

Dear Women's Ministries Leaders:

We are privileged to be women living in momentous times. We are much closer to the Second Coming and the service of women is so much needed. Joel and Peter wrote:

that in the last days God will
pour out his Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
CActs 2:17, 18.

It is obvious that we are living in a changing world. Even the church family cannot escape the scars of stressful last-day pressures. Brokenness in families and the stress-filled lives of the people around us is beyond doubt. Families are scattered and women lack the role models and mentoring they once enjoyed. They are torn by professional needs and ambitions; the home, husband and children; and the demands of the church and community. The church must remain relevant in order to meet the needs of these people.

Almost entirely unique to women are six challenge issues that Women's Ministries has chosen to address around the world; these issues affect women in all cultures, in and out of the church. Fortunately, as we meet these needs for the women in the church, these issues can also be a basis for outreach to our sisters in the community and nation. These issues are abuse, poverty, health risks, work loads and conditions, literacy, and the lack of training and mentoring. In this handbook you will find suggestions and ideas for meeting these needs.

But there is something unique too about Women's Ministries itself—it is not a neat package of programs for you to repeat. It is a program of helping each woman find, understand, and use her special gifts, and then to reach out to meet the needs of those around her. Hence, the programs will look and function differently in different churches, countries, cultures. Each Women's Ministries program must be shaped to fit the needs of the women it serves. This handbook will give you resources to accomplish this mission and this ministry.

May God richly bless you as you serve Him, as you find your talents and gifts, and as you make a difference for eternity.

In His love,

Ardis Stenbakken
Director