

Women's Ministries Handbook For Leaders



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 tailor them to fit individual churches. Most ministries and programs need some adjustments as they are implemented from one church to another.

This Handbook was designed to be user-friendly and is posted as individual chapters for your convenience. 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.

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:

Heather Baker	Jamie Johnson	Cindy Smith
Betty Bowes	Diane Leadingham	Shirley Smith
Becky Brown	Juanita Lemaster	Tamar Tanner
Norma Brunson	Jeannette Littleton	Barbara Tate
Dawn Butler	Windy Lovett	Jayne Taylor
Randy Cloud	Pam Meador	Kari Taylor
Vicki Copp	Larry Morris	Linda Seaman
Barbara Daniels	Kerrie Palmer	Cheryl Stevens
Charme Fletcher	Becky Raleigh	Alice Piggee-Wallack
Becky Grady	Lyn Richard	Linda Watson
Judy Fox	Cheryl Roland	Reg Watson
Aletha Hinthorn	Elnor Small	Ana Zani
Carolyn Johnson		



Linda G. Hardin, D. Min. Women's Ministries Consultant
Women's Ministries Church of the Nazarene
Global Ministry Center
17001 Prairie Star Parkway, Lenexa, KS 66220.
www.sdmiusacanada.org

Chapter One: Local Director

Who We Are

Nazarene women transformed by the love of Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit to live holy lives, committed to nurturing a community of Christlike disciples. Expressed in a lifestyle characterized by:

- Encountering God through prayer and the Word
- Multi-generational, intentional relationships
- Leadership Development
- Compassion

Philemon 1:9-11: *I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation — the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ — for this will bring much glory and praise to God (NLT).*

Micah 6:8: *The Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. The Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God (NLT).*

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.

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 caregiver to name a few of the roles. The way they live out these roles at home, work, and church are as varied as the women. 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 a 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 offers 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 relationship 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 challenges 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,
- Grow in Christlikeness,
- Discover and use spiritual gifts,
- 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 others 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 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 it 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.*

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.¹ 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 outside your community?

The increasing demands of women who find themselves in the sandwich generation – raising children and caring for an ill parent, relative, or friend – 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 and Discipleship 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 Discipleship 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 and Discipleship 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, if needed, 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. The 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 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 other's 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.

Local Women's Ministries Director Job Description

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

1. To report, present proposals, and request funding of the SDMI Council.
2. To determine the needs and interests of the women in the local church by using observations, surveys, etc.
3. To promote and publicize Women's Ministries activities in church bulletins, newsletters, and web sites.
4. To provide the women of the local congregation the opportunity to minister to other women.
5. To identify areas of need within the local congregation and ways Women's Ministries can assist.
6. To identify ways Women's Ministries may assist in meeting community needs.
7. To provide Bible studies, prayer groups, and other means to aid spiritual growth and development.
8. To help develop the talents and abilities of women and to assist women in finding places of ministry within the local congregation.
9. To work in cooperation with other ministries to fulfill the mission of the local congregation.
10. To cooperate with the district Women's Ministries director by promoting district events and reporting changes in leadership.

11. To keep current of policies and procedures for obtaining input and sanction for speakers and events.

12. To identify the needs of women in various life stages and transitions, designing an effective ministry response.

Forming a Local Women's Ministries Council

One means of fulfilling the 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 need and how the ideas 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 is Unique

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

- To encourage and support women as they fill 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 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 chil-

dren 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 caregiver 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. Ministries are based on needs.
- Programs focus on techniques. Ministries focus on people.
- Programs look for numbers. Ministries see changed lives.
- Programs need quick answers. Ministries understand grace in uncertainty.
- Programs see the goal. 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, adver-

tise, 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.

¹ 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.

Local Women's Ministries Structure I



= Pastor



= Sunday School Superintendent



= Adult Ministries Council



= Local Director



= Local Council: Secretary, Asst. Director, Treasurer, Bible Study, Mother's Club, Special Events, Mentoring (Discipleship), Community Outreach, Retreat, Prayer Chain, Small Groups, Publicity



= GROWTH

Local Women's Ministries Structure II

(Complete your own structure using the form below)



= Pastor



= Sunday School Superintendent



= Adult Ministries Council



= Local Director



= Local Council: = Secretary, Treasurer



= GROWTH