

# CAMT WELLSRING RESOURCES FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

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## AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

A recent survey of women's ministry within the churches of Christ revealed a broad spectrum of organization and function. For those planning to develop or reorganize a women's ministry, the following suggestions are offered.

First, look closely at the local body and its structure to see what works well and what does not. Some congregations are highly structured and effective because they assess, plan, and report on a regular basis. However, high structure does not equal success. Congregations which are less structured can also be effective because they involve a high percentage of the women within the congregation. Reflect on the needs of your congregation to discover the best style, and then use that structure.

Second, communicate with the formal leaders of the congregation. These include the deacons, elders, and ministry staff. The women's ministry should have a clear idea of what the leadership expects. Open

communication helps enlighten the church leadership about goals for spiritual growth. Communication also provides an opportunity for church leaders to raise questions, give input, and provide direction.

Third, when developing the women's ministry, plan for a team approach. Find volunteers who are willing to do the work. Having a single individual responsible for the ministry may lead to difficulty if she moves, has interests not broadly shared by others, or does not have leadership skills that are collaborative in nature. Suggestions to increase diversity on the women's ministry team are as follows:

**1) Designate a finite period of leadership service.** Plan to have multiple women lead the team. By having a designated ending for each team leader, a greater variety of women will likely be asked to serve. Setting up the leadership role as a temporary position also helps women keep a proper balance between their family, career, and

ministry demands.

**2) Define leadership expectations.** Make sure expectations are clear and well-defined. For example, the leadership team might plan four spiritual, four social, and several other opportunities for the women of the congregation. Another example might be that the leadership team would be responsible for planning an annual ladies day.

**3) Select women from diverse backgrounds.** Look for those from different generations, with different interests, and types of employment. This will yield additional insight to the needs of women within the congregation and promote integration of diverse members of the congregation.

**4) Minimize the expectation that the spouse of a formal leader should direct the ministry.** The spouse of a formal leader may or may not be gifted in leadership nor desire to participate in that capacity. (Cont. on page 2)

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Registration is now open for "Women's Ministries," a new course offering from Harding University's Master of Ministry program. The course is designed to prepare the master's-level female student theologically, intellectually, ministerially, personally and practically to minister to other women.

This course is designed as a hybrid, incorporating both online and face-to-face formats. Online instruction will occur from January to May, 2009. The class will then meet face-to-face February 27-28, 2009 in Searcy, Arkansas.

During the face-to-face portion, students will attend the new women's ministry conference and take part in presenting in the new women's ministry track at WINGS.

For this *first course offering only* a special 40% tuition discount is offered. To receive more information or to register contact Debbie at the Master of Ministry office. (dstewart@harding.edu or 501-279-4252)



Tell us about your event at Wellspring@harding.edu.

## AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

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Wellspring is published monthly by the Center for Advanced Ministry Training at Harding University.

For information about the Bachelor of Ministry program contact [gwgregg@harding.edu](mailto:gwgregg@harding.edu).

For information about the Master of Ministry program contact [dstewart@harding.edu](mailto:dstewart@harding.edu).

Women should be selected based on their God-given talents and desire to serve. Such women may or may not be married to formal leaders in the church.

Additionally, the survey revealed that many women are seeking opportunities for spiritual growth, desiring opportunity to deepen and strengthen their faith. Opportunities for spiritual growth might include events

such as ladies days or retreats, or it may take the form of mentoring of younger women by older women. When preparing and planning for these events, care should be taken to develop them at a meaningful level.

Each congregation will find structures and functions that are unique and successful at the local level.

*Nancy Tackett  
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We need your help!

Wellspring needs a logo, and we would like your input and ideas.

Send your suggestions or artwork to [Wellspring@harding.edu](mailto:Wellspring@harding.edu).

## BULLETIN BOARD: MOST SUCCESSFUL LADIES' EVENT

We received several interesting responses that we'd like to share.

**"A Taste of Christmas"**  
Lakeside (Mansfield, TX)

This event is open to the entire congregation. Ladies bring their favorite Christmas dessert to share. Afterwards there is an ornament ex-

change. Everyone loved the time to fellowship during the hectic holiday season!  
*(from Caitlin McKuin)*

**"Widows' Tea"**  
Westside (Round Rock, TX)

In the Spring the teen girls host a brunch for the older ladies, focusing mainly on the widows of the congre-

gation. The décor was 40's style hats, gloves, and shoes, and the ladies brought pictures of themselves.  
*(from Ashley Ellis)*

Next month's question is "Which outreach events have been used successfully by your congregation?" Send your responses by January 1.

"THE SURVEY REVEALED THAT MANY WOMEN ARE SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH, DESIRING OPPORTUNITY TO DEEPEN AND STRENGTHEN THEIR FAITH."

## WORDS FOR LIFE: ISAIAH 41:8-10

Granted, believers today are not exactly like the believers in Isaiah 41. We have different situations, backgrounds, and enemies. Our world is definitely different from theirs.

However, the God we serve is the same. Thankfully His promise to strengthen,

and help us is the same as well. In Isaiah 41:10 the Lord says, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God" (NIV).

Just as Israel was chosen, we too are chosen to serve God. As God's people, we have been given the strength

of God to face our enemy. We can face the devil, and any trials or temptations that he places in our way, with confidence.

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