

Meet our Main Session Speakers & Topics:



Catherine Renfro

Catherine Renfro has been a Main Session Speaker for Arise for 5 of our 6 years! She is the National Director of Women's Evangelism at the North American Mission Board. She graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism and graduated from Southeastern Seminary with a Master's Degree in Christian Education and Biblical Counseling. She is the author of "Hope, Hurt and Healing: Experiencing Jesus in the Wake of Suicide." She has a passion for seeing lost people come to know Jesus and for saved people to live out their purpose of making Jesus known. Catherine is married to Chris Renfro and they have 3 children, Isaac, Ava, and Elijah.

Women In The Mission of God - Session One Only - Library

(For Ministry Leaders) As a follower of Jesus, God has called you to be part of what He is doing to expand His Kingdom here on earth. As a leader, He has placed you in a specific ministry context on purpose for a purpose. But what's that purpose? When it comes to leading, it's so easy to get distracted by the demands of our ministry areas that we lose sight of the why behind our ministry areas. Join Catherine Renfro to discuss getting back to the "why" and how to equip and mobilize those you lead to leverage their lives for the gospel.



Rezwana Derbyshire

Originally born to Bangladeshi, Muslim parents, Rezwana Derbyshire is a passionate follower of Jesus. After a long season of waiting for God's timing she is now eagerly sharing her gifts as a singer, songwriter, and author to make God's name known in all the earth.

Rezwana is married to her husband Gary, who is a senior pastor at a church in Phoenix, Arizona, where they live, make music, and minister with their four spirited children. She is also an avid tea drinker (with milk and sugar, please!), and proud participant in daily carpool karaoke with her kids.

Leading Yourself In Worship - Session One Only - E202

How being intentional about the songs we choose to listen to—and what we sing over ourselves—can help anchor our hearts in God's truth and steady us in every season.

So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. 2 Thessalonians 2:15

Laurie Davies

An author, speaker, and former women's ministry director, Laurie has a passion for helping women let go of the emotional baggage that God didn't ask them to carry. She just finished writing her first book, which will be released with Moody Publishers in March 2026. Laurie's writing has been featured in Guideposts, and, most recently, Praying Through Loneliness, a 90-day devotional from Thomas Nelson.

Laurie drinks hot coffee on 115-degree days, she has no idea what all the remotes in her family room do, and she is an extra extrovert, so, of course, she hopes to meet you. She lives in the Phoenix area and has been married to Greg Davies for 29 years. They have one adult son, Morgan, who lives nearby. Connect with Laurie at lauriedavies.com.



Standing On God: 4 Whys and 4 Hows - Session One Only - C118W

In this scripture-saturated and highly practical breakout session, we'll look at four clear promises that result when we stand on God (the four whys). We'll also explore four practical ways to stand firm (four how-tos)--because "standing firm" isn't just a churchy thing we say, it's an essential way to live. You'll leave with biblical, actionable ideas on how to become an unwavering woman of God!

Cherie Wagner

As a wife, mother, mentor, and teacher of God's Word, Cherie Wagner has dedicated her life to knowing Jesus Christ and making Him known. Cherie founded Neue Thing in 2011, a ministry committed to encouraging, equipping, and empowering women with God's Word. Author of several Bible studies including her most recent study on Proverbs, Cherie boldly proclaims God's Word while taking women on a journey to deepen their faith and understanding of Jesus. Cherie was born and raised in Chicago, but transplanted to the desert of Arizona in 2006. She is a wife to Jeremy and a mom to their son, Redford. Though a city girl at heart, Cherie also enjoys weekend getaways with her family up north in the mountains. But most often, you'll find Cherie, coffee cup in hand, surrounded by a group of women in her living room, diving into God's Word. Connect with Cherie at neuething.org.



What Happened to the Church? A Cautionary Tale from the Church in Ephesus - Session One Only - A159

Paul closed his letter to the Ephesians with words of encouragement and praise for the strong faith of these new believers. Fast forward 30 years, and John records a message to the church in Ephesus that includes some hard and confrontational words: They had lost the love they had at first. What happened? Join me as we look at Ephesians 6 and Revelation 2 as we seek to remain faithful to the LORD in a world that is faithless.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

Breakout Session Speakers & Topics:

Jennifer Feemster



Hailing from South Carolina, Jennifer Feemster has traded sweet tea for mountain views and now calls Show Low, AZ, home. She shares life's adventures with her husband, Jason—a retired law enforcement officer turned full-time pastor—and their lively 10-year-old daughter. As if life weren't exciting enough, they also have two married adult daughters and three grandsons, ensuring there's never a dull moment (or a quiet house).

Currently, she serves as the Women's Ministry Leader at their church in Pinetop, AZ. Together, she and Jason love sharing Jesus wherever He leads them, whether it's through heartfelt conversations or spontaneous evangelistic road trips (destination: wherever God says). Her motto? "Faith, family, and a whole lot of grace—because life is best lived with a prayer in your heart and coffee in your hand."

Mount Parenthood or My Teens Bad Choices? Either Way, I'm Out of Oxygen and Climbing Barefoot! - D119

Let's climb this mountain together and learn how God's word has everything we need! Learn how to lean on God's word and Christ centered friends when parenting seems impossible. Daily preparing for the battles ahead, because you love them.....even if you don't like them!

Onjalai Brown



Onjalai Brown is the passionate Founder and Executive Director of Awaken Ministries, a movement devoted to igniting purpose, prayer, and revival in the hearts of God's people. With over 15 years of experience in ministry, Onjalai is a seasoned leader, speaker, and activator who empowers others to walk boldly in God's divine calling for their lives.

At the heart of her work is a desire to see people awakened—revived by the Spirit, rooted in the Word, and released into their God-given assignments. Through retreats, teaching, intercession, and mentorship, she creates spaces for women to encounter God, embrace healing, and rise into purposeful living.

Onjalai is more than a ministry leader—she is a catalyst for Kingdom movement. She carries a prophetic edge and a deep burden for revival, believing that when individuals awaken, families, churches, and communities are transformed.

The Obedience Effect: When Yes Changes Everything - C118E

One small "yes" to God can create a ripple effect of transformation. In this session, discover how obedience—even in the unseen and ordinary—opens the door to divine encounters, growth, and impact far beyond what you can measure.

Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 1 Peter 5:9



Shelia Jones

Shelia is a pastor's wife, Gramma, Bible teacher, and intercessor. She's a true Appalachian hillbilly who identifies as a princess warrior in the Kingdom of God. She strives daily to bow her knee to King Jesus and love her neighbors with the Gospel.

Prayer is The Victory- E204

Many believers avoid prayer meetings while living in fear of the turmoil of this world. This class will discuss two reasons our days are saturated with confusion and chaos. Unknowingly, we suffer from an anemic view of the heart of God and a flawed definition of prayer. To become the personal "House of Prayer" we are created to be, we must gain a passionate intimacy in His Presence. If we don't live assured of Christ in me, we will never experience the thrill of His Kingdom victories.



Jan Shrader

As a native Tucsonan, Jan Shrader's roots run deep in the desert Southwest. She loves hiking, and camping in the mountains of Arizona, and she finds gardening with little water and cactus exciting. As a pastor's child and later a pastor's wife Jan loves teaching the word of God for life change. Her favorite passage is always the one she is currently studying. She has an undergraduate degree from the University of Arizona and a Masters in Theology from Gateway Seminary. Her first book Bloom in the Desert, is about learning to thrive in circumstances that at first feel like a spiritual desert.

Praying the Armor of God - D117

Praying each piece of armor found in Ephesians 6:10-17 is an exercise in remembering who we are in Christ. Come and see how Jesus has provided everything we need to stand.



Lori Vober

Lori is a survivor, overcomer, connector, and encourager. She suffered a hemorrhagic stroke at age twenty-nine and then developed epilepsy from the stroke. Lori is passionate about choices, and even in our trials, we can still find hope, joy, and new success. With the right perspective, attitude, and perseverance, we can stay unstuck and keep moving forward. Even with her difficulties, Lori and her husband, Dainis, were able to become adoptive parents to a sibling group of three. Lori's journey and books can be found at www.lorivober.com.

Grief is Not Just an Emotion for the Loss of a Loved One - A170

Many think of grief as an emotion that is reserved for the loss of a loved one. As a hemorrhagic stroke survivor at the young age of 29, I learned that grieving our losses when we go through unplanned challenges is just as important in order to move forward, being our best healthiest selves. Along with processing our grief and starting to heal comes the opportunity to depend on God and His voice to direct our steps, as we partner with Him and persevere forward on the journey He has planned.

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. 1 Corinthians 16:13



Julie Newsted

Julie Newsted is an Arizona native, a UofA Wildcat and a graduate of Gateway Seminary. She loves college students and young adults, helping them at one of the most crucial decision making times in their lives. She loves sharing Christ and finds herself in some of the oddest places to do so. Julie is married to the one she waited 42 years to find. Lee and Julie enjoy fishing, road trips, and their grandkids!

Breaking the Ice to Share Christ - C106

Sharing Christ is not for the faint of heart. However, it is something all of us should participate in and fulfill Jesus' plan to share Him with the world. Let's see how we can make the process of sharing Christ a little more natural with some great ideas and tools!



Rachel Fiorentino

Rachel Fiorentino is a leadership strategist, speaker, author, and YA ministry leader passionate about equipping people to lead with clarity, confidence, and spiritual resilience. With over 15 years of experience developing leaders across industries, she blends biblical wisdom with practical, real-world tools. She is the creator of Life Skills Unlocked, a book series designed to help tweens and teens grow in confidence through essential skills and intentional conversations. Rachel lives in Arizona with her husband, Joe, and they're the proud parents of four grown-and-flown kids—with their first grandbaby on the way. Learn more at MotivateLeadInspire.com or connect on Instagram @rachel.motivateleadinspire.

From Worn Out to War Ready: Shifting into a Leadership Mindset That Stands - C108

Leadership can wear us down—especially when we lead from depletion, not direction. This session is an invitation for women to shift from running on empty to standing fully armored. Drawing from Ephesians 6:13–18, we'll explore how spiritual armor isn't just defensive gear—it's a leadership mindset strategy for resilience, clarity, and courageous influence.

This is for the woman who's carrying a lot, questioning her capacity, and wondering if she can keep leading with strength. The answer? You don't need more hustle. You need a mindset anchored in truth, peace, faith, and purpose.



Ginger O'Brien

Ginger is a passionate writer, speaker, retired teacher, and pastor's wife. Married 43 years, proud mother of two grown children, and joyful Nana to 5 grandchildren. She has served as the Women's Ministry Director of Meadview Baptist Church for 6 years. God has given her a passion for worship, missions, discipleship, and prayer. She feels called to share the extraordinary greatness of the God she serves.

Stand Firm in Adversity, Praying on the Armor of God - D128

Have you seen any Roman soldiers lately? Me neither! Paul lists the armor without any explanation. Join me and dive into Ephesians 6:10-18 to discover the importance of each piece of armor. We will also practice praying on the Full Armor of God.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel. Philippians 1:27



Karla Cox

Karla has been a follower of Jesus for 27 years. She and her husband Anthony, have 3 sons. She is a faithful church member at Mercy Hill Church, where she enjoys walking alongside women in bible study and discipleship relationships. Karla enjoys traveling, podcasts, reading a good book, and gospel centered conversations with friends while enjoying a cup of hot chai tea latte.

Fortaleciendo tu Estudio de la Biblia - D125

Profundiza tu entendimiento de la Palabra de Dios para que tu estudio de la Biblia sea impactante y transformador para tu vida. Aprenderás métodos efectivos, estrategias y herramientas para interactuar con la Biblia y aplicar lo que estudias para crecer en tu jornada espiritual.



Tammy Karli

My husband, Gary and I have been married for 35 years. We moved from South Dakota to Arizona in 2007. I have worked full-time at Sabino Road Baptist Church as the secretary and now the office manager for 18 years. I realized about 15 years ago that my ministry was to serve and love the members and ministries at SRBC.

As a mom of a blended family of 9, with three teenage daughters still at home, the challenges of today's world and the issues they face have brought me to a greater need for my Savior, Jesus Christ, in my life.

From the Inside Out: Growing Through Trials - D123

Challenges in our lives present us with the opportunity to grow in our relationship with Christ. We can "stand firm" in our faith through loving self-care and reflection on Christ's sacrifice for us.



Becky Boggus

Becky Boggus is a Texas native now happily living in the Valley of the Sun with her family. As a pastor's wife and mom of four, she brings over 15 years of diverse Social Work experience to her current role as a Social Work Professor. Becky loves coffee, asking thoughtful questions, gardening, and helping people find practical ways to overcome life's challenges. She's deeply passionate about helping individuals and families flourish within God's designs for them. Becky's work centers on supporting individuals, building strong families, and promoting well-being rooted in God's design.

Tangled Feelings, Firm Faith - C103

This session is for anyone who's ever felt overwhelmed or confused by their emotions. We'll explore how to process feelings using practical mental health tools, Scripture, and open discussion. Together, we'll unpack common cultural lies about emotions and see what God's Word really says. We believe emotions are a beautiful gift from God, but often we feel controlled by them instead of standing firm in His truth. Join us as we learn to name, understand, and ground our emotions in Jesus, so we can live with greater peace and clarity.

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12



Emily Naaktgeboren

Emily was born and raised in Kentucky and earned her bachelor's degree in missions and church planting from Boyce College, the undergraduate school of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. After living in Sedona while her husband pastored Village Park Baptist Church, they now live Mesa and she homeschools her four children.

Healing With the Healer - A172

Many women carry wounds, whether from trauma done to them* or choices they regret. The world says, "You're enough," but deep down, many women believe they're unworthy, unclean, and beyond healing. In this session, we'll confront those lies and replace them with the truth of who we are in Christ—loved, redeemed, and made new. Healing is not instant or identical for everyone; it's a personal journey led by a gracious God! Come be encouraged to surrender your past to the Lord and trust Him as your ultimate Healer. Your story isn't over, He's still writing it with grace.

*This session will include discussions of physical and sexual abuse.

Brenna Stull



Brenna is a pastor's wife, mother of 7, grandmother, mom mentor, and prayer warrior. She is founder and leader of Arise & Shine, a prayer group that meets online for an hour on weekday mornings to pray. She is also the founder of the Truth Mom Tribe, an online community and resource for honest, free, and fun foster-adoptive living and Coach Mom Live, an annual Phoenix retreat for moms. She has been mentoring moms for 25 years and is the author of Coach Mom: 7 Strategies for Organizing Your Family into an All-Star Team, helping moms organize their homes and families so they can move from frazzled to fun. Brenna and her husband Chris planted Wellspring Church and they live with their family in Litchfield Park, Arizona.

Equipping Esthers to Rise Up: Armed & Dangerous - D115

Most Christian women understand we are in a battle of good vs. evil. But many find themselves in daily situations where they feel discouraged, defeated or paralyzed. Learn simple but powerful truths and practical habits for victorious Christian living: you will stop living in fear and start making the kingdom of darkness live in fear. Live in such a way that when your alarm goes off in the morning, the devil will say, "Oh no, she's up again!"



Sara Beekman

"I love to laugh and have fun! Have a contagious passion to tell others about Jesus and inspire women to grow deeper in their walk with the Lord. I give leadership to the non-profit Christian ministry which my late husband, Gene, and I founded together in 1989 which is now known as Stop to Pray.

The Joy of Becoming a Contagious Christian! - C104

Good news is contagious! We should be faith spreaders, love givers and hope dealers! - Groeschel. Come join me! You will leave inspired, encouraged, and challenged to step out in faith to share Jesus with those around you who desperately need Him! It will be fun and practical!

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27



Sharon Hargrave

Sharon Hargrave, LMFT, is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Arizona, California and Texas. Sharon served as the Executive Director of the Boone Center for the Family at Pepperdine University and as an affiliate faculty member in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at Fuller Theological Seminary. Sharon and her husband Terry, speak on issues pertaining to anxiety, marriage, intergenerational relationships, parenting, couples in ministry and the Restoration Therapy model. She has co-authored 5 Days to a New Self with her husband and The Mindful Marriage with Terry, Ron and Nan Deal.

Healthy Marriage and Family Relationships - D124

This session will inspire you to create the best possible marriage and family relationships you can have through understanding and managing yourself. You will learn how to create healthy patterns through self regulation and emotional healing empowered by the presence of Christ.

Simone Lake



Simone Lake is a Jesus follower, Expository Bible Teacher, conference speaker, writer and wife of pastor Dr. John Lake. Her passion and dedication includes Bible teaching, discipleship, mentoring and counseling. She serves the body of Christ in the local church, community, state, nation and worldwide in 4 out of 7 continents. Simone is the founder of Deep Roots in Christ Ministries and holds a masters degree in Theology as well as several certificates including Christian Apologetics and Biblical Counseling. She enjoys Pilates, ballet and outdoor adventures with her husband including hiking the Grand Canyon Rim to Rim.

Standing Strong in Spiritual Battles with Biblical Strength- E201

The spirit realm is alive and active today as we live on this earth. Satan is out to kill, steal, and destroy. Then we have the temptations and sins of our flesh, others and the world around us.

Although we do not literally fight against flesh and blood (Eph. 6:12), how then do we stand in the battle as followers of Christ? How do we survive the daily attacks of the fiery darts of Satan, flesh, temptations and world? These very darts are ones that can cause us to catapult downward in a place of feeling defeated and hopeless. We hold our position in Christ! And that is how we live daily.

Come and learn tools for studying your Bible, these are practical and applicable to our everyday life and living. We will observe and study what our great Example and Savior, Jesus Christ says, ...fixing our eyes on Him, as well as looking at some Old Testament authors that align with Apostle Paul and what he wrote in the book of Ephesians.



Diana Johnson

Diana Johnson and her husband of 44 years, David, live in Peoria, AZ. They have 2 daughters and 7 grandchildren with one on the way. She has been a pastor's wife for 25 years. Her favorite thing to do is teach Bible to women.

Overcoming Loneliness and Unrealistic Expectations as a Minister's Wife. - D116

Ladies, we will be discussing loneliness amidst chaos and unrealistic expectation of yourself and others.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58 **14**