

**Sally Valleskey**

*Discussion groups for this session are formed according to congregational size and setting to allow the greatest benefit from shared ideas and experiences.*

New mission start/smaller congregation restart

100 – 300 communicants

300 – 600 communicants

600+ communicants

As “Ministry Mentor” for the Women’s Ministry Congregational Ministries Team, I have mentored women in congregational leadership positions as they seek to refresh old ideas and explore how to implement new ones. I’ll be facilitating the discussion from these experiences, while recognizing the gifts and experience of mentoring others will bring.

*Following are ways that mentoring may take place in this breakout session and beyond, as we apply insights from the conference speakers:*

This session provides the opportunity for me to mentor you. I will share my own mentoring experiences from my role as Ministry Mentor.

The session also will facilitate inter-congregational peer mentoring among all of you as you interact with each other. Look for ways you might benefit from contact with a more experienced congregational leader—be a listener! Be alert to how you might connect with someone to offer what you’ve learned in your experience—be willing to share!

We will discuss how formal mentoring programs can be implemented in your own congregation. Building relationships in a congregation is vital! So often there’s a divide between older and younger members, between newer members and those who’ve been around awhile. How might a women’s mentoring ministry help bridge that gap? Would a formal program be appropriate? How can we make sure all women are being nurtured, encouraged and equipped in their use of God’s gifts?

The congregational setting lends itself to unique mentoring relationships at many levels, mentoring opportunities that are not formal programs but rather individual and informal in nature. Following are a few examples: connecting with a teen, welcoming a new-to-ministry teacher or pastor’s wife, nurturing a newer member, encouraging a new leader, or training a new Sunday school teacher. We’ll brainstorm others.

Throughout the session, we’ll apply conference learning! How can the presenter materials be used in your congregation to awaken awareness that mentoring is something worthwhile, providing great benefit to gospel ministry? We’ll share our thoughts on how to initiate and develop these ideas.

**Mentoring Message For All**

*1. Keep Jesus central in all your congregational mentoring efforts*

a. Make sure discussion, comments and solutions stem from gospel motivation—to forgive, build up and refresh

b. Be active in prayer, trusting in God’s promise to hear you and drawing on the power it provides

c. Assess Bible study opportunities—besides personal growth, these provide ideal mentor settings

d. Rejoice in the mentors God gives us, like Paul, who encourages us to “follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.” (I Corinthians 11:1)

e. Be aware of your congregation’s mission statement

f. Balance Bible study with service—emphasize proper order

2. *Love souls*

a. End goal is to see souls in heaven

b. Build relationships to lead to the ultimate relationship with Jesus

c. Build relationships both inside and outside the congregation

d. Use care for physical needs as a bridge to care for souls

3. *Honor existing congregational leadership*

a. Give respect and seek pastoral guidance—God has provided them for our spiritual care

b. Honor the biblical principle of head and helper

c. Look for ways to coordinate ministry efforts with other groups and individuals

d. Encourage Heirs Together study

4. *Note God’s plan for all gifts to be used*

a. Remind/equip women to know what God says about this—the priesthood of all believers

b. Assess whose gifts are being used, who might be “over-used,” and those not being reached (Get to know your ladies, develop a plan, look for and encourage those who might be a mentor)

**Key Questions for Discussion Starters**

What’s working well in your congregation? Relationships? Programs? Leadership? Time in Word? Getting all women involved? (We’ll encourage you to share ministry ideas for others’ benefit!

What are three main points/ideas/insights from each conference presentation that made an impact on you? Jot down how each one might apply to your congregation’s mentoring efforts.

What kind of mentoring help would be useful for you in your current setting? (Renew an existing program? Initiate something new? Work through a challenge?)

What mentoring experiences would you be able to share as a mentor? As a mentee?

**Scripture**

*As mentors involved in the life of a congregation the whole of Scripture is open to us, but here are a few reminders as we recall who God is, who we are, the abundance of grace that is ours (and ours to share!), and how God uses his gifts through all of us! In Christ, we are encouraged, equipped and nurtured all to God’s glory.*

*Isaiah 45:18-19*

For this is what the LORD says—he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other. 19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right.

*Romans 5:17*

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

*Galatians 3:26-29*

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

*1 Peter 2:9*

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

*Titus 2:3-5*

Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

*Colossians 3:12-18*

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

*Hebrews 13:17*

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

*Galatians 6:9-10*

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

*James 1:5*

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

*1 Peter 4:10*

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.

*1 Corinthians 12:4, 11-12, 27*

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

*Matthew 28:19-20*

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

*Romans 15:5-6*

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.