

2016 dotMOM Speaker Bios

PLATFORM

Angela Thomas-Pharr

Platform/Breakout Leader

After 14 years, Angela's marriage ended. Through the wounds of divorce and the uncharted territory of life as a single mom, this ordinary woman learned how to rely on God for strength, hope, and comfort. Today Angela is a best-selling author and gifted teacher who speaks to thousands each year, sharing life experiences to draw her and others into a deeper passion for knowing God. Angela spends her time as a wife and mother in Greensboro, NC. She has a master's degree from Dallas Theological Seminary.

Lisa Harper

Platform/Breakout Leader

"Hilarious storyteller" and "theological scholar" are rarely used in the same sentence—but Lisa Harper is anything but stereotypical! A gifted communicator, she writes and speaks using colorful pop culture references that connect the dots between the Bible era and modern life. She was Focus on the Family's national women's ministry director followed by six years as a women's ministry director at a large Nashville church and is the author of eleven books. Her academic resume includes a master of theological studies with honors from Covenant Seminary in St. Louis. Now a sought-after Bible teacher and speaker, Lisa was on the Women of Faith national arena tour for eight years and speaks at many other large multi-denominational events as well as at hundreds of churches all over the world. She describes her greatest accomplishment to date as becoming Missy's mama because in April 2014, after a difficult two-year journey, Lisa got to bring her adopted daughter home from Haiti—and she hasn't stopped grinning since.

Lisa-Jo Baker

Platform/Breakout Leader

Lisa-Jo has been the community manager for www.ingourage.me, an online home for women all over the world, for nearly a decade. She is also the author of *Surprised by Motherhood*, and her writings have been syndicated from New Zealand to New York. She lives just outside Washington, DC, with her husband and three very loud kids, where she connects, encourages, and champions women in person and through her popular blog, lisajobaker.com.

Sophie Hudson

Emcee/Breakout Leader

Blogger and author Sophie chronicles her daily (sometimes weekly) life at BooMama.net. She has written three books: *A Little Salty to Cut the Sweet*, *Home is Where My People Are*, and her most recent, *Giddy Up, Eunice*. A graduate of Mississippi State University, Sophie lives with her husband and son in Birmingham, Alabama, where she serves as women's advisor at a local Christian high school.

Laura Story

Platform/Breakout Leader

The intersection of opportunity and a tragedy is what originally spawned her runaway hit "Blessings," that took home a GRAMMY, a Billboard Music Award, and three Dove Awards. Laura's unabashed conviction to write and sing truth about life's ups and downs and heartache and joy, and everything in between, touched a heartstring that resonated around the world as others continue to see how God was present in their own circumstances and stories that just made no sense. Laura leads worship at Atlanta's Perimeter Church. She and her husband Martin have welcomed their first child into their family. Laura says "Becoming a mom has been by far the greatest adventure Martin and I have embarked upon thus far in our lives." "I play a good many roles in my life. Worship leader, songwriter, artist, mom, wife of a disabled husband. And often I find myself trying to play the extra role of God." It's more than eloquent words to an infinite, omnipotent, omnipresent God. More than another happy ending ... More than just another story. It's every story. <http://laurastorymusic.com/>

Dale & Jena Forehand

Platform/Breakout Leaders

Dale and Jena are the founders of Stained Glass Ministries. They are sought-after speakers and conference leaders. They have conducted national and local church conferences for over 15 years. The death, burial, and resurrection of their own marriage has been featured in *Homelife Magazine*, the 700 Club, Life Today with James Robinson, Family Talk Live with Focus on the Family, and much more. They have served as keynote speakers and workshop leaders for LifeWay's Festival of Marriage since 2001. They are the authors of 8 books including an 8-week couples DVD Study called *Let's Get Real: Bringing Authenticity and Wholeness to Your Marriage*. For more information on the Forehand's please visit their website: www.daleandjena.com

BREAKOUT

Chris Adams

Breakout Leader

Chris is Senior Lead Women's Ministry Specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to her employment at LifeWay in December 1994, Chris was the special ministries coordinator at Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, coordinating women's ministry and missions education. She is an adjunct professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Women's Certificate Program, where she received her undergraduate degree in Christian Ministry from the seminary's Leavell College. Chris has been a consultant, speaker, and conference leader in a variety of church and denominational roles. She is Executive Editor of *Journey*, a women's devotional magazine, and compiled *Women Reaching Women: Beginning and Building a Growing Women's Ministry*, *Transformed Lives: Taking Women's Ministry to the Next Level*, and *Women Reaching Women in Crisis*. In 2008, Chris received the Career of Excellence award

at LifeWay. She is a wife, mother of twin daughters, and grandmother of 7, plus 7 bonus grands. She also loves reading, good coffee, and chocolate! Visit her blog at <http://LifeWay.com/womenreachingwomen>.

Jen Barrick

Breakout Leader

Jennifer Barrick suffered a traumatic brain injury and was not expected to live through the night. But God miraculously intervened and now at age 24, God has given Jennifer a new personality and a new platform to share Christ. Jennifer is an extraordinary speaker and travels all over the country with her family speaking at teen and women's events, schools, disability centers, churches, and community events. God is using her story to change thousands of lives with a message of faith, hope, and forgiveness.

Linda Barrick

Breakout Leader

Linda Barrick, author of *Miracle for Jen*, is an inspirational speaker with a captivating message of hope. Linda leads a weekly Bible study of over 550 women at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, VA, where she lives with her husband of 27 years, Andy, and their two children, Jennifer and Joshua. Their lives were dramatically changed 9 years ago when a drunk driver struck their family van head on, nearly killing them all.

Angela Cottrell

Breakout Leader

Angela loves encouraging women in their faith through Bible study and prayer groups. She spends most of her time watching her children play sports, studying the Bible on her computer, teaching college small group, and shopping at thrift stores. Her husband, Travis, is the worship pastor at Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson, TN and also leads worship for Beth Moore's Living Proof Live conferences. Angela and Travis have been married for 23 years, with most of that time spent in ministry, leading worship, and writing music together. Their three greatest collaborations are their children: Jack, Lily, and Levi.

Jeannie Cunnion

Breakout Leader

Jeannie is a Jesus lover and a grace clinger. She is the author of *Parenting the Wholehearted Child*, holds a master's degree in social work, is a contributor for The Better Mom, The MOB Society, and Fox News, and serves on the board of Raising Boys Ministries. Jeannie has loved traveling the country (48 states to be exact!) speaking about parenting and adoption, and encouraging women to live in the freedom of being fully known and loved by God (a message her own heart needs to hear daily). Her greatest joy is doing life alongside her husband, Mike, and the four boys God has graciously entrusted to them.

Michele Dyer

Breakout Leader

Michele oversees the PLACE Ministry at Brentwood Baptist Church, which is a ministry that seeks to help others discover their God-given calling and design and fosters appreciation and understanding of others. As a mom of two sons, Michele has learned firsthand that every child is different yet intentionally created by God to fulfill a unique purpose in life. She enjoys walking alongside other parents, helping them better understand and appreciate each family member by using what she has learned as a Certified Temperament Professional and a Christian Leadership Coach. By studying and seeking to understand each child's hard-wiring, Michele believes that parents can better affirm and encourage godly self-esteem and confidence in their children.

Amy-Jo Girardier

Breakout Leader

Amy-Jo is the Girls Minister at Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, TN. She has been serving in this role for 14 years and still can't believe this is what she gets to do for a job! Originally from Springfield, Illinois, Amy-Jo graduated from Southwest Baptist University and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to pursue a Masters in Christian Education. She is the author of *Faithful One: A Study of 1&2 Thessalonians* for teen girls and serves on the LifeWay Girls Ministry leadership team. Amy-Jo is married to Darrel and they have a son, Scout.

Darrel Girardier

Breakout Leader

Darrel is the Creative Director for Brentwood Baptist Church. He currently oversees the team that handles social media, web, design, and mobile presence for the church. Previously, Darrel was a creative director at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, TN, where he served for 12 years. He blogs at www.darrelgirardier.com.

Sissy Goff, M.Ed., LPC-MHSP

Breakout Leader

Sissy spends most of her days talking with girls and their families with the help of her counseling assistant/pet therapist, Lucy the Havanese. She has worked as the Director of Child and Adolescent Counseling at Daystar Counseling Ministries in Nashville, Tennessee, since 1993, with a Master's degree from Vanderbilt University. A sought-after speaker for parenting and teacher training events such as dotMOM, LifeWay Kids Conference, and Heart of the Child, Sissy has spoken to thousands of parents, teachers, and girls across the country. Sissy is the author of a LifeWay video parenting curriculum called *Raising Boys and Girls*, as well as six books including parenting titles, *Intentional Parenting*, *The Back Door to Your Teen's Heart*, *Raising Girls*, and *Modern Parents*, *Vintage Values*, as well as *Mirrors and Maps* for 11-14 year-old girls and *Growing Up Without Getting Lost* for 15-19 year-old girls. Sissy is also a frequent guest and contributor to media shows and publications such as Moody Midday Connection, *ParentLife* magazine, and The Chat with Priscilla Shirer. You can find her giving parenting tips on the blog at raisingboysandgirls.com.

Tina Goode

Breakout Leader

Tina Goode is a master's level intern at The Refuge Center for Counseling, and will receive her Masters of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Trevecca Nazarene University this December. Additionally she is pursuing licensure as an Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselor. In marrying her husband, Skip, seventeen years ago, Tina immediately went from being a divorced mom of one, to a mother of five. While she did not give birth to all of her children, she says she birthed each one within her heart. Facing and overcoming challenges in her own life and family, Tina felt called to become a counselor. She is committed to providing a safe, empathic, and compassionate space where concerns can be truly heard and addressed in a therapeutic manner. Tina is honored to work with clients through life's challenges and help aid transitions into growth, healing and wholeness. Her areas of clinical focus include addiction, co-dependency, recovery, and transitional adjustments, such as trauma, grief, and loss. Tina is an active member of Cross Point Church and has served in a leadership role with Community Bible Study since 2002. She enjoys traveling and values spending quality time with friends and family.

Jennifer Holt

Breakout Leader

Jennifer coordinates the Sapphire Special Needs Ministry at Forest Hills Baptist Church. She is a writer for LifeWay Christian Resources and Special Friends Sunday School and VBS Curriculum. Her passion is inspired by her spunky ten-year-old son, Sam, who was diagnosed with autism at age three. After graduating from Duke and Vanderbilt Universities, Jennifer began her teaching career in Brentwood, TN. She has been a gifted education teacher at Edmondson Elementary for 15 years, where she recently was named both Edmondson Elementary School and Williamson County Teacher of the Year for 2015. She lives with her husband, son, and physically disabled mother in Franklin, TN.

Stacy Jagger

Breakout Leader

Stacy is a licensed marriage and family therapist with offices in Brentwood and Columbia, TN (www.sunnybrookcounseling.com). She specializes in trauma and attachment issues with women, children and families, utilizing various modalities, including eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), emotionally focused therapy (EFT), trust-based relational intervention (TBRI), and play therapy. Stacy's work with clients from diverse populations, faiths, and backgrounds, includes the old order Amish, for whom she wrote her abuse prevention book titled *A Letter From Emma*.

Jana Magruder

Breakout Leader

Jana serves as the Director of LifeWay Kids. Jana offers a wealth of experience and passion for kids ministry, education, and publishing. She has written award-winning curriculum, both interactive and traditional in nature, for the state of Texas, IMAX films, international authors, churches, and ministries. She is also the author of *Kids Ministry that Nourishes* and co-author of *Life Verse Creative Journal*, which she wrote with her teen daughter. Jana and her husband, Michael, along with their three kids made the journey from their home state of Texas to Tennessee where they serve in their local church and enjoy exploring the great city of Nashville!

Jenni Oates

Breakout Leader

Jenni's passion for lifestyle health and fitness comes from years of competing in multiple sports and at the Division I level for Liberty University, where she graduated with a degree in youth ministry. She has co-founded two companies, HealthyOates, Inc. and BURSTClub.com, with her best friend and business partner, Nathan. They live just outside Nashville, TN and have four children—three of whom they have been blessed to raise this side of heaven. Jenni is an entrepreneur who focuses on developing leaders, as well as coaching individuals and groups to better health, fitness, parenting, and marriages. She is the author of *5 Alive* and loves creating life-changing tools and resources that inspire hope and promote health and freedom—in the body, soul, and spirit.

Wynter Pitts

Breakout Leader

Wynter Pitts is the author of *For Girls Like You Devotional for Tweens* and the founder of For Girls Like You, a ministry to girls and their parents, that includes a quarterly magazine and other print and web resources. She has a drive to introduce young girls to Christian values so they can walk passionately and boldly. A native of Baltimore, Wynter resides in Dallas, Texas, with her husband, Jonathan, and their four daughters.

Linc & JoEllen Taylor

Breakout Leaders

Linc and JoEllen have been married for 26 years and been involved in full-time local church ministry over that time. They have 3 daughters ages 17, 21, and 23. JoEllen graduated from Belmont, writes regularly for LifeWay, and works in the Missions office of Brentwood Baptist in TN. Linc graduated from Carson Newman College, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing his Doctorate of Ministry in Leadership in the area of Family Ministry. As Associate Discipleship minister at Brentwood Baptist Church, Linc oversees the Next Generation and Family Ministries, supervising the vision of Preschool, Children, and Students. A combination of campfires, laughter, friends, family, and Mexican food would all be part of Linc and JoEllen's favorite day.

David Thomas, L.M.S.W.

Breakout Leader

David is the Director of Family Counseling at Daystar Counseling in Nashville, TN, the coauthor of six books including the best-selling *Wild Things: The Art of Nurturing Boys* (Tyndale House Publishers), a frequent guest on national television and radio, and a regular contributor to *ParentLife* magazine. David speaks to

parents, teachers, and leaders across the country at events and conferences such as MOPs, D6, dotMOM, and LifeWay Kids Conference. His first video curriculum, *Raising Boys and Girls: The Art of Understanding the Differences* (LifeWay), is currently available, as is his newest book, *Intentional Parenting* (Thomas Nelson). He and his wife, Connie, have a daughter and *three* Wild Things (twin sons and a feisty yellow lab puppy named Owen). You can find David giving parenting tips on the blog at raisingboysandgirls.com.

Annemarie Williams

Breakout Leader

Annemarie is a Nashville native and has been married to her high school sweetheart, Brian, for 20 years. She has been an event planner for over 20 years working for corporate magazines and most recently the NYSE, but gets the most gratification from helping serve on teams to plan women's events at her church, Long Hollow Baptist. She loves the local church and is very active in serving in preschool, kid's and women's ministry. She loves teaching and studying the Bible with other women and see it come to life. Supporting orphan care and ministry led to mission trips to Haiti and Uganda, where she and her husband followed thru in obedience to God's direction by beginning their journey of adoption 3 years ago. They now have 3 sons at home as their third son was able to come home from the DRC in March 2016. She loves serving at school, and she spends much of her afternoons running between the boys' activities and sports practices! She also has a love for the beach and travel, a steaming cup of cocoa, popcorn, and a good book.

Selma Wilson

Breakout Leader

Selma Wilson is Chief People Officer and vice president of Organizational Development at LifeWay Christian Resources. Prior to this, she served as vice president of B&H Publishing Group. She is married to Rodney who serves as Marriage and Family Counselor at LifePoint Church in Smyrna, TN. Selma and Rodney lead conferences and speak on marriage and family. They have been married for 38 years and have two married daughters, two sons-in-law, two grandsons, and one granddaughter.

Alli Worthington

Breakout Leader

Alli is the author of *Breaking Busy: Finding Peace and Purpose in a World of Crazy*, speaker, and the Executive Director of Propel Women. Alli's no-nonsense, guilt-free take on business, family, and balance has lead to appearances on The Today Show, Good Morning America and more. Alli, and her husband, Mark, live outside of Nashville, TN with their five sons.