastic and enjoying themselves, the singles won't either, and they'll stop coming."

**Stick with it.** "Maybe you start by eating out after service and the first time three people come. Then it grows to 10. Then it goes back to three. Don't get discouraged! Consistency is the key—keep going. Maybe someone who is newly single is just watching and waiting. You may have to make a year's commitment to one fellowship idea to get it rolling."

**Vary your events.** "Have periodic theme parties, and let people use their giftings for entertaining. If you do a potluck every month, jumble it up a little. Make some corny and some catered. Do some game nights with just snack foods. Go out for a night on the town. Take a road trip. Keep track of what kinds of events your group likes best, and also try new things."

So what do they need? According to Linda, one thing they need is structure in their fellowship. "If they're newly single, they may not know how to fellowship without their partner," she says. "Even if they've never been married, they may never have hung out with a whole group of people of different genders. They need help to do that!"

In addition to fellowship and teaching, the Carrs have managed to create a culture of caring within their group. Members often help each other move or do home repairs. They bring meals when someone is sick and provide transportation if needed. They network to get roommates, buy and sell items, and find jobs, and they rejoice together when someone has a victory.

"When I fill out a form that asks who to contact in case of emergency, I put down Robert and Linda's number," says one class member, age 52. "This is my tribe, my place of belonging."



Matching T-shirts help a group feel cohesive and also stand out in a crowd!

### Outside of Church

The Champions have several fellowship activities each month. Those include after-church meals at restaurants (sometimes as planned events and sometimes on the spur of the moment—meeting up in the lobby), concerts and theater events, themed parties and luncheons, game nights, pool parties, road trips, museum trips, men's breakfasts, ladies nights out, and more. A fellowship committee helps generate and implement ideas and prints a monthly calendar listing all events.

In addition to the monthly men's breakfast, every calendar usually includes what the Carrs call a "Plug-In Lunch," where the whole class goes to a local restaurant together after Sunday morning service. "It's called that because we 'plug it in' to the schedule wherever there's room," laughs Linda. "It's also a place where singles can 'plug in' and have fellowship."

The Champions have a regular booth in the church lobby where class members can pick up calendars, sign up for events, leave notes for each other, or hang out and make plans for after service.

One of the most important things this group does is celebrate holidays together. "There's nothing worse than being single again and facing your first Thanksgiving alone," says Linda. Making sure there's an event every holiday is often a sacrifice for the leaders, but it's vital for building a caring, family atmosphere for singles who otherwise might be alone.

The Champions always have Thanksgiving together, with everyone cooking and bringing their favorite foods. The class treasury provides the turkeys, then several members cook and bring them. After dinner, some go walking through the RHEMA Christmas lights and then play games and sometimes have entertainment. (There's always a TV for football watching!)

On Christmas Day, one of the class members has an open house, where singles can just drop in or stay all day. Everyone brings food. Other holiday events include a Memorial Day barbecue, a New Year's Eve theme party, and an Easter banquet.



### On Sunday Mornings

On a typical Sunday morning, Champions come to class at 9 (the main church service starts at 10).

Before anything official gets started, they help themselves to coffee and a snack, then fellowship for a while. A volunteer team handles the refreshment table every week. All the class members help provide the food. One week, those with last names beginning A through F bring snacks. The following week, the next group in line alphabetically brings them, and so on. (The Carrs are big on getting Champions involved with helping—from activity and food committees to greeters and ushers in class.)

The Sunday morning refreshment table is mainly intended to help newcomers. "I've found that people are more comfortable standing by themselves if they have something to do," says Linda. "It's scary enough coming into a room full of strangers, but if you can drink a cup of coffee or eat a bagel, you don't feel so awkward. It also gives an outlet to those with cooking and baking talents, plus it motivates those who get up late to come anyway, because they can eat and drink here with us."

After announcements (which usually cover ways to get involved in the church and upcoming class social events), Robert brings a word of encouragement from the Word of God for 15 to 20 minutes. "Over the last 15 years," he says, "topics have included everything from developing godly relationships and time management, to excellence, faithfulness, and finding your place." After the message, it's time to head over to the main service.



### Leaders in Singles Ministry

Many churches make the mistake of developing a singles ministry on a youth ministry model, and they look for couples to be “advisors” or “sponsors.”

But singles are not teens—they’re adults. And adults are not interested in being directed in ministry. They want to take responsibility for themselves. A better way to look at leadership in a singles ministry might be seeing the leader as chairman of the board and the singles as the only stockholders. They must own the ministry. They’re not interested in programs being done *for* them.

It works best to let the singles be the primary determiners of the program, the age delineations, and the written job descriptions that go with each office in the ministry cabinet.

It’s also important that these leaders be integrated into the whole life of the church. Singles ministry shouldn’t turn into a satellite operation, much less a leper colony. Some churches totally isolate their singles from the life of the rest of the church, but singles should be plugged in to decision making in the whole congregation.

### Understand the Numbers Game

- \* Single adults are mobile. They move from church to church, trying on a variety of organizations, clubs, and classes. Most singles groups turn over 50 percent every six months, so your singles group *must be set up to grow* or it will die from attrition.
- \* The older the age group, the more common it is for females to outnumber males. Work as hard as you can to reverse this, but also be prepared for it.
- \* Singles like large groups with lots of relational possibilities, but also small groups that offer authenticity. Growing, healthy singles ministries are a combination of large events that attract significant numbers, and small groups that provide close-in sharing.

### ONE KEY TO SUCCESS

One key to building a successful community of single adults in church is **balance**—meeting the spiritual *and* social needs of singles, promoting spiritual growth *and* relationships.

- **Balance your attitude.** Being single is not a disease or a stigma. Do you see singles as whole people? As a vital part of the church? Are there singles in leadership positions? Have you polled your membership to see how many are single? Create a culture that includes singles as important members of your church body.
- **Balance the ministry.** Have specific ministry to singles—conferences, retreats, regular prayer meetings, and services that teach on topics like developing relationships, godly principles for dating, courtship, marriage, finding your place in the Body of Christ, spiritual growth, and so forth. Balance those with practical ways to help singles—divorce or grief recovery, a helping hand for widows or single parents (doing repair work, watching the kids, running errands), someone to call in emergencies, and so forth.
- **Balance the social aspect.** Singles need fellowship and a place to belong. Have events just for them (see ideas on pages 5, 7, 8, and 9) *and* include them in all-church events with families. (This requires inclusive language from the pulpit. See p. 11.) Make note of the kinds of events your singles like best, mix it up for different ages, and consider child care or kid-friendly events.

### offer Divorce-Recovery Program

**Q.** Why do divorced people need to go through a recovery program?

**A.** They often need to work through issues of anger, abandonment, hopelessness, or fear and need help to do it. They also need new relationship tools to use in any future relationships, and help in building a new life.

**Q.** What kinds of issues can be covered in divorce recovery?

- A.** Here are a few areas to consider:
- Grief . . . anger . . . fear . . . guilt . . . rejection . . . letting go
  - Self-worth . . . examination . . . openness . . . trust . . . love
  - Forgiveness . . . godly character . . . communication
  - Hope . . . purpose . . . finances . . . the future
  - Family . . . children . . . exes . . . daily living
  - Relationships . . . sexuality . . . dating . . . boundaries



**Q.** How long does it take to “get over” a divorce?

**A.** It depends on many factors: how long someone was married, how good the relationship was and how committed they were, whether the divorce was a surprise to one spouse or the other, whether there are children, whether there’s a new relationship . . . personality, age, socioeconomic status, and so forth. Each person recovers differently, and most need help through the process.

### Use Inclusive Language

Many churches emphasize marriage and family so much that singles are left with the impression that to be a good Christian, you should be married and have kids. They often feel as though they don’t belong.

When speaking from the pulpit, remember that, very likely, more than half your crowd is single. If everyone preaching always refers to “your wife, your husband, or your kids,” they’re leaving lots of people out. If every bit of advertising for church events shows families and couples, then singles think these events aren’t for them. Consider changing the mind-set, the advertising, and the language to include everyone.

### A Place for Everyone

Most singles ministries that attempt to be comprehensive need to have *at least* three separate groups, divided by age:

- 21 to 35
- 30 to 50
- Over 50

The overlap is intentional, and obviously, no one should be checking IDs at the door. People need to feel comfortable with folks their own age, and there can be regular interface among the different singles groups and between the groups and the whole church.

**NOTE:** It’s never a good idea to separate people by their status of singleness (i.e., “career,” divorced, widowed, and so forth). Age divisions help people discover the right group for them and also guard against older adults seeking unhealthy relationships with those far younger.



# RBTC/RBC UPDATE

**A RECORD-SETTING YEAR!**

For the first time in RBTC's history, over 100 students were accepted into the various third-year programs for the 2011-2012 school year.

## New Women's Basketball Coach

The RHEMA Lady Eagles have a new coach at the helm for the 2011-2012 season.

When former coach **Olivia DiCamilli** ('01, '02, '03) stepped down this summer to explore other opportunities, **Kerri Sharp** ('05, '06, '07) was tapped to be the new head coach.



Kerri is a familiar face around the RHEMA Athletic Department. She played for the Lady Eagles for three seasons (2004-2007), served as an assistant coach for two years, and has been the Athletic Department secretary for the past three years. She has an associate degree in Science Technology from Southern Arkansas University Tech and will complete her bachelor's degree in Human Services at Southwestern Christian University in May of 2012.



"I've always wanted to be a coach—it's what I started out to do," says Kerri, "so this is a dream come true for me."

The Lady Eagles currently are two-time defending Association of Christian College Athletics (ACCA) national champions, and Kerri is optimistic about their chances again this season. "The team looks good this year," she says. "They've been conditioning, and they're solid. They're excited, I'm excited. It's going to be a good year!" [www.rhemaathletics.com](http://www.rhemaathletics.com)

## Alumni Fun AT CAMPMEETING!

On Tuesday night following the service, almost 600 alumni got together for an evening of food and photo ops, plus connecting with old friends and making new ones. The event was held in SDC 1, Room 1278, with the theme "The '70s!"



NEW From FAITH LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS

**25% Off for Alumni**

### Books

#### Create the World You Want to See

Kenneth W. Hagin  
BM754.....\$8.96 (Reg. \$11.95)

#### For Such a Time as This

Patsy Cameneti  
BM988.....\$7.46 (Reg. \$9.95)

#### God's Peace: Experience It All the Time

Lynette Hagin  
BM808.....\$4.46 (Reg. \$5.95)

#### Making the Most of Your Meltdowns

Brenda Thomas  
BM983.....\$9.71 (\$12.95)

#### Talk to Me: Connecting With the Heart of God

Lynette Hagin  
BM809.....\$8.96 (Reg. \$11.95)

### CDs

#### The Blood-Bought Church

Kenneth W. Hagin (2 CDs)  
CS46J.....\$10.50 (Reg. \$14.00)

#### Keys to Successful Christian Living

Kenneth E. Hagin (6 CDs)  
CS34H.....\$31.50 (Reg. \$42.00)

#### Miracles of Healing Series—Volume 4

Kenneth E. Hagin (6 CDs)  
CS79H.....\$31.50 (Reg. \$42.00)

#### Prayer: The Power Plant of the Church Series

Kenneth W. Hagin (3 CDs)  
CS28J.....\$15.75 (Reg. \$21.00)

#### Recognizing Roadblocks to Healing Series

Kenneth E. Hagin (4 CDs)  
CS30H.....\$21.00 (Reg. \$28.00)

#### Understanding the Anointing

Kenneth E. Hagin (6 CDs)  
CS28H.....\$31.50 (Reg. \$42.00)

#### Victory: God's Plan for You

Kenneth W. Hagin (3 CDs)  
CS29J.....\$15.75 (Reg. \$21.00)

#### Why, God? Why Me? Why Now?

Kenneth W. Hagin (3 CDs)  
CS62J.....\$15.75 (Reg. \$21.00)

#### Zoe: The God-Kind of Life

Kenneth E. Hagin (2 CDs)  
CS01H.....\$10.50 (Reg. \$14.00)

### DVDs

#### Empty Cisterns or Full Reservoirs?

Kenneth E. Hagin (1 DVD)  
DH28S.....\$11.21 (Reg. \$14.95)

#### How to Reign as a King in Life

Kenneth E. Hagin (2 DVDs)  
DS05H.....\$20.21 (Reg. \$26.95)



### Order Today!

**Online:** [www.rhema.org/store](http://www.rhema.org/store)  
(Enter coupon code CN1112 at checkout.)  
**By Phone:** 1-888-28-FAITH (283-2484)  
(Be sure to mention your 25 percent alumni discount—code CN1112.)  
Listed prices do not include shipping and handling.

## Finding 'The One'

### Christopher Burge ('00, '01, '02)

Chris Burge is founder and president of *Chris Burge Ministries*, which helps people (especially singles) reach their divine potential. [www.ChrisBurgeMinistries.com](http://www.ChrisBurgeMinistries.com)

Everywhere he goes, Chris Burge is asked by Christian singles, "How do I meet someone? What does the Word say about finding the right person?"

His answer? "Well, the Word doesn't say how to find the right person, but it does tell us how to *become* the right person."

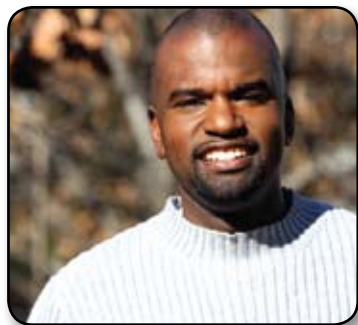
Chris encourages singles to work on their own issues *before* they get married. "Marriage problems are simply single problems that went unaddressed," he says. "We think that marriage will minimize those issues, when really, it maximizes them."

**"Marriage problems are simply single problems that went unaddressed."**

His best advice is, "**Become the person that you want God to send your way.** Get as healthy as you can *now*. The healthier you are, the more you can discern what you're looking for."

Don't be fooled by chemistry. "By the world's standards, finding Mr. or Mrs. Right is all about chemistry," Chris says. "That's why premarital sex is so dangerous. Once that infatuation leaves, people are yoked together and realize the only thing they have in common is the bed. **The problems you encounter in marriage aren't chemistry problems—they're relational problems.** So if you don't have relational skills—conflict resolution skills, walking in love skills, long-suffering skills—you're in trouble when the chemistry leaves."

Chris believes that the Holy Spirit is constantly giving us "things to work on," such as attitudes, family issues, getting out of debt, and so forth. "Pay attention to those promptings," he says, "because your unresolved issues—your wounds—*will* resurface and impact your relationship with your spouse."

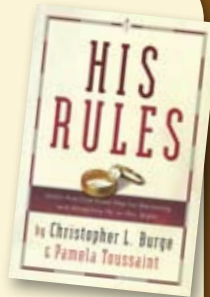


He says preparation time is never wasted time. "I got married at 42, which some think is incredibly late. But I learned from the mistakes of my friends and colleagues. If you're getting healthier or getting out of debt in advance, when you do meet your spouse, you'll be ready, and they'll be very thankful you worked on those things."

### TIPS: FOR SINGLES

- 1. Know what marriage is NOT.** Marriage isn't a treasure chest containing all the treats and prizes you've waited for, at no cost. It doesn't give you a purpose for living or unconditional love. It doesn't grant you a partner who will understand your every thought and desire, or provide you with all the sex you want or need. Make sure your views of marriage are right side up.
- 2. Give control of your life to God.** We all need His guidance to make right choices about whom to date or court or marry, and how to handle ourselves in a relationship. Too many of us make choices without the clarity and peace of knowing God's plan and purpose for us. Work to discover your purpose *now*. Don't wander through life grasping at false goals and aspirations to complete the assignment that has your name on it.
- 3. Practice intimacy now.** Intimacy requires the willingness to reveal ourselves and the desire to truly know another person. The best way to practice intimacy while we're single is to make Jesus the Lord of our lives. When we feel utterly accepted by God, holding nothing back from Him, we're free to be ourselves in a relationship with someone else.
- 4. Clean house.** Are you the type of person you would want God to send to *you* as a mate? If your gut answer is *no*, then it's time to clean house. Cleanse your life of unforgiveness, bitterness, sexual sin, and the fallout from past hurts and traumas. God wants you to enter marriage emotionally and spiritually healthy so you have something substantial to give the other person.

**Connections says:** Chris' book is a must-read resource for singles AND for those who minister to them.



## Make the Most of Your Single Season

### Kate McVeigh ('86, '87)

Kate McVeigh is an itinerant minister, radio and TV personality, and author. Here are excerpts from her book *Single and Loving It*. [www.KateMcVeigh.org](http://www.KateMcVeigh.org)

According to Kate McVeigh, you can enjoy being single!

"To be able to enjoy this season," she says, "we must get into faith instead of being anxious. We must believe that God is ordering our steps and preparing us for the future."

**Don't Wait.** "Many single people think, 'When I get married, then I'll be happy,'" says Kate. "But then they get married, and they're still not happy! So they think, 'Well, when I have kids I'll be happy.' But they're not. So they say, 'When the kids move out, I'll be happy.' So they're never happy!"

"We need to learn to enjoy every phase of our life *now*," she says. "Many times we're not happy in our current phase of life because we're waiting for the next one. So we have to purpose in our hearts to be happy right where we are. That means enjoying where we are on the way to where we're going."

### TIPS: BENEFITS OF BEING SINGLE

- ➔ **Mobility.** "When you're single, you don't have to ask anyone for permission to go somewhere or do something that you want to do."
- ➔ **Money.** "When you're single, if there is something that you want to buy (and you have the money!), you don't have to ask anyone if it's OK."
- ➔ **Freedom.** "When you're married, you have to consider your spouse and his or her desires. But as a single person, you are basically free to do what you want."
- ➔ **Time.** "Later when you're married or have children, you won't have quite the same amount of time. Your time will be a little more occupied, so enjoy this time while you can!"



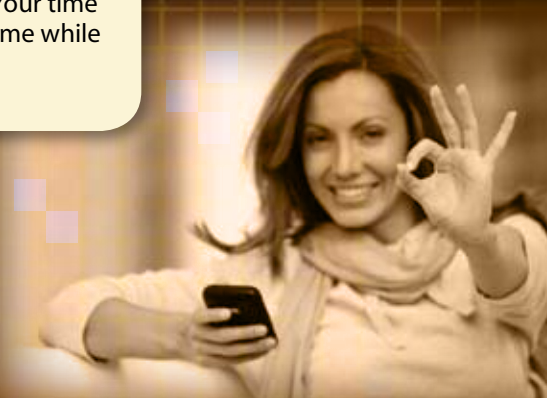
Kate meets a lot of Christian singles who have put their life on hold, waiting for the person they're going to marry.

"They may feel called to the ministry, called to start their own business, or called to help in a certain place in their church," she says, "but they don't take the step because they're *waiting* for a mate before they start. Don't wait to do the things that God has put on your heart—get busy fulfilling your vision!"

"For example, I bought a house when I was younger," she says. "Sure, I'd rather have a house with a husband, but since he wasn't here yet, I thought it would be wise to have an investment. I also save money every month, and I have a retirement account, preparing for the future as though I won't be married (but I believe I will!). This is not a lack of faith—it's just smart!"

**Be a blessing.** When you're single, it's a great time to work for God. "The Bible says in First Corinthians 7:32–35 that people who aren't married can spend their time doing the Lord's work and thinking about pleasing Him," says Kate.

"As singles we can be a big blessing to our church and to the Kingdom of God," Kate continues. "Remember, Jesus was single! And God used Him in a great and mighty way. Take advantage of the time you have as a single person. Use this season for God's glory."





# EIGHT REASONS to Say No to Sex Outside of Marriage

FOR SINGLES

FOR SINGLES

1.

## Reason #1. God, Who loves you, says don't do it.

Why does God forbid sex outside of marriage? Is it because He's no fun? No, it's because He *loves* you. He knows what sex outside of marriage (aka sin) will do to you. It'll eat your lunch. It'll mess with your mind, body, spirit, and emotions. It'll make you miserable.

- "God wants you to live a pure life. Keep yourselves from sexual promiscuity" (1 Thess. 4:3 Message).
- "Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people" (Eph. 5:3 NLT).

2.

## Reason #2. You don't want to miss out on the blessing of the wedding night.

There's something very special about a couple making love for the first time. They become one flesh. This exclusive experience of discovery and pleasure is only meant to happen within the intimacy of marriage. If we don't wait, we miss out on a very special blessing from God.

- "Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. As written in Scripture, 'The two become one.' Since we want to become spiritually one with the Master, we must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us more lonely than ever—the kind of sex that can never 'become one'" (1 Cor. 6:16 Message).

3.

## Reason #3. You'll be spiritually healthier.

When we live as carnal Christians, we seek to gratify the desires of the flesh and live only to please ourselves. If we continue to feed our fleshly desires, our spirit will grow weak and our relationship with God will be damaged.

- "Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. . . . For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live" (Rom. 8:8, 13 NIV 1984).
- "When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures . . ." (Gal. 5:19 NLT).

4.

## Reason #4. You'll be physically healthier.

This one is pretty much a no-brainer. If we refrain from sex outside of marriage, we will be protected from the risk of catching sexually transmitted diseases.

- "Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body" (1 Cor. 6:18 NLT).

5.

## Reason #5. You'll be emotionally healthier.

When God tells us to honor marriage and keep the marriage bed pure, He's helping us avoid baggage carried into our sexual relationships. Memories from the past, emotional scars, and unwanted mental images can defile our thoughts and make the marriage bed less than pure. God Himself *absolutely* forgives the past, but that doesn't mean we're free from the baggage that can linger in our minds.

- "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral" (Heb. 13:4 NIV 1984).

6.

## Reason #6. You want to show consideration for your partner.

When you choose to wait, you're putting your partner's needs above your own and considering his or her spiritual well-being. God wants the best for your partner, and you should too.

- "Follow God's example . . . and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph. 5:1–2 NIV 2011).
- "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves" (Phil. 2:3 NASB).

7.

## Reason #7. You'll avoid trouble.

There are always consequences to sin. Sometimes they are devastating. Pregnancy, abortion, adoption, broken relationships, sexually transmitted diseases—these are just a few of the possible scenarios of choosing sex outside of marriage. Just say no.

- "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23 NLT).

8.

## Reason #8. You'll keep a good witness.

Whether you like it or not, people are watching you, and your life has an impact on theirs. You may be the only Bible some people ever read. Choose to set a good example before the world and be a light to them.

- "You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless" (Matt. 5:13 NLT).
- "Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity" (1 Tim. 4:12 NLT).

Are there new rules for love, sex, dating, and living together?

Check this out: the truth about relationships and how to make yours great.

<http://www.northpoint.org/messages/the-new-rules-for-love-sex-and-dating/part-1>

## Single Parents



- **Create a network.** Even children with two parents need other adults in their lives to grow up well-rounded. And you need the help! Get your family, neighbors, school friends, church friends, or other single parents involved in your lives. Ask God to help bring just the right influences. Arrange play dates, swap babysitting, trade chores and car pooling, go on outings together, barter for things you need, and so forth. Don't be isolated!
- **Get a life.** It's easy to make your kids the focal point of your life and spend every moment providing for them. But it's important to spend time on your own well-being, to grow and develop. Allow yourself an occasional night out. Set goals for yourself with a plan to fulfill them. Do something you love every day. Stop and smell the roses.
- **If you're divorced.** Give yourself time to grieve over the loss of a relationship. Don't rush into another one until you've had time to heal. And give your children the stability and security they desperately need during this time. Assure them often that you love them and that the divorce is not their fault. Don't spoil them! The happiest children are the ones with boundaries. Also, do your best not to speak badly about their father or mother in front of them. That only hurts them.
- **Keep believing.** Never, ever think that you're outside the supernatural love and provision of God. Even when things are hard, stay rooted in your Heavenly Father. Soak yourself in His Word, determine to keep your joy, and keep expecting the victory. You're a believer, not a doubter!
- **Be informed.** There's a lot of help out there for single parents. Go find it! Check out this great website: [www.singleparent.lifetips.com](http://www.singleparent.lifetips.com). Also see the Resources on page 19, especially for help with finances.

None of us can change our yesterdays,  
but all of us can change our tomorrows.

—Colin Powell

## Stay safe

These tips can be used by everyone, but singles can pay special attention:

- ➡ Don't be out alone after dark.
- ➡ If you're meeting someone for the first time, always meet in an open, public place. (Don't have the person pick you up at home).
- ➡ If you live alone, anytime you go out at night, inform someone of your plans.
- ➡ Never go to someone's house or apartment alone if you just met them.
- ➡ At first, exchange email addresses with someone rather than cell phone numbers or physical addresses.
- ➡ If you're out (anywhere) and feel uncomfortable, heed the inward witness and leave.

## Power in numbers

When you're single, it's easy to get isolated. Don't let it happen! Get involved in groups (preferably Christian)—whether it's your singles group at church, a life group, a sewing group, a ministry group, an exercise group, a civic group, a special-interest group, and so on. There are a million to choose from. Find your tribe!

Here are some benefits of belonging to groups:

- ✦ Helps you avoid loneliness
- ✦ Keeps you from getting off balance; allows people to speak into your life
- ✦ Helps you develop as a person, learn new things, stay active
- ✦ Gives you a place to share your giftings and be a blessing to others
- ✦ Helps you learn about all kinds of people and relationships
- ✦ Provides a place to belong
- ✦ If you *do* think you've found Mr. or Mrs. Right, you have a place to bring them and let those who know you check them out and give you perspective.
- ✦ It's fun! (And we all need more fun in our lives.)

## Encourage yourself!

For many of us, being single is hard. We have problems different from those married folks have, whether psychological, emotional, or financial. Married people quickly forget what single life is like.

But, that doesn't give us the right to feel sorry for ourselves. *Everyone* could cry over what's wrong and depressing about life, whether we are single or married. *Everyone has problems.*

And anyone can feel lonely, sad, or frustrated, even those who are married. Anytime we look to another person to meet our need for love, support, acceptance, and joy, we are headed for trouble. Only Jesus can meet all those needs. Be careful not to set your heart on romance and special feelings instead of on serving and worshipping Him.

Keep your heart and mind on the Word of God and stay in faith. Remember that you are complete in Him, and you are called for a specific purpose. Focus on obeying Him. Rehearse your blessings. Go help somebody. Find out what it will take to improve things and start doing it, if only a little bit at a time.

## Divorced?

Top 10 "Dos" for Divorce Recovery

1. Ask for help and let help in.
2. Talk about your grief with others.
3. Take some kind of divorce-recovery program.
4. Face each obstacle as it arises.
5. Let others know when you're not feeling well.
6. Allow your feelings to come to the surface.
7. Allow yourself to feel whatever you feel—then go to the Word.
8. Accept your new reality and move on when it's appropriate to move on. (That doesn't mean you have to like it!)
9. Be willing to make mistakes.
10. Have **faith** that things will work out.

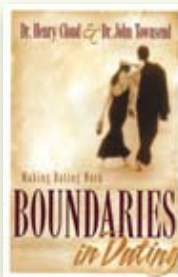
## Is it okay for Christians to date?

Lots of Christians are confused about this issue, and some think it's not "spiritual" to date. So they sit at home, "waiting" for the person of their dreams, doing nothing to meet people or learn about relationships.

In their book *Boundaries in Dating*, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend say that yes, it's okay to date—but within the biblical guidelines of character and holiness. These guidelines are not burdensome. They will save your life and help ensure that you end up with a good person to marry.

Dating can give you the opportunity to learn about yourself, others, and relationships in a safe context. It can provide a means to find out what you value in another person. Dating helps build relationship skills and can also help heal and repair past hurts. It's relational and has value in and of itself, just for the sheer enjoyment of getting to know another person. Dating can be great, with the right boundaries in place.

**Connections says:** *If you're interested in dating, you want to read this book. You might also want to try online dating. Many Spirit-filled Christians have met their mates that way!*



## resources

### Reads

- Table for One*—Camerin Courtney  
*Boundaries in Dating*—Henry Cloud & John Townsend  
*His Rules*—Christopher Burge & Pamela Toussaint  
*Single and Loving It*—Kate McVeigh  
*Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage*—Kenneth E. Hagin  
*Built to Last: How to Build Strong and Lasting Relationships With God, Family, and Friends*—Kenneth W. Hagin  
**20s–30s Never-Been-Married**  
*twentysomething* by Margaret Feinberg  
*20/30 Series*—Bible studies for young adults from Abingdon Press  
**Starting and/or Building a Singles Ministry**  
*Starting a Single Adult Ministry* by Sue Nilson & Andy Morgan  
*Giving the Ministry Away* by Terry Hershey, Karen Butler, and Rich Hurst  
*The Idea Catalog for Single Adult Ministries* by Jerry Jones  
*Creative Weekends* by Paul Petersen  
*How to Build a Small Groups Ministry* by Neal F. McBride  
*Making Small Groups Work* by Henry Cloud & John Townsend  
*Reaching Single Adults* by Dennis Franck  
*Single Focus: Understanding Single Adults* by George Barna

### Divorce Recovery

- Kids Hope* by Gary Sprague  
*Healing the Scars of Emotional Abuse* by Gregory L. Jantz  
*Radical Recovery: Transforming the Despair of Your Divorce Into an Unexpected Good* by Suzy Brown

### Single Moms

- Psalms for the Single Mom* by Lisa Hussey  
*Hope & Help for the Single Mom* by Lori Little

### Websites

- [www.TheSinglesNetwork.org](http://www.TheSinglesNetwork.org)—resource, networking, leadership, ideas, services, conferences, etc.  
[www.ChurchLeaders.com](http://www.ChurchLeaders.com) (type "singles" in the search box)  
[www.SurveyMonkey.com](http://www.SurveyMonkey.com)—resources for online surveying of your singles ministry  
[www.Crosswalk.com/11621142/](http://www.Crosswalk.com/11621142/)  
[www.Inspiration-For-Singles.com/](http://www.Inspiration-For-Singles.com/)  
**Divorce Recovery**  
[www.ChurchInitiative.com](http://www.ChurchInitiative.com)—Strategic ministry for divorce recovery, divorce care for kids, grief recovery, single parenting, groups for churches, and so forth. A vital resource for those going through divorce and those ministering to them.  
[www.WalkingTheChristianLife.com](http://www.WalkingTheChristianLife.com)  
[www.GraceForDivorce.org](http://www.GraceForDivorce.org)  
[www.PicketFences.org](http://www.PicketFences.org) (for women)  
[www.MidlifeDivorceRecovery.com](http://www.MidlifeDivorceRecovery.com)  
[www.DivorceRecovery.net](http://www.DivorceRecovery.net)  
**Single Parents**  
[www.SingleMotherHelp.org](http://www.SingleMotherHelp.org)—connecting mothers with free help  
[www.HelpForSingleParents.org](http://www.HelpForSingleParents.org)—advice on how to manage your finances  
[www.SingleParentsNetwork.com](http://www.SingleParentsNetwork.com)—resources, information, discussions  
[www.SingleParent.lifetips.com](http://www.SingleParent.lifetips.com)—tips on raising confident children from single parent families

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# Where Are They Now?

1979

**Patsy Busey ('78, '79)** celebrated 30 years of ministry at Living Faith Fellowship in Superior, Nebraska. During that time, LFF has sent 26 students to RHEMA (including Patsy's granddaughter Alona Runyon, who just started the 2011–2012 school year). In addition to church members, many local ministers and RHEMA grads from across the region came to the anniversary celebration, held in June 2011.



*Front Row:* Allen ('83, '84) & Lisa Runyon, Pastor Patsy Busey ('78, '79)  
*2nd Row:* Darren ('90, '91) & Shannon ('92, '93) Tyler, Linda Shrauger ('01, '02), Missie Wilt ('90, '91), Rev. Jerry ('78) & Darlene ('78, '79) Burlie, Rev. Sterling Hudgins ('83, '84—RMAI regional director), Rev. Tony Cooke ('80, '81—former RMAI National Director)  
*3rd Row:* Richard Bates ('95, '96), Rev. Barry & Julie Nelson (both '87, '88), Jon Albrecht ('88, '89, '03)  
*4th Row:* Nancy ('07, '08, '09) & Royce ('07, '08) Gonzales, Ellen Shrauger ('97, '98), Edwin Wiest ('02, '03)  
*Back Row:* Brian Whitecalf ('02, '03), Rev. Tony Finley ('92, '94—RMAI district director).

**Trey Hill ('79)** and his wife, Earleen, pioneered Word Fellowship Church in Kenedy, Texas, in December of 1979 and have been there ever since. They have sent many members to attend RBTC. This is a photo of all the RHEMA graduates who currently work in their church. [www.WordFellowship.org](http://www.WordFellowship.org)



*Front Row:* Sandra Hill ('99, '00), Lindsay Riojas ('06), Earleen Hill, Jennifer Garcia ('99, '00), Edith Stewart ('89, '90)  
*Back Row:* Jared Hill ('98, '00), Robert Riojas ('06, '07), Pastor Trey Hill ('79), James Stewart ('89, '90)

1982

**Jim and Lydia Ames (both '81, '82).** After they graduated from RBTC, the Ameses pioneered Abundant Life Family Church in Dodge City, Kansas, and have been there ever since. [www.alfcdc.com](http://www.alfcdc.com)



**Dave Ward ('81, '82)** and his wife, Vonda, pastor Legacy Family Church in Wagoner, Oklahoma, where they just expanded into their new sanctuary and doubled in size. Their sons Josh (with his wife, Jennifer), Jordan, and Caleb

travel with their Christian rock band Consumed by Fire and are all a part of the worship team at LFC. Jordan is also the youth pastor. [www.LegacyFamilyChurch.com](http://www.LegacyFamilyChurch.com)

1984

**Gregory Lovell ('83, '84)** and his wife, Kathy, live in Brockton, Massachusetts, and have been married 16 years. He is in charge of nursing home ministry at Living Word Church in Brockton and is also writing a daily inspirational devotional.



**Roger Vandevent ('83, '84)** and his wife, Gloria, announce the birth of their new daughter, Raquelzinha Ferreira, born July 19, 2011, in Brazil, weighing 6 pounds. Roger is 59 and Gloria is 49, and they say "persistent faith in Jesus produced this long-awaited miracle." The Vandeventers work in Brazil with the Churches of God in Christ.

1985

**Leon Troyer ('84, '85)** and his wife, Rebecca, this year celebrated the 20th anniversary of Agape Family Church in Three Rivers, Michigan. The weekend of March 13 they had an open house and special services with Rev. Marvin Yoder, former dean of RBTC.



1986

**Jay McMullan ('85, '86)** has been playing guitar and leading the praise-and-worship team since March 2010 for the Celebrate Recovery ministry at First Baptist Church in Orlando, Florida. [www.FirstOrlando.com](http://www.FirstOrlando.com)



1987



**Kevin ('86, '87) and Areni ('97, '98) Castro** announce the birth of their third son, Jordan Michael, born on April 9, 2011, in Nagpur, India. He joins his brothers

Jay (age 4) and Josiah (age 3). The Castros work at RHEMA India and are instrumental in the translation of many FLP books into Hindi and other languages. [www.Rhema-India.org](http://www.Rhema-India.org)

1990

**Kevin Jewell ('89, '90)** married Tina Kennedy on April 2, 2011. They live in Concord, North Carolina, where Kevin is the director of youth ministries for The Father's Heart Ministries and owner of Rockwell Auto Parts. [www.tfhp.org](http://www.tfhp.org)



1991

**Bryan Cowan ('90, '91)** has been on staff at Faith Is The Victory Church in Nashville, Tennessee, for almost 20 years and has served as associate pastor for the past 12 years. (His father, **Charles Cowan, '75**, is the pastor.) Bryan and his wife, Joyce, have been married over 30 years and have three children. [www.VictoriousLiving.org](http://www.VictoriousLiving.org)



**Terry and Dianne Scheel (both '90, '91)** pioneered Summit Church in Fenton, Missouri, in 1994 and have pastored there for 17 years. [www.SummitChurch.us](http://www.SummitChurch.us)

## Alumni Spotlight



**David Fleming ('90, '91)** has been in itinerant ministry for more than 10 years, traveling first with his mother, **Rev. Kathy Fleming ('77, '79)**, and then on his own. He lives in Broken Arrow and attends RHEMA Bible Church (where he used to work in helps ministry), but most of the time you'll find him on the road, ministering in churches and

helping people. David specializes in teaching on helps ministry, and most churches report that after he's been there, they see an increase in volunteers and dedication. And David lives what he teaches. When he's not ministering, he's visiting RHEMA pastors just to encourage, listen, and help. David has also traveled overseas to minister in Russia, England, Germany, Honduras, Jamaica, and Czech Republic.



1993



**Maurice ('92, '93) and Betty ('92) Monson** have recently become the senior pastors at Faith Christian Family Church in Gainesville, Florida. [www.fcfcflorida.com](http://www.fcfcflorida.com)

**Sharon Alice (Obenhaus '85, '93) Schol** lives in Columbus, Texas, and has been busy about the Lord's work since graduation. She's had a local Christian radio program, taught in churches, and done children's ministry, jail ministry, outreach, and women's ministry. In addition she is an artist and has written a book under the pen name Mary Alice Brown. [www.MaryAliceBrown.com](http://www.MaryAliceBrown.com)



**Bret Sutherland ('92, '93), and Brenna Lavold ('05, '06)** were married on June 11, 2011, at the RHEMA Chapel in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. **Rev. Bill ('86, '90) and Lorena ('89, '90) Ray** performed the ceremony. The Sutherlands currently reside in Broken Arrow. Bret is employed by Bank of Oklahoma and works in the security department. He is an usher for RBC and is involved with the RHEMA Rangers program. Brenna has been employed by Kenneth Hagin Ministries for the past six years. She is currently the Admissions Office manager and an instructor in the Biblical Studies program.



1996

**Mark ('95, '96) and Cindy ('97, '99) Shephard** are serving as assistant pastors at Valley Family Church in Salida, California. They both minister on the worship team, Mark teaches healing classes, and Cindy runs the nursery and preschool classes. Their daughter Precious (23) leads the young singles, son-in-law David plays guitar on the worship team, daughter Candace (21) is finishing her third year at Vanguard University, and son Christian (19) serves on the media team. [www.lifeatvfc.com](http://www.lifeatvfc.com)



## 1998



**Katie McDonald Contreras ('97, '98)** and her husband, Abner, announce the birth of their daughter, Vanessa Joy, who arrived on May 14, 2011, weighing 6 pounds, 10 ounces. The Contreras family lives and works in New Smyrna Beach, Florida.

**Jewell Griffith ('95, '97, '98)** married Aaron Rodgers on January 22, 2011, in Terre Haute, Indiana. (Although Aaron didn't attend RHEMA, Jewell graduated from RBTC with Aaron's dad, **Ron Rodgers '97, '98**). Aaron is a Christian attorney, and the Rodgerses are involved in their church, Cross Tabernacle, in Terre Haute.



## 2001



**Aaron Antis ('00, '01)** owns his own real estate consulting business in Broken Arrow, and he and his wife, Debbie, currently serve in the children's ministry at RHEMA Bible Church. They are the proud parents of two adopted sons: Levi (10) and Josiah (8).

**Christina Brooks ('99, '00, '01)** is the first female chaplain to be employed by the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Christina comes from a family of US armed services veterans and earned a master's degree in practical theology from Regent University. She served her clinical pastoral residency in the Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens VA medical centers and is board-certified by the National Association of Veterans Affairs Chaplains (NAVAC).



## 2002

**James and Maureen Bowman ('01, '02)** celebrated their one-year anniversary at Family Prayer and Worship Center in West Allis, Wisconsin, which they planted in March of 2010. Before starting the church, Jim was active in prison ministry in Wisconsin. [www.fpwcenter.org](http://www.fpwcenter.org)

### SEND US YOUR NEWS!

If you've had a wedding, a new baby, a new ministry position, or some other milestone happen in your life, we want to hear about it! Please email a photo and the details to

[rmai@rhema.org](mailto:rmai@rhema.org)



**Chris Burge ('00, '01, '02)** married his wife, Melanie, on October 11, 2009, in Atlanta, Georgia. They welcomed their baby daughter, Adoniah Abigail, on Christmas Day 2010. The Burge family lives in New York City and ministers around the world through Chris Burge Ministries. [www.ChrisBurgeMinistries.com](http://www.ChrisBurgeMinistries.com)

**Josh ('01, '02) and Kate (Kennedy '03, '05) Richter** announce the birth of their son, Wyatt Sullivan, born February 6, 2011, weighing 8 pounds, 3 ounces. The Richters are the children's pastors for **Pastor Jerry Weinzierl ('82, '83)** at Grace Christian Church in Sterling Heights, Michigan. [www.GraceSterling.com](http://www.GraceSterling.com)



**Seth Morrissette ('01, '02)** married Nicole Jean Grenier in Waterville, Maine, on May 14, 2011. The wedding was performed by Seth's pastor, **Rev. David Rogers ('84, '85)**. Seth is the children's pastor at Resurrection Life Church in Waterville. [www.MaineChurch.org](http://www.MaineChurch.org)

## 2003



**Tom Gottsacker ('02, '03)** married Kim Tucker on February 23, 2011, at Woodward Park in Tulsa. The ceremony was performed by **Rev. Chris Musgrove ('84, '85)**. After completing her first year at RBTC, Kim now works at the RHEMA Child Development Center, Tom works from home, and they serve in helps ministry at RHEMA Bible Church in Broken Arrow.

**Miguel "Tony" ('02, '03) and Tina (Norman '03, '06) Martinez** announce the birth of their son, Isaiah Miguel Martinez, born May 26, 2011. Isaiah joins his big brother, Isaac Antonio. Tony and Tina are the youth pastors at Faith Pleases God Church in Harlingen, Texas. [www.TeenProjekt.com](http://www.TeenProjekt.com)



## 2004

**Ryann Isley ('03, '04)** married Isaiah Weaver March 12, 2011, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Pastor RayGene Wilson of West Coast Believers Church, Santa Barbara, California, officiated. The Weavers currently live in Broken Arrow. Ryann works in the RBTC alumni office as missions secretary and sings on the Kenneth Hagin Ministries crusade team. Isaiah works in retail and is completing his second year at RBTC.



## 2007

**Jon ('92, '93, '07) and Kimberly ('05, '06, '07) Slusser** announce the birth of their second daughter, Madeleine, born May 4, 2011, and weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces. She joins her big sister, Elliana.



The Slussers returned to the U.S. in December 2010 after living and working on the mission field in Botswana—Kim with the Baylor Pediatric AIDS Corps and Jon with **Matt & Kristen Buckley ('87, '88)** at Light of the World Ministries. Now Kim has started a new pediatric position with a Christian missions-based clinic in Lititz, Pennsylvania, and they both serve in helps ministry at Worship Center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with Pastors **Sam & Sherlyn Smucker (both '77)**.

## 2009



**Eric and Erica Giesow (both '08, '09)** announce the birth of their daughter, Ella Joy, born February 26, 2011, and weighing 8 pounds, 1 ounce. The Giesows are middle school and college pastors and directors of the EPIC Commission discipleship program at Valley Family Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan for **Pastors Jeff ('87, '88) and Beth ('85, '86) Jones**. [www.ValleyFamilyChurch.org](http://www.ValleyFamilyChurch.org)

**Jeremy and Leah Kloosterman (both '08, '09)** moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, after graduating from RBTC. Jeremy serves as an associate pastor at Resurrection Life Church and Leah works in the media department. Together they run Impact, a group for singles and couples in their mid-20s to late-30s. The Kloostermans have three children. [www.reslife.org](http://www.reslife.org)



**Amanda Oliver ('08, '09)** graduated from Eastern New Mexico University in May 2011 with a bachelor's degree in religion and a minor in psychology. She lives in Farwell, Texas.

## 2010

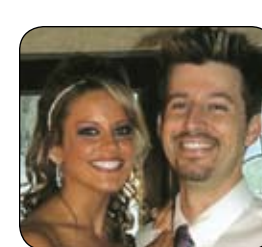
**Joseph Bevelacqua ('06, '10)** married Erikiyah Harvey in Grand Haven, Michigan, on January 22, 2011. Joe and Kiah are serving as ministers on the youth team at Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. [www.victory.com](http://www.victory.com)



**Graham and Laura Foster (both '09, '10)** announce the birth of their daughter, Kassidy April, on April 28, 2011, in Ormskirk, Lancashire, England. The Fosters attend a church in Manchester, where Graham is an usher and Laura works in the nursery.

## 2011

**Monte and Lauren (Black, both '10, '11) Waterhouse** were married in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, on June 11, 2011. They currently live in Tulsa.



**Courtney McCormack ('10, '11)** married Michael Varrichione on July 1, 2011, in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. Courtney is the children's pastor at Christian Life Chapel in Tulsa, and Michael is completing his second year at RBTC in the children's group. The Varrichionnes live in Broken Arrow.

## Homegoings

|                   |                         |                    |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| '77.....          | David Emigh.....        | June 16, 2011      |
| '78.....          | James Lopez.....        | April 27, 2011     |
| '78.....          | Stephen Stephens.....   | August 3, 2011     |
| '76, '79.....     | Vic Hawkins.....        | August 8, 2011     |
| '80, '81.....     | David O'Donahue.....    | August 21, 2011    |
| '84, '85.....     | Peggy Lynch Rice.....   | August 14, 2011    |
| '86.....          | Norman Ezell.....       | May 8, 2010        |
| '87, '88.....     | Lucile Jackson.....     | May 8, 2011        |
| '87, '88.....     | John Lamm*.....         | April 28, 2011     |
| '88, '89.....     | Richard Rise.....       | May 2011           |
| '90, '91.....     | Artie J. Riley, Sr..... | May 11, 2011       |
| '91, '92.....     | Jim Hackman.....        | September 2, 2011  |
| '92, '93.....     | Gary Lucero.....        | February 2011      |
| '93, '94.....     | Antonio Nava.....       | June 4, 2011       |
| '98, '99.....     | Connie Jordan.....      | August 16, 2011    |
| '98, '99.....     | Larry Paris.....        | April 13, 2011     |
| '00, '01.....     | June Holmblade.....     | September 16, 2011 |
| '04, '05, '07.... | Christine Stone.....    | July 13, 2011      |
| '08, '11.....     | Phyllis Schaaf.....     | June 13, 2011      |
| '09, '10, '11.... | Doretha Flowers.....    | July 25, 2011      |

\*member of RHEMA Ministerial Association International (RMAI)

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## 2012 LIVING FAITH crusades

With Kenneth and Lynette Hagin  
[www.rhema.org/crusades](http://www.rhema.org/crusades)

**JAN 22-25** Words of Life Fellowship Church  
20051 NE. 16th Ave. | **North Miami Beach, FL** 33179  
Pastors Stan & Geri Moore | (305) 653-8155  
Sun. 7:00 p.m. | Mon.-Wed. 10:30 a.m. & 7:30 p.m.

**MAR 11-14** Harvest Family Church  
7245 Copperfield Drive | **Montgomery, AL** 36117  
Pastor Bill & Fredna McNeese | (334) 277-1156  
Sun. 7:00 p.m. | Mon.-Wed. 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

**APR 1-4** Harvest World Outreach Church  
4915 Guilford College Road | **Greensboro, NC** 27407  
Pastors Joe & Misti Coyne | (336) 885-0587  
Sun. 7:00 p.m. | Mon.-Wed. 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

**APR 29- MAY 2** Word of Life Christian Center  
3520 N. Buffalo Drive | **Las Vegas, NV** 89129  
Pastors David & Vicki Shearin | (702) 645-1990  
Sun. 6:30 p.m. | Mon.-Wed. 10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

## 2012 EVENTS

On the RHEMA campus in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma  
[www.rhema.org/events](http://www.rhema.org/events) | **1-866-312-0972**



**Winter Bible Seminar & RHEMA Worldwide Homecoming**  
February 19-24  
[www.rhema.org/wbs](http://www.rhema.org/wbs)



**RHEMA Singles Conference: Flying Solo**  
March 29-31  
[www.rhema.org/rsc](http://www.rhema.org/rsc)



**Spring RHEMA College Weekend**  
April 20-22  
[www.rhema.org/rcw](http://www.rhema.org/rcw)



**International RHEMA Day**  
May 6  
[www.rhema.org/ird](http://www.rhema.org/ird)



**Amplify: RHEMA Worship & Technology Conference**  
June 6-9  
[www.amplifyconference.com](http://www.amplifyconference.com)



**Campmeeting**  
July 22-28  
[www.rhema.org/cm](http://www.rhema.org/cm)



**Kindle the Flame® Women's Conference**  
September 27-29  
[www.rhema.org/ktf](http://www.rhema.org/ktf)



**A Call to Arms® Men's Conference**  
November 1-3  
[www.rhema.org/cta](http://www.rhema.org/cta)

