

**Meeting 10 — Navigating
Through Ministry:
Flourishing in Ministry
(Up to 90 minutes)**



**women
thriving
in ministry**

AN INITIATIVE OF ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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—5 minutes

- Briefly tell us about a time in the last year when you knew that God was at work in the life of your ministry.

Sharing—Flourishing in Ministry—50-55 minutes

Homework before: Please watch the video below and spend some time in prayerful reflection and journaling.

As in the previous session, you may choose to watch just one set, or both!

Set 1 - Filmed by Cohort 1 mentors, 2021

Flourishing in Ministry- [Navigating Through Ministry: Flourishing](#) (15 min)

Set 2 - Filmed by Cohort 2 mentors, 2022

Flourishing in Ministry - [Navigating Through Ministry: Flourishing](#) (21 min)

After watching, please spend some time journaling or considering the following questions:

- What did you appreciate about hearing the mentors share from their experience of flourishing in ministry?
- Was there anything shared that particularly resounded with your hope for or experience of a ministry that is fruitful?
- What questions came up for you as you considered the practices that sustain a flourishing ministry?
- Is there anything that came up in your reflections that you want to give further consideration to?
- Are there any action steps that you feel compelled to take in response to this reflection?

To the Mentor: Please share these questions with your mentees and ask them to watch the video(s) and spend some time in prayerful reflection prior to your meeting. We hope that you can do the same. Mentees will share some of their reflections in 3 rounds of 3 minutes each in a

Holy Listening Exercise. View the instructions on the document “Wholly, Holy Listening.” (Page 3). Keep this in mind: Feel free to use silence before and after sharing rounds. For the first round, you’ll ask mentees to share about their experience or one (or more) of their intentions following their reflection. Let them know in advance that there will be no cross talking while people are sharing and to lean into good listening. Use a timer. While deeper guidance is on the document, here is what the three rounds will include:

- The first round is for sharing what has come up for them in their reflection
- The second round is for going deeper in what has come up for them OR for sharing a question that they want to ask about someone else’s sharing
- The third round is for sharing another reflection OR a gratitude for the sharing time

The final two elements of the handout include closing in prayer. We encourage inviting that during the Closing Prayer section below.

Rule of Life—10 minutes

Several mentors mentioned a Rule of Life. A Rule of Life is a way of living that puts some boundaries in your life to create space for flourishing. It could include commitments that you keep with yourself about spiritual practices, relationships, habits, or other areas about which you have a conviction.

- Have you ever intentionally crafted a rule of life?
- Are there commitments that you already keep with yourself (even though they aren’t written down) that help you to flourish?
- Are there areas of your life and ministry that God may be inviting you to make a renewed commitment to?
- Does the idea of crafting a rule of life seem life-giving or life-draining? In other words, does it seem energizing or does it seem restrictive?

[Mentor: if you have a Rule of Life, would you be willing to share all or part of it with your group?]

Some resources about crafting a Rule of Life can be found below (Page 4-7) to help you consider whether you want to spend time creating one during this season.

Inviting Responses—10 minutes

- Share the reading, “Fire” by Judy Brown (Page 8)
 - What stands out to you from this poem?
 - How does it point to a life of flourishing?
- Confirm next meeting time.
- Is there anything that you’ve wanted to say that you’ve not said yet?
- In a word or phrase, what are you thinking or feeling about living a life of flourishing?

Closing Prayer—5 minutes

Remind them of the Group Commitments, one being prayer for one another. Are there any updates or new prayer concerns within this group? Share them now. Ask each person to pray for another person. Agree upon those prior to praying.

Wholly, Holy LISTENING

The Art of Deep, Spiritual Listening

Adapted by Ann Starrette from a program on The Spiritual exercises of Saint Ignatius

A format for creating space and opening hearts to hear the wisdom of the Holy Spirit

SHARING: 3 minutes each (adjust time depending on number of people and time available)

FIRST ROUND: Leader begins sharing (based on the topic provided) — followed by others. Leader will keep time allowing each person 3 minutes per round as others listen without interruption.

SECOND ROUND: When all have shared, leader opens the floor again for 3 minutes to elaborate on what they have shared or comment/ask a question on another person's sharing as others listen without interruption.

THIRD ROUND: One last time, the floor is open for 3 minutes each sharing one grace received from the time together and any sense of God's invitation moving forward.

Leader invites circle members to pray a short prayer for the person on their right (either aloud or silently) — or the leader invites people to partner up and pray for each other (again, either aloud or silently).

Leader closes the Holy Listening circle, inviting all to recommit to confidentiality and accountability as we move back into the world.

Rule of Life

*Compiled by Ashlee Alley Crawford
from Ruth Haley Barton's Rule of Life Resources*

Though the temptation is to find the next best-selling ministry book to tell us what we should be doing or preaching in our contexts, often what we need most is a heart and mind attuned to what the Spirit is speaking to us now. "When we are rested, we bring steady, alert attention that is characterized by true discernment about what is truly needed in our situation, and the energy and creativity to carry it out" (Ruth Haley Barton in *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, p. 121). Creating a Rule of Life provides some boundaries to help us shepherd our own schedules and actions so that we might share in the abundance of Christ.

Developing a Rule of Life

A Rule of Life was first identified in the 5th century by St. Benedict so that the community of monks could, as Ruth Haley Barton says, in *Shaping the Soul of Your Leadership*,

Seek God and live responsibility in the world...St. Benedict's Rule...is simply a pattern of attitudes, behaviors and practices that are regular and routine and are intended to produce a certain quality of life and character in us.

Two samples are provided for you to consider how you might begin to identify a rule to draw forth faithfulness and fruitfulness from your life. You're not expected to work through both models. Rather, linger over each and identify a path of listening to your own life as you see what Rule of Life emerges.

Sacred Ordinary Days

The Sacred Ordinary Days planner includes space for one to develop a Rule of Life, or, as they describe,

Several simple statements that guide the posture of your life and the living of your days. It is not lived perfectly but can be lived faithfully while fostering within you an integrated and embodied life of faith (Sacred Ordinary Days Liturgical Planner).

The Planner includes space to draft out one's values in seven areas: Spirit, Body, Mind, Relationship, Home, Work, Resources. They encourage creating a statement that can become a "rule" for life that can be shared with others in one's community and is meant to inspire and guide, rather than dictate.

Spirit	
Body	
Mind	
Relationship	
Home	
Work	
Resources	

Spiritual Rhythms, Ruth Haley Barton

Author Ruth Haley Barton writes in several books about spiritual rhythms that nourish one's soul which could become the foundation for a Rule of Life. Consider the categories that she shares in Chapter 8 of her book, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* (134-135). For each of these areas, consider if you're practicing them in a healthy way. What is the vision of "abundance" for each area? What practical boundaries could you draw related to each of these areas?

Solitude.....Community

Work.....Rest

Stillness.....Action

Silence.....Word

Engagement.....Retreat



Circle areas that might be missing for you. Draw an arrow at something God is inviting you to grow in today. Write out a short list of statements that could become a Rule for your Life.

Spiritual Discipline Reflection

Take a look at this list of spiritual practices. Underline those that have been meaningful to you in the past. Star* those that you are currently practicing. Circle those that you want to include as part of a healthy rhythm for living within a Rule of Life.

- Reading Scripture
- Memorizing Scripture
- Meditation
- Prayer Beads
- Intercessory Prayer
- Prayer Journal
- Praying in groups
- Memorized Prayers
- Breath Prayer
- Daily Office
- Fasting
- Covenant Group
- Meeting with a Spiritual Director
- Keeping Sabbath
- Silence
- Solitude
- Labyrinth
- Examen
- Simplicity
- Generosity
- Forgiveness
- Worship
- Art
- Gratitude practice
- Journal
- Spending time in nature
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- Eucharist

Fire Reading

Judy Brown

What makes a fire burn
is space between the logs,
a breathing space.
Too much of a good thing,
too many logs
packed in too tight
can douse the flames
almost as surely
as a pail of water would.
So building fires
requires attention
to the spaces in between,
as much as to the wood.

When we are able to build
open spaces
in the same way
we have learned
to pile on the logs,
then we can come to see how
it is fuel, and absence of the fuel
together, that make fire possible.

We only need to lay a log
lightly from time to time.
A fire grows simply because the space is there,
with openings in which the flame
that knows just how it wants to burn can find its way.