



Family Fest  
**marriage**  
**booster**  
Retreat

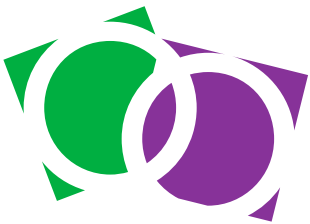
*Retreat Prep Pack*



# Marriage Booster Retreat Prep Pack

*Thank you for choosing the Family Fest Marriage Booster Retreat to support married and engaged couples in your church. The key to an effective Marriage Booster Retreat is preparation. This booklet will help you make your retreat the best that it can be. Please take some time to review this packet.*

## What is a Marriage Booster Retreat?



*The Marriage Booster Retreat is a one-day, seven-hour intensive program where couples can talk about the important issues that affect their marriage and life together. This retreat will focus on communication, intimacy, money, dealing with conflict, expectations and more.*

*The day incorporates humor and fun in the presentations and exercises throughout the day. Couples will have several opportunities to work through a guided discussion together. Not only will couples leave at the end of the day with a renewed sense of love and hope in their relationship, but they will also have new tools to help them grow stronger in their marriage.*

## How to Get Started

### Pick a Date

If you have not yet chosen a date for your retreat, you will want to do so soon. The retreat is about 7 to 7.5 hours long. Most retreats are held on a Saturday from 9:15am to 4:45pm. Talk to the church staff to make sure there are not major conflicts on that date. Check with Family Fest for availability.

### Reserve Your Space

Having the right environment is key to your retreat. Find a room that is comfortable and free of distractions. Some churches prefer to get away to a place that might be more conducive to this type of experience such as a retreat center or banquet facility (hotels, golf course, etc.). Generally we need about 16-18 square feet per person. Family Fest would be happy to give you suggestions of off-site facilities that could accommodate your group.

Choose a location that will have limited distractions. You may want to look at a weekend where there are not a lot of other events scheduled at your church.

### Develop A Team

Don't do this alone! There are many people in your church who will share your passion for helping build strong marriages. Get them to commit to coming on the retreat and to invite others. These can be volunteers or leaders of other ministries in your church. This is a wonderful way to collaborate with various ministries in your church.

# Set Up and Retreat Needs

## Location Needs

Once you have chosen your retreat location there are just a few things that we will need. On page 3 you will find a diagram showing the standard room set up needed for the retreat with 15 couples.

- Comfortable chairs are greatly appreciated by participants. Chairs for the retreat should be stacked on the side of the room as we will need the open space in the front of the room for an opening activity.
- Lunch tables and chairs for the number of participants (6-8 per table). If needed lunch can be served in another nearby room.
- We will need 3 large 8' tables. One should be in the front of the room. The others should be near the lunch tables.

Several times during the retreat, couples go off together for a time of one-on-one discussion. This can be done in the room where the retreat is being held, or in any other open break out space that you have available.

## Materials

Family Fest will provide all of the materials needed for a successful retreat. We will bring in our own sound system, video projector and screen. We will also provide all retreat materials and pens for participants.

## Name Tags

We find it very helpful to have name tags for all participants. Our office will take care of this. The only thing that we require is the list of couples 2 days prior to the retreat. It is not a problem if someone registers last minute. We can accommodate that and will have extra name tags available.

## Lunch & Snacks

You can arrange your own lunch and snacks for the retreat. If the retreat is in the Twin Cities, Family Fest can make the arrangements for you. Typically the cost of lunch and snacks will add about \$12-15 per person to your cost.

## Family Fest Team Arrival

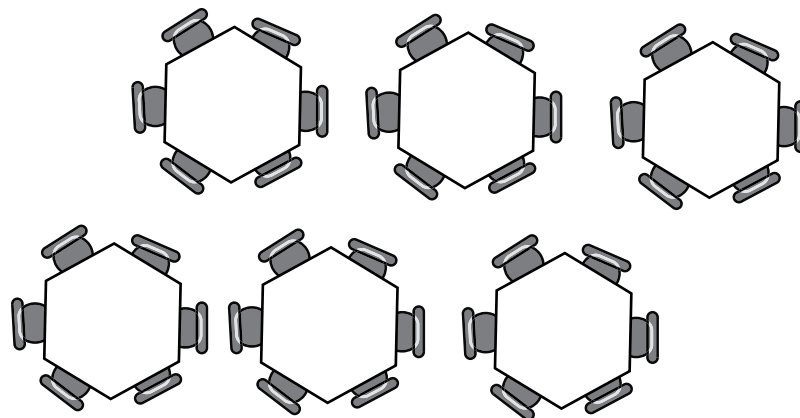
The Family Fest team will need about an hour and fifteen minutes to set-up on the day of the retreat. Please arrange to have the facility open early for set up. It will take us about 45 minutes to pack up at the end of the retreat.

# Room Set-Up Diagram

Front of room

8' Table

- Please leave shaded area of room open except for one 8-foot table.
- No mic or podium is needed.
- We will need 3 - 8 foot long tables. One toward the front of the room and two in the back.
- Please place stacked chairs off to one side of the room. We will need one chair for each participant.
- In the back side of the room, please set up tables with chairs to accommodate each participant. Tables can be set for 6 or 8 people.



8' Table

8' Table

# Promoting Your Retreat

*Start Promoting Today! The earlier you begin promoting your retreat the better. It is important that people hear about it early and often.*

## Develop a Team:

The most effective thing you can do is to develop a Retreat Booster Team of couples from your church to personally invite couples to the retreat. Successful churches recruit 4-5 couples to be part of a Marriage Booster Retreat coordinating team. They can help with promotion, set-up, registration, retreat day check-in, setting up coffee and morning snacks and lunch.

## Marketing

Family Fest can help you with posters and flier design. Keep in mind that marketing experts say that **most people need to see something three or more times before they respond**. Use a variety of different approaches to get the word out. Start as early as you can.

## Marriage Booster Logos

You are welcome to use our Marriage Booster Retreat logos and other marketing materials. These can be found on our website in the Marriage Booster Retreat Resource page.

## Mailings

Mailings and Post Cards are a great way to make sure that people know about the event. We are happy to help you with a template that can be used for this.

## Lawn Signs

Family Fest can send you a lawn sign or two that tells people that the Marriage Booster Retreat is coming. Just let us know how many you may need. The first two lawn signs are free. Additional lawn signs can be ordered for your church at \$15 each. If you would prefer to have customized lawn signs with the date of the retreat, those can be ordered as well at \$15 each.



## Announcements

Announcements by the Pastor is a great way to encourage couples to participate in the retreat. If your church projects announcements on a screen you can download editable Power Point slides from our website in the Marriage Booster Retreat Resource page.

## Personal Invitations

If you have a Retreat Booster Team, encourage them to make personal invitations to others from your church. Encourage couples who sign up to invite other friends to join them.

## Letter from Pastors

Some churches have sent letters to all couples who have been married in the past ten years inviting them to refresh their marriage. This type of invitation can be non-threatening and very inviting.

## Email & Social Media

Don't forget about these great ways to get the word out about your retreat. Many churches have developed an online registration form for their registration.



## Radio & Newspaper

Many Christian radio stations such as KTIS in the Twin Cities have a community events calendar that will allow you to advertise your retreat. To access KTIS Community Calender, go to the following link in your browser: <http://myktis.com/events/category/community-events/>. From there you will find the link to add your event. Also, your local newspaper often will have a section to announce upcoming events such as this retreat.

## Website

Make sure that you include information about the retreat on your church website. This is one of the first places people will look to find out more information. Make sure that you include links to your sign-up page or phone and email information on how to register. Remember the you can use our logos found on our website.

## Bulletin Announcements

Announcements in the bulletin are great reminders, but are easy to miss because of other information. Do not count on this as your only means of publicity. You can find a sample announcement on our website in the Marriage Booster Retreat Resource page.

### Sample Bulletin Announcement

St. John's will be hosting the Marriage Booster Retreat on Saturday, November 14th from 9:15am to 4:45pm in the Fireside Room. Cost is \$135 per couple and includes lunch and all materials. Scholarships are available.

The best gift we can give our children and each other is a strong marriage. The Marriage Booster Retreat, presented by Family Fest Ministries, is an interactive and unique experience designed to give couples a chance to focus on each other and the issues that touch their marriage. Imagine a day where the two of you can laugh, reconnect, and talk deeply about your marriage relationship. This day is a fast-paced, faith-filled, romantic, relevant and fun experience that is focused on you marriage. Register by calling 555-555-5555 or by going to our website and following the Marriage Booster Retreat link in Upcoming Events.

# Retreat Overview

## Family Fest Presenters and Staff:

The Marriage Booster Retreat is facilitated by the Family Fest Ministries Marriage Booster Staff. Family Fest has over ten years of experience presenting the Marriage Booster Retreat.

## Your Church Retreat Booster Team:

Many churches will develop a Retreat Booster Team to help with the retreat. These people help with promoting of the retreat, check-in, snacks, lunch, and various other tasks that help the retreat go smoothly. Often churches that do this retreat annually will ask previous participants to serve on this team.

## Arrival and Welcome

Upon arrival to the retreat, couples will be welcomed by the Family Fest staff as well as your church's Retreat Booster Team. When they check in they will be given their name tags and an anonymous marriage survey. This survey gives couples something to do as they wait for everyone to check in. It is also helpful to Family Fest as a way to gather information about the state of marriages of the couples who come on a retreat. As soon as all participants arrive, we will engage them in interactive activities that we have found will help "break the ice" and build a sense of community between the participants.

## Retreat Presentations

The retreat content has been created by Family Fest. Generally there are four to five main presentations during the course of the retreat. Topics include Communication, Love Languages, Money, Expectations, Sex and Intimacy, and Priorities in Marriage. Each presentation is about 25 minutes in length. The goal of the presentations is to move couples into a safe place for their one-on-one couple time that follows each presentation.

## Couple Time

This is the most important part of the retreat. Following each presentation, couples will have about a half hour to engage in personal discussion and reflection. Each couple will be given dialogue sheets that will guide them through this period. The material presented will give couples permission to open up during this time of couple dialogue.

## Retreat Activities

Mixed throughout the day are various fun and non-threatening activities designed to keep participants energized and awake.

## Closing

At the end of the retreat, couples will be given the opportunity to renew their wedding vows. This can also be incorporated into a Saturday evening worship service or Mass if you would like.



# FAQ

## **How many couples can the retreat accommodate?**

This really depends on the size of your retreat space. We can work with as few as 8 couples or as many as 50 couples if there is enough room. A comfortable sized group is between 15-30 couples.

## **Can we do this retreat with another church?**

Absolutely! This is a great way to share expenses and to build enthusiasm for the retreat in your community.

## **Does the church need to provide any materials such as pencils, paper, sound system, etc.?**

Family Fest will bring all necessary material needed for the retreat. This includes a sound system, video projector and screen and all other retreat materials. Each couple will receive a bag at the beginning of the day with pens, snacks, and couple journals. The only thing that we need are two 6-8 foot banquet tables.

## **What if a couple would have to come late or leave early?**

We hope that they can make every effort to stay for the entire retreat. Not only for them to get the full impact of the retreat, but because it keeps the retreat running much smoother without interruption.

## **Is it okay to bring a nursing baby to the retreat?**

We would prefer that they make other arrangements for the baby. The retreat format is not really conducive to having a baby there as it can be disturbing to others, but it also takes away from your opportunity to get away.

## **Will Family Fest provide any resource materials?**

Yes. Each participant on the retreat will receive a journal booklet that will assist them with couple discussion on the retreat. There is more material in these journals than they could get through during the course of the retreat. Couples are encouraged to continue their discussion after the retreat.

## **What is the cost of a Marriage Booster Retreat?**

The base cost for a Marriage Booster Retreat is: 8-15 Couples \$1600.00 plus expenses. Each couple after 15, add \$50.00. (I.e. 20 couples would be \$1850.00) (Lodging and travel expenses may be incurred for retreats outside of the Twin Cities area).

Family Fest is also happy to arrange lunch and snacks for retreats that take place in the Twin Cities. There is an additional cost if you would like us to arrange catering. Typically catering costs will run about \$15 per person for a box lunch.

## **How do most churches charge for the retreat?**

Some churches simply divide the costs of the day per couple. Some churches underwrite part of the retreat and ask couples to pay the rest. We have had some churches that don't charge, but have a suggested donation amount. This allows for couples who cannot afford the retreat but really need to be there. If you have 15 couples, the cost including a box lunch will run approximately \$135 per couple.

### **Is a one day program enough time for a retreat?**

A one day retreat is perfect for couples who are overwhelmed with family and work commitments. Being able to spend seven hours together talking about their marriage is a great opportunity.

Many couples who have attended the Marriage Booster Retreat have found it very beneficial to continue their retreat by going out for dinner following the retreat. Other couples also continued their retreat by staying at a local hotel, or finding someone to care for their children so that they could be together for the evening at home. This might be something that you might want to encourage with couples as they register for the retreat.

### **How is faith incorporated into the retreat?**

The Marriage Booster Retreat is a faith-based program developed by Family Fest Ministries. We realize that couples are at various places in their faith, and we are very sensitive to this. We will incorporate scripture and the Christian faith into the presentations and materials. There will be times of prayer during the retreat. We will talk about the impact that faith has in a marriage. That being said, we have had many participants who do not have a faith background and they have told us that it was very comfortable for them.

### **Are there follow up materials that couples can get after the retreat?**

Yes. The couple dialogue sheets have more questions than can be discussed in the time of the retreat. Couples will be encouraged to continue sections that they did not get to finish. They will also receive follow-up questions that can be used on their own.

# Sample Confirmation Letter

A copy of this Word Document can be downloaded from the Family Fest Web Site Resources Page

November 2, 2016

John & Jane Doe  
216 Valley View Place  
Minneapolis, MN 55419

Dear John & Jane,

We are so excited that you will be joining us at the St. John's Marriage Booster Retreat on Saturday, November 14th. We are about a month away from the retreat and wanted to make sure that you had all the information that you needed to make this a great getaway.

First of all, plan on a great day with your spouse. Come dressed casually. Be prepared for fun and growth with each other. The program will be engaging and informative. It moves fast, breaking up presentations with couple time as well as other activities throughout the day.

## **Presentations and Couple Time**

Generally there are four main presentations during the course of the retreat. Topics include Communication, Love Languages, Money, Sex and Intimacy, Expectations, and Priorities in Marriage. Each presentation is about 25 minutes in length. The goal of each presentation is to move couples into a safe place for their one-on-one couple time that follows each presentation.

## **Retreat Location and Time:**

The retreat will be held here at St. John's in the Valley Wood room. Please plan on arriving between 9:15am and 9:25am to check in. The retreat will start promptly at 9:30am. We will go until 4:45pm. Please plan on staying until the end. If for some reason you can't be there for the entire retreat, we encourage you to sign up at another time.

## **Lunch:**

A great lunch and snacks will be provided. You should receive an email with a link to make your lunch choices about a week before the retreat.

## **Continuing Your Getaway**

Many couples who have attended the Marriage Booster Retreat have found it very beneficial to continue their retreat by staying at a local hotel, or finding someone to care for their children so that they could be together for the evening at home. Several of these couples have encouraged us to recommend this to future participants. This is something you may want to consider.

## **Retreat Facilitators**

The retreat is facilitated by Family Fest Ministries. Family Fest is a non-profit ministry creating strong families built on faith through family retreats, marriage retreats, family service opportunities, and special events. The Marriage Booster Retreats are a function of Family Fest Ministries and are led by Family Fest staff and volunteers.

*Sample Letter Continued:*

**Cost of Retreat:**

The suggested donation for this program is \$00.00 per couple. We appreciate those who are able give more in order that all who wish to are able to attend.

**Cancellation:**

You have made a great commitment to yourselves and to your marriage. We truly hope that nothing interferes with your retreat plans. In addition, materials and meals have already been purchased for this retreat and it is important that we fill every spot. If for some reason you are unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible.

**Emergency Phone Numbers:**

If you need to be reached during the retreat, you can call the church office at 952.555.7888.

Finally, if you know of other couples who might still like to attend, please have them call us as soon as possible so that we can arrange for them to join us.

We look forward to seeing you on the 14th!

God Bless,

The Marriage Booster Retreat Team at St. John's

# Marriage Booster Check List

- Set a date
- Book your facility
- Encourage ministries in your church to promote this retreat
- Get 3-5 couples to be on the retreat team
- Develop a promotional plan
- Personal Invitations
  - Mailings
  - Radio Community Calendars
  - Local Newspapers
  - Bulletin Announcement
  - Email Announcements
  - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest
- Register Couples
- Order lunches & snacks
- Send out confirmation letter
- Confirm final numbers with Family Fest 3 days prior to your retreat.

If you have more questions about setting up your retreat, please call the Family Fest office. We will be happy to help you prepare for your retreat in any way!

Family Fest Ministries

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