

Mentoring Guide

For

Ministry Wives

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Several years ago BMA pastors' wives participated in a survey: "A Pastor's Wife Needs to Know . . ." This booklet is a compilation of those responses. Thank you to all who contributed ideas from your experience and wisdom.

The purpose of this guide is to facilitate personal growth and mentoring for pastors' wives. As wives, our role in our husband's ministry is very important.

Please keep in mind that this is intended to guide—not to be a complete study in itself. Work on topics as you need them, in any order. Dig into additional Scriptures and resources. Challenge each other as together you grow. May God help us to be all He plans for us to be!

Wives of Members of the Board of Executors of the

Biblical Mennonite Alliance

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PERSONAL LIFE

Relationship With God

Do you have assurance of salvation? (I John 1:9; John 20:31)

Are you learning to abide in Christ? Are you growing in intimacy with the Father? Are you walking in the Spirit? (John 15:4, 15; 17:20-26; II Peter 3:18; Ephesians 5:1, 2)

Are you practicing Spiritual Disciplines?

-Prayer is our personal lifeline. (Philippians 4:6; John 14:13, 14; James 5:14, 15; Luke 5:16; 6:12)

-We are also called to a ministry of intercession. (I Timothy 2:1-4)

-Daily Bible reading with Scripture meditation is our necessary food. (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1; Matthew 4:4)

-Try to keep adding to your store of memorized Scripture. (Psalm 119:11)

-Combine regular fasting (e.g. one food, one meal, one day...) with prayer. (Matthew 6:17, 18; I Corinthians 7:5)

Christian Character

Keeping a clear conscience is essential; is there anything you need to make right? (I John 1:7; James 5:16)

Identify and work on your besetting sins. (Hebrews 12:1; Romans 6:11-14; 12:1)

Guard your heart, mind and words in all purity.

(I Timothy 4:12; I Corinthians 6:18-20)

Set personal boundaries so that you can flee the lusts that war against your soul: what you will not do, watch or read; where you will not go; what you will not say; with whom you will not associate.

Learn and practice control of the tongue. Your words carry more weight in your role as Pastor's wife. (James 1:26; 3; Psalm 34:13; The Proverbs; Ephesians 4:29)

Do not gossip or listen to gossip. Learn to kindly but firmly ask, "Have you spoken to [the person involved] about this? Would you be willing to go with me to talk to [her]?" Ministries can be destroyed by the uncontrolled tongue of the pastor's wife!

Continue to develop the graces of the Spirit in your life. Make these your prayer goals. (Galatians 5:22, 23; Colossians 3:12-14)

Be accountable to another sister. (Ephesians 5:21)

Personal Growth

Learn to deal with discouragement, loneliness, rejection, and others' expectations. Remember it is Christ we are serving; it is His approval that matters. (The Psalms; Colossians 3:23, 24; I Corinthians 15:58; I Corinthians 10:13; II Corinthians 4:16-18; Galatians 6:9; I Peter 5:7-11; Philippians 4; Hebrews 6:10)

Guard against bitterness and don't take up offenses. (Hebrews 12:11-15; I Corinthians 13; Matthew 18:21, 22)

Sharpen communication skills. We need to learn to communicate clearly. Ask for feedback from family and friends: How am I coming across? How can I communicate more clearly? More graciously? (Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:15)

FAMILY LIFE

Love Your Husband

Build oneness in marriage. Be his best friend; make a safe place for him to share his heart. Be loyal and respect him—don't share his faults with others; don't correct him in public. Plan times alone and keep communication open. Be available for physical intimacy. (Ephesians 5:22-24, 33; Colossians 3:18; I Corinthians 7:3-5)

Submit, honor, respect and support; he needs your cooperation. Be his faithful cheerleader (make him a king). Make his role as leader in the home and in the church easier, not more difficult! Give him freedom to minister as God leads him. Submitting to your husband boils down to TRUSTING GOD. (I Peter 3:1-7; Proverbs 12:4)

A loving relationship with your husband gives your children security.

Nurture Your Children

Pray for their salvation and spiritual growth. Teach them and guide them in the ways of the Lord. (II Timothy 3:15; Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Ephesians 6:4)

Train them to be obedient, not because they are the pastor's children, but because it is always right to obey God. (Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 6:1, 2)

Teach them to be gracious, friendly, grateful and generous. Your lives intersect with many people; children have a ministry, too, in honoring others. Help them learn contentment with your family's financial situation. (I Timothy 4:12; Philippians 4:11-13; Proverbs 20:11)

Teach confidentiality. Pastors' families often have access to information that should not be shared with others.

Guard against negative comments about the church family and do not complain to the children about their father's ministry. (Philippians 4:8; I Peter 3:10)

Plan special family activities and protect your commitments to the children and family. (Church does not always have to come first.)

Homemaking

We are called to be a "Keeper at Home." BE THERE - physically and emotionally. (Titus 2:5)

Work on order and neatness. Our homes need not be showcases, but they should be comfortable and inviting for family and guests. Is the family working together as a ministry team? Does my home reflect the order and peace of Christ? (Proverbs 31)

Time management goes better when we honor our husband's preferences in establishing priorities. Work at home is never completely finished so plan for ministry time. However, if bases at home are not being covered, perhaps we should not be going out for coffee, Bible studies, etc...Also, evaluate "phone time." Study Proverbs 31 and read a good book on time management!

Hospitality is an opportunity to show love and to minister right at home. Our hearts and homes should be open to willingly and graciously receive guests, even unexpected ones. (I Peter 4:9; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:1-2; Matthew 25:40)

CHURCH LIFE

Partner With Your Husband

Pray for him daily.

Help to protect his study/prayer times. Do special things with the children during those times.

When possible make pastoral visits with him.

Be available to minister to women and young ladies. This is a protection for him and for them, and it is a blessing for you. (Titus 2:4; I Timothy 5:2)

Have an “open hand” since you will need to share him and his time with many others.

Build relationships with the ministry wives in your church. You all need prayer and encouragement, so meet together regularly. If as wives you are strong in the Lord and one in spirit, you will greatly help your husbands’ ministries. (Suggestion- Use Sunday service times to connect with others. Arrange other times to connect with ministry partners in order to avoid cliques.)

Appropriate bedside manner: Be positive and brief; a light touch can comfort; share a short Scripture and always pray with the one who is ill; be sensitive. (Luke 6:31; James 5:13, 14)

Comforting the grieving - be present. Weep with those who weep; hugs and tears can minister even without words. Help with meals, errands, arrangements as needed - be sensitive.

Pray through and practice Romans 12 with the help of the Holy Spirit!

Be a Servant

Discern and use your gifts as God enables. But be willing to serve outside your gifting at times—we can learn new things! (I Corinthians 12; I Peter 4:10, 11)

You will need to make many sacrifices. When God gives you peace about meeting a need, do it cheerfully. (Matthew 25:40; Philippians 2:14)

However, we cannot do everything. Before committing to responsibilities, get your husband's counsel; remember that saying yes to one thing may be saying no to something of higher priority. (Luke 9:23, 24; Matthew 16:24, 25)

Ministering to Women

Teach the younger women; they may be younger in age, in the faith, or in experience. (Titus 2:3-5)

Study the Word diligently so that you can rightly divide the Word of Truth. (II Timothy 3:16, 17; Colossians 3:16)

Learn how to lead Bible studies and teach Sunday school classes. Be willing! You can start a file of useful information that can be used in teaching.

Informal Mentoring - We all teach by example. (I Cor.11:1)

Formal Mentoring - We can offer to spend time together for a specific purpose (one-on-one or with a small group) for a specific time. Pass on what God is teaching you. (II Timothy 2:2; Philippians 4:9)

Develop a ministry of encouraging and edifying. Learn to listen. (II Corinthians 1:4; Romans 15:14)

Show genuine interest in everyone; avoid cliques. We can take the initiative to be available.

Learn to gently probe: Would you like to talk? How can I pray for you? You seem troubled, may I help?

Guard confidentiality. Ask their permission to share with your husband.

Rebuke and reprove when necessary with great care and much prayer. (Galatians 6:1)

Help women with special needs, e.g. gullible, irresponsible, outspoken, etc... (See Training Faithful Women, IBLP)

Do not counsel or pray with men without your husband.

COMMUNITY LIFE

World/Community Awareness

Our world must be larger than just our family and our church. We should care about our world. Be aware of world and community events. Scan headlines and learn from your husband and teens.

Care. Pray. (Philippians 2:4; I Peter 3:15; James 2:15, 16)

We can give priority to our church family but should not neglect our next door “neighbor.” (Galatians 6:10; Colossians 4:3-6; II Corinthians 2:14-16)

Taking the initiative to reach out to those around us can help dispel the misconception that church people are aloof and cultish. So be neighborly - love, care, share. Be alert for opportunities to serve your neighbors and be willing to receive from them as well as give to them.

Learn to Share the Gospel

The Pastor’s wife must learn to share God’s Good News to lead someone in repentance and surrender to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We all hope to have the opportunity to lead our children to salvation. Also, there will be opportunities within the church and with unsaved neighbors and friends. (II Corinthians 2:14-17; Colossians 4:6; Romans 10:12-17; 1:16; I Peter 3:15)

Be prepared with Scriptures and Tools

-John 3; Jesus’ parables; Romans 3, 9, 10; Hebrews 4:12 . . .

-*Have You Heard the Good News?* (Christian Light Publications)

-*The Four Spiritual Laws* (New Life Publications)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

BMA Ministers' and Deacons' Wives, *Given to Hospitality*

Byler, Anna Mary, *A Woman by God's Grace*

Byler, Anna Mary, *A Woman for God's Glory*

Eggerichs, Emerson, *Love and Respect*

Fitzpatrick, Elyse, *Helper by Design*

Fitzpatrick, Elyse and Carol Cornish, editors, *Women Helping Women*

George, Elizabeth, *A Woman after God's Own Heart*

Institute in Basic Life Principles, *Training Faithful Women*

Meyer, Ruth, *31 Days of Praise*

Meyer, Ruth, *31 Days of Prayer*

Ormartian, Stormie, *The Power of a Praying Wife*

Otto, Donna, *Finding a Mentor; Being a Mentor*

Somerville, Mary, *One with a Shepherd*

Vernick, Leslie, *How to Act Right When Your Spouse Acts Wrong*

Weaver, Joanna, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*