

Starting a Women's Led Women's Bible Study

Talk to your pastor and ask him if you could put together some ideas about having a women's Bible study, following the suggestions below. Pray for God's guidance as you prepare your plan.

1. Define the focus of the group and who will be served: *young moms, working women, new Christians, mature Christians, cross-generational, or a particular interest group*. Define the needs of the women that this Bible class will be meeting.
2. Articulate why a woman led women's Bible class would be helpful to meet the above needs.
3. It is important to keep your group focused on your purpose. How will the group keep from becoming a social group, therapy session, "gripe group," or breeding ground for gossip?
4. Consider where you will meet, when, how often, and whether you will provide childcare. Will you serve refreshments?
5. Define WHO will lead the group and how that will be decided? What are the qualifications necessary to be a leader, i.e. "full of wisdom and the spirit" or something else?
6. What are the arrangements for pastoral guidance? (See also, "[Keeping a Women's Bible Study on Track](#).") Should questions arise in a lesson, your pastor stands ready to guide you to the best of his ability. Share with him concerns and needs that have surfaced.
7. What materials will be used as the basis for the study and who will decide what is valuable for the particular group wishing to begin a study? Choose your materials wisely. If you have questions, check with your pastor. He will be happy to guide you in your choice of a book or study. (See also, "[Evaluating Bible Studies](#)" or "[Discernment in Bible Study Materials](#).")
8. After these considerations have been clearly written, take it to your pastor and/or church council or elders to ask their permission, prayers and guidance. If this will involve women from more than one congregation, be sure that all of the pastors and congregational

authorities involved are aware of the above information and identify which pastor/congregation will be the recognized advisor/responsible body.

9. If there is support for this class, start with a small group as a sort of “pilot” group so you can deal with the “blessings” first on a small scale. This will also give you a chance to work out the kinks and deal with unforeseen circumstances: *length of lessons, more discussion than you planned, presence of children.*

10. After the pilot, decide who the wider group is to include and be sure to make the class focus, study method, material/resources, attitude toward children, etc., widely known so those who fit your target group and are interested will know they are welcome. You don’t want to earn or inadvertently develop a reputation as an exclusive club! Women seem to be especially sensitive to feeling “left out” or unwelcome. Be careful here.

11. Plan a course of study for a year. Know where you’re headed and how you’ll be meeting the needs you identified earlier. After that time get feedback from the group as to whether or not this is meeting their Bible study needs and adjust/expand as necessary.

Studying God’s Word together as women is a tremendous blessing and responsibility. Know that your synod’s Women’s Ministry Committee is praying for you and here to help and support you. Visit the WELS website at www.welswomen.net and check out the resources available under “[Bible Studies and Resources](#).”