



ABOUT US

Every Marriage Matters got its start in 2000 when Tom and Liz Dressel met Dr. Steve Stephens at the Smart Marriages conference in Denver. Steve had just interviewed Mike and Harriet McManus of Marriage Savers for a radio program he was hosting. Mike indicated he would like to share his vision for a Community Marriage Policy[®] if we could bring together an interested group. Tom and Liz agreed to help form that group; that first meeting was held in October 2000. The Lord put together a team that resulted in the development of and signing of the Clackamas County Marriage Policy with pastors from 157 churches on June 1, 2001. As of January 2014 pastors from 180 Clackamas County churches had agreed to adhere to the minimum standards of that Policy.

Research has demonstrated that many community problems in education, health, finances and security are tied to family breakdown. Study after study describes the impact on children.

One of the keys to restoring the family, the plan God has described in the Bible, is through His Church. Seventy-four percent of weddings in Oregon are performed in churches and synagogues. Premarital preparation is a great place to start building skills and understanding capable of withstanding life's storms.

Every Marriage Matters' website, monthly e-newsletter and bulletin insert provides pastors and marriage leaders with resources and information to assist their ministries in the areas of marriage preparation, marriage enrichment, relationship crisis and divorce recovery. We've encouraged mentoring programs, brought nationally-known marriage speakers to Clackamas County, held annual I Still Do events honoring long term marriages, and sponsored Lunch With the Experts events.

Marriage begins to thrive when pastors band together to uphold His plan, as evidenced by a fall in the divorce rate. The Clackamas County divorce rate has dropped 23% from 2001 through 2012! We're a team of volunteers from a spectrum of denominations passionate to see marriage thrive and excited about the opportunity of encouraging the pastors of the Metro Portland area (Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah and Washington Counties) to unite under the banner of the Greater Portland Community Marriage Policy. Far greater resources of manpower and finance will be required to accomplish the task. Our Lord is able!

We are currently working on a broader mentoring program by teaming with Western Seminary, George Fox University, Multnomah University, Luis Palau Association, Marriage Team, FamilyLife and Northwest Family Services. We are also sponsoring Date Night PDX Challenge. Most recently we have developed a counseling network to assist and strengthen the marriages of those in full-time ministry. God is good and there is so much to do. Please join us in these opportunities.