

Women's Ministries

# Handbook for Leaders



CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

# *Women's Ministries* Handbook for Leaders

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<http://www.nazarene.org/ministries/ssm/adult/women/display.aspx>

## From the Director

You probably chose to read this *Women's Ministries Handbook for Leaders* since you are involved in some aspect of Ministry Through Women. This will be a challenging and rewarding experience as well as an exhausting and time consuming ministry. However, the benefits will far outweigh the challenges. Ministry Through Women plays a vital role in helping churches to meet the demands and expectations of women as they fill their various roles. Women's Ministries is one of many entry points into local churches.

Any handbook that attempts to cover the unique nature of churches soon realizes the impossibility of that task. Therefore, we have attempted to provide general principles and concepts. The reader and ministry leaders must then tailor them to fit individual churches. Most ministries and programs need some adjustments as they are implemented from one church to another.

This *Handbook* contains a wealth of information. You are encouraged to skim through it before reading specific sections. You may want to prioritize your reading to avoid feeling inundated with information. If you are beginning Women's Ministries, remember you cannot start everything at once. Start with small and simple programs and ministries. This does not mean, however, they are insignificant. As your support and leadership base grows, expand as needs and interests dictate.

The *Handbook* was also designed to be user-friendly. Unless otherwise noted, all materials are reproducible for use in your ministry and leadership training as long as proper credit information is included.

This *Women's Ministries Handbook for Leaders* is a product of the Women's Ministries General Council of the Church of the Nazarene. Their input, support, work, and prayers were vital to making the vision for this Handbook a reality. Therefore, I express my appreciation to the following individuals who contributed to this product:

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# Chapter One

## Local Director

Welcome to Women's Ministries in the Church of the Nazarene. In accepting the position as Women's Ministries director for your church, you've embarked on an exciting adventure. At times, traveling this road may be a challenge—or it may be easier than you expect. In the long run, this is a fulfilling, rewarding ministry as you invest in the lives of the women in your church.

### Women's Ministries...Its Reason for Being

Women's Ministries has a multi-faceted purpose. It is designed

- To encourage and support women as they fill their various roles,
- To reach out to the community,
- To minister to those in the church, and
- To offer opportunities for spiritual and relational growth.

Women have ministered in the Church since its beginning. Perhaps this involvement reflects the nature of women to readily sense others' needs. Nurturing and compassion as intuitive parts of women make this ministry productive.

### To Support Women as They Fill Their Various Roles

Women are relational beings. Their lives tend to revolve around relationships. When women enter new life stages, they look for role models. They want to see how other women have met, or are meeting and succeeding in, the challenges of life. As roles change with time, women look to those who have traveled a similar path for advice and encouragement.

This is especially important since women fill so many different roles during their lives- wife, mother, new Christian, growing Christian, and caregivers to name a few of the roles filled. The way they live out these roles at home, work, and church are as varied as the women are. Yet commonalities unite and bind these women together as they go through various life stages.

Women's Ministries is a place where women may find role models and other women at the same stage of life. Through Women's Ministries in your church, women find friendships, support, and encouragement. Women's Ministries may even provide practical encouragement, help and support required to face specific situations.

### To Reach out to the Community

Women's Ministries provides a point of entry for those new to the community and church. Because of the less formal structure, some women choose to attend a function of Women's Ministries even though they may not be willing to attend a scheduled church service. Therefore, Bible studies, seminars, and mothers' groups are a necessary part of Women's Ministries and the total ministry of the church.

### To Minister to Those in the Church

The needs and interests of the women in your church will direct the scope of Women's Ministries. While ideas, concepts, and programs are shared among different churches, the ministries usually need to adjust the concepts to fit the specific interests and needs of the women of the church family.

If Women's Ministries is newly formed entity, begin with one program or ministry. It is not possible nor is it advisable to begin more programs or ministries than those the women of the church have an expressed interest or need and can be supported by the church. For example, a Bible study group may be the beginning ministry for one church. Another church may begin by preparing the Sunday bulletin, maintaining bulletin boards, assisting with church decorations, or other similar projects.

As Women's Ministries grows and develops, programs and ministries will fail. Don't be afraid of failure. It's a great teacher. A child learning to walk falls in the process, but gets up again and again—until walking becomes natural. One failure doesn't mean all of Women's Ministries has failed. Sometimes what is viewed as a failure is simply a program ending because it has outlived its usefulness. Move on to the next program or ministry the Lord is leading you to begin. The congregational survey at the end of this chapter is a useful tool to help identify appropriate, new ministries.

You may also purposefully end a program or ministry when its goals and objectives have been achieved. The life span of a program or ministry is determined by need and interest. As needs are met and interests change, end a program or ministry to provide time, energy, and talent to begin new ones.

### **To Offer Opportunities for Spiritual and Relational Growth**

Women's Ministries is the arm of the church that allows women to meet the needs of other women. It provides a place where love is offered under every circumstance, where acceptance is granted without reservation, and where forgiveness is freely given. As these three key elements thrive, Women's Ministries will grow...and the women involved in it will grow personally and spiritually.

In addition to offering the opportunity to grow in their relationships with each other, Women's Ministries also gives women the opportunity to grow in their relationships with God. The women will not only find insights from each other, but as they are pointed to the Creator of relationships, they will find His wisdom for each challenge they face. They will grow in their individual relationship with God, and the women will grow as a community.

## **Philosophy, Purpose, Mission Statement**

### **Philosophy**

We believe all women are important in God's eyes and are vital in His kingdom. We believe in unity within diversity and cooperation and caring through the inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of Women's Ministries is to glorify God by challenging women

- To know God personally,
- To grow in Christlikeness,
- To discover and use spiritual gifts,
- To love and serve others, and
- In all we do to reflect the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Women's Ministries is GROWTH.

**G**athering women

**R**esourcing opportunities

**O**ffering acceptance

**W**inning women to Christ

**T**eaching biblical truths

**H**onoring the Spirit-filled life



Colossians 2:6-7 supports these statements: *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude* (NASB).

### **Applying the Purpose and Mission Statements to Your Women's Ministries**

How do you apply the purpose statement to your Women's Ministries at your church? Why does Women's Ministries exist? How does Women's Ministries fit into the mission statement of your church? How does your Women's Ministries work with the total church program to reach its goals and objectives?

Consider the questions asked in the above paragraph and adapt them to reflect the needs, interest, and location of your church. Determine measurable goals and objectives for Women's Ministries. Make them realistic and attainable. Be confident each ministry and program is manageable.

### **Women's Ministries Logo**

The Women's Ministries logo is more than a design. It symbolizes the whole meaning of Women's Ministries within the Church of the Nazarene.

Colossians 2:6-7 is the basis for this logo. *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness* (NIV).

Paul identifies Christ Jesus as Lord since we need to grow in our relationship with Him. Paul calls us to continue walking in Him—which results in our growth—and obeying Christ Jesus as Lord. As we do this, we are rooted and grounded in Him like a strong tree or built-up like a beautiful building. If our faith is established in Jesus Christ, our lives will abound with love and thanksgiving.



Paul writes about the importance of maintaining our link to our Source: Jesus.

(Throughout the *Handbook* Jesus refers to his earthly life and ministry and recognizes him as God incarnate. Christ involves a confession of faith and acknowledges him as risen indeed.) Like the believers in Paul's day, we also face the challenges of guarding against forces that do not operate according to Jesus' life and ministry. Christ is all we need. In Him we are complete, lacking no good thing. This is a fact since Christ is Lord over everything.

The tree represents the Church growing in Christ, particularly the Church of the Nazarene. Women's Ministries, one of the many entry points into a local congregation, is depicted as one of the branches. The root represents our steadfastness in Christ. Just as a mighty tree with solid roots withstands the forces of nature, so we withstand the forces of life when we are rooted and grounded in Christ.

### **Women's Ministries in the Local Church**

In this Handbook, you'll find a wealth of information. You are encouraged to read through it for information and ideas, adapting and changing them to meet the unique situation of your church. An extra Structure Circle is included at the end of this chapter to assist you in Identifying the spokes for your church.

No matter the size of your church, all programs and ministries you begin demand careful planning and creative presentation. God commands our best efforts, regardless of the size of the church or the assigned task. Even though we have a God-given and holy purpose, shabbily presented programs and ministries are still shabby.

As an arm of the local church, Women's Ministries should be part of your church's organization. As you work with Women's Ministries, remember two critical goals are to educate the congregation about the diversity among women and to strengthen the church's ministry. Since the breadth of the Women's Ministries reaches beyond being a single entity in the church and embraces the entire church community; the Women's Ministries director must strive to achieve the following goals.



1. The Women's Ministries director should meet with the pastor and Sunday School superintendent regarding the mission, vision, and goals of the church.
2. The Women's Ministries Council should study the mission, vision, and goals and develop a plan of action that complements and helps to reach them.
3. Women's Ministries must always be regarded as a complementary part of the church; it is never to be seen as a separate entity.
4. The graying of society requires Women's Ministries to inform the congregation about the needs, interests, and concerns of senior adults. What role can Women's Ministries fill to assist aging parents whose children live out of the community?
5. The increasing demands of women who find themselves in the sandwich generation—raising children and caring for an ill parent or relative—call for our attention. What role does Women's Ministries play in providing respite care for the caregivers?

## **Structure of Women's Ministries in a Local Church**

The director of Adult Ministries nominates the director of Women's Ministries with the approval of the pastor and the Sunday School superintendent. You are then elected by the Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries Board and serve on the Adult Council. You serve as liaison between the Women's Ministries Council and the Adult Council. It is your responsibility to keep current of policies and procedures as well as to obtain input and approval for speakers and events. (In churches where there is not a Sunday School and Discipleships Ministries Board, the official Church Board fills this role.)

Women's Ministries is not an entity to itself. One of the aims of Women's Ministries is to work within and support the total church program. The specific goals and objectives of a local Women's Ministries should be compatible with those of the total church program. Before adapting the purpose, goals, and objectives of Women's Ministries to fit your local church, the Women's Ministries director is encouraged to discuss with the pastor the mission statement for the local church and the role of Women's Ministries in fulfilling that statement.

The Women's Ministries director appoints the members of the Women's Ministries Council. These names must have the approval of the Adult Ministries director, Sunday School superintendent, and pastor. In ministries where council members are elected, the ballot must receive approval by the above-mentioned individuals. While it is not necessary that every name submitted be a member of the local church, the individuals should be Christians and regular attendees with leadership potential. It is also recommended that the treasurer be a member of the local church.

Women's Ministries reaches the adult women of the congregation. Adult Ministries typically begins with age 24. Due to the church size and other factors, some Women's Ministries will include women younger than 24. The Women's Ministries Council should reflect the make-up of the congregation, including women from various age groups, marital status, employment, and interests.

Women's Ministries should be part of the annual church budget. These monies should be used for communications, newsletters, leadership development, and training. Programs and ministries of Women's Ministries such as retreats and banquets, should be self-supporting. Women's Ministries is required by God and the church to be a good steward of its financial resources.

## **The Local Women's Ministries Director**

As you begin your responsibilities as Women's Ministries director, identify the motivating factors in your decision to accept this position. You will be investing much time and energy into the ministry; therefore, it is vitally important for you to consider the impact on you and your family. If this has not been a topic of conversations with your family, set aside an evening or block of time for this discussion. It is assumed that accepting this position has been a matter of prayer.

Involve your family as you lead Women's Ministries. Some tasks young children can take responsibility for and assist with. Folding and stuffing envelopes may also allow you some individual time with your children. Holding some council meetings in your home allows the children of council members to play together and eliminates

the need for babysitting. Older children may take responsibility for babysitting the children of council members. Take your children to some of the functions with you. This allows them to see the results of your work.

If Women's Ministries in your church does not have a working council, one of your first duties is to form a council. Depending on the size of your church, invite 5 to 20 women to participate in a brainstorming session. These women on the council should reflect the various age groups of women (those under 25, 26-35, 36-50, 51-65, and over 65), married and single women, various employment groups (full-time, part-time, self-employed, retired, stay-at-home mothers, etc.), church members, non-church members, church leaders, and spiritually mature.

Conduct a survey of the women in your congregation using one of the surveys found at the end of this chapter. These surveys are generically designed and most will require some adaptation to fit your local church. You may wish to select items from various surveys and create a survey tailor-made for your ministry. After the survey, tabulate the survey results prior to the next council meeting. Part of the brainstorming session will be a review of the survey results.

State the amount of time allocated for brainstorming. Either identify a person as official time-keeper or set a timer to signal the end. Follow these four ground rules for an effective brainstorming session:

1. Absolutely no evaluation or criticism.
2. Consider any idea, no matter what the quality.
3. Generate ideas.
4. Build upon each others' ideas.

Remember any deviation from these rules, especially evaluative or critical comments, tend to stifle the group's creativity. Identify a person to write the ideas on a flip chart or chalkboard and record them for future reference. Use the information from the brainstorming session as input when the council meets to determine how your Women's Ministries can implement the purpose, mission, and philosophy of Women's Ministries for your church.

Keep the congregation informed about Women's Ministries. This includes using bulletin boards to promote meetings, events, programs, and ministries. If your church has a regular newsletter, ask for a column for Women's Ministries. (Be sure your column is completed by the due date!) Or consider the possibility of a Women's Ministries newsletter.

The newsletter can be distributed through various church activities by e-mail or posting on the church's web site. Prepare bulletin inserts to announce and promote the ministry's activities. Talk with other Women's Ministries leaders to share ideas, encourage, and coordinate ministries.

## **Local Women's Ministries Director Job Description**

The job responsibilities of the local Women's Ministries director are:

1. To determine the needs and interests of the women in the local church by using observation, surveys, and other means of input.
2. To develop and use the talents and abilities of the women and use them.
3. To identify areas of need within the church and the ways Women's Ministries can assist.
4. To determine community needs that Women's Ministries can meet.
5. To help non-Christian women meet Christ.
6. To provide Bible studies, prayer groups, discipleship, and other means to aid spiritual growth and development.
7. To provide opportunities for women to be discipled and to be disciplers.
8. To provide the women of the church a place to minister to other women.
9. To reserve meeting places for Women's Ministries activities held at the church.
10. To promote and publicize women's activities in the church bulletins, newsletters, and web site.
11. To serve on and be responsible to the Adult Ministries Council of the Board of Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries.

12. To make reports and present proposals to the Adult Ministries Council of the Board of Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries.
13. To work within and support the total church program.
14. To cooperate with the district Women's Ministries director by completing forms, promoting district activities, and updating leadership changes.
15. To keep up-to-date regarding approval procedures for speakers and events.
16. To form a local Women's Ministries Council.

## **Forming a Local Women's Ministries Council**

One means of fulfilling these job description responsibilities is to form a Women's Ministries Council. The director of Women's Ministries will recruit and train council members in areas of responsibility such as spiritual life, communication, enrichment, hospitality, missions, outreach, and nurturing of women within the congregation. The director works as a liaison between the Women's Ministries Council, Adult Ministries Council, pastoral staff, and the community. She also screens potential ministry ideas prior to presenting them to the Council to determine the need and how the idea mesh with the philosophy, purpose, and objectives of Women's Ministries.

The director of Women's Ministries also conducts the regularly scheduled council meetings. Some of the purposes of these meetings are to form community, to pray together, to receive reports from the various ministries and programs, to process any business, to plan activities and events, and to develop leadership skills. In addition to these meetings, the director of Women's Ministries should meet periodically with the council members to mentor them, to discuss difficulties, and to provide accountability.

Many Women's Ministries Councils find an annual, one day council retreat beneficial. The retreat provides time for prayer, evaluation of the previous year's activities and events, implementation of changes based on evaluation input, continuation leadership development, determination of new and continued ministries and programs, and setting the calendar for the upcoming year. Another benefit is the opportunity to form friendships among the council members in a neutral setting. Building relationships and a team spirit are vital for an effective council.

## **Women's Ministries Treasurer**

Working with the local director of Women's Ministries, the treasurer should prepare an annual budget. The budget should project the income and expenditures for the fiscal year. The fiscal year for Women's Ministries should be the same as that of the local church. The budget should also include funds provided through the local church's operating budget.

Since Women's Ministries is an entity of the local congregation, Women's Ministries should follow procedures established for other entities of the church such as Nazarene Youth International, Nazarene Missions International, and others that maintain financial records. The responsibility of the Women's Ministries treasurer is to maintain an accurate accounting of all money received and disbursed.

Monies received through Women's Ministries should be funneled through the church treasurer. The responsibility of the treasurer of Women's Ministries is to maintain careful accounting of all monies received and disbursed, and to prepare a monthly report for the Women's Ministries Council. The report should also be presented to the Adult Ministries Council. Should the records of the Women's Ministries and church treasurers disagree, the church treasurer and the Women's Ministry treasurer work together to identify and correct discrepancies. In instances where Women's Ministries has a separate checking account, the treasurer prepares a monthly accounting of monies received and disbursed. The church treasurer, Adult Ministries director, Sunday School superintendent, and pastor receive a copy of the report.

Women's Ministries should have reasonable reserve funds for unexpected expenditures. The amount of this reserve fund will vary with each local church. A minimum of \$100.00 is recommended. Funds in excess of this amount should be reinvested into the ministries of the local church.

## Women's Ministries is Unique

Women's Ministries operates with a multi-faceted purpose:

- ✓ to encourage and support women as they fill their various roles,
- ✓ to reach out to the community,
- ✓ to minister to those in the church, and
- ✓ to offer opportunities for spiritual and relational growth.

Each Women's Ministries program is unique. Women's Ministries in your church will look different than any other Women's Ministries. Women's Ministries sometimes vary because of locations. If you are in a metropolitan church, you'll have different needs and interests than a suburban church. Likewise, small town and rural churches have different needs and interests.

The composition of women in each church also varies. Your church may have more older women or more mothers with children at home. You may have primarily married women, or a significant number of single women. The women may tend to work full-time outside of the home, or perhaps they work part-time, are retired, or are stay-at-home mothers. In different churches, the commitments and interests that women find in common may vary. Because of these factors, Women's Ministries will be unique. Expect that and celebrate your unique qualities.

### Today's Woman

To minister effectively, we need to look seriously at today's woman:

1. She is in her early to mid-20s beginning to establish herself in a career and finding her role in life.
2. She is over 65 and retired. She is adjusting to a different lifestyle, perhaps having her husband around all day, no structure to the day, or adjusting to fixed or limited income.
3. She is 40 to 50 and coping with the empty nest syndrome. She may be redefining her marriage, especially if children have been the focal point.
4. She is over 40 and childless. She is listening to her biological clock running down. No one seems to understand her pain as she watches others have children. She is tired of answering well-meaning but personal questions.
5. She is middle-aged and sees the end of her parenting days. She dreams about having more discretionary time and wonders how life will be different as the youngest leaves home. Suddenly she is forced on the daughter track as one of her parents, in-laws, or another person requires extensive care. Her time on the daughter track may last longer than her parenting track.
6. She is a single adult in any of the previously described situations. If she is younger, she may feel pressure from family and church to marry. If she is older, she has established herself, but often feels as if she is not accepted as a peer.
7. She is a senior adult over 60, sometimes caring for a husband incapacitated by a serious illness.
8. She is a middle-age woman who is rearing her grandchildren. She wonders if she has the stamina to keep up with them.
9. She is struggling with the conflicting information she receives about her roles. She is searching for the answer to the question, "Is one role better than another? Is one more valued than another? How can I effectively fulfill all these roles?"
10. Women no longer attend a function just because it is there. They have many demands competing for their attention.
11. Women today are highly educated and hold responsible positions. Their expectations are higher while their needs increase.
12. Some churches may include single mothers struggling to adjust to a new lifestyle following a divorce or the death of a spouse.

These mothers represent an increasing number of homes. Some face the task of rearing their children without daily contact with fathers. Be aware of the unique needs and concerns of the single-parent family.

## **The Difference between a Program and Ministry**

Programs focus on resources available.  
Programs focus on techniques.  
Programs look for numbers.  
Programs need quick answers.  
Programs see the goal.

*Ministries are based on needs.  
Ministries focus on people.  
Ministries see changed lives.  
Ministries understand grace in uncertainty.  
Ministries see the heart.*

Women's Ministries needs both program and ministry. Notice that ministry is long-term while program is short-term. You will develop programs within your ministry. The focus, however, must be on ministry rather than programs. When you begin a new venture, identify it as a ministry or program. This helps you determine the length, goals, purpose, and objectives.

Women's Ministries overlaps with other ministries in the church, like Prime Time Ministries, Single Adult Ministries, and Nazarene Missions International. How can Women's Ministries complement rather than compete with these ministries? Working together helps each ministry to meet the diversity of needs reflected by women. Coordinating calendars and supporting other programs and ministries allows women to choose the activities that best meet their needs.

### **An Effective Women's Ministries will:**

1. Start with prayer.
2. Know the women of the congregation.
3. Enlist church leadership.
4. Have specific goals.
5. Develop leadership.
6. Be built on a spiritual emphasis.
7. Include variety.
8. Provide support groups.
9. Emphasize outreach.
10. Encourage personal friendships.
11. Be flexible and relevant.
12. Encourage use of spiritual gifts through training and ministry opportunities.

Without a vision, women will not grow and may even perish. Leaders who spend time with God and women gain perspective on ministry needs. Pay attention to the burdens and passions God gives you about how He wants to bring holiness and wholeness to women.

After leaders plan their work, they work their plan. Good ideas go nowhere without investing time and energy to organize, advertise, and do the work of ministry.

Ministry is spiritual work. It's initiated by God, accomplished by Him, dependent upon Him, under His direction, and through His enabling. If a ministry isn't worth praying about, it isn't worth doing. A ministry must be supported in prayer.

## **Local Goals**

In every ministry, program, event, and one-on-one encounter, Women's Ministries in the local church will provide opportunities:

- To know Christ personally,
- To mature as a whole person, with focus on spiritual growth,
- To become equipped for service,
- To develop interpersonal relationships,
- To give and receive love,
- To do good deeds, and
- To reach out to the community and beyond, all through the direction of the Holy Spirit.



## Local Objectives

Women's Ministries is dedicated:

- To teach women how to share the gospel of Christ,
- To develop materials and classes that include the message of salvation,
- To coordinate the study of the Word of God,
- To design events that provide friendships, and
- To plan ways to specifically invite women from outside the church into the fellowship.

## Outreach and Inreach

Outreach is reaching to those outside the church. Reaching out is a vital part of Christian growth and development. Inreach is ministering to those inside the church family.

Under the umbrella of outreach ministry is welcoming visitors. If welcoming visitors is the responsibility of Women's Ministries, here are two suggestions:

1. Prepare a visitor's packet to be given to each adult visitor. Include letters from the pastoral staff and department leaders (Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International, Nazarene Youth International, Nazarene Missions International), explaining their ministry, information regarding the Church of the Nazarene, newsletters, etc.
2. Have a welcome coffee. Arrange for two or three women to visit new families with cookies, flavored coffee, or tea. Due to potential liability concerns, we recommend purchased and sealed items. All items should be delivered with the seal unbroken. Larger churches may form an outreach ministry to oversee and coordinate the welcome coffees.

Mother's Clubs and Mother's Day Out are means of outreach. Outreach occurs through many contacts churches have during holidays for assistance with special needs. Be aware of these needs throughout the entire year.

There are many different approaches to inreach. These include Bible study, prayer and support groups. Establishing a prayer chain makes informing the church of special needs easier. Be sure to inform the prayer chain of answers to prayer.

A library helps by providing useful books without major personal investments. The check-out system will be determined by the number of books and people involved.

Consider having a women's retreat. Depending on size, you may wish to include other churches in the area. Sharing, encouraging, and supporting are the major objectives of a retreat. Resources determine the scope of your retreat. If finances are a problem, use community resource persons as well as local, district, and general leaders. Adapt the lock-in idea to meet your needs. During off seasons, some motels give special rates.

Women's Ministries may be responsible for some social needs of the church. These could include showers, meals for shut-in and hospitalized people, funeral dinners, food poundings, church decorations, etc. Reaching to those outside the church makes them aware of God's love in action. Reaching to those inside the church gives encouragement and support. We need each other.

## Tools to Begin or Evaluate Women's Ministries

The worksheets at the end of this chapter are included to assist as you begin or evaluate Women's Ministries in your church. They are designed to provide basic information regarding the makeup of the women within the congregation and to assist in developing the ministries and programs needed to complement the mission of the local church.

**Analysis of Your Congregation** is designed to enable leaders to gain basic information to develop effective ministries and programs. Without this initial step, it is possible to develop ministries and programs that overlap and duplicate those already in place. This analysis provides the opportunity to gather information regarding ideal meeting times, needs, and interests. Each Women's Ministries must be tailored to fit the uniqueness of the congregation. A ministry or program concept from another church will require some adjustments. Ministries and programs are not one size fits all.

**We Want to Get to Know You Better** is a short survey to gain information about meeting times and interests. Without this information, it is possible to develop and attempt to implement an ideal ministry or program but one that does not fit the women of the congregation.

**Does Our Church Need Women's Ministries?** is a worksheet to analyze the motivation for beginning or maintaining Women's Ministries. "Just because" is not an adequate reason and will not support Women's Ministries. Some will find it necessary to sell the importance of Women's Ministries to the pastoral staff, church leaders, and church board. In addition to analyzing the motivation, this worksheet provides the information needed to complete the sales job.

**Leadership Team Brainstorming Session** is for the Women's Ministries director as she considers developing the leadership team. Rather than randomly selecting women to join the leadership team, this form asks the director to consider the rationale for selecting the members and to begin some preliminary planning. Brainstorming Session Results provides a quick method of summarizing the results of these sessions.

**Entry Event Worksheet** is designed to assist in developing the event. Completion of this worksheet helps to formulate the goals and purposes of the event, to identify the target group, to consider the processes involved, and to develop follow-up ministry.

**Quality Program Checklist** offers assistance for covering all the minute details of planning an event. The walk-through format allows planners to step back and view the registration or entrance in a more objective manner. There are also sections to complete following the program or event that provide a quick evaluation of it and the involved processes.

## Analysis of Your Congregation

1. How many women attend your church? (18 years and older)
2. Estimate the number of women in each of the following age groups.

_____ 18-23	_____ 24-35	_____ 36-45
_____ 46-55	_____ 56-65	_____ 66-75
_____ over 75		
3. How many single women are in your congregation?
4. How many single-parent families?
5. What percentage of the women in the congregation work outside their homes?
6. What is the average distance a woman drives to your church?
7. What does your church do now to minister to women?
8. How are the women in the congregation currently involved in ministry?
9. Have you talked regularly with the pastor and Sunday School superintendent regarding the need for Women's Ministries?
10. What do you think the women in your congregation need?
11. What do you think the women in your congregation want?
12. What can you discover from the daily newspaper about the needs of women?
13. Do you have the finances to support your Women's Ministries?

*Adapted from Denver First Church of the Nazarene. Used with permission.*



# Does Our Church Need Women's Ministries?

1. What is the reason for starting Women's Ministries in our church?

Who is asking for the ministry?

2. How many women are members of our church?  
What are their approximate age groups?

3. What is the attitude of the senior pastor toward Women's Ministries?

What is the attitude of the congregation toward Women's Ministries?

4. Is there financial support in the church budget for Women's Ministries?

5. What resources are available in our church and community to help our Women's Ministries?

6. Who will be part of the leadership team to brainstorm, create, or improve Women's Ministries?

7. What is our definition of Women's Ministries?

*Adapted with permission from Sue Nilson.*

## Council Brainstorming Session

1. Who will you invite to serve on the Women's Ministries Council?

What section of the women in the congregation and community does each person represent? What is the reason for inviting each one?

2. Who will facilitate the leadership team's brainstorming sessions?
3. What is the proposed agenda (purpose) of the leadership team?
4. When and where will the sessions take place?

*Adapted with permission from Sue Nilson.*

## Brainstorming Session Results

1. What purpose statement did the leadership team develop for Women's Ministries?
2. What two to four areas of Women's Ministries did the council target?

In what order were they prioritized?

3. Have you updated the senior pastor about the council brainstorming session results?
4. What feedback did you receive?

5. The Next Step: Who will be part of the council for the first event of your Women's Ministries?

*Adapted with permission from Sue Nilson.*

# Quality Program Checklist

## Meeting room or location

- ☐ Clean and well-lit?
- ☐ Adequate number of chairs and tables?
- ☐ Easy to find?
- ☐ Adequate instructions in publicity for finding the location?
- ☐ Enough parking?
- ☐ Location clearly marked with signs?

## Greeters

- ☐ Adequate number?
- ☐ Arrive early?
- ☐ Sufficient instructions or training on how to be a greeter?
- ☐ Registration table present?
- ☐ Name tags and pens available?
- ☐ Literature about Women's Ministries and the church in general available?
- ☐ Newcomers not embarrassed by too much attention?

## Actual Event

- ☐ Provided what was promised in the publicity?
- ☐ Began on time?
- ☐ Ended on time?
- ☐ All program needs (flip charts, markers, overhead projector, handouts, etc.) set up prior to the meeting?
- ☐ Program details fulfilled?
- ☐ Child care offered safely and sufficiently?
- ☐ Refreshments plentiful and appropriate?
- ☐ Other special needs or circumstances?

## Your overall rating of this event:

- ☐ What could be done to improve this event in the future?

## Entry Event Worksheet

1. Who is our target group?
2. What are their needs, issues, or interests?
3. Who is on the leadership team for this event?
4. What are the essentials in setting up this event?
5. How is this event connected to the total life of the church?
6. How will we evaluate and strategize following the event?

Special Notes:

*Adapted with permission from Sue Nilson.*

## We Want to Get to Know You Better

The following will help us to know your interests. This will not obligate you in any way.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State/Province

Postal Code

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 18-23 \_\_\_\_\_ 24-35 \_\_\_\_\_ 36-45 \_\_\_\_\_ 46-55

\_\_\_\_\_ 56-65 \_\_\_\_\_ 66-75 \_\_\_\_\_ over 75

Check all that apply:

\_\_\_\_ married \_\_\_\_ never-married \_\_\_\_ single parent \_\_\_\_ divorced \_\_\_\_ widowed

Time: (Check the day and time that would allow you to attend most meetings)

\_\_\_\_\_ Monday \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday

\_\_\_\_\_ Morning \_\_\_\_\_ Afternoon \_\_\_\_\_ Evening

How could Women's Ministries best meet your needs? Please rank the following 5 items according to need with 1 being top priority and 5 being least priority.

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship

\_\_\_\_\_ Bible study and prayer

\_\_\_\_\_ Self-improvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Arts and crafts

\_\_\_\_\_ Service opportunities

\_\_\_\_\_ I would be willing to open my home on a weekly basis for an in-depth study series.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would prefer to go to a restaurant meeting room for an in-depth study series.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to participate in the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Book reviews

\_\_\_\_\_ Craft demonstrations/classes

\_\_\_\_\_ Service projects

\_\_\_\_\_ Coffee-teas monthly

\_\_\_\_\_ Bible study (weekly, bi-monthly)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sports activities (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship (weekly, bi-monthly)

\_\_\_\_\_ Shopping trips

## Getting To Know You

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

### All About You and Your Family

Your age (within a couple of years) \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_  
Family members living with you (Please include ages)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### You and Your Special Abilities

Do you work outside the home? \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special interests: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special talents: (Please don't be shy. These are God's gifts to share with others.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrative or office skills: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of Involvement

In what areas of ministry are you currently involved? (choir, Bible studies, children's ministries, etc.)

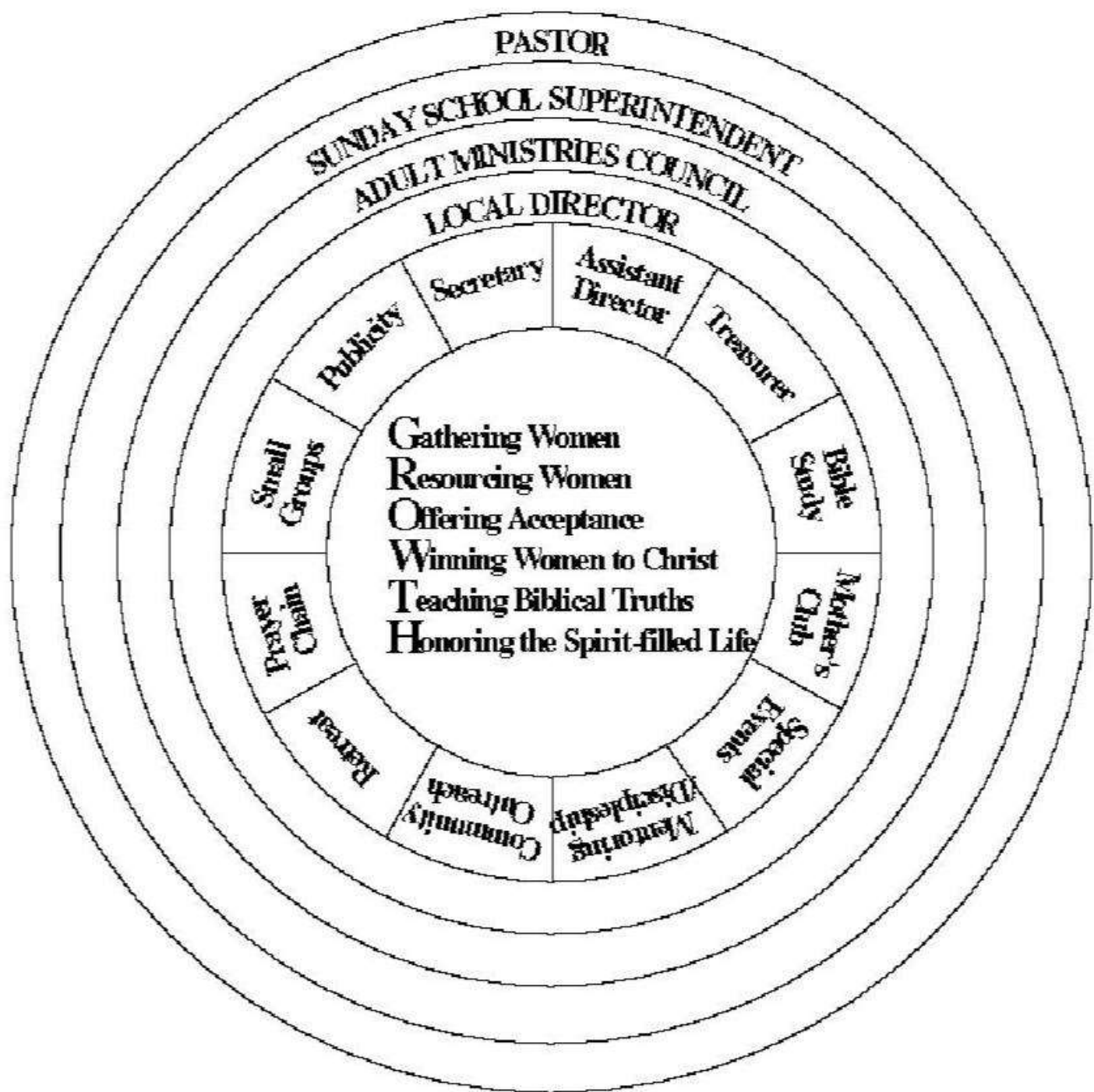
What are your past or present activities outside the church? (PTA, Girl Scouts, room mother, coaching, etc.)

## All About Women's Ministries

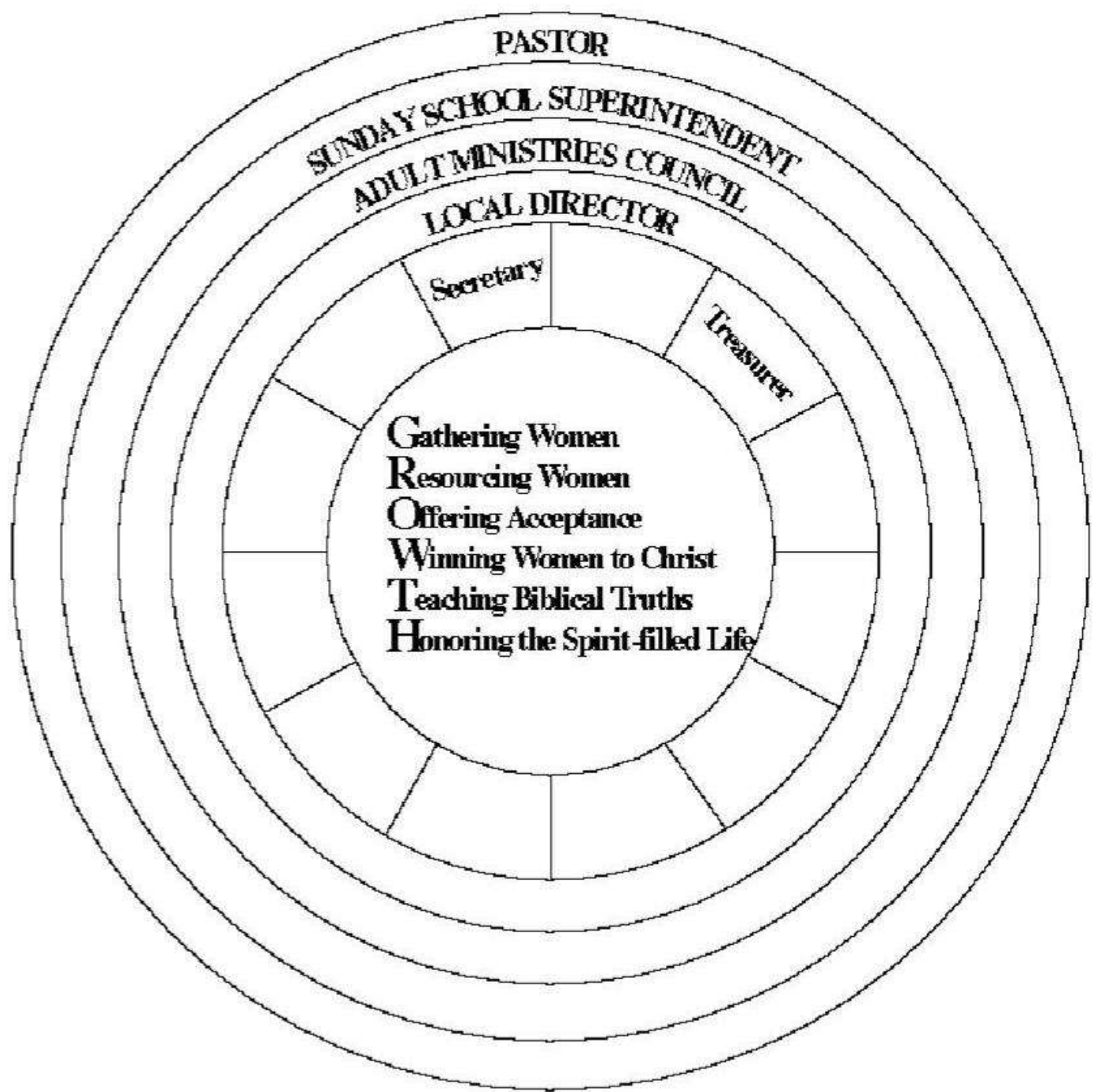
Women's Ministries is a very rewarding part of our church. As we plan, organize, and develop programs, we need your ideas and concerns.

1. What do you see as the predominant need of women?
2. How can the church best meet these needs?
3. What kind of ministry programs would benefit you most?
4. In what areas of Women's Ministries would you like to be more involved?
5. What is a new area of ministry you would like to see Women's Ministries implement?
6. Would you be interested in serving on the Women's Ministries council?

Additional Comments:



# ***LOCAL WOMEN'S MINISTRIES STRUCTURE***



***LOCAL  
WOMEN'S MINISTRIES  
STRUCTURE***



# Chapter Two

## District Director

### Women's Ministries. . . Its Reason for Being

**W**omen have been part of the Church's ministry since its beginning. They have been vitally involved in the outreach of the church. Perhaps it reflects the nature of women, sensing the needs of others. Because women tend to be intuitively nurturing and compassionate, women minister productively.

It makes sense for Women's Ministries to be an organized program in local churches. Women's Ministries is multi-faceted and designed

- To encourage and support women as they fill their various roles,
- To reach out to the community,
- To minister to those in the church, and
- To offer opportunities for spiritual and relational growth.

Women's Ministries is important to the church due to the vast number of women and because women need other women. Many women look for role models and mentors as they begin new stages of life such as adulthood, working, parenting, discovering life as a single adult, becoming caregivers to parents and other relatives, grandparenting, etc. The roles that women fill at home, in the workplace, and in the church are varied. These roles include being wives, mothers, new Christians, growing Christians, and caregivers to name a few. Yet, as women travel through these different roles and stages, they find commonalities. They look to women in the same stages of life, or women who have passed through a particular stage, for advice and support. For instance, career women often look for role models as they balance life at work, home, and church.

### Philosophy, Purpose, and Mission Statement

#### Philosophy

We believe all women are important in God's eyes and are vital in His kingdom. We believe in unity within diversity and cooperation and caring through the inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit.

#### Purpose Statement

The purpose of Women's Ministries is to glorify God by challenging women

- To know God personally
- To grow in Christlikeness
- To discover and use spiritual gifts
- To love and serve others and
- In all we do to reflect the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Mission Statement

The mission of Women's Ministries is GROWTH.

**G**athering women

**R**esourcing opportunities

**O**ffering acceptance

**W**inning women to Christ

**T**eaching biblical truths

**H**onoring the Spirit-filled life

Colossians 2:6-7 supports these statements: *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude (NASB).*

## Women's Ministries Logo

The Women's Ministries logo is more than a design. It symbolizes the whole meaning of Women's Ministries within the Church of the Nazarene.

Colossians 2:6-7 is the basis for this logo.

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness (NIV).*

Paul identifies Christ Jesus as Lord, emphasizing our need to grow in our relationships with Him. (Throughout the *Handbook* Jesus refers to his earthly life and ministry and recognizes him as God incarnate. Christ involves a confession of faith and acknowledges him as risen indeed.) Paul calls us to continue walking in Him—which results in our growth—and obeying Jesus as Lord. As this is done, we are rooted and grounded in Him like a strong tree or built like a beautiful building. If our faith is established in Jesus Christ, our lives will abound with love and thanksgiving. Paul writes about the importance of maintaining our link to the source: Jesus<sup>1</sup>. Like the believers in Paul's day, we also face the challenges of guarding against forces that do not operate according to Jesus' life and ministry. Jesus is all we need. In Him we are complete, lacking no good thing. This is a fact since Jesus is Lord over everything.



The tree represents the Church growing in Christ, particularly the Church of the Nazarene. Women's Ministries, one of the many entry points into a local congregation, is depicted as one of the branches. The root represents our steadfastness in Christ. Just as a mighty tree with solid roots withstands the forces of nature, so we withstand the forces of life when we are rooted and grounded in Christ.

## District Women's Ministries

The purpose of a District Women's Ministries is to resource, train, encourage, and support Women's Ministries in the local churches. The shape of Women's Ministries will be unique for each district. Some districts cover large territories of land while others compactly fit into smaller areas. Districts covering wide areas find that offering similar training sessions and retreats in different parts of the district work well. More compact districts enjoy bringing the entire district together for one training session and retreat. The number of metropolitan areas, ethnic groups, and the area's economic health also influences the design of Women's Ministries on a district.

In addition to supporting Women's Ministries in local churches, Women's Ministries may sponsor events and activities, such as conferences and retreats, on the district level. These events and activities give women an opportunity to meet and enjoy fellowship. District activities encourage women to realize they are not alone on their journeys. Hearing stories from those traveling similar paths strengthens others. Understanding how each local church functions within the district, whether large or small, helps women gain an insight to the overall responsibility of the church. Another benefit is that district events allow women to enjoy a larger special event that smaller churches cannot sponsor.

Women's Ministries events and activities on the district level may provide visitors an entry point into local churches. These events and activities allow women to invite non-Christian friends and relatives to attend a church supported function in a less threatening environment. Meeting at a retreat center, hotel, or restaurant helps break down the fear of entering a church carried by many unchurched women.

## Structure of District Women's Ministries

The district director of Women's Ministries is appointed by the district director of Adult Ministries with the approval of the Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International chairperson and the District Superintendent. Women's Ministries reports to the District Adult Ministries Council and District Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International Board.

Women's Ministries is not an entity to itself. The specific goals and objectives of the district Women's Ministries should be compatible with those of the district program and complement the total church program. Before implementing the philosophy, mission, and purpose of Women's Ministries on your district, discuss with the Adult Ministries director the district goals and objectives for Adult Ministries on the district and the role of Women's Ministries can have in fulfilling them.

The Women's Ministries director appoints the members of the Women's Ministries Council. The council members must have the approval of the Adult Ministries director, Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International chairperson, and the District Superintendent. This should include representatives of various sized churches, socio-economic groups, ethnic groups, locations (urban, suburban, rural, small town, etc.), and other variables unique to the district. The district Adult Ministries director is an ex-officio member of the council.

As district Women's Ministries begins, the district Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International should budget funds to develop the ministry. Within a short time, the ministries and programs of Women's Ministries should become self-supporting. However, the district should continue to consider Women's Ministries as a budget item of Sunday School and Discipleship International Ministries to promote unity and accountability. Women's Ministries is required by God and the church to be a good steward of its financial resources. The financial procedures for Women's Ministries should be the same as those of other ministries on the district.

If Women's Ministries has a separate checking account, an annual report detailing income and expenses is to be presented to the Women's Ministries Council and Adult Ministries Council. Balances over \$3,000.00 should be invested into other ministries. These may include a scholarship fund for future retreats, a district project, a local church project, or other special projects.

## District Goals

- To be a role model for the local churches and communicate passion for ministry.
- To have an active Women's Ministries in every church.
- To encourage area/zone-wide ministry and to plan and implement district-wide ministry for women of all ages, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.
- To enhance the local churches by providing training, resources, and opportunities for ministry.
- To communicate information from the general church level to the local church level.
- To raise a generation of competent, Spirit-filled leaders.

## District Objectives

- To be accountable to the District Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries Board in purpose, vision, and finance.
- To survey and analyze local churches to determine areas in which the district can support, encourage, and equip.
- To develop a resource center to provide CDs, DVDs, and literature.
- To establish a newsletter (electronic or mailed) and a yearly information packet for local directors of Women's Ministries.
- To correlate calendar planning with general, district, and local churches.
- To encourage enrollment in Lay Ministries Studies (LMS).

## District Women's Ministries Director Job Description

The job responsibilities of the District Women's Ministries director are:

1. To serve on and be accountable to the Adult Ministries Council.
2. To report, present proposals, and request funding to the Adult Ministries Council.
3. To develop a well-rounded program to meet spiritual, emotional, mental, physical, and social needs of women.
4. To promote, oversee, and evaluate district activities for Women's Ministries.
5. To encourage and assist the implementation of Women's Ministries in each local church.
6. To serve as a resource person to the local Women's Ministries directors.
7. To become acquainted with materials available from the general Women's Ministries office.
8. To share information from the general Women's Ministries office with the local directors of Women's Ministries.
9. To share ideas and concerns with the general Women's Ministries office.
10. To serve as an ex officio member of all district Women's Ministries committees.

The district director of Women's Ministries must freely give her time and talent and be able to lead the council members to successful completion their assigned tasks. An effective director stimulates others to work, is patient, and does not show favoritism or overloads key members of the council. She must resist the urge to work alone, and she must never assume the credit for what the District Council accomplishes. The district director of Women's Ministries needs to evaluate her effectiveness should she remain in this position for more than five years. She must also be sensitive to God's leading regarding her tenure and involvement others in the ministry. This allows other women with leadership capabilities to give new life and ideas to the district Women's Ministries.

## Forming and Organizing a District Council

The work of district Women's Ministries director is too large for one person. While the position involves certain responsibilities, fulfilling the whole ministry is easier when the director enfranchises others to do the work of the ministry. Carefully and prayerfully select women who represent various church sizes (small, medium, large), locations (rural, suburban, urban), and balance of ministry wives and laywomen. Be sure the council reflects all age groups, church sizes, locations, and ethnic groups. Remember to include all women--the divorced, married, never-married, and widowed. This helps the ministry to stay well-rounded and to reach the multiplicity of needs. The council members must have the approval of the Adult Ministries director, Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries International chairperson, and the District Superintendent.

All council members are to be genuinely interested in Women's Ministries and active members of the Church of the Nazarene on your district. They must be dependable, able to accept responsibility, and work well with other council members. Working well with others includes being a good listener, fair-minded, and able to abide by the decisions of the council.

The General Women's Ministries Council recommends that each council member serve a limited term of three to five years. Consider a rotation system in which council members are appointed for a two, three, or four-year term. With this system, a controlled number of council members rotate off the council, resulting in fresh perspective and increased variety of participation.

A treasurer appointed by the district Women's Ministries Council handles all finances according to the guidelines of the *Manual* entitled "Church Treasurer" and serves of the district Women's Ministries Council.

**Paragraph 135.1:** To receive all monies not otherwise provided for, and disburse the same only on order of the [Women's Ministries Council].

**135.3:** To keep a correct book record of all funds received and disbursed.

**135.4:** To present a detailed [annual] financial report for distribution to the [Women's Ministries Council].

**135.5:** To present an annual financial report to the [District Sunday School Ministries International director].

**135.6:** To deliver to the [Women's Ministries Council] the complete treasurer's records at such time as the treasurer shall cease to hold office.

**129. 23:** To provide a committee, no fewer than two members of which shall count and account for all money received by [Women's Ministries].

The treasurer's account shall be audited at least annually to protect the council members as well as the ministry. Some ministries have their books audited by professional auditors or by certified accountants. Others appoint an auditing committee.

If an auditing committee is appointed, the committee will need copies of the budget, a list of the specific responsibilities and authority of the treasurer, the treasurer's books, canceled checks, receipts, vouchers, current bank statements, and copies of the Women's Ministries Council meeting minutes documenting authorization for bill payment to conduct properly the audit.

The auditing process begins with a comparison of the bank statement at the end of the previous year with the current year's beginning balance. Total bank deposits are added and total checks paid are deducted. The resulting balance should be the same as the closing bank statement. All cash receipts are checked for agreement with the bank deposits. Finally, the Women's Ministries Council minutes are examined for approval of bill payments.

Bank statements, deposits, and paid bills should all agree. If a difference exists, the treasurer should be asked to explain the difference before the auditing committee's report is completed. The audit committee's report is to be presented in writing to the Women's Ministries Council.

# Event Planning

Retreat planning can turn you into knots and fray your nerves. But it is only when you get to the end of your rope that God can and will do His great work in and through you. The 911 of the Bible is Jeremiah 33:3: “Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you do not know.” Retreat planning begins with the realization that God will instruct you and anoint your efforts as you rely on Him.

## Steps to Retreat Planning

**1. Accept God’s call to lead.** Allow God to transform your declaration from “I am afraid not (or a frayed knot)” to “I am not afraid!” If you have experienced a persistent, recurring dream for a women’s retreat, the chances are God is calling you to lead. Prayerfully nurture that call. There is a leader in every one of us longing to be recognized and released to change our world. Retreat planning may be God’s design for fulfilling your ministry potential and encouraging leadership in others.

The fear of failure and feelings of inadequacy can become a blessing when we realize what God can do through one who is willing to trust, adjust, and obey Him. Consider these points taken from a sermon by Charles Stanley:

- My inadequacy drives me to God.
- My inadequacy forces me to live my life and do His work in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- My inadequacy provides God the privilege of demonstrating what great things He can do with so little. (Remember the five loaves and two fish.)
- My inadequacy frees God to use me to the maximum of my potential.
- My inadequacy allows God to receive full glory for His work.
- My inadequacy relieves me of the burden of trying to do God’s will in my own strength.
- My inadequacy enables me to walk in the contentment and quietness of the Spirit. Psalm 46:10: “Cease striving and know that I am God.”

**2. Pray for a group of women who share your vision.** Meet with them to pray and plan. Make sure that what is done is for the Lord, from the Lord, and of the Lord. Pray for:

- Harmony and a unified vision among the planning committee members.
- Selection of retreat location and a good relationship with personnel.
- Wisdom and guidance in guest selection—whether to bring in speaker, musicians, etc., or to choose women from your own group.
- The registration process and financial wisdom as rates are set.
- Publicity and effective ways of dispersing information.
- Travel safety and health of guests, workers, and attendees.
- Fun and release from the stresses of daily routines.
- God’s anointing on the sessions and obedience to His life changing Holy Spirit.
- Pray for the unsaved to attend and receive Christ as Lord.

**3. Set a date.** Work to establish a date that does not conflict with the local or district church. Most retreat planners recommend scheduling a year in advance. Depending on the size of your group, you may need more time to secure a popular speaker or less time if your group is small. It is vital that you allow time to plan well and carefully attend to details that pave the way for a successful meeting.

**4. Choose a location.** If possible, plan for a site that is one to two hours away to provide a break from the concerns of home and work. Choose the location that best accommodates your group whether it is in a home, retreat center, the district camp grounds, or a hotel.

**5. Determine the length of your retreat.** How many speaking sessions will there be? How much time will you give your speaker per session? Will you stay one or two nights? What time will you begin registration? When will your sessions begin and end? Creating a time line is extremely helpful. Try to estimate the amount of time it will take for your meals, music, and testimonies. Build in time for the women to form small groups to share freely their faith. Record the time line and make copies available for all workers.



**6.Contact the speaker.** Be sure to convey the amount of time she has to consider your invitation. This list is not complete but it does include some ideas of details to discuss with your prospective speaker.

- Your name, your district's name, your address, and telephone number.
- The location of your retreat—send address, telephone, email, etc.
- Dates and times of your meeting.
- Topics and/or possible themes.
- Number of speaking sessions.
- Length of time allocated for each speaking session.
- Honorarium and transportation fees and housing arrangements.
- Other guests who will have a place on the program.
- Expected number of attendees.
- Suitable clothing for climate and location.
- Request a photo and biographical sketch as well as a tape or CD.
- Confirm all arrangements in writing.
- Avoid last minute changes and communications.

**7.Establish a budget.** Consider cost of lodging, meals, speaker fees and travel, decorations, publicity, printing, postage, equipment, scholarships, door prizes, crafts, gifts for the planning committee, etc. Your retreat fee is calculated by dividing the estimated costs by the projected number of women attending. If you are meeting in a hotel, be sure to figure tax on rooms as well as tax and gratuity on meals in the total cost.

**8.Decide on program format and set the schedule.** Will there be workshops, music, skits, get acquainted games, small groups, crafts, or door prizes? Do you want to include quiet time, a time for personal Bible study, or book reviews? How will you carry out your theme?

**9.Various themes can be created through the imagery of the Scriptures.** You may want to design T-shirts, magnets, center pieces, and door prizes to emphasize your theme. The following suggestions may be helpful.

- The Lord is My Shepherd (sheep)
- As for me and my house (birdhouses)
- Pause for praise (praying hands)
- Precious moments
- The fruit of the Spirit
- Love bears all things (bears)
- He is my hiding place
- The light of the world is Jesus (candles, lamps, etc.)
- Baskets of blessings (baskets)
- Beautiful feet
- You are the apple of His eye (apples)

**10. Organize the planning committees.** Assign each committee member a specific area of service. Writing out job descriptions helps to clarify expectations. As each chairperson or coordinator involves others in helping with her areas of responsibility, enthusiasm builds and attendance increases.

- a. The chairperson oversees all retreat planning, corresponds with guests and facility personnel, and keeps committee members informed. This could be you. Boldly declare, "I am not afraid! I will trust and obey!" The chairperson must emphasize the power of prayer and lead the way in praying as a group for the retreat.
- b. The prayer and evangelism chairperson gathers women who are prepared to let God use them to lead others to Christ. These women commit to be in prayer throughout the weekend and to be available to pray with others. If possible, provide a special room just for prayer. Remember that prayer releases God's power to save souls and He is able to meet the varied needs of those attending.



- c. The publicity chairperson generates enthusiasm through skits, posters, and flyers. She designs a registration form that communicates details and states necessary information, such as: items to bring, map of retreat location, and registration information. Provide a place on the registration form for those who are handicapped to express their needs. Also include the phone number of the retreat location for family members or babysitters.
- d. The registrar and her committee must be people oriented and service minded. They must be knowledgeable about the retreat accommodations as well as the program details. The registrar needs to be able to handle money and to carefully record details to insure a smooth registration process. Her committee may also be in charge of designing and distributing name tags and any information packets. Packets might include:
  - Program or schedule of events.
  - Pictures and biographies of guests.
  - Chorus or song sheets.
  - Floor plan of retreat facility.
  - Evaluation form.
  - Map of area shops (especially drug store or pharmacy).
  - Note pad and pen.
  - Tissues.
  - Small gift, such as magnet with the logo or Scripture theme.
- e. The hostess chairperson coordinates a group of women to serve as greeters. She should designate a speaker hostess to ensure your guest speaker's needs are met and that she is included in all other retreat activities. The speaker hostess might transport the speaker from the airport, present her with flowers, and place a fruit basket in her room to express warm welcome. Committee members must be alert and ready to meet the needs of attendees, give directions to restroom facilities, give first aid assistance, and guide attendees to the correct source of help quickly. In all ways, these women must say "Welcome!" One committee distributed hugs and kisses (chocolate candy and real hugs) as each woman entered the retreat session.
- f. The music coordinator is to be sure that choruses are visible so those who are unchurched or unfamiliar with the songs will be able to participate. She also arranges for a pianist, special music, an adequate sound system, and a piano or keyboard.
- g. The hospitality chairman takes charge of meals and snacks. Plan menus carefully to accommodate the majority of tastes. Consider asking women to bring snacks to share.
- h. The entertainment chairperson prepares skits and fun time. This committee might also purchase the door prizes and devise a plan to present them.
- i. The decorations committee or equipment coordinator arranges the tables and chairs, sets up the projector, sees that the podium is in place, and regulates the heat or air conditioning. This committee decorates the tables and meeting rooms to fit the theme. They may also need to turn lights on and off and see that the facility is left clean and locked.
- j. The research chairperson is responsible for developing an evaluation tool for the retreat for use as a planning tool for future retreats. This committee designs, distributes, collects, and tallies the evaluations. These committees and the breakdown of responsibilities will vary according to your specific needs. Carefully recording day by day planning will help you when you begin planning for next year's retreat.

When fear turns you into a "frayed knot," call the "911" of the Bible, Jeremiah 33:3, and declare that you are "not afraid" to trust, adjust, and obey.

*Adapted with permission from Cheryl Roland.*

# Sample Retreat/Conference Schedule

## Friday

6:15 PM Sound check (taped music playing)  
6:45 PM Doors open/Piano prelude  
6:55 PM Choruses  
7:00 PM Welcome/Prayer  
8:00 PM Door Prizes  
8:15 PM Introduce Musicians  
8:35 PM Introduce Guest Speaker  
9:35 PM Announcements  
9:40 PM Dismiss

## Saturday

8:00 AM Sound check—taped music  
8:15 AM Doors open  
8:20 AM Begin music  
8:30 AM Welcome/Prayer  
8:35 AM Announcements  
8:40 AM Special Music  
8:55 AM Speaker  
9:55 AM Dismiss/Announcements/Prayer  
9:55 AM Announcements/Prayer/Breakout to Small Groups  
10:00 AM Morning Break  
10:15 AM Small Group Sessions  
11:30 AM Lunch-Prayer  
12:00 PM Acknowledgments/Thanks  
12:35 PM Choruses and Special Music  
12:50 PM Speaker  
2:00 PM Dismiss

## Comments Please!

Thank you for taking a moment to share your ideas and comments. Please circle the number that best represents your feelings. Feel free to write suggestions or ideas on the back of this form and leave it on the table. Hope to see you again next year!

	Excellent				Poor
Retreat Location	5	4	3	2	1
Meals	5	4	3	2	1
Schedule	5	4	3	2	1
Musician	5	4	3	2	1
Speaker	5	4	3	2	1
Communication					
prior to retreat	5	4	3	2	1
Registration Process	5	4	3	2	1
Group Devotional	5	4	3	2	1
Table Numbering System	5	4	3	2	1
Silent Auction	5	4	3	2	1

In what ways has this retreat encouraged you spiritually?

Would you or your church enjoy assisting in the retreat next year?

How?

☐ Registration      ☐ Hostess      ☐ Decorations      ☐ Music      ☐ Packets      ☐ Other

How many hours did you drive to get to retreat? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you on our mailing list? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to be added to the mailing list? \_\_\_\_\_

*If so, please clearly print your mailing information below.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reflection Walk...

A time to contemplate God's creation and His purpose for my life.

—Read Psalm 139.

—Ask the Holy Spirit to open God's truth to you from verses 13-18.

—Pray the prayer from verses 23-24.

### Your reflection

#### Spend Time Alone With God . . .

Psalm 116—"I love the LORD because \_\_\_\_\_".

*Jesus himself is our Model for spending time alone with God.*

*Read the following scriptures and give reasons why we need to have a "timeout" with God.*

Mark 1:35-37

Luke 5:15-16

Mark 6:44-47

Luke 6:12-13

#### A model for prayer. . .

**A**doration

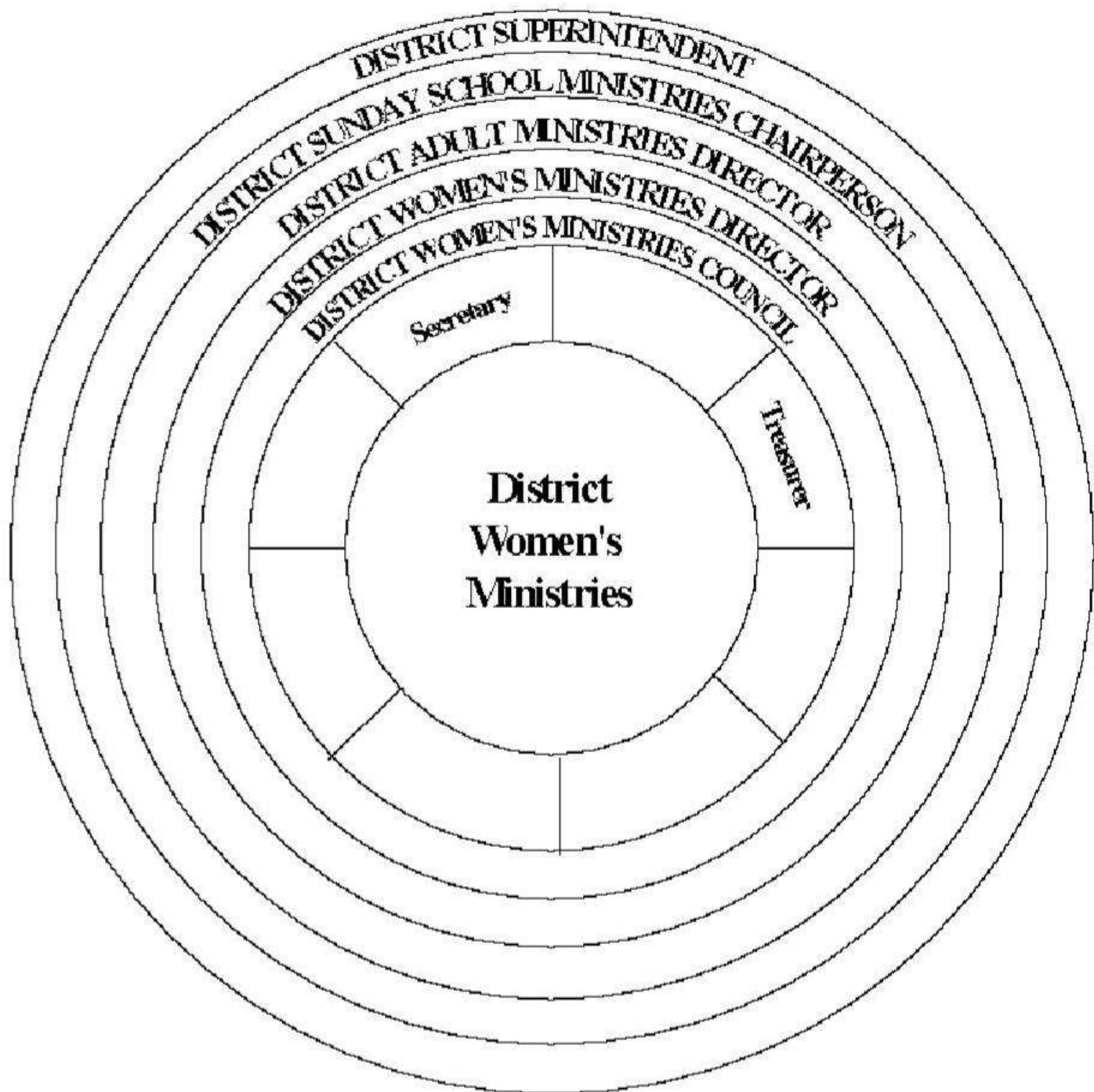
**C**onfession

**T**hanksgiving

**S**upplication

## ANALYSIS OF YOUR DISTRICT

1. How many churches on the district have Women's Ministries?
2. What size churches make up your district? How many churches have attendance of  
\_\_\_\_\_ less than 49    \_\_\_\_\_ 50-99    \_\_\_\_\_ 100-199    \_\_\_\_\_ 200-299  
\_\_\_\_\_ 300-499    \_\_\_\_\_ 500-699    \_\_\_\_\_ 700-999    \_\_\_\_\_ 1000-2500    \_\_\_\_\_ 2500+
3. What does your district do now to minister to women?
4. For what district or service projects could the women assume financial or organizational responsibility?
5. Do district activities and events include single women, whether or not they are mothers?
6. Have you discussed the need for Women's Ministries with the District Adult Ministries and Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries directors?
7. What are the needs of the women on your district?
8. How can District Women's Ministries help meet the needs?
9. What do you think the women on your district want?
10. What can you discover from the daily newspaper, women's periodicals, and other magazines about the needs of women?



***DISTRICT  
WOMEN'S MINISTRIES  
STRUCTURE***

# Chapter Three

## Leadership Skills

Leadership is a topic that piques our interest, especially as we try to translate principles from the business world to ministry settings. One of the challenges we encounter is modifying business-world leadership concepts into ministry settings based on the servant leadership model. We learn about servant leadership as we watch Jesus wash the disciples' feet. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12 about our various gifts and how they form the Body of Christ.

Leadership is more about who we are rather than what we do. Bible stories of great leaders remind us that their success was not based on having the right information as much as being in a place where they heard God speak and were willing to obey. For instance, reading how Nehemiah listened to and obeyed God gives us some good leadership principles:

1. A leader demonstrates genuine compassion and love for the people she leads—a desire to see them experience God's very best. This compassion is what brought Nehemiah into leadership. He saw his people's needs and was moved by love to do something about them (Neh. 1:1-4).
2. A leader doesn't act before she has spent time alone with God in prayer. Nehemiah's first response was a time of mourning, fasting, and prayer before God (Neh. 1:4).
3. A leader is willing and able to overcome fear and take risks for the sake of the vision. Nehemiah was afraid to speak to the king on behalf of his people, but he did it anyway (Neh. 2:2-3).
4. A leader knows and accepts the fact that when she attempts anything significant, she will face opposition and negative people. As soon as Nehemiah finished his presentation to the king, two of the king's officials criticized it (Neh. 2:10).
5. A leader does her homework, studies the situation, evaluates possible solutions, and is careful and timely about communication. Nehemiah scoped out the project before he started talking publicly about it. He timed his communication carefully (Neh. 2:11-18). <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jeren Rowell, "Careful, Your Leadership Is Showing," *The Communicator*, Nazarene Publishing House: Kansas City, July 2001.

While we can learn many other leadership principles from Nehemiah, remember that Nehemiah never became self-conscious about his leadership. He apparently wasn't so much trying to be a leader as he was simply trying to be faithful in fulfilling the passionate vision that God gave him to be an agent of restoration among his people.

### Leadership Is a Process

Leadership is a process rather than a position. Consider this acrostic, developed by Kerrie Palmer, which defines a leader.

**L— Led by God and leads His people.** It is awesome to realize that God trusts us with the privilege of leading His people. When we see leadership as a God-given privilege, we're less apprehensive, knowing God is holding our hands.

**E— Enabled and energized by God.** Jesus promised power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and enables you to be His witnesses in your world (Acts 1:8). Your leadership in Women's Ministries is part of your world. The main purpose of Women's Ministries is to proclaim the Gospel message to the women of your world. Although ministries and methods may vary, the message is the same. All ministries are intended to draw people to Christ, for He commissioned you to go and make disciples

of all nations, baptizing and teaching them (Matt. 28: 19-20).

**A— Aspiring to accomplish God's will.** Romans 12 is a leadership textbook in itself, explaining how to lead in God's will. First, a leader offers herself to God as *a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, which is really a spiritual act of worship*. This is a conscious decision that does not automatically happen. Once you have committed all of yourself to God, your next step is to be continually transformed by the renewing of your mind. Through this act and process, you will be able to discern God's will for you and your ministry, *His good and pleasing and perfect will* (Rom. 12:1-2).

The renewing of your mind occurs as you communicate with God in prayer and through His Word. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, cast a vision and establish a purpose and a mission for the ministry to which God has called you. An effective leader has a vision; vision energizes every effort and provides the force that pushes through obstacles. With vision, the leader has a mission and a contagious spirit. When she has these in place, the team comes alongside her to fulfill God's purpose and mission for ministry.

**D— Developing leaders.** Leadership is a spiritual gift that Paul says we need to exercise with diligence (Rom. 12:8). Eugene Peterson in *The Message* explains that a leader leads without manipulation—which is maneuvering or using people for her own purposes. John Maxwell links his definition of leadership (influence) with the responsibility of leadership (people development). He asks, "How do we who influence others truly motivate and develop them? People tend to become what the most important people in their lives think they will become."

Leaders are developed as we affirm and encourage each member of the leadership team. As your team players observe your diligent leadership, they will follow your example and become good leaders themselves.

**E— Enlisting and equipping a team.** Each member is part of the Body of Christ. *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully* (Rom. 12:4-8). Each gift should be represented in your ministry team. A leader may have several of these gifts, but God does not expect you to do the full ministry alone.

The analogy of the body is a beautiful picture of God's design for ministry. If women are given the opportunity to use their gifts, the Body will be complete. A leader prayerfully considers her council and, with the proper approval, enlists women on the team.

**R— Reproducing herself, releasing the ministry.** . . . *That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way* (Eph. 1:19-23).

The analogy of the body to the Body of Christ appropriately describes the Women's Ministries Council. Christ is the Head; and we are a part of the Body. We are important in fulfilling what the body was created to do. Max



DePree in *Leadership Is an Art* writes, “The art of leadership is liberating people to do what is required of them in the most humane way possible. Thus, the leader is the servant of his followers in that he removes the obstacles that prevent them from doing their jobs. In short, the true leader enables followers to realize their full potential.”

## Characteristics of a Leader

In the book, *Managing People Is like Herding Cats* by Warren Bennis, these traits were identified as common to all effective leaders.

- 1. Self-knowledge.** Knowing who you are and recognizing and using your talents is a basic ingredient for good leadership. When we understand our gifts, we can form a powerful leadership team by surrounding ourselves with individuals possessing other strengths.
- 2. Open to feedback.** Although at times feedback may be difficult to hear and accept, choosing honest and caring people who will provide feedback will help us to grow.
- 3. Eager to learn and improve.** Asking questions and listening to answers are key characteristics of good leaders. Many leaders are open to change and eager to learn new methods and strategies.
- 4. Curious risk takers.** While it almost sounds like an oxymoron, taking curious risk reflects the adventurous nature of leaders. Good leaders look for ways to challenge the routine and then develop plans before taking risks.
- 5. Focus on tasks.** Persistence is a quality that leaders possess. They are able to concentrate on the tasks at hand.
- 6. Learn from adversity.** Great leaders frequently endure setbacks. They use the setbacks to learn about themselves, other people, the organization, and relationships.
- 7. Balance tradition and change.** Good leaders recognize the value of tradition while recognizing the need for change. They have developed skills that allow them to integrate tradition while making change.
- 8. Work within the system.** Good leaders soon realize it is impossible to accomplish the task alone. They work with the system to cope with problems and challenges, and they rely on others to help them achieve goals.
- 9. Serve as models and mentors.** Good leaders understand the necessity of having “leaders-in-training.” They feel a sense of accomplishment as they watch new people move into leadership roles. <sup>3</sup>

Leadership will also include challenges, situations that test our abilities, and opportunities to work with different personality types. As we lead, we may need to occasionally return to this list to remind us of the traits that are characteristic of strong leaders. At other times, this list may remind us of traits we, as leaders, need to continue to develop and strengthen.

Ideas regarding leadership have changed dramatically in recent years. Rather than the leader being the driving force for a ministry, current leadership models have moved from a team concept to a more fluid style. No longer is the leader “in charge” giving direction, dreaming the dreams, and formulating the vision alone. The leader communicates the purpose and mission of the ministry to others, including those involved in the ministry and church leaders. She also implements methods to accomplish the purpose and mission, develops the leadership potential in others, and facilitates change and transition.

Building relationships is a vital aspect of leadership. People want to know that the leader is a “real” person—that she has faced and survived challenges and failures. Authenticity is a key characteristic of today’s leader. A great leader understands the importance of being authentic in relationships. She develops her self-

understanding, interpersonal skills, intuition, and communication skills. She develops others through team building, mentoring, coaching, and networking.

Today's effective leader knows the importance of being a life-long learner. She capitalizes on learning opportunities within her networks. She adapts skills and insights from other organizations to her ministry setting.

An effective leader knows the importance of listening. She works to develop the skill of active listening in conversation. She listens to identify gifts, talents, and passions and then assists individuals as they develop and use them to build God's Kingdom.

## Foundations of Leadership

Leadership takes time to develop and involves time for others to recognize leadership skills. According to John Maxwell in *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, seven key areas are found in leaders.

**1.Character.** Leadership begins as you develop your inner self, enabling others to see your character. Character is necessary for trust, and trust makes leadership possible.

**2. Relationships.** Leaders have followers. Relationships make it easier for people to follow. The deeper the relationships with followers and those involved in the ministry, the easier it is for them to follow.

**3. Knowledge.** The leader must comprehend the ministry potential, the ministry needs, and a vision for the future.

**4. Intuition.** As important as knowledge is, leadership requires more than raw data. A leader can communicate passion for the present and vision for new ministry strategies.

**5.Experience.** A leader needs experience to demonstrate abilities. It is possible for the experience to be in a related, but transferable, field. Experience is not a guarantee, but it encourages people to give you opportunities to show your abilities.

**6. Past success.** Proven experiences show what you've accomplished. Additionally, each success is another example of leadership ability.

**7. Ability.** People will follow as long as you demonstrate the ability to lead. When people no longer believe in your abilities, they will stop following you. <sup>4</sup>

Leaders view life experiences from a leadership perspective. Some are born with this ability while others develop it. This may be described as the ability to grasp intangible factors, understand the factors, and work with them to accomplish ministry goals. This involves the ability to read the situation by capturing the details others miss. Understanding the context of the bigger picture and observing trends are other elements of this ability. Good leaders learn to read themselves as well as others. Reading themselves includes knowing their strengths, skills, and weaknesses. This enables leaders to develop a leadership team that complements them.

## Key Functions of a Leader

A leader is a busy person; and the position is rarely under your control. You may face conflict between council members, stress as all the ministries vie for available meeting space, financial problems as an event goes over budget, ... the list is endless. In *Empowered Leaders*, Hans Finzel identifies some key functions of a leader. These functions can keep you focused on your responsibilities. <sup>5</sup>

**1.Cultivate the vision.** The leader cultivates the vision cast by leaders within Women's Ministries. It is important to remember that women involved in determining the vision are more willing to work to achieve it. The leader helps articulate the vision.

**2.Create a clear organization.** The structure of Women's Ministries may remain essentially untouched through leadership transitions; however, a new director may add or shift ministry emphases. A key element of any organization is putting the correct person with the right task.

**3.Choose the right team.** Women on the council play an important role in determining your level of success. Each woman has unique gifts, talents, and abilities. As we've emphasized before, make certain your council mirrors the women in the congregation.

**4.Change the culture.** Culture is defined as the shared values and behaviors that knit a community together. Understand the unwritten values and norms of your community and congregation.

**5.Coach the team.** Since a leader is only as good as her team, you must guide and empower the team. Each member brings specific strengths and weaknesses that complement the ministry and create a synergy for effective leadership.

<sup>5</sup> Hans Finzel, *Empowered Leaders*, (Nashville: Word Publishing), 1998

**6. Care for the troops.** Caring for the members of the council and leadership team involves providing resources and opportunities for growth and development. Time and money invested in these women will yield returns.

**7.Curing the problems.** Part of the director's responsibility is to solve problems and resolve challenges. Part of this process is to teach and enfranchise council members to address the situation on their own. Risky? Perhaps, but remember you must clearly state the amount of freedom council members have to make decisions.

**8.Check on progress.** Humans tend to do what is inspected more than what is expected. Develop a system to help track the progress of ministries, programs, events, and other delegated responsibilities.

A leader's job often seems endless. Responsibility starts and stops with the leader. Leadership is a complex set of gifts, skills, experience, respect, emotional strength, discipline, vision, and developing a leadership team.

## Leadership Gifts

Do not assume that only women with the gift of administration are spiritually equipped for leadership. Leaders often lead through other areas of giftedness.

A woman with a gift of teaching may lead a Bible study. A woman with a gift of mercy may lead a support group by creating a safe atmosphere. A mercy-gifted woman may also organize food and clothing drives for the needy or set up a soup kitchen. A woman with a gift of exhortation may motivate others through her ability to challenge and encourage them to love and do good works. An evangelist may lead women to be more committed and trained in witnessing to the unchurched.

### Discovering and Developing Gifts

A baby may be born with good intelligence but show a significant lag in mental development from living in an environment where learning is not stimulated. So, a Christian may have an aptitude for ministry (a spiritual gift) that has not been encouraged to grow. Spiritual gifts need to be discovered and developed.

A number of tools are available to help Christians discover their spiritual gifts. Many books on spiritual gifts are available for study. Ask your pastor for recommendations.

Do not overlook secular sources for learning how to express spiritual gifts with greater effectiveness. Teachers can learn to teach better by taking classes in teaching methods. Speakers can learn to speak more effectively by taking courses in communication. Leaders can become more capable by attending seminars on management, administration, and leadership skills. Also, consider both Christian and secular books as resources for growth. Finding a mentor with the same gifts is another wonderful learning opportunity.

Knowing a woman's gifts and plugging her into a ministry where she can express them builds her sense of significance, competency, and contribution to the church. Encouraging a woman to serve as she is gifted lessens burn out. It is easy to become weary in well-doing when a woman is working outside her area of expertise and effectiveness. But we are more energetic in our tasks when we're doing something that we love and that comes naturally.

Taking a woman's gifts into consideration can save leaders the headache of placing square pegs in round holes and the need to dislodge them. Just placing a woman in leadership without considering her skills may lead to a difficult situation when a woman is incompetent in a position she wants to hold because she perceives it as prestigious.

Ultimately, the greatest advantage of taking a woman's spiritual gifts seriously is to use these gifts as God intended—for His glory and the Church's good.

### **Working with Volunteers**

Almost all ministries of the church require lay or volunteer participation. Motivating, recruiting, and retaining volunteers requires thoughtful preparation, and continued effort. According to Leslie Parrott in *Motivating Volunteers in the Local Church*, "The first step in motivating potential volunteers is to understand and appreciate their personal values and priorities." Before deciding to volunteer, church members must first learn about the need and determine the importance of the need. Then they must decide whether or not to volunteer to serve.

The decision to volunteer is easier when the church atmosphere is positive and the congregation is happy. Positive church experiences create an environment that fosters volunteerism. On the other hand, many people do not volunteer because they are afraid. "And fear in the mind of a potential volunteer turns to apathy." <sup>8</sup>

Make certain you carefully explain the task you are asking a volunteer to do. A clear challenge produces more volunteers than an ambiguous one. Choose jobs to fit volunteers, carefully give instructions, establish specific deadlines, and insist on quality work. When volunteers see their work as significant, and when it gives them opportunities for personal growth, they continue serving. "Repetitive work without significance fosters a high dropout rate among volunteers."

(This section on volunteers is adapted from materials written by Anita Greening in completion of the requirements for a degree in Management and Human Relations from MidAmerica Nazarene University.)

### **Natural Abilities, Talents, and Spiritual Gifts**

"Real ministry takes place when perceived needs are strategically matched by the person who has the gift to meet that need. The matching of needs to the gifts of people is essential for meaningful ministry to take place." How can we effectively match jobs to volunteers and volunteers to ministries? One method is to search for natural helpers. While we give and receive help from time to time, some people see helping as a more central activity than others. These people are sometimes called natural helpers.

They willingly make themselves available to meet needs in organizations they're part of, their families, neighborhoods, or workplaces. They have the type of personal skills, similar to those of helping professionals, which make them particularly effective problem solvers. Some natural helpers hold positions of leadership, but many prefer to work behind the scenes. (Diana S. Garland and Diane L. Pancoast, *The Church's Ministry with Families*)

John Ed Mathison, author of *Every Member in Ministry*, suggests that an attitude of ownership is extremely important in motivating volunteers. When lay people prayerfully consider their own gifts, and then match them to a particular ministry, they have ownership of the decision. When volunteers have ownership of a commitment, they are more likely to follow through on it.

To match jobs and volunteers, use a short questionnaire that asks participants for specifics about willingness, the ability to serve, and the type of service they enjoy. Volunteers and ministry opportunities can be matched

as you identify what the volunteer feels she is especially well equipped to do and the situations in which she feels comfortable. (Howard W. Stone, *The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care*)

Effective caring people will reflect a spiritual aliveness in how they meet life, and how they respond to, empathize with, and relate to others. Empathy, familiarity, ownership, and personal preferences all help determine volunteers' involvement in the ministries of the church. Yet we should ask volunteers to serve based on their God-given spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are given to build up the church (I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4). People's gifts should match the committee or function where the gifts are most likely to be used.

"Church leadership is mostly a matter of letting spiritual gifts do their ministry." (Brian Kelley Bauknight, *Body Building: Creating a Ministry Team Through Spiritual Gifts*) Unfortunately, many people do not know what their gifts are or how to discover them. Many believers have never been told about God's gifts for the benefit of the church, nor have they ever recognized or identified spiritual gifts in themselves or in others. When lay people are "talked into" a ministry, they often leave it. Then we end up recruiting people for the same positions over and over again. When God calls people into ministry, they often find new meaning and purpose in their lives; and they enjoy a God-given ministry.

When looking for a church, most people seem to want an atmosphere they describe as friendly, spiritual, and accepting. Gareth Weldon Icenogle (Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry) writes, "We are hungry to be with others. Our spirits cry out to be known by another, to be loved by another, to be affirmed by another."<sup>14</sup> According to Garland and Pancoast, authors of *The Church's Ministry with Families*, people are not able to form meaningful social networks in large-scale, fast-paced, impersonal settings.

God has called us to be in Christian community. Community is a gift from God; and by God's power and grace, it is a human responsibility. The universal community of faith takes form in local congregations as they are called to share life together in ways bearing witness to God's love and mercy. Studies show that when people join a church, if they are not involved in a group or ministry within six months, 50 percent of them will become inactive. The best way to avoid inactives is to involve every member in meaningful ministry.

Although most lay volunteers have strong biblical, theological, and spiritual reasons for volunteering, they are still human beings who will eventually stop to examine the returns on their voluntary efforts. This is a human reaction. Volunteers expect material benefits, social approval, honor, or a sense of well-being from doing a good job. From the negative aspect, volunteering releases them from the guilt that they "should be helping."

### **Training Volunteers**

All volunteers should be trained before actually being placed in some ministry function. Proper training gives them confidence in their ability to perform the ministry effectively. As lay people are recruited and trained, we must help them learn to support, encourage, and grow from one another.

Training workshops, seminars, retreats, lectures, and discussion groups all can nurture and enable lay leaders. But training alone is not adequate. In too many programs, people are trained well, and then they are left on their own to sustain their ministry. Without some form of continued support, natural helpers can lose their effectiveness.

Women's Ministries, along with the other ministries and programs, must use volunteers to reach our goals. These volunteers must feel ownership of the areas in which they are involved. Without this ownership, they tend to lose interest, burn out, become discouraged, and quit. To avoid losing volunteers and lay leaders, publicly and privately acknowledge their roles in the success of the ministry or program. Women's Ministries, regardless of church size, requires many individuals to reach its potential.

## How to Approach a Potential Volunteer

Many leaders shy away from inviting people to volunteer because they are never quite sure how to ask in the best way. It is not difficult— but it does require forethought and a belief that what you are asking the volunteer to do is worthwhile.

These phrases *do not* belong in your invitation to a potential volunteer:

“I know you’re busy, but. . .”

“Would you mind doing a little thing for our program?”

“We’re desperate for new people to help us. We really need you to say yes.”

“Could you at all possibly do this?”

“We can’t find anybody else to do it. . .”

Here are some simple, clear phrases that do belong in an invitation to a potential volunteer:

“We are looking for someone with real gifts in this area for this responsibility.”

“Do you have interests in this area?”

“How can we help you contribute some of your many talents to Women’s Ministries?”

“I’ve observed that you seem to be gifted in this area.”

When issuing an invitation, never apologize. For example: “I can guess that you are too busy to help us, but I’d like to ask anyway. . .” By apologizing, you communicate the thought that the potential volunteers have something more important to do or that what you are asking them to do is not worthwhile. Make your invitation to the volunteers positive, simple, and straightforward.

Here are three things volunteers want to know:

1. Is it meaningful? Does it fulfill God’s plan? Will I have a sense of significance?
2. Will I have authority and structure? What is the chain of command? Will I have the freedom to get things done?
3. What about training? Will someone help me learn to do what I’ve been asked to do?

Remember to care for the individuals you ask to volunteer, whether they accept or decline your request. God’s love can reach through your willingness to listen, support, and understand those with whom you minister. Your willingness to form a relationship with the volunteers and to appreciate their work and family situations may strengthen and empower them for future, transforming service. <sup>15</sup>

## Delegating Responsibilities

An effective leader enfranchises her team members so they can effectively complete their responsibilities. She also recognizes that people want to accomplish their goals in a way that reflects their personalities and styles. However, some responsibilities are reserved for the Women’s Ministries director:

### **1. Be responsible for communications with the church leadership.**

As the leader of Women’s Ministries, you need to meet with the leadership to ensure that your volunteers have a clear understanding of the Women’s Ministries goals and how they fit into the picture for the entire church. Keep the leadership informed. I’m convinced that you can’t give too much information.

### **2. Be responsible for communications with the Women’s Ministries Leadership Team.**

Volunteer leaders need to know they are valued. Keeping them informed is part of that. Remember all communications involve giving and receiving information. If the leader doesn’t listen to others, communications with the leadership team will usually cease.

### **3. Be involved with the promotional process.**

It isn’t necessary for the director to develop all promotional materials. However, be involved in the process so you can be certain that the materials are quality.



#### 4. Be involved in selecting new team members.

Take time to get to know those interested in joining the team. Without limiting involvement, maintain a congenial team.

#### 5. Be sure to follow up.

Whether it's details for events or garnering information for new attendees. Make sure follow-up occurs without making those responsible feel as if you are monitoring them.

#### 6. Express appreciation to your leadership team.

Volunteers need to receive personal notes and calls as well as hearing words of praise in public meetings.

#### 7. Keep informed of the finances.

The leader is responsible to maintain the budget and make necessary adjustments.

#### 8. Address problems promptly.

Remember the buck stops with the Women's Ministries leader. Resolve issues quickly and with love.

(Adapted from Women's Ministries, Issue # 131, Thursday, August 15, 2002. <http://www.womensministry.net>)

## Resolving Conflicts

Whenever individuals work together to create a ministry or to achieve a common goal, conflicts occur. Based on *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande, here are five ways to resolve conflicts:

1) The first way is to **overlook the offence**. Some disputes are insignificant and, therefore, are easily resolved when we quietly and deliberately overlook the offence and forgive the person who wronged us. An example is when someone makes flippant remarks that offend you.

2) **Discussion** uses confession or loving confrontation to resolve the conflict. In this method of reconciliation, individuals talk about the circumstances that led to the conflict, the role each played, and what they can do to resolve the issue. Discussion involves naming the problem, identifying your role in the conflict, using "I" statements, and accepting the role each party played.

3) Some **negotiation** is necessary. Typically, negotiation issues involve money, property, or other rights. In negotiations, the parties seek to reach a settlement that satisfies the legitimate needs of all involved. Negotiations attempt to make the conflict a win/win situation—that is, both of you get some things while you compromise on others.

4) If negotiation doesn't result in solution, the next step is **mediation**. One or two people are asked to meet with the individuals to help them communicate more effectively and explore possible solutions. The mediator's role is to ask questions and to give advice, rather than forcing a certain solution.

5) The final step is **arbitration**. This involves appointing one or more people to listen to the arguments and settle the matter with a binding decision. Typically, this is done in business and legal circumstances.

Perhaps you haven't considered using negotiations, mediation, or arbitration to resolve conflicts. More than likely, you've used some form of negotiations without recognizing the process. For instance, mediation may have occurred as you discussed problems with mutual friends. Their insights may have caused you to resolve the conflict without recognizing the process.

At some point, conflict may develop among members of the leadership team and you may be asked to serve as a referee. Finzel suggested a step before you accept the role of referee—ask those involved to talk about the problem with resolution as the goal. Finzel recommends the following guidelines.



**1. Mediate rather than judge.** Encourage those involved in the conflict to solve the problem and let them determine how to accomplish it.

**2. Give it time.** Give all sides adequate time to express their positions and understand the other person's perspective instead of hurrying to end the conflict.

**3. Don't accuse or lay blame.** Keep people focused on the goal—finding a resolution. Emphasize *what* is right rather than *who* is right.

**4. Gain admissions—and forgiveness—of mistakes.** Let people gracefully admit to shortcomings. Remember some of the hardest, but most powerful, words are, "I was wrong."

**5. Find grounds for cooperation.** Create ways for those involved in the conflict to work together for a common goal.

When you are involved in a conflict, ask yourself, "What results do I want?" Honestly answering this question will direct the approach you take.

Remember that anger and differences of opinions are part of daily life. It's how you cope with and react to these differences that matters.

Anger is an emotion, a feeling, with nothing good or bad about it; therefore, even as Christians, we will become angry and experience conflict.

However, our Christian experience should help us handle the situations effectively and peacefully.

# Chapter Four

# Bible Studies and Prayer Groups

**Editor's note:** When the Council decided to include a chapter on how to lead Bible Studies and prayer groups, I naturally turned to the woman with experience in leading both groups, Aletha Hinthorn, to write this chapter.

## Prayerfully Prepare

If you would like to lead a Bible study, consider this desire to be a gift from God. Psalm 37:4 tells us, “Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.” God never gives you a longing to do a task for Him without providing all you need to accomplish that task. And this is true for leading a Bible study. Your most important qualification for this role is a sense of dependence on the Lord for His perfect provisions.

Lorne Sanny said, “Prayer is the battle; witnessing is taking the spoils.” It’s just as true to say, “Prayer is the battle; leading a small group is taking the spoils.” You lead with more confidence if you have prayed until you are trusting God to work in the class. Through prayer you gain a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit so you can allow Him to guide the discussion according to the group’s needs.

As you study, seek to find a truth from the Word that excites you. Your excitement for the Word will be contagious. The psalmist wrote, “Blessed is the man . . . who finds great delight in his commands” (Ps. 112:1). The Living Bible adds that such a person “shall have influence and honor” (v. 9).

If the truths you share have only reached your intellect, they will probably only reach the intellect of those in your group. But if the truths have reached your heart and changed your life, then those truths are more likely to reach the hearts of the participants and change their lives, too. Rely upon the Lord to be the teacher, because spiritual truths must be taught by the Spirit. Isaiah 55:10 promises that the Word will be “seed to the sower, and bread to the eater” (KJV). Your role is simply to sow the seed. As you do, God promises to provide the miracle of turning it into bread for those who receive it. Before every group meeting, ask God to provide spiritual bread for each woman coming.

In the Tabernacle, bread was always to be sitting on the table, ready for those who entered (Exod. 25:30). As you trust Him, God will always provide the exact bread each woman needs that day. When you’re tempted to think your supply of seeds is exhausted, claim 2 Cor. 9:10: “Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.”

## Lead with Confidence

Be willing to share how God has worked in your life. Paul asked his listeners to follow him as he followed Jesus: “*Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice*” (Phil. 4:9). As you let the woman see how you follow Jesus, you not only show them how to follow Him, but also provide the motivation. Many times Christians know what they must do to follow Christ, but simply need the leadership of one who is wholeheartedly committed to obedience. Be that woman for those in your group.

Make sure you keep the Bible study alive and friendly. Your own attitude is a key factor in the group’s enthusiasm. Develop a genuine interest in each woman’s remarks, and expect to learn from them.

Concentrate on developing acceptance and compassion in the group. Don't be afraid of silence after asking a question. Give everyone time to think. Use "What do you think?" questions. These can help keep the discussion from seeming pressured or unnatural, since these kinds of questions have no wrong answers.

Remember that your goal is not simply to lead an interesting discussion but also to help your group understand and apply God's Word so it becomes life to them. As Deuteronomy 32:27 says, *"These are not idle words for you; they are your life"*.

Occasionally suggest, "Next week, let's bring to class the verses that have especially ministered to us." Usually a verse becomes special when it meets a personal need, so class members will often share needs as well. Studying Scripture develops bonds of true friendship.

Remember Malachi 3:16 when enjoying the breaking of spiritual bread that occurs in group Bible studies: *"Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name."* The Hebrew word for "listened" paints a picture of a mother bending over to listen to her children. Imagine God listening to you speak of Him and telling His recording angel to note your conversation in a heavenly journal!

Remember, *"The lips of the righteous know what is fitting"* (Prov. 10:32). Lead with confidence, because the Lord will help your words to be appropriate as you learn to depend on Him.

## Practical Tips

*"In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps,"* Prov. 16:9 tells us. As you make plans to respond to the desires He has given, the Lord will direct your steps and provide the specific guidance you need.

When selecting your study book, consider the women who will attend. Some books present the plan of salvation, while others assume the readers are Christians. So think through your goals with the group as you evaluate different study books, and choose one accordingly. After the book is selected, whether you've chosen a book for unbelievers, new believers, or seasoned believers, welcome all who wish to join you. In the Early Church, the Lord added to their number. He is still Lord of the harvest. He knows whom to draw and gives a desire to all of those who should be a part of your group. Depend upon the Lord to direct those to attend who would profit from the study.

Unless you are meeting as a Sunday School class or other regularly scheduled meeting at church, the ideal setting is often the home of a hospitable woman. Trust the Lord for details regarding time of meeting and place for weekly classes. Perhaps you could meet once when everyone can come and then determine the details.

If you, as the leader, come early, you do more than set a good example. You also communicate your enthusiasm and delight in the group.

Begin on time, even if not all members are present. Be sure chairs are set up so latecomers can easily join you. Don't ignore latecomers, but don't let them disrupt the session. Greet them warmly, then return to the study.

If you decide to include refreshments, you can make a sheet available at the first meeting and let women sign up who would like to provide refreshments.

Begin each meeting with prayer. Prayer is more than a transition from small talk to Bible study. Through prayer, you provide the class with a consciousness that they are in God's presence.

Give time for prayer requests before the opening or closing prayer. If someone has a special need, ask for volunteers to spend five or ten minutes during the next week praying for that woman. Twelve segments of five minutes of prayer make an hour of prayer! Perhaps at times you will want to send around a sheet of paper with

the prayer request written down and ask volunteers to write down how many minutes they will pray. This will help the members feel that they have indeed committed themselves to pray.

You may want to begin each session by reviewing memorized Scripture. Encourage the women to write down either the suggested verse or a passage that challenges or encourages them. Urge them to reflect on this Scripture during the coming week. The women will find that it affects their motives and action. We quickly forget what we read once, but remember what we ponder and act upon.

Keep in contact with the group members between weekly meetings. Make their burdens your own, and let them know you are praying for them. When they are absent, call the women to tell them you missed them, but don't pressure for attendance.

You are *"Christ's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"* (Eph. 2:10). Take heart as you remember that all you need for your study has been preplanned by Him.

## Types of Bible Studies

Several types of Bible Study groups exist. Each has its unique ministry opportunities and goals.

1. **Neighborhood Bible Class** is often largely comprised of unsaved people. This type of class is evangelistic. The members come from various backgrounds, and denominations, and some may not be active in any church. They have the common need of knowing Jesus. You will probably want to limit the number of mature Christians who attend this class. A ratio of six to eight non-Christians to two or three Christians works well. Too many mature Christians tend to stifle the openness and participation of the group. Members of this group discover the power of God's Word to change their lives.
2. **Bible Class for New Christians** helps new believers discover the riches and challenges of God's Word. They learn that the Bible is the source for Christian growth and development. They begin to see the need for holy living.
3. **Bible Studies for Working Women** meet regularly during lunch. These may be "brown bag" lunches in a conference room at an office or held in a meeting room of a restaurant. These Bible studies provide an opportunity for us to reach working women who don't attend a church. These groups offer an alternative to evening Bible Study for working women.
4. **In-depth Bible Study** is designed for people who need the challenge of studying the Word more deeply. These groups explore the cultural setting for the first hearers and study word origins to understand the impact the Word had for the first audience, and can have for us.
5. **Talk-it-Over** is an alternative to the lecture-type Bible study. The main purpose of this style is to provide a solid Bible study with active discussion. The entire group is involved with the emphasis on relating the lesson to everyday life.

## Procedural Suggestions

1. Provide comfortable seating. Circles work well since everyone can see other members of the group.
2. Tables simplify note taking. Arrange them so that the whole group can see the leader. If you place them in a square or "u" formation, participants can also see each other.
3. Unless the groups are structured, leave extra seats by the door so late arrivals can join with little disruption.
4. Encourage everyone to bring a Bible. Provide extra Bibles for those who forgot or do not own a Bible.
5. Assign reading before the study. Then the women who don't read well or are uncomfortable speaking in a group will be able to avoid embarrassment or intimidation.
6. Begin with group conversation, leaving time to share the events of the week and prayer concerns.
7. Make newcomers feel comfortable. Take time for the group to become acquainted with new women.

8. Maintain a list of the members' names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
9. Provide time for the group to pray together.
10. Include praise in each session. This may be in the form of a song, testimonies, or response to a question such as, "What was one positive experience you enjoyed this week?"
11. Stress the confidentiality of the group. This insures that your Bible study will be a safe place to break down walls and remove masks. Emphasize that, "What's said here, stays here!"
12. Let the women choose their participation level. Be aware of women who tend to dominate the discussions. To draw others into discussion, address questions to specific people.
13. Let members tell how the lesson related to them and how they can apply the lesson to their lives.

## Scripture Memorization

Though memorizing scriptures is more frequently stressed with children, it should be part of every Christian's life. When God's Word is part of our hearts and minds, it becomes alive and active. It is always present to guide our actions and reactions.

Memorizing scripture may take longer for adults than it does for children. However, it is an attainable and necessary life goal. Here are some tips to help you memorize:

1. Have a definite daily time for study:
  - a. Print the verse on cards and place them over the mirror or sink to study while dressing, doing dishes, or preparing meals.
  - b. Study and recite verses while ironing or driving or other such chores.
  - c. Carry cards to study while exercising or while waiting in lines.
2. Note the key words and their positions in the sentences.
3. Learn what triggers your recall of Scripture - key words? First word? situation?
4. Some people find that visualizing the position of the words on the page helps trigger recall.
5. Memorize scriptures from the version of the Bible you find most comfortable. When you understand the passage, memorizing is much easier. Memorization confronts us with God's Word. We must understand it and apply it to life to retain the meaning.
6. Form a review system to maintain what you learned the previous week. Regularly review the verses you've memorized.

## Calling Women to Prayer

### The Power of United Praying

Satan fears prayer more than all else. Satan starts to tremble when he sees a Christian in prayer. Imagine how he quivers when he sees two kneeling together!

When two or more prevail together, their prayer power is multiplied. "*Five of you will chase a hundred and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand*," Leviticus 26:8 tells us. Five chasing one hundred speaks of great power, but one hundred overcoming ten thousand almost surpasses belief.

Years ago people attended "horse pulls." A strong horse could sometimes pull 7,000 pounds and another might pull an amazing 9,000 pounds. But when the two horses were hitched together, they could pull 33,000 pounds. The increased amount is called synergy.

We can be praying with others, though, and still pull only our individual loads of 7,000 or 9,000 pounds each if we are not praying for the same thing at the same time. When we all desire the same thing, with one leading in prayer, our prayers become synergistic.

Many light bulbs shining together make a bright light, but if they are concentrated into one light beam, they give a laser beam effect capable of penetrating the hardest substance. Think of your agreeing in prayer as focusing your light into a laser beam that God can use to penetrate those “inaccessible” situations.

One woman was concerned about her unsaved neighbors so she asked two other women in her neighborhood to weekly join her for a brief prayer time. The neighborhood grew quieter. Neighbors began to get along better. One young woman came to know Jesus.

The pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene in Independence, Missouri asked the prayer partners to pray that the Holy Spirit’s presence would be in their facilities. After they began praying this, an unchurched lady began feeling drawn to the church on the corner. One Sunday morning she walked in the doors, and before the day was over, she gave her heart to the Lord.

One pastor told a leader of home prayer meetings, “When I walk into the pulpit on Sunday morning, I can tell if your group met to pray for the services this week.”

A prayer leader of one church said, “We have a prayer vigil on Friday nights. Two to four of us meet at the church to pray from 10 PM until midnight. Every Friday night we leave anticipating a glorious worship service on Sunday morning. We are not disappointed.”

### **Listen to the Spirit**

“*See, I am doing a new thing, now it springs up, do you not perceive it?*” Isaiah 43:19 tells us. God is doing a new thing in prayer today. His call is going forth. More people than before are interested in personal prayer and spiritual formation. One source estimates that ten million prayer groups are meeting across the country, and 1,400 prayer networks coordinate prayer from city to city. Local churches are praying together in new and exciting ways.

The Holy Spirit is the prayer coordinator in the local church. Women who are calling for prayer emphasize that all prayer is initiated and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

“We felt the Spirit call us to have nights of prayer.”

“You have to be listening and moving with the Spirit. He gives assignments.”

“If I tried anything on my own, it didn’t work.”

“We asked Him to lay on our hearts His path for our fasting.”

As leaders we are to discern where God is working, and move in that direction. Then, as we move in step with the Spirit, He does His work. The people in Haggai’s day had grown disinterested in the unfinished temple project, which was begun sixteen years earlier. Haggai saw the problem and committed himself to getting the people to go back to work on the temple. Haggai was successful in his venture for one reason: “*God had sent him*” (Haggai 1:12). The Lord stirred up the spirit of the leaders and the people and they worked on the house of the Lord. Why? Because the Spirit of the Lord had initiated Haggai’s venture.

As we pray and wait on the Lord, trusting the Holy Spirit to go ahead of us and give us His ideas and timing, the women will respond.

### **Mobilizing Women to Pray**

Many ministries in our local churches are highly organized. Yet, when it comes to prayer, often no plan, leadership, recruitment, or training exists. We just hope people are praying, and we hope they know how to pray effectively. However, Jesus said, “*My Father’s house shall be a house of prayer*” (Matt. 21:13). He is looking to see that prayer occurs in His house. To begin a prayer ministry, first choose a prayer coordinator.

The prayer coordinator is essential to an effective, long-lasting prayer ministry. She is the person who will help integrate prayer into the total life of the church. She should have a strong personal prayer life, spiritual maturity, gifts to organize and encourage, a good reputation, the confidence of leaders, plus enough time to attend key prayer events.

Her responsibilities will be to:

1. Identify key people who will take ownership in the prayer effort.
2. Research and evaluate the church's current prayer ministry.
3. Look for areas that need prayer.
4. Develop and put into action a prayer plan.

## Prayer Plan Possibilities

### Guarding the Flock

To ensure that every member of your church is prayed for by name, prepare a list of the church members' names. Date each list so you have a list for every day of the month. Find those who will take a list and commit to pray for every member out loud by name on the designated day. Also suggest specific scriptures to be prayed so all can pray effectively.

Scripture suggestions include:

- *"Strengthen and protect him [or her] from the evil one....Direct his [or her] heart into God's love and Christ's perseverance"* (2 Thess. 3:3, 5).
- *"Ransom him unharmed from the battle waged against him"* (Ps. 55:18).
- *"Supply all his needs according to your riches in glory through Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:19).
- *"Make all grace abound to him, so that in all things at all times, having all that he needs, he will abound in every good work"* (2 Cor. 9:8).

Pastors are under severe attack from the enemy and need intercessory prayer. Each pastor needs someone who will "pay the price" for their success. The excellent book *The Prayer Shield* by C. Peter Wagner will help you recruit intercessors for spiritual leaders.

### Corporate Prayer

Corporate prayer is when a group prays together, either by meeting together or scattered about. It is a focused prayer by a number of people interceding in line with God's heart. In many churches, Wednesday night prayer meetings have served as a corporate prayer time.

Sample Guidelines for corporate prayer include:

1. Be sensitive to pray under the Spirit's guidance.
2. Pray the promises of Scripture.
3. Listen to, affirm, and agree with the one praying.

### Prayerwalking

Prayerwalking is called "praying on site with insight." The goal is to pray while walking. You can do this alone, as families, in small groups, or large groups. You can either pray for the area in which you're walking or combine exercise with prayers. Especially if you're praying for specific areas, your walking/praying sites can include workplaces, neighborhoods, sites of consecrated use, overlook points, sites of past sin, or even sites of ongoing sin in the community. Prayerwalking helps us agree in prayer and focus our faith.

### Prayer Vigils

Prayer vigils are organized to focus intense prayer on a particular situation to win a breakthrough. You can schedule vigils to last a few hours, all night, all day, or for several days. Vigils can be more effective if coupled



with a time of fasting. It is important to announce the results of the vigil and celebrate answers. A schedule for an all-night vigil might include worship, prayer for specific needs, teaching, testimonies, quiet individual prayer and reflection, and a prayerwalk.

### **Prayer Triplets**

A prayer triplet is a group of three Christians committed to pray together regularly for the lost. Each chooses three non-Christians for whom all will pray to find Jesus as Savior. They can also select a country or people group and pray for specific missionaries.

Pray once a week for fifteen minutes. Don't spend time chatting or eating. It is not a social gathering with prayer as a sideline, but a deep, disciplined time to pray for those needing Jesus.

Decide in advance how many months you will promise to pray together. Renew your commitment at the end of that time. Select a chairperson to keep track of who is praying in triplets, and report all victories to the chairperson.

### **Moms In Touch**

The purpose of Moms In Touch is to intercede for our children, and to pray that our schools will be guided by biblical values and high moral standards. The founder, Fern Nichols, says, "Our desire is for God to raise up moms to intercede for every school across the U.S. and around the world."

To begin, pray for other moms to join you. Order a Moms In Touch book by writing to Moms In Touch, PO Box 1120, Poway, CA 92074-1120 or call 858/486-4065, or go to [www.momsintouch.org](http://www.momsintouch.org). It is important to be in contact with the national headquarters, so if others in your city want to be a part of Moms In Touch, the headquarters can tell them of your group.

Commit one hour each week to Moms In Touch.

### **Lydia Prayer Groups**

Lydia Prayer Groups are clusters of women forming around the world uniting their hearts in prayer on behalf of themselves, their families, churches, communities, and the world. The name is taken from the story in Acts 16:6-15 where Paul went to the riverbank and encountered Lydia and a group of women. From there the church in Europe was birthed, and the course of history was changed.

Lydia Prayer Groups are praying for a mighty outpouring of the Spirit of Jesus throughout the earth! The main focus of the Lydia Prayer Ministry is to pray for revival beginning in our own hearts and then asking Jesus to come and touch His people once again.

Lydia Prayer Groups are praying in North and South America, Africa, Europe, Australia, and Asia. "Psalm One" and "Come to the Fire" Men's Prayer Groups have also started as an outgrowth of the Lydia Prayer Groups Ministry. Groups are praying in prisons, at restaurants, and other creative locations. Some Lydia groups meet weekly. Others meet every other week or once a month. Their vision is to see multiplication.

You are invited to be an active participant in the Lydia Prayer Group movement and experience the incredible power of united prayer! A Lydia Prayer Groups guide is available in both English and Spanish and is being translated in other languages. There are leaders' packets, a booklet of prayer group suggestions in English and Spanish, a prayer guide for men, and a prayer guide for students available. Also, a weekly email is sent to Lydia leaders giving a scripture focus and prayer needs. For more information or to order material, go to Francis Asbury Society, [www.francisasburysociety.com](http://www.francisasburysociety.com). Under Women's Ministry, click "Lydia Groups" or call 858-858-4222.

## Resources on Prayer

*The Coming Revival*, Bill Bright New Life Publications, A Ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, 100 Sunport Lane, Orlando, Florida, 1995.

*A Study Guide for Evangelism Praying*, Evelyn Christenson, Produced for the use of AD 2000 International Women's Track by Modern Press, New Brighton, MI 55112.

*Touch the World Through Prayer*, Wesley Duewel, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986.

*Mighty Prevailing Prayer*, Wesley Duewel, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1990.

Prayer organization links at <http://www.gospelcom.net/npc/organizations/links.html>

## Resources for Bible Studies

The Satisfied Heart Topical Bible Study Series: *Simply Trusting*, *Boldly Asking*, *Joyfully Following*, and *Quietly Resting*: Aletha Hinthorn, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 1996.

The All for His Glory Bible Study Series: *Filled With His Glory*, *Transformed by His Glory*, and *Behold His Glory*, Aletha Hinthorn, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 2001.

*Leaders God Uses*, Aletha Hinthorn, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 2002.

*Wisdom of the Word*, Jeanne McCullough, 6789 Northwest 39<sup>th</sup> Expressway, Bethany, OK 73008 (405/789-5812 extension 237).

*Basic Bible Studies for New/Growing Christians* and *Basic Bible Studies for the Spirit-filled and Sanctified Life*, Charles (Chic) Shaver, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri.

*How to Read the Bible So It Changes Your Life*, Aletha Hinthorn, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 2004.

*How to Read the Bible.*

# Chapter Five

## Mentoring

Back in the days when sons worked with their fathers to provide life's necessities, role modeling was a natural part of life. In earlier days, apprenticeships were also a form of a mentoring relationship. Young people had the opportunity to learn a trade or craft by observing and developing skills under a master craftsman's direction. Meanwhile, daughters learned the skills necessary for family care while they worked with their mothers to prepare food and perform other household duties. Extended family members also insured that many other skills were passed to the next generation.

Mentoring experienced a surge of interest during the 1990s. Perhaps this was a result of people realizing they were separated from their biological families. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins were not available to fill the roles of mentor, teacher, encourager, discipler, and coach.

Today a variety of words describe relationships that resemble role models and mentoring. These include mentor, teacher, encourager, discipler, and coach. While nuances may distinguish the relationships, the ultimate goal is consistent: one person helping another grow.

Women's Ministries is an excellent a place for role modeling and mentor relationships to develop. Role modeling often happens naturally as women watch other women and incorporate the positive traits they see into their own lives. Mentoring relationships, on the other hand, are deeper. They require a greater level of personal commitment. Mentoring is today's application of Paul's instructions in Titus 2:3-5:

*Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God (NIV).*

While the life circumstances of those who first heard Paul's words are different from today, we can still glean from the principles he taught. Women who are more mature have a responsibility to teach those who are less mature. For example, a woman whose children are grown can mentor a new mother as she learns to juggle various roles. Yet a young widow can companion an older woman through the grief process following her husband's death. Life experiences and maturity become a determining factor in mentoring relationships.

### What is Role Modeling?

Role models are often women whose behaviors and skills are observed from a distance or learned about through reading. These individuals may or may not be aware that they are serving as a role model. Role models may or may not have a personal relationship with the women who see them as examples. Role models provide examples for women to follow during times of specific need, in a profession, or through new experiences. Many children grow up without extended families close by, so they tend to look outside the home for role models. Some young mothers and fathers look for individuals to fill a grandparent's role for their children. New mothers look to women further into the child-rearing years to provide encouragement and to serve as role models. Young parents who grew up in single-parent homes look for someone to be the role model of the non-residential parent. Newly married couples look for couples to see how marriage works. New Christians look for mature Christians to help them navigate the new lifestyle called Christianity.

As mentioned before, role modeling can occur without a personal relationship. Many people find wisdom and value reading books or articles about people who are role models in society or in the Christian world. Some

people tell how reading books written by the saints of yesteryear have motivated them to develop their Christian faith. Knowing that others through time have struggled with integrating Christianity into all aspects of life has encouraged them. For example, *In His Steps* and *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* are just two of many books written years ago that continue to influence Christians today.

## What is Mentoring?

Mentoring was a basic element of life before the 1900s. It occurred naturally as boys and girls learned farming, gardening, and life survival skills while working with their parents. Mentoring was the chief learning method as artisans invested time and taught skills to apprentices. At one time, the university system revolved around a student learning in the scholars' homes. Mentoring occurred in royal courts as knights taught warriors' skills to the novices. In the eighteenth century, people like Jonathan and Sarah Edwards frequently had one or more "disciples" living in their homes to observe marriage and personal spiritual dynamics.

When we research mentoring, we see that definition of mentoring varies with each author. However, some commonalities tie the definitions together. In *Connecting*, Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton define mentoring as "a relational experience in which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources." In *Mentoring*, Bobb Biehl adds time references to his definition: "Mentoring is a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé reach her or his God-given potential."

Mentors share lessons they have learned, extend helping hands, and become safety lines of love and affirmation to those following them. *The Word in Life Study Bible* stresses the giving aspect of mentoring by describing it as a "voluntary investment in others for their growth, development, and success." This definition is expanded to include faith in the value of the mentee and the benefits for this individual. Because of the value of the learner, mentoring may require loving sacrifice from the mentor. Howard Hendricks from Dallas Theological Seminary describes mentors as individuals involved in a process. Mentors are committed to help people grow, to keep them growing, and to assist them as they realize their life goals.

A look at the lives of biblical personalities and Christian leaders, we find references to, and experiences of, mentoring relationships. Moses prepared Joshua for the transition of leadership as the Israelites entered Canaan. Eli helped Samuel develop into a man who listened to God's voice and spoke to the nation. Priscilla and Aquilla disciple Apollos, taught him essentials for the faith, and sponsored his ministry. Barnabas stood behind Paul, the persecutor-turned-convert, as he introduced him to church leaders and testified of his conversion. Assisted by Barnabas' mentoring, Paul became the outstanding leader of the New Testament church. Paul recruited Timothy and passed along the importance of mentoring by building on the foundation Timothy's mother and grandmother had laid in the young man's life.

## Need for Mentors

In *Counseling Single Adults* Doug Fagerstrom suggests people need five different types of relationships in their lives: parent figure; role model; casual friend; intimate friend; and spiritual director, who is someone who comes alongside and helps you reach your spiritual goals. As people mature, the function of these relationships may change. The mentor who fills one of these relationships during a woman's childhood may not continue to fill that role when she reaches adolescence or adulthood.

Dr. Howard Hendricks suggests that each woman needs three types of mentoring relationships in her life: an older woman role model, a contemporary "soul sister," and a younger woman to teach. Through the older woman's life, a woman sees that survival is possible; and she sees a demonstration of spiritual maturity and depth to emulate. A contemporary in a woman's life is someone who loves her but is not impressed with her abilities. In this relationship, she finds acceptance and someone who can help her identify areas of her life that need attention.

To fulfill the third mentoring relationship, each woman also needs a younger woman to mentor. This relationship involves sharing experiences, passing along traditions, and helping the younger woman apply Christianity in the current society. It may also include teaching and being a role model for the younger woman

as she finds her place in adulthood. This may be a more challenging relationship to develop since older women are often reluctant to approach younger women. Remember that many young women are separated from their biological families and would like to have a mentor.

As technology increases, a growing number of women find themselves isolated. Equipment and technological advances make it possible for us to work at home. E-mail, cell phones, and fax machines offer quick communication but lack personal contact. Increasing numbers of women spend time communicating with others they may never meet. The need for mentors increases as this sense of isolation continues to grow.

Changes in the family structure often leave some people without an effective model for fathering or mothering. Those reared by a single parent frequently face unique fears as they enter marriage. While these women may ask the same questions entering marriage as those who weren't raised in a two-parent home, they are more likely to wonder if they will repeat the pattern of being a single parent or break the cycle. Adults who were raised by abusive or emotionally absent parents also look for others to teach and model effective parenting.

## Characteristics of a Mentor

Some common characteristics are found in most mentoring relationships. These include:

- Ability to see the potential in women.
- Tolerance to see the potential beyond mistakes and difficult personality traits.
- Flexibility in responding to the woman and situations.
- Patience and perseverance as gifts, talents, and abilities develop.
- Perspective and the ability to see down the road as the basis for the next step.
- The gifts and abilities to encourage others.

Mentors also give timely advice, offer encouragement, and provide helpful information from articles, books, and other sources. Mentors are willing to risk their reputations as they give the mentored person opportunities to develop leadership skills. Mentors encourage mentees to reach beyond their accomplishments to accept the challenges of a new generation. Mentors invite their disciples to come alongside them and learn while doing. Eventually, the roles reverse as the mentored ones accept new roles—the mentors then step into helping roles.

Ideal mentors structure the mentoring relationship, conversations, and activities to help protégés reach their God-given potential. These mentors remember the relationship is a two-way street. While mentors teach skills and model behaviors, they are also willing to learn from the mentee.

## Beginning a Mentoring Relationship

A mentoring relationship may be initiated by either the one who wants to mentor or the one who wants to be mentored. Women should always be mentored by other women, and men by other men. At the beginning of this relationship, both women must take time to determine what they are willing to commit to and invest in the relationship.

A woman who has identified a woman she would like to have as a mentor may ask her about her establishing a mentoring relationship. Likewise, women who feel they have something to offer less experienced women may approach them about the possibility of investing in the future.

What kind of questions should you cover as you evaluate starting a mentoring relationship?

How easily do we communicate?

How well do we relate to each other?

What areas will the mentoring relationship involve?

What are the expectations of the mentor and mentee?

How frequently and for how long will we meet?

Are our philosophies of life compatible?

Are we both Christians? If not, how will this affect the relationship?

While professional mentoring relationships may not demand that both women be Christians, we need to exercise caution about entering such relationships. Even with the focus on professional or work-related mentoring, Christianity is a lifestyle that permeates all aspects of life. Therefore, relationships involving a non-Christian and Christian may be less effective because of different life perspectives.

Wait until you feel it is God's time to begin a mentoring relationship. Forced relationships or those resulting from pressure may not have the commitment necessary to foster true mentoring.

## Identifying a Mentor or Mentoree

I will never forget the first day of my teaching career. The teachers eagerly surrounded the desk of the principal's secretary for the first glimpse of their class lists. The other second grade teachers quickly formed a group as they scanned their list looking for "the name." With a sigh of relief, they looked from one to another attempting to pinpoint the unfortunate person. A first grade teacher looked over my list and marked one name. I realized "the name" was on my list.

Before long, I understood the others' apprehension about this student. I also remember how willing other first and second grade teachers were to help me during that school year. They listened to my frustrations, offered advice, and made suggestions for coping with that student. While it was not part of a formal relationship, I reflect fondly on that mentoring I received from those teachers. Sometimes I asked for advice and at other times mentoring just happened during recess, over lunch, and at various meetings. Those relationships laid a foundation for me to build on during my teaching career.

Consider the women you know who are ten or more years younger than you are. Name three women in whom you see potential, ones you would like to get to know better and share some common interests. These interests may be work or career related, similar experiences, or other shared interests. These commonalities open the door for a mentoring relationship.

As you contemplate beginning a mentoring relationship, consider these questions.

### For the Mentor:

#### 1. Do I suggest a mentoring relationship or do I wait to be asked?

While a mentoring relationship may begin either way, one woman must take the initiative. Who asks is not the important issue—establishing a relationship is. Due to the commitment of attention, interest, and encouragement, often the mentor first approaches the woman she wishes to mentor.

#### 2. What time commitment does a mentoring relationship involve?

Each relationship is unique. Common interests, needs, and proximity are usually determining factors as you analyze the time commitment. If you live near each other, you may meet weekly or monthly. Some mentoring relationships are long distance with infrequent personal visits. These women maintain contact by phone, fax, e-mail, and letters. Other relationships are based on an as-needed frequency. At first, you may need to invest extra time in the relationship to become better acquainted and relaxed with each other. Relationship-building times can include walks; come-with-me invitations as you perform various duties and responsibilities; or spontaneous encounters that forge your relationship.

#### 3. What topics will you discuss during meeting times?

The meeting agenda is set by the mentee's needs. Discussions may include focus on decisions the mentee needs to make; problems for which the mentor can offer insights; listening as the mentee reaches a conclusion; updating of concerns from previous meetings; reporting progress and prayer requests.

#### 4. Where do these meetings occur?

Anywhere you can enjoy personal, in-depth talk. Meetings may occur in restaurants over a meal or something to drink. At times, depending on the topics to cover, you may want a more private location—a walk in a park,

your home, or your office. Remember much of mentoring is sharing your life with the woman you are mentoring. Mentoring is an attitude more than a setting.

### **5.How much advice do I offer?**

Sometimes advice is sought and accepted. Other times, the mentee simply needs an opportunity to talk and gain another perspective to a situation. When you give advice, remember the mentee decides what to do with it. The goal is not to make a clone of yourself but to assist the mentee in developing God-given potential and abilities.

### **6.How will I know when to end the relationship?**

Ending or changing any relationship is difficult. A relationship may naturally die due to changing interests and needs or from a conflict. Whatever causes the change, make sure you maintain open communication so both of you feel positive. Make sure you convey care, honesty, and fairness. Be positive and use “I” statements. End the discussion by assuring the mentee of your continued interest and support. Leave the door open for the future, too.

### **7.Should I loan money to my mentee?**

Though you might be tempted, loaning money can hurt a mentoring relationship, even if you take precautions of signing formal papers.

### **8.What is the confidentiality level?**

Extremely high. Never discuss with others information you shared or gained through a mentoring relationship.

### **Desirable Characteristics in a Mentee:**

1. The individual is a woman of integrity. As you look at this woman, you see potential and someone in whom you want to invest time and energy.
2. The individual is enjoyable. You want to see this woman succeed. This is someone you are willing to invest in for a lifetime. She is a woman with whom you can be comfortable.
3. The individual is open to being nurtured and is an eager disciple. Look for a woman who wants to learn from the experiences of others. A teachable attitude is a basic requirement for a mentoring relationship.
4. The individual is self-motivated. As the relationship progresses, the woman should take some responsibility for setting up meeting times and contacting you.

### **For the Woman Being Mentored**

As you consider a mentoring relationship, look for a woman who is more experienced than you, believes in you, indicates an interest in your well-being, enjoys being with you, and encourages you. The following characteristics are important as you identify potential mentors.

1. A mentor is honest with you. Honesty does not mean being critical; it reflects a willingness to help you face tough issues. Because the mentor is interested in your well-being, she is willing to address uncomfortable issues. The ideal mentor is honest, caring, and fair.
2. A mentor is a model for you. Remember the goal is developing your full potential—not to become a clone of your mentor. Your mentor, however, should be a woman who lives with integrity.
3. A mentor is deeply committed to you. The Scriptures contain examples of mentoring: Jesus and the disciples, Priscilla and Aquila, Paul and Timothy, Saul and Annaias. These examples show how individuals walked with others as they faced new experiences.
4. A mentor is open and approachable. A mentor shares success stories as well as stories about situations that didn’t turn out so successfully. It is important for you to see both sides and to learn that life goes on.
5. A mentor is a good teacher. A mentor explains the “how” and “why” behind tasks and decisions and gives you opportunities to learn new skills.
6. A mentor believes in your potential. A mentor is your cheerleader. As you talk to your mentor about discouraging times, she will encourage you to keep going, even when you may want to quit.
7. A mentor helps define your dreams and develop plans to achieve them. This involves clarifying your dreams and determining how realistic they are. Part of the mentoring process is refining dreams into achievable goals.



8. A mentor is successful in your eyes; a woman you want to be like. This does not necessarily mean successful by the world's standards. Success should be defined as following God's leading.
9. A mentor is willing to learn from you. A mentor models teachability while teaching. An ideal mentoring relationship is a two-way street with both of you giving to and receiving from each other.
10. A mentor is willing to follow your agenda. You determine the topics you will discuss during your times together.

As your mentoring relationship develops, be gracious and thank your mentor. While your mentor does not expect any kind of compensation, sincere appreciation is always acceptable. Share how you have benefited from your time together. Be considerate of your mentor's availability and work together to determine meeting times and places. Express the admiration and love you feel for your mentor. Although watching you grow and develop is rewarding, your mentor will enjoy hearing you express those words.

### **Implications of Mentoring for Women's Ministries**

Mentoring is not another program or ministry under the umbrella of Women's Ministries. Most successful mentoring relationships occur when women see other women they'd like to be mentored by or to be mentor. The role of Women's Ministries is educational. We provide information and create opportunities for women in all strata of life to become acquainted. As women develop relationships and friendships, mentoring opportunities naturally evolve. New Christians become acquainted with mature Christians who provide encouragement as they live the Christian lifestyle. Life-long Church of the Nazarene members are able to share our denominational history with new Nazarenes. Additionally, the Women's Ministries Director may demonstrate mentoring as she works with future leaders to develop their skills and as she gives them opportunities to use these skills.

Consider women in your congregation. Who has the potential to be a future Women's Ministries Director? Who are the new Christian women who could benefit from another woman discussing the implications of Christianity on their lives? Who are the new Nazarenes that need to understand the Wesleyan/holiness perspective and the influence of the Church of the Nazarene world-wide?

Begin applying this information with Women's Ministries Council members. Role-modeling has many merits. However, you'll have a deeper and longer-lasting effect through mentoring. Identify one council member who has leadership potential. Become better acquainted and gradually implement leadership information as you become her mentor.

## **Summary**

Mentoring is deliberately selecting another woman in whom you are willing to invest yourself to help her achieve her life goals. Mentoring is not evangelism, discipling, modeling, or coaching. Mentoring is based on the needs of the mentee and revolves around the mentor helping meet those needs. Mentoring requires a long-term commitment of time, energy, and availability. Mentoring draws from life experiences and requires a dedication to the agenda of the mentee.

Because many women are relationship orientated, Women's Ministries is the ideal setting to teach mentoring. As you mentor council members, develop strategies for educating other women about mentoring, and ultimately, inform the entire congregation. One of the hallmarks of young adults is their need for relationships. Mentoring may be the key to reaching them.

## **Selected Resources:**

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Brestin, Dee. *The Friendships of Women*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1995.

Hunt, Susan. *Spiritual Mothering*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1992.

Icenogle, Gareth Weldon. *Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

Stanley, Paul D. and J. Robert Clinton. *Connection: The Mentoring Relationship You Need to Succeed in Life*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992.

## Differences Among Evangelism, Discipleship, Mentoring

Mentoring is one of many terms used interchangeably. While there may be elements of the various roles involved in mentoring, Biehl makes distinctions among these roles. The following charts state these differences.

### EVANGELISM

#### Is it scriptural?

Taught and modeled in scripture

#### Models in scripture

Paul

#### How great is the need?

Desperate

#### Primary basis of interchange

Content

#### Type of role

Convincing non-believers and defending the faith. Presenting the Good News

#### Whose agenda?

Evangelist's Agenda (the gospel)

#### Training required?

Person equipped as evangelist

#### Time frame

Less than one hour (typically)

#### Long-term commitment required

Low

### DISCIPLESHIP

Taught and modeled in scripture

Timothy

Desperate

Content

Teaching new believers spiritual truths in all aspects of life

Disciple's agenda (spiritual disciples)

Academic knowledge and personal mastery of the spiritual disciplines

Limited time course of study

Low

### MENTORING

Modeled in scripture

Barnabas

Desperate

Relationship

Caring for and helping a person

Protégé's agenda (goals/problems)

Pastoral life experience relevant to protégé

Life-long as needed

High

**Focus of time together**

Presenting the  
salvation  
opportunity

Teaching the  
spiritual  
disciplines

Supporting  
toward  
maturity in all  
areas of life

**Importance of personal chemistry**

Respect required

Respect required

Respect and  
Personal chemistry  
both required

**Approximate involved**

Possibly  
thousands  
evangelized over  
a lifetime

Possibly  
hundreds  
disciplined over  
a lifetime

Typically one  
to twelve  
mentored  
over a lifetime

**Modern role parallels**

Brilliant,  
articulate,  
evangelist/ apologist

Disciplined  
mature teacher

Loving aunt,  
uncle, or close  
(more experienced)  
friend

**Essential message**

Repent,  
you must be  
saved! The  
kingdom of God  
is at hand.

To mature  
spiritually, here  
is what you need  
to know, do or  
become.

How can I  
help you get  
where you  
are going?

# Chapter Six

## Resources

### Developing and Using Small Groups

***The implementation of small groups is one factor in the growth of some churches. Church growth experts say small groups are an important factor for growth, whatever the church attendance. Beginning small groups requires much work, time, prayer, and a vision.***

#### Reasons for Small Groups

**1. They provide another entry point into your church.**

In the past, Sunday School, worship services, and special events served as entry points. While these still offer opportunities, we must continue to search for ways to increase the opportunities people have to become involved in our churches. For a variety of reasons, some people are intimidated by walking into a crowd. They feel more comfortable with a smaller group. Others prefer the anonymity of a large group.

**2. They are an effective evangelism tool.**

Small groups offer a place to discuss daily life and to receive encouragement and support. They provide a setting where questions are easier to ask, helping non-believers and new believers to learn more about the Christian life-style.

**3. They are an effective means to care for the people.**

Whatever the size of your church, it is impossible for the pastoral staff to provide all the care people need. We already practice this through a variety of ministries. Additionally, some will find it easier to talk with a lay person, especially if they are new to the church or don't know the pastor.

**4. They accelerate spiritual growth within the people.**

In a small group of people, usually 8 to 12, people are more comfortable in sharing needs and concerns. This leads to accountability and an atmosphere that nurtures growth.

**5. They shift the work of the church to the people and fulfill Ephesians 4:12.**

This verse says "equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry." As Christians, we are saints, whether or not we are comfortable with the term. The early church demonstrated how the work of the church was accomplished by empowering lay leaders. Community people expect the pastor to be involved in ministry. When the laity, however, takes this role, the impact is greater.

Dale Galloway, pastor of New Hope Community Church in Portland states, "No church with more than 50 members can be effective in pastoral care without enlisting and enabling the lay people to do daily work of pastoral care."

#### Needs of People Today

According to a Gallup poll, there are six needs people have today.

1. To believe life is meaningful and has purpose.
2. To have a sense of community and deeper relationships.
3. To be appreciated and respected.
4. To be listened to and heard.
5. To feel that one is growing in faith.
6. To have practical help in developing a mature faith.

Based on the reasons for developing small groups, it is easy to see how small groups provide a means of meeting these needs.

### **What Is A Small Group?**

A small group is a group of 8 to 12 people who meet regularly to learn and care for each other. The focus of the group plays a significant role in determining the makeup of the participants. Some groups focus on specific needs for a definite time span. Others are more general in focus without a preset ending time.

For example, a parents of teens group may find participants changing yearly. A single parent group may find the same people attending for several years. While the two groups have a similar focus, the differences in marital status limits the ability to meet together.

Other groups designed for spiritual growth and development may find their makeup includes both genders, married and single adults. Whatever the makeup of the group, they soon learn ways to improve their life-styles.

Determine the purpose of each small group. The purpose may be evangelism, discipleship, shepherding, or service. Some groups may feel they want to include the four purposes. However, the emphasis each purpose receives will vary from group to group.

### **Naming Your Groups**

The name of the group serves to identify the purpose and focus of the group. It is important for the name to be a welcoming and inviting one. Cute names serve a purpose but can also be uninviting. For example, one group named themselves “BOB”—Bunch of Believers. Would a non-Christian feel welcomed in this group? Probably not. This name limits the group’s ability to reach new people for Christ.

If the focus of the group is general, be aware of names and references to people that presuppose a specific lifestyle. If you refer to men as husbands and women as wives, single adults feel unwelcome. If the assumption is that everyone is a single adult, married adults feel unwelcome.

### **Beginning New Groups**

The concept of small groups often begins with one group as a model. As interest and involvement increases, the small groups multiply. Using the scientific cell growth as a model, the small groups multiply rather than divide.

Share your vision of small groups with the pastor and others in the congregation. People won’t volunteer until they catch the vision. It is important that group meetings begin and end on time. If the group determines one hour is enough, stick to that timeline. When meetings exceed the time limit, it makes it easier to skip a meeting—especially following a long work day! However, members need to feel comfortable to stay a few minutes longer.

New groups are formed when the number in the group exceeds 12 to 15. Groups this size lose the ability to function effectively. In the timeframe for each meeting, the time for each member to have input becomes limited. More people in a group require higher leadership skills. Multiplying groups also allows more people to become involved in ministry.

When a small group doesn’t keep multiplication as a goal, it is easy to become very comfortable with the group. This limits the group’s ability to attract and keep new people. A healthy small group keeps evangelism as a continuing mission.

### **Job Descriptions**

#### **Group leader**

1. Contact, by phone or home visit, all prospects and members.
2. Work with the host/hostess to make people comfortable.

3. Talk and pray with the assistant leader and host/hostess before each week's meeting.
4. Initiate the conversational prayer.
5. Lead the lesson and discussion.
6. Complete the report form for each meeting.

### **Assistant leader**

#### **Leader-in-training**

1. Contact, by phone or home visit, all prospects and members.
2. Open the meeting by introducing guests and using an icebreaker activity.  
Some icebreaker suggestions:
  - a. Today was a good day because . . .
  - b. My favorite color is . . .
  - c. My favorite time of day is . . .
  - d. One good thing that happened since last meeting . . .
  - e. My favorite season is . . .
  - f. I was aware of God's presence this week when. . .
3. Make announcements as needed.
4. Lead the sharing time.
5. Plan the refreshment schedule as needed.
6. Arrange babysitting if needed.
7. Lead the lesson and discussion occasionally at the request of the group leader.

### **Host/hostess**

1. Be responsible for a comfortable setting for the meeting. It might be a home, club house, restaurant, room at church, etc.
2. Set up refreshments before the meeting begins.
3. Arrange the chairs. A circle with an empty chair for the guest is one option.
4. Have extra Bibles and pencils for those who didn't remember to bring theirs.
5. Set an atmosphere of love and acceptance for everyone.

### **Suggested Timeline for Small Group Meeting**

Opening: Introduction of guests and icebreakers . . . . .	2 minutes
Opening prayer: . . . . .	2 minutes
Praise: . . . . .	10 minutes
Singing	
Testimonies	
Reports of answered prayers	
Appreciation of each other	
Thanksgiving to God	
Conversational Prayer . . . . .	5-10 minutes
Lesson with practical applications . . . . .	30 minutes
Prayer to make applications of the lesson . . . . .	5-10 minutes
Closing: The Lord's Prayer or Doxology . . . . .	2 minutes

### **Principles for Dynamic Small Groups**

Each small group must use and keep in equal balance the following three principles:

1. Share a life—a life-centered testimony that illustrates what the lesson taught. Sharing personal experiences with a group generates feelings of belonging.
2. Conversational prayer—talking to God builds unity by praising Him and by praying for expressed needs.
3. Bible application—teach to encourage a relationship with Jesus rather than the Christian culture.

4. Encourage participation without pressure. The leader is a guide on the side rather than a sage on the stage. Interactions are easier if people can see one another. Remind participants that “passing” is OK. Avoid calling on people to read aloud or reading around the group. Contact ahead of time those you want to read aloud.
5. Respond immediately to an expressed need. Love responds immediately. Pray for the individual and need as it is expressed.
6. Encourage everyone in the group. Make each person feel his or her questions and responses are important. Avoid put-downs.
7. Follow-up between meetings is important. If a need or concern was shared, contact the individual during the week to offer encouragement and support. Contact visitors and encourage them to attend again. Contact regular members to express appreciation.
8. New members brought into the group keep it alive and growing.
9. Don’t allow one person to do all the talking. One solution is to identify a member of the group that is comfortable with having a question directed toward him or her. Use this person’s name in the question.
10. Keep learning—you don’t have all the answers. Good leaders are learners. Life is a journey. We are always learning.

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# MINISTRY SUGGESTIONS

## MOST - Mothers of Senior High Teens

**MOST** is a network of mothers that meets one day a week during the lunch hour to pray for their senior high teens. Mondays provide the opportunity to pray for students as they return to school following a weekend of spiritual renewal and allows the participants to receive prayer requests for the week.

Meetings last 30-45 minutes and are devoted to prayer requests, praises, and support. Specific requests of teens are shared as well as praises of how they are living consistent Christian lives among their classmates. Support is given to mothers as they share concerns and are reassured by those experiencing similar situations.

The leader of the group sends a list of prayer requests and praises to those unable to attend. This keeps them informed and serves as a reminder they were missed. Mothers employed outside the home can also participate without attending the meeting by devoting their lunch hour on the specified day to prayer.

Today's children face tremendous pressures. How fortunate for teens to be supported by the prayers of Christian mothers. Surrounded by the prayers of mothers and other concerned women, our teens may receive added strength to withstand the pressures of their peers.

Though this concept focuses on senior high teens, your church may decide to combine the focus to include junior and senior high teens.

## Heart to Heart Ministry

**Purpose:** To develop friendships among the women of our church. As the church experiences growth and women attend various activities, opportunities to become acquainted with women outside a circle of friends and/or age group are limited. New members of the congregation need to be integrated into the church community.

### **Guidelines:**

1. Complete the informational sheet.
2. Partners are encouraged to make weekly contact by phone, mail, or visitation.
3. Pray for each other, sharing requests, needs, and praises.
4. Plan at least a monthly time together.

### **Heart to Heart Information Sheet**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthday \_\_\_\_\_  
Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_  
Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

# Mother's Club

**A** Mother's Club is a group of Cradle Roll and nursery mothers who meet at regular intervals, (usually once a month) for fellowship, study, and activities. The purpose is to foster friendships between Cradle Roll and nursery mothers. This friendship can serve as an entry point for Cradle Roll families into the church. The ultimate goal is to win the Cradle Roll parents to Christ. Mother's Clubs have been an effective tool to reach mothers outside the church.

The organization should be kept as simple as possible. Only a limited number of officers is necessary. There should be a president, secretary, and perhaps a treasurer as service projects are started.

The meetings may be held in members' homes. Some groups prefer a night meeting when the fathers can babysit. Others prefer a morning meeting followed by lunch. Some meet in the afternoon. Child care should be provided. Programs should be varied, but always offer a devotional as either an opening or closing. Programs might include group discussions, book reviews, speakers, films, service project work, baby showers, hobbies, etc.

Group discussions can include topics such as the preschooler and the Bible, books for the preschool child, mother as a moral guide, discipline, balancing the budget, child behavior, how to have a happy home, good books, etc.

An occasional speaker such as a pediatrician or family doctor, nurse, pastor, pastor's wife, or a missionary is one means of adding interest to the program. Consider inviting husbands to these special meetings. Service projects may include new curtains for the church nursery, new stuffed toys, volunteer help in the church nursery, and exchange babysitting. Mother's Club could sponsor baby showers for expectant Cradle Roll mothers.

Hobby demonstrations are always interesting. Candle making, sewing, flower arranging, creating Christmas decorations, interior decorating, and crafts of all kinds can be demonstrated and taught.

Book reviews are excellent, if well given. The book could be placed in the church library and all Cradle Roll and nursery parents encouraged to read it.

You may want to take an offering occasionally to help with service projects. Make this voluntary so no one feels embarrassed if she cannot give.

Keep the purpose—winning Cradle Roll families to Christ—the primary focus. The success of Mother's Clubs often depends on the attitude and interest of the church mothers. These monthly meetings must not become gossip sessions. Church mothers need to be encouraged to view Mother's Club as a ministry opportunity as they offer acceptance to non-church mothers.

# Women's Ministries in Churches Under 100 Members

As you begin Women's Ministries in the small church, it is important to involve as many people as possible. Make each woman feel needed by providing a place of service. Discover needs and strengths by listening. Personal conversations may work better than a survey. Remember not everyone will attend every meeting. Some meetings interest different groups of women. This shows the importance of planning a variety of activities. Make Women's Ministries fit your church and needs. Ideas that worked well for one church may not fit yours. The program may need adjusting to make it more suitable. Try new ideas.

## Ideas For Women's Ministries

1. Maintain church bulletin boards. Keep them updated and seasonal.
2. Take responsibility for planting flowers and landscaping the church lawn.
3. Ask for volunteers to "adopt" children whose parents don't attend church. Remember the child at Christmas, birthday, etc.
4. Canvas the neighborhood for VBS, new prospects, etc.
5. Plan funeral dinners. Use a planned menu and ask for volunteers to prepare each dish. Assign two volunteers for each month to assist with the dinners.
6. Develop a secret pal program. This allows all women to participate even if they aren't Christians.
7. Plan a shower for the pastor's wife during her birthday month.
8. Establish a church library. Books may be donated or purchased.
9. Have a "Martha Ministry." Visit weekly those who are sick or shut-in. Read scripture. See if there are needs the church family can assist in meeting.
10. Remember the college students and servicemen (military, police, firemen, etc). Ask for volunteers to correspond and send at least one care package during a specified time.
11. Use "Loaves of Love" to welcome new families. Ask the women to bake and freeze small loaves of breads (banana nut, raisin, etc.)
12. Collect clothing for a mission.
13. Plan a Bible study/craft night. Schedule this for a six to eight week period. Follow the Bible study with a short craft lesson.
14. Build self-esteem. Give each woman a piece of paper with another women's name on it. Have each one write something that's admired about the person. Distribute to the woman whose name is at the top.

## Social Activities

1. Plan a day trip. It might be a tour of a food factory or bakery, or shopping in a different location. Travel by van if possible.
2. Have a Ham and Bean supper. Use cloth for napkins with a scripture verse pinned on each one.
3. Plan a sweet tasting party. Have each women bring the same number of sweets (i.e. cookies, brownies, etc.) Give enough warning so that there is time for each women to bring enough copies of their recipe for each woman attending. Provide containers/plates to that each woman will be able to take home one of each treat.
4. Have an Early Bird Breakfast at 6:00pm. Serve a breakfast menu. Have a hostess dressed in a robe and sleeping cap greet the women as they arrive. Give gummi worms to the first ones to sign up and arrive.
5. Plan a Dish For Two. Bring a covered dish and a guest. Use this to include friends and neighbors. Have something intriguing to announce for the next meeting time.

## What Is A Prayer Cell?

The prayer cell concept is based upon Matthew 18:19-20.

*“Again, I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father, who is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*

From the Scripture comes the following definition of a prayer cell:

1) a small group of believers, 2) meeting together, 3) for prayer and fellowship, 4) with specific requests, 5) to the Father, 6) in the name of Jesus Christ.

Each of the six aspects of a prayer cell is an important and necessary aspect of the objective of the prayer cell. Only as we pray together harmoniously (“agree on earth”) with specific requests (“touching any things,” i.e. concerning any particular object) to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, can God answer these prayers.

It is only as He can answer our prayers that He can bless us in ways that we can in turn praise His glory. If we can, through the prayer cell, make God visible through praise of His glory, we may accomplish both training (maturing) of Christians and proclamation of God’s Word.

## How to Conduct a Prayer Cell

### A. Opening of Meeting—10 minutes

1. Everyone seated and relaxed
2. Informal—no one standing to lead
3. Word of greeting and welcome

### B. Scripture Meditation—10 minutes

1. Short
2. Conversational style
3. Read around a Scripture portion
4. Time for comments

### C. Sharing Time—10 minutes

1. Some blessing from Bible
2. An answer to prayer
3. A witnessing experience
4. Requests for prayer

### D. Praying Together—15 minutes

1. Conversational prayer
2. Specific prayer
3. Freedom of participation

## Preparation of a Cell Leader

### Job Description

1. **Basic Function:** The Prayer Cell Leader is to encourage and direct the members of the prayer cell to prayer and fellowship and to serve as a pathway of communication between the Prayer Coordinator and members of the prayer cell.
2. **Responsibilities:**
  - a. Coordinate with the members and host(ess) of the cell to establish a mutually convenient meeting time and place and encourage maximum attendance.
  - b. Be on time for all prayer cell meetings.

- c. Call the meeting to order, welcome each member, and guide the activity toward prayer and fellowship.
- d. Encourage the participation of all members.
- e. Close the meeting on time. (Meetings should run 30 minutes to a maximum of 1 hour.)
- f. Keep accurate records (or delegate this responsibility to a cell member) for prayer requests/answers and attendance, and communicate these records to the Prayer Coordinator. (All records are to be anonymous with respect to prayer requests, answers and attendance.)
- g. Pray for his or her responsibilities, the cell and each member of the cell.
- h. Contact people who are good prospects to join the cell. Consideration should be given to geographic location, interest and peer level.

## Conversational Prayer

### A. "What is Conversational Prayer?"

Conversational prayer is more than a dialogue. It is what its name implies. It is conversation directed to God with us and within us, as well as to each other. Therefore it contains three ingredients common to any meaningful communication:

1. We become aware of the other person, what he says, what he means, how he feels.
2. We pursue the same subject by taking turns, listening, speaking, agreeing, and giving thanks.
3. We try to keep in tune, by not prematurely introducing a new subject but by maintaining interest through participation in the current subject.

Prayer is thus lifted out of the cold, formal, impersonal routine (and the Shakespearean language) into the warmth of fresh, personal, everyday language . . . in the presence of Jesus our Lord who is always near us.

Actually, you will probably discover that conversational prayer is the way you pray in your own heart, during the day, or in your own personal devotions. For all prayer is a heart-language.

### B. There are four basic steps of conversational prayer.

These form an easily recalled framework . . . the descriptive phrases that accompany each step in the following outline help us see what each involves and the Scriptural basis of each:

1. Jesus is here—*The power of worship*  
Realizing God's presence  
Accepting God's love  
Matthew 18:19-20
2. Thank you, Lord.—*The power of thanksgiving*  
Speaking from our hearts  
Freedom from fear  
Philippians 4:4-7
3. Help me, Lord.—*The power of confession*  
Affirming one another  
Receiving love  
James 5:13-16
4. Help my brother.—*The power of intercession*  
Giving away our love  
Receiving answers  
Mark 11:22-25

## Scripture Reading for Use in Prayer Cells

*Read and meditate on one set of verses at each meeting.*

Matthew 18:15-20  
Ephesians 3:14-21  
Matthew 6:5-15  
Ephesians 6:10-20  
Matthew 7:7-12  
Philippians 1:9-11  
Matthew 9:35-38  
I Thessalonians 5:14-21  
Matthew 21:18-22  
I Timothy 2:1-6  
Luke 18:1-8  
John 14:12-18  
Hebrews 11:1-6

John 15:1-7, 16  
James 5:13-20  
Acts 3:1-10  
I Peter 5:5-10  
Acts 4:23-30  
I John 3:18-24  
Acts 16:10-18  
I John 5:13-15  
Romans 8:25-28  
Jude 1:20-25  
Romans 15:30-33  
Revelation 1:9-18

## Telephone Prayer Chain

*“Don’t worry over anything whatever; whenever you pray tell God every detail of your needs in thankful prayer” (Philippians 4:6, Phillips)* There is power in prayer when a number of persons are praying at the same time for the same request!

### Select Your Chairperson:

*The following characteristics are recommended:*

1. Spirit-filled Christian
2. Able to organize and enlist prayer warriors
3. Discerning—able to sense when something is too personal to share. (“Have you checked with the person for whom you’re requesting prayer?”)
4. Faithful

### Enlist Those Willing to Participate in the Prayer Chain Program:

Enlistment cards may be distributed during a service. Be sure a place for the phone number is included.

### Procedure:

Give cards to the Chairperson. She will choose as many key callers as is required for each Key Caller to have no more than five calls. Names are then divided up among the Key Callers.

### Spread the Word

The name and phone number of the Chairperson should be made known to the congregation through announcements and bulletins, with instructions regarding requests. When someone has an urgent prayer need, he/she calls the Chairperson, who in turn calls each Key Caller. The Key Caller calls those on her list.

The following are basic rules given by Evelyn Christenson in her book, *What Happens When Women Pray*.

1. Pray immediately
2. Pass on prayer requests immediately
3. Don’t delete anything or add anything to the request
4. Keep it confidential—no gossiping
5. Pray prayer requests—not answers

To affirm to your prayer warriors the power of God to answer prayer, you may wish to keep a prayer journal in which you record answers to prayer.



# Devotional Suggestions

**Invitations:** Shapes of jars cut from construction paper

**Decorations:** Jars and vases of various shapes and sizes

**Refreshments:** Pour punch from different types of jars. Serve matzo bread or pita bread with butter and other spreads.

**Music:** “Bring Your Vessels, Not a Few,” *Sing to the Lord*, 294; “Take My Life, and Let It Be,” *Sing to the Lord*, 455; “Make Me a Blessing,” *Sing to the Lord*, 533.

**Icebreakers:** In groups of two or three, list as many kinds of vessels that hold liquids as possible. The team with the longest list wins.

**Devotional:** Is there any oil in your jar?

1 Kings 17:7-16—The widow of Zarephath and Elijah. The widow must have been depressed, saddened, and resigned to her fate as she gathered supplies to prepare her final meal. Yet as she ministered to Elijah, she received the help she needed. She shared the little she had and it became more than enough.

2 Kings 4:1-7—The prophet’s widow and Elisha. In verse 1, the widow asked Elisha for help; verse 2, Elisha asked what she had; verses 3-4, the widow willingly shared what she had; and verses 5-7, the widow followed instructions and received help.

Are you down to your lowest level? How much oil is left in your vessel? God wants us to willingly give Him everything we have--material possessions, relationships, time, talents, money—and obey Him in all things. He will supply our needs “immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20 NIV).

**Fun time:** Have a vessel exchange. Each woman brings a wrapped vessel for the “White Elephant Exchange.”

**Craft time:** Have available painting supplies and small vases ready to paint.