

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES LEADER

A MINISTRY DESCRIPTION FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

Introduction

The Bible gives great insight into the role of women. Biblical women were entrepreneurs, judges, homemakers, and Bible teachers to list only a few. Thus the Christian woman is called to live her life in terms of the great potential for the development and use of her abilities.

Christian women are compassionate with godly wisdom. They choose to act, to be voices proclaiming a better way, to be hands making a tangible difference, to work toward spiritually strengthening people already in the membership as well as the non-members in the community. Christian women are committed to changing the world through prayer and sharing their faith in the Lord.

As our model, Jesus ministered to women (Mark 7; Luke 7, 8, and 13) restoring their self-worth and value as human beings. The increasingly complex needs of women within North American society and the church make women's ministries a key priority in the church. "They (women) can do a work that men cannot do. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. The labor is needed" (*Evangelism*, page 465). "Why may they (women) not understand their own powers, and realizing that these powers are given of God, strive to make use of them to the fullest extent in doing good to others, in advancing the work of reformation, of truth, and of real goodness in the world" (*Welfare Ministries*, page 161). "Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God, take up her mission" (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, page 564).

Women today are commissioned to use the talents and opportunities God has given them to fulfill His eternal plan. The responsibility of sharing the Good News is the burden of all who call themselves Christians. If the church were not to fully utilize women's gifts the church body would be denied the internal freedom under which it flourishes best. It would be denied the benefit of the spiritual and intellectual gifts of over half of its membership. Women would experience loss and those to whom she might minister also would lose the needed help. Women's ministries involves encouraging women to discover and use their gifts.

An Influential Force

The women's ministries leader is elected by the church nominating committee and she is a member of the church board. Qualifications include a sensitive, caring nature, and a clear spiritual understanding of God's design for women. She assists the church in meeting the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual needs of women in their various stages of life and cultural background. She seeks to provide a spiritual climate for growth, encourages productivity and rewards efforts and initiatives.

Women are an influential force in the church. They cradle the future and shape the present with their attitudes and actions toward themselves, family, friends, fellow church members and neighbors. When women are ministered to, the church, their family, and the community are ministered to as well.

Women's needs and concerns include (but are not limited to) women living balanced lifestyles, considering responsibilities within the multiple roles of home, work, husband's work, children, church, and society; women and finances; women and self-esteem; women and decision-making; conflict resolution, and time-management.

Duties of the Women's Ministries Leader

The major tasks of the women's ministries leader include the following:

1. *Chair the women's ministries committee.* This responsibility is essential to the success of women's ministries. The chair functions as a facilitator, encouraging the evolution of ideas and plans that produce efforts toward maximizing our church's mission. The chair assembles the agenda, moderates discussion, and encourages group cohesion through personal sharing, prayer and fellowship.

2. *Establish a committee.* The women's ministries leader works with the church board or church ministries council to establish a committee of individuals interested in women's needs and concerns. The committee's purpose is to brainstorm, develop strategies, network, and assist in planning and implementing programs and activities relevant to women's specific and varied needs.
3. *Conduct needs assessments.* The women's ministries leader works closely with the women's ministries committee in periodically surveying and identifying the needs of the women within the church and community, including spiritual growth needs and training in the promotion of outreach. Identify the demographics of the female population such as age, ethnicity, educational level, marital status, etc., and identify topics specific to their needs.
4. *Develop programs.* The women's ministries leader works with the women's ministries committee and the pastor to develop and implement programs and seminars and networks with existing support groups or makes appropriate referrals. Special needs include support groups for abused women, senior citizens, single-parents, teens, substance abuse, empty-nest syndrome, and child abuse, seminars on stress management, grief recovery, parenting skills, self-improvement, spiritual care, etc. Other activities may include prayer breakfasts, literacy program, day care, and programs for the community elderly.
5. *Advocate of women's needs, concerns and contributions.* The women's ministries leader must keep the church membership informed of women's ministries and their contributions to church life, through written and verbal reports, including newsletters and time during the personal ministries time, announcement period, Sabbath School, or worship hour. This responsibility includes being liaison between women and the church board or church ministries council and assisting decision-making bodies to keep in view the needs of women and to recognize women's ministries as a vital part of church growth and church dynamics.
6. *Interacts with the conference women's ministries department.* This includes filing regular statistical reports and calendar items and participation in conference women's ministries training events.

Resource Materials

The following resources are recommended for your ministry. You can purchase these by calling AdventSource (800-328-0525), the Adventist Book Center (800-765-6955) or your local Christian bookstore.

Expect Great Things: How to Be a Happy, Growing Christian, by Richard O'Fall. A template for successful Christian living, with the goal of being like Jesus.

Strengthen Your Church Through Women's Ministries, by Tamyra Horst. How Women's Ministries can make a difference in your church.

Women's Ministries Handbook, by North American Division Women's Ministries Department. The complete guide to starting and supporting a ministry for and by women at the local church.

Women of Spirit Magazine. Stories, ideas and reports of what women are doing in their church and community.

Visit AdventSource On-Line at www.adventsource.org/women for a complete list of the latest resources available for local church leaders. You can place an order or request a catalog by calling 1-800-328-0525.

For information about additional resources and answers to your questions call the Adventist Plusline at 1-800-732-7587 or visit them on-line at www.plusline.org.