



## FamilyLife Local—Ministry in YOUR Neighborhood

by Jayna Richardson

When Jorge and Rose Rosario were thinking through creative ways to reach out to their neighbors, they had no idea God would use them to help save a marriage. They had created colorful print-outs that said “Just poppin’ by to say hello” and passed them out in their neighborhood along with a bag of microwave popcorn, their contact information, and a brief note offering their help and support for marriages. Little did they know that one of their letters would reach the home of a wife who, that exact day, was contemplating divorce. When she received the letter, she took it as a sign that perhaps divorce wasn’t the answer. She met up with the Rosarios two days later, and by the grace of God, she and her husband decided to give their marriage a second chance.

The Rosarios are part of the FamilyLife Local team in Orlando, Florida. They are just one of many couples around the world who have been trained by FamilyLife as “Guides” to develop their own ministry to marriages and families right where they are.



FamilyLife’s vision is “Every home a godly home.” But the only way that every home becomes a godly home is if people in those homes start to reach their neighbors. That’s the essence of FamilyLife Local.

“The purpose of this initiative is to grow secure, healthy, missional-living families who advance the kingdom,” said FamilyLife Local director Mike Fendley. “FamilyLife Local is movements of people who are equipping others to have godly homes.”

FamilyLife has a long history of helping couples in other countries launch FamilyLife ministries by starting small and combining simple events, small groups, and training for powerful year-round ministry. Now this same strategy that helped launch many international FamilyLife ministries is being implemented within the homes of ordinary couples in the US as well who want to be used by God to make a difference. FamilyLife Local is taking the best of Cru’s DNA of win-build-send and combining it with FamilyLife’s passion for marriages and families to reach people far from God and far from the church with the gospel through innovative strategies.

The FamilyLife Local movement takes many forms: small-group studies, premarital counseling, creative neighborhood outreaches, video events, leadership training—all undergirded by prayer. In some cities, FamilyLife Local is working with the Department of Human Services to offer parenting classes (using FamilyLife’s Art of Parenting®) as a service to families whose kids have been placed in foster

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## Kenya—Equipping the Saints

By Jayna Richardson

Couples who are involved in ministry together face unique challenges in their marriages. That's why FamilyLife initially formed in 1976—to help the young staff couples of Campus Crusade for Christ (now called Cru), who were excited to serve the Lord but struggling in their families. Recently, FamilyLife Global staff Greg and Janet Westbrook went back to those roots, working with a group of staff members from Life Ministry of Kenya (Kenya's branch of Campus Crusade for Christ International).

For five days in a row the couples watched one Art of Marriage® video session per day on their own, then joined a Zoom call for two hours of group discussion, interaction, and even some fun activities. Each day, two or three couples would give testimonies about what they had learned from the day before, so the atmosphere was very encouraging with real-life examples of practical application and impact.

Some of the more experienced staff couples of Life Ministry Kenya provided an African perspective on the principles from The Art of Marriage. For example, The Art of Marriage encourages couples to follow the biblical mandate to leave their parents, cleave to each other, and become one flesh. But in many African cultures, the mother relationship ranks higher than the wife, so this "leave and cleave" concept can be difficult to grasp. Hearing the principles explained and reaffirmed by fellow Africans helped the attendees to embrace biblical values that may have been unfamiliar to them.

Even some of the projects were



adapted to fit the culture. Knowing that some men in Kenya might not be comfortable with the idea of writing a love letter to their spouse, one of the staff couples encouraged them to consider an alternative: the men could show their love and affection by bringing home a chicken!

But despite some cultural differences, the Westbrooks saw firsthand that many of the struggles faced by married couples are universal. "It's remarkable how much we are the same," said Janet Westbrook. "People everywhere are facing the same issues." Covid-19 has only reinforced this around the world.

While the first online session was quiet with little response, by the end of the week the couples had really warmed up and were enjoying the interaction, especially when they broke up into smaller Zoom groups for discussion time. They loved the laughter and comradery and even began making good use of the

chat feature for a bit of lighthearted fun (such as fireworks and fire extinguisher emojis when discussing the "Love Sizzles" session on sexual intimacy).

But while the merriment was important, even more important was the opportunity to minister to couples and strengthen their marriages.

"The last half of August has seen some revival in our marriage," said one attendee. "The Art of Marriage seminar has taken this a notch higher—a catalyst towards oneness under the lordship of Christ."

It's this oneness under the lordship of Christ that will help these couples to be more effective as they reach out to others. By equipping these couples in their own marriages and teaching them to do the same for others, FamilyLife is partnering with them to change lives and legacies and reflect the love of Christ in Kenya and throughout the world.

**Note: Some events may be delayed or cancelled due to COVID-19.**

**Europe (Eastern)**

- Croatia (FL Slovenia team) . Nov 6-8, 2020 . . . . . Parenting seminar . . . . . Crikvenica
- Croatia (FL Slovenia team) . Nov 13-15, 2020 . . . . . Through the Desert . . . . . Crikvenica
- Croatia (FL Slovenia team) . Nov 20-22, 2020 . . . . . Through the Desert . . . . . Crikvenica
- Croatia (FL Slovenia team) . Nov 27-29, 2020 . . . . . Through the Desert . . . . . Crikvenica
- Croatia (FL Slovenia team) . Dec 11-13, 2020 . . . . . Through the Desert . . . . . Malinska

**Europe (Western)**

- Switzerland . . . . . Feb 6-7, 2021 . . . . . Weekend Getaway . . . . . Zurich
- Switzerland . . . . . Mar 5, 2021 . . . . . Marriage Course
- Switzerland . . . . . Jun 18, 2021 . . . . . Marriage Course
- Switzerland . . . . . Jun 25-27, 2021 . . . . . Weekend Getaway . . . . . A-Imst
- UK . . . . . Nov 7, 2020 . . . . . A Day Together . . . . . Manchester
- UK . . . . . Nov 21, 2020 . . . . . A Day Together . . . . . Manchester

**Middle East and North Africa**

Due to sensitive nature of these countries, please contact [global@familylife.com](mailto:global@familylife.com) for further information.

**North America**

- United States—Phone 1-800-358-6329 or [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com) for a complete listing of conferences.
- Canada . . . . . Feb 12-14,2021 . . . . . Weekend Getaway . . . . . Victoria, BC
- Canada . . . . . Mar 5-7, 2021 . . . . . Weekend Getaway . . . . . Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON
- Canada . . . . . Nov 21, 2020 . . . . . Together for Good . . . . . (virtual)

**Asia**

- Singapore . . . . . Nov 21-22, 2020 . . . . . Art of Marriage

**Oceania**

- New Zealand . . . . . Nov 14, 2020 . . . . . A Day Together . . . . . Tauranga

**From a recent event in Mexico:**

*“It impacted me [to learn] that God has called us to live in freedom.”*

*“I learned to forgive and love and to ask the Holy Spirit to control my life daily and guide me in my decisions.”*

*“God has called us to peace, freedom, and to be women who are different and who impact other women and families.”*



## New Resource:

***Love Like You Mean It: The Heart of a Marriage that Honors God***

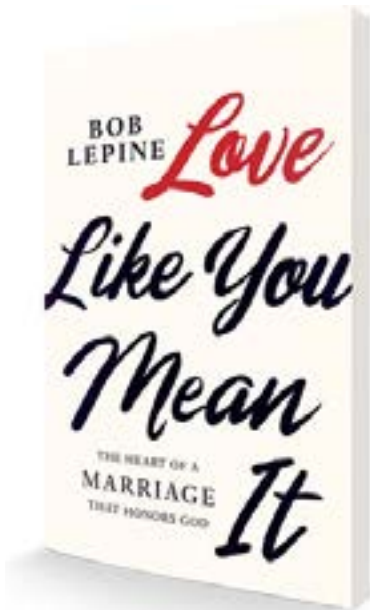
Every year, millions of men and women stand before friends and family to pledge their lifelong love to each other. Do they know what they're getting into?

Unfortunately, many people have a shallow, superficial idea of what marriage is. As a result, many marriages don't last, and many more married couples are trudging along looking for something more.

*Love Like You Mean It* gives husbands and wives a biblical understanding of what real love looks like in marriage by unpacking the ten attributes of genuine love listed in 1 Corinthians 13. Bob Lepine, marriage and family expert and host of the nationally syndicated radio program *FamilyLife Today*®, helps husbands and wives discover that it's not primarily emotions that define marital love, but actions and decisions that fuel emotions and cause marital love to grow.

Every person who is married, would like to be married one day, or wants to understand more about the biblical vision of marriage will find what they're looking for as they dive deep into *Love Like You Mean It*.

Order at <https://shop.familylife.com/p-5890-love-like-you-mean-it.aspx>.



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care. A parenting class is required before the kids can be returned home, so FamilyLife is equipping local volunteers to help fill this need. In other places, FamilyLife is partnering with schools, crisis pregnancy centers, and local governments. It's a "boots-on-the-ground" approach to evangelistic, discipleship-oriented community ministry.

Another FamilyLife Local couple, the Kravicks, created a "date night in a bag" for all ten of their neighbors. The bag contained a *Like Arrows* DVD, a bag of popcorn, and a handwritten card. They weren't sure how their neighbors would receive something like this, but the response was very positive. One couple expressed their thanks for the movie and said they had shared with friends that it's never too late to have Jesus Christ at the center of the home. Another young

couple shared prayer requests with the Kravicks when they ran into them while out walking.

"We had no idea that something so



simple would lead to so many meaningful connections and conversations," said Trevor Kravick. "During these unprecedented times, we have an opportunity to step out of our comfort zones and to make an impact that might just transform a family legacy for generations."

Jennifer Walker is another FamilyLife Local Guide who developed an ongoing mentoring relationship with a wife who wanted to learn how to have a godly marriage. The wife expressed her gratitude to Jennifer and said, "Wouldn't it be great if every person had a godly someone to walk alongside them as they do marriage and family?" And that's exactly why FamilyLife Local exists!

To learn more about FamilyLife Local and get involved, visit [www.familylife.com/local](http://www.familylife.com/local).



## Colombia—Ministry Multiplication

By Jayna Richardson

During a recent Facebook Live event in Tunja, Colombia, 170 couples from 27 small groups celebrated the completion of a FamilyLife study. Through the study, approximately 50 couples encountered the gospel for the first time in their lives! This is just one example of the many ways God is at work in Colombia.

In Colombia, FamilyLife has been working through teams of volunteers in various cities such as Bogotá, Cali, Medellín, Pereira, Manizales, Pasto, Tunja, Bucaramanga, Popayán, and Cartagena. Despite the atypical circumstances brought on by the pandemic, the message of help and hope for families has continued to spread, reaching and blessing many Colombian homes.

In Bogotá, key volunteers Vladimir and Johanna Cañas have formed partnerships with congregations across multiple denominations that have implemented resources and programs such as FamilyLife’s Art of Parenting®, The Art of Marriage® (AOM), *Keeping Your Covenant*, and *Stepping Up*®.

They’ve also helped train more than 80 “multipliers” who can use these resources in their own extended families and communities.

“For us as a family, it has been a great blessing and a privilege to see what God is doing in our nation and be part of this movement that arises as a response to the felt need of families of our society,” said Vladimir Cañas.

Last year, thousands of people viewed FamilyLife’s *Like Arrows* movie, and many became involved in Art of Parenting small groups afterwards. Groups are continuing to form as parents around the country seek help raising their kids according to biblical principles.

This year has been different with fewer live events and more virtual events, but the changing circumstances haven’t stopped the FamilyLife team in Colombia. They’ve continued to see God at work with more than 2,000 people participating in small groups and events. The virtual events are allowing couples to participate from all over the country.

As couples and families are being



touched through FamilyLife, their enthusiasm for helping spread the message to others grows. FamilyLife Colombia makes good use of this spark of enthusiasm. They’ve initiated a training process that teaches couples to facilitate their own FamilyLife small groups, so new couples are trained regularly to help spread FamilyLife’s message even further.

In fact, during a recent virtual AOM event, 80% of attendees indicated the highest level of interest in taking AOM back to their own churches, and 60% indicated high interest in joining the FamilyLife team in their area. The potential for the continued growth and spread of FamilyLife in Colombia is significant.

FamilyLife Colombia is excited not only to minister to others, but to put tools in the hands of families everywhere and watch as God uses them to create a powerful ministry of their own. Already hundreds of families have committed themselves to living by biblical principles. And as they multiply what they are learning, we dream of God reforming marriages in every corner of Colombia.



## New Zealand: Together Again

by Jayna Richardson

As coronavirus began to spread throughout the world in spring 2020, FamilyLife live events everywhere were being postponed or cancelled. One question loomed in everyone's minds: when will we be able to meet in person again? For New Zealand, that time came sooner than it did in most other places. In late June, they were the first country in the world to re-launch a live FamilyLife major event: a Weekend to Remember® in Taupo.

"It was so good to be back running a live event again, and remarkable to have over fifty couples attending when only three weeks prior we were uncertain if it was going to go ahead," said FamilyLife staff member Steve Hooper.

The event was a powerful and encouraging time for the attendees, who seemed to agree that there was something special about the weekend. Maybe it was partly because everyone was eager to be out and about again

after being cooped up, but more likely, it was because God was at work in the lives and hearts of the couples who attended.

Here were some of their comments:

"We separated for a year in 2016. Although we have gone through counseling, healing, and renewed our vows, there was still residual stuff we needed to work out. This weekend really helped us do that and look forward with joy to our life together."

"It helped us to recognize the gift [we are to] each other and reminded us why we are together."

"As a couple heading fast in the wrong direction, this weekend has turned us around and given us practical help."

"We loved it! It was fun, entertaining, informative, and very challenging at times. Overall, I feel it will revolutionize our marriage."

"Jump started us from a place of near devastation. [It has] given us tools and hope to help us be fully on the same page."

The FamilyLife team felt they were able to connect with the couples at this event on a deeper level than usual. One couple they had spoken with several times over the weekend sent this email soon after the Weekend to Remember:

"Do you or anyone you know have any links with a church down here in Palmerston North? My husband and I were both really touched and we want to change our lives and walk with Christ. I feel like it's the next positive step and possibly what we have both been missing all these years."

Only God knows the number of legacies changed by one event in a small island country. But one thing is sure: even in a time of uncertainty and Coronavirus, God is still at work!

