

Women's Ministry Handbook

What is Women's Ministry?

The title is self-explanatory. Women's ministry is about ministering to women and training women to minister to others. Group ministry always deals with "ministering to" and ministering through."

Choosing a Name

Most youth and children's ministries choose a name that identifies the group. However, it is very common for the office of women's ministry to identify themselves as Women's Ministries or Ladies Ministry. Many women see the importance of choosing a name for the ministry. A name gives identity and focus to the group. It allows each participant to feel like she is a part of something unique and important, as opposed to simply being involved in a generic gender group.

There are many great names that have been used by women's ministry groups. Some of them have been copyrighted and can only be used by starting a chapter of the existing group. Usually the name that is chosen will in some way describe the purpose of the group.

The Mission and Vision of Women's Ministry

It is important that each group develop a mission or vision statement to determine the focus and direction of the group. If the group is part of a local church, the mission and vision must fit within the scope of the pastor's and church's mission and vision statements. Most women's groups within a local church use the church's mission and vision statements for their group. Without a written mission and vision, the women's ministry can easily fall into a traditional maintenance mode, where they exist solely for minimal tasks, like fund-raising and superficial social events. In this case, the women miss out on the wonderful opportunity to minister to each other, their families, and to their church and commu-

The Women's Ministry Director

Qualifications for the director of women's ministry include the following:

1. She must be called to this type of ministry.
2. She needs to have a great heart for women, as well as a broad understanding of women's needs.
3. She needs to be a well-organized individual who is capable of recruiting and training a team to lead the women's ministry.
4. She primarily functions as the chairperson of a committee of individuals who oversee the various ministries and activities of the women's ministry.

In many cases, the pastor's wife is automatically appointed to this position. This mind-set is long outdated. The person over this group needs to be called to this type of ministry and should possess the gifts and skills necessary to implement and execute this ministry effectively. The pastor's wife may not be the best choice unless she feels called to this position.

The selection of the leaders is usually done by appointment from the senior pastor. Some small groups choose to elect their own director, but in many cases, the person elected to the position is neither called nor qualified, so the best method is still for the right person to step forward and make the senior pastor aware of her calling and interest.

How to Get Organized

The most efficient and effective way to organize a women's ministry is to appoint a board or committee to oversee various activities and ministries. Here is a suggested lineup for the board or committee:

- Director of Women’s Ministry—Chairperson
- Assistant to the Director (sometimes referred to as the vice president)
- Treasurer
- Director of Communications and Publications
- Director of Social Events
- Director of Conferences and Retreats
- Director of Outreach and Evangelism
- Director of Small Groups

Another suggested line up would be:

- Coordinator > Small Group Leaders
- Assistant Coordinator > Women’s News Letter
- Outreach Coordinator

Training the Leaders

Each group should select a training program and make it a requirement for all leaders within the group. The program can be as simple as going through the handbook once a year, or as elaborate as a book or video training course on leadership development. Taking the time to train and develop the leaders will raise the level of excellence and confidence of those leading the other women. Their spirit of excellence will cause the whole group to respond in like manner, thus producing a better quality of ministry within the entire group.

The director may wish to write a job description for each of the board or committee members. Each woman’s role would be clearly defined within the scope of the individual job description. If so, the job descriptions should state clearly the duties and responsibilities of each role. Within the content of each job description everything would be detailed as to answer questions before they arise. Job descriptions are a great way of ensuring that each person is performing her role to the expectations of the ministry and the director. Many times, a well-written job description is the biggest difference between frustration and functionality. Thus the women’s ministry can move forward instead of being bogged down with questions regarding the nature, intent, and expectations of that person and their role in the ministry. The “good” job description would assure the leader of the other women participants understanding and demonstrating the task of the given ministerial role.

The Ministry Calendar

1. *Daily:* Daily ministries offered through Women's ministry might include such things as a prayer chain or on-call ministry of encouragement. Some groups specialize in counseling for women which is sometime offered on a daily basis within the normal work week.
2. *Weekly:* The group members should decide what kind of events they plan to offer on a weekly basis. In most cases, this would be a Bible study, special-interest group or small-group meeting. It is important to make sure that the same people are not involved in too many events, or they will become overloaded and discouraged.
3. *Monthly:* Monthly events may include things like social gatherings, pampering parties, and outreach ministry opportunities. Many women's ministries are involved in community outreach, such as Meal's on Wheel's, Angel Tree, Hospital Volunteer, and other benevolent programs. The women's group may choose to have a social night each month that is designated solely for having fun and entertainment. The women's ministry may want to have monthly "Mom's Night Out," where ladies meet, eat and shop. Some groups have a ministry for couples and offer a "Couples' Night Out" and the women provide a child-care program for those who need to spend time together. Some groups have monthly meetings that are filled with reports, a financial statement, planning, and a time of socializing.
4. *Annual Events:* Annual events may include conventions, conferences, retreats, and fundraisers. The difference in a convention and a conference is that conventions are primarily worship services with plenary sessions. Each day is filled with two to three worship/speaking services and various speakers. Conferences primarily are held in a smaller, classroom type setting and usually have a variety of choices for the attendees. There are many great women's conferences and conventions around the country. A few of the conventions may have as many as 5,000 to 50,000 in attendance. If that is too large, there are many other conferences offered by a number of well-know women's groups. Some are beneficial for the officers and committees, others are beneficial for entire groups of women.

Conferences usually have around 1,000 to 2,000 in attendance. Usually they are held in conference centers or large hotels. Most of them will offer a variety of speakers and topics to choose from. Retreats are the smallest of these types of gatherings. Retreats are usually sponsored by local women's groups, but sometimes they are sponsored by larger ministries. Retreats can have anywhere from 10 women to several hundred.

Some women's ministries choose to have one weeklong event. Here is a brief schedule for such an event:

Monday-Worship and a Speaker

Tuesday-Breakout classes

Wednesday-Shopping, classes or a guest speaker

Thursday-Pampering, fun and games

Friday-Closing sessions with a speaker

Other groups prefer women's retreats. There are many models for a women's retreat. There is a *small-group model*, where the women are divided into small groups and go through a variety of teachings and exercises with their group. They usually come together for corporate worship a couple of times during the retreat.

One great retreat model is the *conference model*. In the conference model, ladies are given a schedule of various classes they may choose to attend. They usually come together for corporate worship a couple of time during the retreat, but the effectiveness is primarily through the classes. Another very successful setup for a women's retreat is the *convention model*. Here, the women are always together in one room and a speaker addresses the whole group in every session.

Each retreat is geared to meet different types of needs in women. In the small-groups model, women will experience intimacy, an examination of the inner self, openness, trust with others and personal resolution. In the conference model, women are given choices so they can choose to attend classes that speak directly to their solution. .

In the convention model, the women will experience the energy of the corporate setting. The room will be filled with corporate laughter at times and tears at other times. They leave the convention-style retreat feeling like they belong to the society of womanhood.

Certificate of Exemption Funds for individual group retreats must be paid for through the WOC checking account so, the church "Certificate of Exemption" form may be used for tax exemption.

Monthly Leadership Meetings

Monthly meetings are necessary for any ministry group that wants to stay focused and connected. The monthly meeting should consist of a financial statement, reporting and planning. Many groups hold the meeting after having dinner together. Once the financial statement is reviewed, each person on the board should give a verbal or written report of what the group is doing. After the reports are given, the planning calendar should be reviewed to make sure all events are well organized and clearly communicated to all of the participants in the ministry. These meetings usually last between one to three hours—according to the size of group, the number of board members, and whether or not a meal is included in the meeting. The monthly meetings can be taken care of by small groups.

Small Groups for Women

Small groups are a wonderful way to reach women who would otherwise never get involved in women's ministry. Small groups can meet almost anywhere and anytime. Most small groups meet in homes or in restaurants. A small group is defined as a group of approximately 10 women or less who meet on a regular basis. There are great ideas for women's ministry small groups. Here are only a few:

Service or Outreach Groups:

- Mentoring groups
 - Young Mothers
 - Girls Ministry
- Sewing Ministry
- Cooking Ministry
- Carpooling Ministry
- Homework Ministry
- Nursing Home Ministry
- Missions

Social Groups

- Quilting Group/Crochet/Knitting Groups
- Scrapbooking Group
- Arts and Crafts
- Bowling or tennis Group
- Walking Group
- Soccer Moms
- Recipe Club
- Personal Care Groups

Community and Support Group Programs

- MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)
- D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness Resistance Education)

Ministry Groups

- Bible Study Groups
- Intercessory Prayer Groups
- Praise and Worship Groups

Networking

There are so many wonderful Women's Ministry groups operating today. Many of them have events that are open to the everyone. Here is a list of a few groups to be considered for networking.

Women's Aglow (www.aglow.org)

Women's Ministry Network (www.womensministry.net)

Women's Missionary Union ([www. Wmu.com](http://www.Wmu.com))

Women's Network (www.beingbeloved.org)

Ruth Women's Ministry (www.ruthministry.com)

Staying Connected

Keeping the groups connected is extremely important to the success of women's ministry. In today's world of busyness—especially for women with children at home—it takes a special effort to keep the groups connected and focused. A monthly *newsletter* or letter from the director is perhaps one of the easiest and most efficient ways of disseminating pertinent information. In addition to the monthly communiqué, a *ministry bulletin board* can be very helpful in keeping the groups up-to-date. The board should be located in a strategic place where ladies often gather. Just outside the women's restroom or in the lobby of the church is a great place. Utilizing the weekly *church bulletin* is also effective, especially for new women in the church who are not yet involved in women's ministry. Many women today have access to the Internet, so having a *Web Page* and utilizing *e-mail lists* can also help to keep the group informed. Of course the *telephone* is still a very effective means by which to communicate, especially when most people have the convenience of a cell phone readily available. *Phone Trees* are a quick-and-easy means to relay emergency and critical information such as meeting cancellations, death notices, hospital notices or special needs.

The Ministry of Encouragement

Many people join the women's ministry for support and friendship they may need an outlet in their life or perhaps are even seeking an inner healing. Offering the ministry of encouragement to these women can be a life-changing experience. There are many ways to offer this unique and much needed ministry:

1. *A Big Sister Program:* In this program, every new woman is assigned to a stable and mature member for a period of several months. The purpose of the program is to help women become comfortable in the ministry. The Big Sister will introduce the new member to everyone in the group, call and check on her regularly, and for a short time sit with her in church during the assigned period just for support.

2. *Secret Pals:* The secret Pal program is very effective in encouraging others. At the beginning of the year, or at a designated time, all of the women who choose to participate in the program put their name in a hat. The names are then drawn out secretly by all the members. No one knows whose name the other people in the group have, except the leader. For the next year, she will send cards and purchase small gifts for her secret pal. Usually the name that is on a card drawn has other types of information on it, such as birthday, hobbies, special interests, anniversaries and home address. At the end of the year, the group gathers for a party to reveal the secret pal's identity. The night ends with expressions of appreciation and sentiments for the kindness of a person whose identity was unknown.

3. *Encouragement Committee.* An encouragement committee is a group of individuals who are assigned to send cards and make telephone calls to the group for the purpose of offering encouragement. This special group of women nurtures and cares for the women of the group in a variety of creative ways.

4. *Small Groups:* Small groups are a natural way to encourage individuals. By simply encouraging the women to participate in a small group, the women will automatically receive nurture, care and friendship from the group.

5. *Support Groups:* There are many support groups that exist solely for addressing the needs of women. There are groups for women with low self-esteem, groups for women recovering from abuse, and even post-abortion groups. The types of support groups that can be started are endless. The key is to listen for the cry of the women, find the wound and try to heal it. Regardless of the need, with two or three individuals who have a need and a qualified facilitator, a support group can be initiated. Support groups meet in living rooms, classrooms, parks and restaurants. They are easy to budget, easy to maintain, but most of all, they are very effective for healing lives.

Social Clubs

There are hundreds of ideas for starting a social clubs with a group

your own. Social groups are a wonderful way to bring wholeness to the life of a woman. In the group, new friends are made, and a good time is had by all. Laughter does the heart good like a medicine.

Many ladies groups join the "Red Hat Society." this is a group of ladies who get together for a time of fun in a social setting. All of the ladies show up wearing a red hat for a planned time of fun. For more information about the Red Hat Society, visit their Web site at www.redhatsociety.com.

Mission Projects

Many women's groups sponsor missions work. There are numerous ways to do this. You can adopt a missionary, or sponsor a child from an orphanage home. You can initiate special fund-raising projects for designated needs on the mission field or start a ministry of encouragement to missionary families and send them cards, letters, money, personal items and gifts. Bringing missions into a women's ministry group will help to develop their souls and spirit.

Special Days for Women

1. *Mother's Day.* Mother's Day is a great time to focus on the women of the church. One of the things that works great is for the church to have a special theme for Mother's Day. Some churches have an all-ladies choir to sing, or give flowers to all the women in the house. Some have special presentations from the children and youth of the church. Many women's ministries will have a Mother/Child Banquet for mothers and invite children to attend. A great idea for Mother's Day is to have all the women put their names in a hat and draw out several names for special gifts.

2. *Ladies Day.* Ladies Day is a Sunday that is set aside when all of the ministry is done by the ladies in the church. The music, preaching and teaching are done by the ladies to celebrate women in ministry. For example, all lady ushers, greeters, choir, ensemble, solo, sermon, and possibly have a special impartation service for all the women.

Women in Ministry

Aimee Semple McPherson is a woman who pioneered the work for women in ministry. At a time when many people frowned on women in the pulpit, this wonderful woman forged ahead to make room for women. After 10 years of grueling evangelistic work, McPherson decided to settle down in Los Angeles in 1921. she purchased property near Echo Park, designed and built Angelus Temple, dedication the new building on January 1, 1923. By the time she was 33 years old, Aimee Semple McPherson had established the first Christian radio station in the United States, a 5300-seat auditorium in which thousand of people were saved and healed, a Bible college, and ultimately a denomination-all of which are still in operation today.

Today, women in ministry are emerging more than ever before. Prominent conferences like "Woman Thou Art Loosed" have given today's Christian women wings. Some have tried to silence their voices on a male dominated floor of business, but their gifts have already made for them in pulpits, stadiums, on airwaves, convention centers and publication around the world.

Women like Joyce Meyer, who employs over 600 people to manage her evangelistic ministry, have proven that, with God's help, women can stand in the face of adversity and come into their rightful divine destiny.

The list of successful women in ministry is long. Ana Ruth Diaz pastors over 5000 people in the city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Judy Jacobs, Karen Wheaton, Shirley Caesar, Annette Watson, Jackie Smith, Gloria Copeland, and Marilyn Hickey have covered the globe with preaching and teaching. The Hall of Faith is filled with female vocalists, musicians and other types of artists whose voices have not gone unheard. Women have spoken up, showed up and held up the banner of the Cross for centuries. They have given birth to ministries, churches and movements of the faith. They are among the elite of Kingdom leaders, who many times, like Mary, pushed their way through a crowded group of men to break an alabaster box at His feet.

But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this women has done will also be told as a memorial to her" Mark 14:6-9 NKJV

Special Ministry Needs

Within in every church there are special circumstances that warrant special attention. Such as funerals, showers, (baby and wedding), church dinners, church banquets, supplying church needs, such as buying church furniture and kitchen utensils. Sometimes the women's ministry will have fundraisers for certain items that are needed to supply a need within the church.

Funeral meals are the responsibility of the Outreach Coordinator. If a member of the family was a part of a Covenant Life Group then the Outreach Coordinator must work "hand in hand" with the Life Group Leader of the bereaved family. Also, it is imperative that the Outreach Coordinator stay in close touch with the staff and church office sharing all information regarding the arrangements for the funeral services and meals. When notified of a death of a member or an immediate relative of a member, the Outreach Coordinator is to canvas the women in the entire women's ministry to make up a meal for the bereaved family. The meat and paper products will be provided by the church, and the remainder of sides should consist of two—three vegetables (ie. Corn, green beans, mashed potatoes) breads, (i.e. rolls) and drinks (i.e. tea and/or soft drinks), and desserts. It is also the responsibility of the Outreach Coordinator to find out when and where the family wants the food. It is also Outreach Coordinator's responsibility to make sure the meal is taken to the family.

Surgery and/or Extended Sickness Meals are the responsibility of the smaller group of women in the age group of the woman. A meal is always appreciated by the sick or someone whom has had surgery and finds it difficult to prepare their family a meal. When the group leader is notified about a person who has an extended illness or surgery they will then notify the group to prepare ample meals as needed. Maybe two to three days of meals for a family. It will be the group leader (or someone the group leader has designated) to find out how large the family is and decide how much food to prepare for the meal. It is the responsibility of the small group leader to follow up to make sure the food is delivered to the needy. * While delivering the food be sure to pray for the individual and their family.

Wedding Showers are the responsibility of the small group of the women in the age group of the woman. Wedding showers should be for first time marriages. (Some exceptions do apply) When the small group leader is notified of a wedding it is the small group leader's responsibility to have or designate a woman of the same small group to have a shower for the bride to be. The shower is best suited at another woman's home but can be given at the church after checking the online calendar, with the Pastor of Ministries, and the church calendar. Wedding showers are vitally important to the foundational welfare of the church. This also promotes marriage, the union of one man and one woman. This is a happy occasion where the church can express their joy and love.

Baby Showers are the responsibility of the small group of women in the age group of the woman. When the small group leader is notified of a mother to be it is the small group leader's responsibility to have or designate another woman of the same small group to have a baby shower. This should be given for members of the church and for first births only. (Some exceptions do apply) The shower is best given at someone's home, but can be given at the church after checking the online calendar, with the Pastor of Ministries, and the church calendar.

Accountability

According to the Church of God Minutes the Women's ministry's financial accounts are not scrutinized by anyone but by the officers of the women and Pastor. The pastor has liberty to designate whomever he deems necessary to view the accounts.0.23

The women are responsible to one person and that is the pastor. This is according to Article S54 , page 135 and 136 of the Church of God 2008 Minutes. (Attached) Pastor has requested a quarterly report regarding all Charts of Accounts. Essentially this a record of all money as income and/or expenses. This is a "check and balance" accountability.

Excerpt taken from Church of God 2008 Minutes, book of Discipline, Church Order, and Governance.

S54 *Women's Ministries (Local Church)*

I. Name

1. That each local church organize and maintain a ministry which shall be generally known as the Church of God Women's Ministries,
2. Where a ministry of this type is functioning under a different name, it may continue, if they so desire.

II. Officers

The local church Women's Ministries Committee shall consist of a president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer, of which the past is chairman. The manner of selecting, electing, or appointing these officers shall be left up to the pastor.

III. President

The president shall

1. Preside at each meeting of the Women's Ministries.
 2. Be responsible for the general promotion of the Women's Ministries in the local church.
 3. Consult with the pastor about times and places of special services, such as in rest homes, prisons, and hospitals.
- With the aid of the Women's Ministries, consult with the pastor about worthy projects for the church.

IV. Vice President

The vice president shall

1. Assist the president.
2. In the absence of the president, preside over regular meetings of the Women's Ministries.

V. Secretary-Treasurer

The secretary-treasurer shall

1. Keep a record of all regular meetings of the Women's Ministries.
2. Keep a record of all finances and give a report of same to the Women's Ministries at regular meetings.

3. Report each month to the state Women's Ministries president, which will also include the YLM (Young Ladies Ministries) report.
4. Disburse monies when authorized to do so by the Women's Ministries, the president, and with the approval of the pastor.

VI. Purposes and Objectives

Some of the purposes of the Women's Ministries, under the guidance of the Women's Ministries Committee and pastor, are to meet each week, or as often as convenient, to engage in prayer for the welfare of the church and the lost, to visit the sick, rest homes, prisons, PTAs, and other worthy civic organizations, where their influence could be effective for God, the church, and the community. Further, they are to raise funds to be disbursed in behalf of the local church, state, and general work, after consulting with and having the approval of their pastor.