

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Women's Ministries exists to uphold, encourage, and challenge Adventist women in their pilgrimage as disciples of Jesus Christ and members of His world church.

Our mission is in the larger sense common to all Christians, that of uplifting Christ in the church and in the world. But more specifically, we are called to:

- elevate women as persons of inestimable worth because they have been created and redeemed
- enable women to deepen their faith and experience spiritual growth and renewal
- build networks among women in the world church to encourage bonds of friendship and mutual support and the creative exchange of ideas and information.
- mentor young Adventist women, encouraging their involvement, and creating paths for them as they reach for their potential in Christ.
- address the concerns of women in a global context
- bring women's unique perspectives to the issues facing the world church
- seek expanding avenues of dynamic Christian service for women
- challenge each Adventist woman with her potential to complement the gifts given to other women and men as they work side by side to further the global mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

that out of the fullness we as women have personally found in Jesus Christ, we may be empowered to share the good news within our families, among our fellow believers, and in ever expanding circles in the unsaved world.

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Women's Ministries offers four levels of leadership training. It covers a wide range of topics and will help provide information and skills for leading Women's Ministries. This is available through the conference/union/division offices. It is recognized by Adventist Griggs University and can provide credit points for other degree courses.

## SIX CRITICAL ISSUES

There are six critical issues that particularly impact women around the world. These issues are:

- **Illiteracy** is powerfully linked to low social status, poverty and poor health.
- **Abuse**, when tolerated within the church, is a denial of Christ. It is a burden too heavy for women to carry.
- **Poverty** is increasingly a feminine disease. The poverty cycle tightens for poor women who have limited education, limited jobs and resources.
- **Threats to Health** undermine a woman's ability to be a participant in God's work. Globally, women need much improved access to health care.
- **Woman's Workload** and poor working conditions contribute to women's poor health. In some places women are expected to do 90% of the agricultural work as well as housework.
- **Lack of Training, Mentoring and Leadership Opportunities** limit women in business, government and in the church. Women's Ministries now provides a Leadership Training Certification course.

Although these issues affect all members directly or indirectly, they impact women most strongly. For this reason, Women's Ministries encourages all members to find ways to address these concerns. To do so is to serve as Christ served, loving and valuing humanity.

# Women's Ministries

WHAT IT IS...  
**AND**  
WHAT IT ISN'T...



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## HISTORY

More than 100 years ago the Seventh-day Adventist Church recognized the special, God-given gifts of the women in our church. In 1898, Mrs. Sarepta Henry became the first Women's Ministries director for the General Conference. Ellen White encouraged her, and she worked tirelessly to establish a network and support system for women in the church. She was granted a ministerial license, and she published and traveled widely. When she died in 1900, a nine-member committee worked for a while, but then Women's Ministries quietly faded from activity. Reactivated in 1990, Women's Ministries became a department of the General Conference in 1995, and has continued to grow around the world.

## WHAT IT IS...

Women's Ministries is:

- a place to address the spiritual, emotional, physical, and social needs of women in the church.
- encouragement for women to improve their potential for participation in the mission of the church.
- a support system for hurting women, whether they are suffering from divorce, abuse, or simply loneliness.
- a forum to help address topics and issues as they affect women.
- encouragement for young women through a college scholarship program.
- encouragement for women to become involved in all areas of ministry in their church, their community, and their home.
- mentorship of young women so that they may find joy in the Lord.
- recognition that women have many Gifts of the Spirit and an attempt to help women discover and use these gifts to the glory of God.

## WHAT IT ISN'T...

Women's Ministries is not:

- new. In 1898 Mrs. S.M.I. Henry, with the encouragement of Ellen G. White, headed a church department for women's ministry. Her death soon after ended the work she began. It wasn't until 1990 that the Office of Women's Ministries was once again begun. It became a full church department in 1995.
- a forum for women who have complaints, justified or not, against employers.
- a place for women to promote equal rights for women, although we recognize it is an important issue.
- a mere source of entertainment or the opportunity to spend endless hours on projects that promote selfish ideas.
- a platform for the ordination of women, although we believe that everyone should use their talents to God's glory and should receive just recognition for work done for His honor.
- male bashing. It is anti-sexist, not anti-male.
- exclusive. Women's Ministries encourages inclusion, not the exclusion of anyone.

## THREE MAIN FOCUS AREAS

**Nurture** Women's Ministries addresses the spiritual, emotional, physical and social needs of women in the church. It mentors young women, encourages mothers and supports older women and those who are hurting.

**Empowerment** It recognizes that women have many Gifts of the Spirit and it attempts to help women discover and use these.

**Outreach** It provides resources for women to reach our sisters in the community who are longing for a touch from Jesus.

## HOW TO BE INVOLVED...

Women are an influential force in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. When women are ministering to the family, church, and community receive the benefits of their spiritual strength and ministry.

You are invited to become involved in a number of ways:

- Through prayer and encouragement;
- By promoting an active Women's Ministries program in your church, conference, union, and division;
- By volunteering your talents and leadership abilities;
- Through your financial support.

Women's Ministries is involved in sponsoring and developing a number of programs and ministries. Some of these are:

- International Women's Day of Prayer - 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbath of March
- Women's Ministries Emphasis Day - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sabbath of June
- Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day - 4<sup>th</sup> Sabbath of August
- Literacy programs
- Abuse recovery
- Intercessory prayer
- Mentoring young women
- Global Mission projects
- Area-wide retreats and congresses
- Prayer groups and prayer chains
- Small group ministries/Bible studies
- Church hospitality
- Support groups
- Small enterprise development
- Leadership training
- Ministries for teen girls
- HIV/AIDS prevention programs and care support