

2026 Conference Schedule Overview

Rise Up!

Thursday, July 9

9:00-12:00 Pre-Conference Sessions:

Speakers' Pre-Conference Options:

Create Your Speaker Sizzle Reel—Dawn Scott Damon (15-minute segments)

Up Your Speaking 2.0—Karen Porter (3-hours)

7 Strategies to Secure Speaking Engagements—Robyn Dykstra

Writers' Pre-Conference Options: (3-hours)

Book Proposal Intensive Clinic—Dave & Cindy Lambert

Developing Your Brand Across Genres—Janet McHenry

From Message to Masterclass: Build Your First Course in 3 Hours—Carol Tetzlaff

Ministry Development Option: (3-hours)

AI for Kingdom Impact: Transforming Your Ministry—Rachel Wojo

12:00-12:55	Optional Lunch	Great Hall
	VIP Lunch.	Boardroom
1:00-1:10	Opening Welcome—Bonnie Emmorey & Carol Kent	Great Hall
1:10-1:20	Praise & Worship	
1:20-2:00	Opening Keynote —Debbie Alsdorf— Rise & Remain	
2:00-2:45	Panel Discussion:	Great Hall
	Platform Building: Interviews, Podcasts, Social Media & Networking	
2:45-3:00	Break	
3:00-4:00	Breakout Session #1	
	(S) Speak Like a Pro (Carol Kent) .	
	(S) The Top Ten Best Speaking Tips (Karen Porter)	
	(W) How to Craft a Winning Non-Fiction Book Proposal (Cindy Lambert)	
	(W) Proposals Publishers Love (Karen Neumair)	
	(P) Create a Winning Podcast (Rachel Wojo)	
	(M) Boots on the Ground Marketing (Shawn Kuhn)	
	(M) What Makes a Good Speaker or Author Website? (Katy Boykin)	
4:00-4:15	Break	
4:15-5:45	Speakers' Track—Small Group Critiquing Session	Location on your printout
	Writers' Track—Introduction of authors with a new book in the last year & 1 st Page Peer Critiquing	Great Hall
5:45-6:45	Buffet Dinner	Great Hall
6:30-6:40	Praise & Worship	
6:40-7:30	Evening Keynote —Cindy Bultema— Rising Up When Life Falls Apart	
7:30-7:45	Break & Sweet Treat (Pick it up and move to your breakout session.)	
7:45-8:45	Breakout Session #2	
	(S) Aim for Results & Outlining with Pizzazz (Bonnie Emmorey)	
	(S) Captivating Presentations (Robyn Dykstra)	
	(W) Self-Editing: Becoming Your Own Most Helpful Critic (Joel Armstrong)	
	(W) Writing Twice as Much in Half the Time (Bruce Martin)	
	(P) Rise Up! Starting Your Vodcast Journey (Dawn Scott Damon)	
	(M) Remove the Walls that Block Your Progress (Lisa Saruga)	
	(M) God's Seven Drivers of Ministry (Jerry Howard)	

Friday, July 10

- 8:00-8:45 Breakfast Meeting— Marriage & Ministry (Lee & Mike Nienhuis)
Breakfast Meeting— Goal Planning (Jennie Dimkoff)
- 8:55 Praise & Worship.Great Hall
- 9:00-9:05 Welcome, Announcements, & Giveaways—Bonnie Emmorey
- 9:05-9:15 Praise & Worship
- 9:15-10 **Morning Keynote**—Carol Tetzlaff—**Faithful on Tuesday**
- 10:00-10:45 Panel Discussion: **Current Challenges & Opportunities in a Changing World.** . .Great Hall
- 10:45-11:00 Break
- 11:00-12:00 **Breakout Session #3**
(S) Teaching the Bible with Confidence (Lee Nienhuis)
(S) Crafting a Memorable Message (Cindy Bultema)
(W) How to Write a Chapter (Karen Porter)
(W) Unstoppable Words (Athena Dean Holtz)
(P) Create a Successful Media Kit for Podcast (and Other Media) Interviews (Janet McHenry)
(M) Arise, Shine: What to do when it is not going well (Jeri Howe)
(M) AI for Writers and Speakers (Susan Call)
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:35-12:45 Comic Sketch—Tracy DeGraaf
- 12:45-1:00 Platinum Sponsors Highlighted
- 1:00-1:45 Panel Discussion: **The Business & Ministry of Speaking & Writing** Great Hall
The Business & Ministry of Speaking & Writing
- 1:45-2:00 Break
- 2:00-3:00 **Breakout Session #4**
(S) Your Story Matters: Sharing your Personal Testimony (Angela Donadio)
(S) Lose the Notes. Keep the Audience (Karen Porter)
(W) Writing Devotions (Sandi Banks)
(W) Risking to Write the Book (Blythe Daniel)
(P) Podcasting: Asking the Good Questions (Courtney Doyle)
(M) The Way You View Life is the Way You'll Do Life (Sheila Qualls)
- 3:00-3:15 Break
- 3:15-4:30 Speakers' Track—2nd Small Group Critiquing Session Location on your printout
Writers' Track—Mock Pub Board with Dave & Cindy Lambert
followed by Q & A with publishers, editors & agents Great Hall
- 4:30-5:30 Break
- 5:30-6:30 Friday Night Banquet Great Hall
- 6:15-6:25 Praise & Worship
- 6:25-7:15 **Evening Keynote**—Jenn Hand—**Hope Beneath the Rubble: Rise Up!** Great Hall
- 7:15-7:30 Break
- 7:30-9:00 Publishing Awards followed by Book Signings Great Hall

Saturday, July 11

- 8:00-8:45 Breakfast Meeting— Podcasting (Rachel Wojo)
- 8:55 Praise & Worship. Great Hall
- 9:00–9:05 Welcome & Announcements—Bonnie Emmorey & Rachel Wojo
- 9:05–9:15 Praise & Worship
- 9:15–10 **Morning Keynote**—Marvin Williams—**Pushing through Fear, Standing in Faith**
- 10:00–10:45 Panel DiscussionGreat Hall
Rise Up: Rise Up: Real Stories, Real Obedience, Real Impact
- 10:45–11:00 Break
- 11:00–12:00 **Breakout Session #5**
(S) Stories & Statements that Make Your Messages Stick (Shannon Popkin)
(S) Tough Talks (Darlene Larson)
(W) Nonfiction Structure (Debbie Alsdorf)
(W) The Pursuit: Seeking His Purpose for Your Writing (Judy Dunagan)
(P) Unlock the Power of a Podcast Tour (Susan Neal)
(M)Developing Your Prayer Team (Kathe Wunnenberg)
(M) RISE UP: Embracing the Seasons of Your Calling (Pat Layton)
- 12:00–12:15 Break
- 12:15–1:00 Lunch
- 12:55–1:00 Praise & Worship. Great Hall
- 1:00–1:05 Introduce Full Speak Up Team
- 1:05–1:15 Speak Up Masterpiece Theater—Bonnie Emmorey & Gene Kent
- 1:15–2:00 Panel Discussion: **Where Do We Go From Here?**
- 2:00–2:15 Break
- 2:15-3:15 **Breakout Session #6**
(S) Retreat Speaking that Rocks (Cindy Bultema)
(S) Master the Mic: Learning the Art of Emceeing (Dawn Damon)
(W) Improve Your Nonfiction with Fiction Techniques (D&C Lambert)
(W) Using the Pyramid Method to Write Winning Articles (Cheri Cowell)
(P) Booked & Blessed: Land Podcast Interviews (Dawn Sanders)
(M) How to Endure in Ministry in Painful Seasons (Ginny Davidson & Joanna Teigen)
(M) Building Community on Substack & Threads (Christy Lynn Wood)
(M) Guided Outdoor Reflections (J. Howe), Weather Permitting) . . . Meet at the back door
- 3:15–3:30 Break
- 3:30-4:30 **Closing Session: Praise & Worship) Great Hall**
Keynote—Carol Kent—**If Not You, Then Who?**