



Meeting 1 —Introductions & Purposes *(Up to 90 Minutes)*

The Gathering Time—5 minutes

- As people join the meeting, welcome them and create a place of hospitality. When all have arrived, open your time in prayer.

Conversation Starter—30-35 minutes

- Share your name, where you live and serve, how long you've been there.
- The Question Game:
 - The leader chooses a question to answer from The Question Game handout and then picks someone to go next. The second person answers the same question and then picks another question to answer. Then, they pick a third person to do the same. Repeat, making sure everyone gets to answer as long as time allows.

Program Overview—15 minutes

- Share the WTiM Program Goals and Expectations.

Asbury Theological Seminary received a grant from the Lilly Foundation to help women thrive in ministry. In an effort to encourage lifelong thriving, women who are in their first five years of pastoral ministry join together in small groups and are mentored by a female pastor who is thriving and is a few years farther along in her ministry.

To help women move from threatened to thriving, our goals are to help women in the early years of ministry deal with:

- Isolation
- Leadership Identity Formation
- Possible lack of support from local churches, families, or denominational leadership
- Facing ministry challenges and decisions (now with many additional challenges related to Covid-19).

The shape of the program:

- Groups of about 5 women meeting virtually, once a month, for two years
- Fantastic mentors who themselves are women thriving in ministry

The possibility of traveling to meet in person once or twice during the two years

Groups include: support, sharing, group problem solving, leadership goals set individually or as a group

Women may also connect across groups for networking with others in similar ministry settings, leadership challenges, or stages of life

Occasional optional online gatherings or other resources will be offered to address themes that arise as common learning goals (such as preaching, addressing conflict, managing staff, leading change, self-care, etc.)

- The mentor role is to be a guide, but not to have all the answers. Mentors are co-participants on the journey. Feel free to personalize this piece.
- What is a hope or a question that you have?

Group Guidelines—10 minutes

- Introduce the Group Ground Rules and invite discussion.
- Are there any other guidelines that you'd like to see added?
- How will we uphold these commitments?

Inviting Responses—5 minutes

- In a word or phrase, what's exciting to you right now?
- In a word or phrase, what's a concern for you right now?
- Is there anything that you've wanted to say that you've not said yet?

Closing Prayer—5 minutes

Remind them of the Group commitments, to pray for one another as you invite each of them to share a prayer request to be recorded individually. Each person can pray for another in the group and then commit to ongoing prayer. **Confirm the next meeting time and dismiss.**

The Question Game:

- Where do you feel most at peace?
- What was your favorite class in all of your studies? Why?
- What was the religious environment of your childhood like?
- What's the 2 minute version of your call story?
- If we meet up for a meeting at a restaurant/coffee shop/ice cream place/etc., for a meeting, where would you pick and what would you order?
- What's your favorite hymn/praise song/Christian song?
- How do you really feel about icebreakers?
- What advice do you have for me about ministry?
- Tell me something about your family.
- What are your vacation plans in the year ahead?
- If you had more space in your life, what is something you would spend more time doing?
- If you were to preach a sermon on your "life verse," what passage would you choose and why?

- If you were to get a tattoo of a word in a foreign language on your body, what would that word be and would you use spellcheck first?

Group Ground Rules:

- Maintain confidentiality. No one else should be present in the room during the meeting.
- What is shared in the group, stays in the group, unless there is a safety concern.
- Be present. Attend the groups and don't multitask during the meeting.
- Don't judge. Respect others' actions, choices, and theology.
- Don't pastor each other. Just create a safe space to share.
- Pray for each other.
- What would you add to this list of ground rules?