

Meeting 5 — Practical Skills for 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

- What would a mentor or one of your “favorite” church people say was your area to shine in ministry? Would your closest friends or family members agree?

Practical Ministry Skills—Sharing (50-60 minutes)

Ask your group to think about the homework assignment (below) that you shared with them. Ask the following 5 questions and invite them to think in terms of the 5 bigger categories of ministry skills (Preaching, Leadership, Collegiality, Empowering the Laity, and Flourishing in Ministry). Let them know that you’ll be taking notes for an interview with all the mentors later this year that will touch on some of these topics.

- What do you feel like you do really well?
- What do you enjoy doing most or have passion around doing?
- What is something that you avoid doing or feel anxious about doing?
- What do you feel is a growing edge for you?

Inviting Responses—5-10 minutes

- Is there anything that you’ve wanted to say that you’ve not said yet?
- In a word or phrase, what is an area of ministry in which you sense God is calling you to grow?
- What kind of practical support would be most helpful at this point?
- Confirm your next meeting time.

Closing Prayer—5 minutes

Remind group members 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.)

Homework Assignment:

As we start a new year, we want to take some time to talk about how you're growing in some of the practical aspects of ministry. Preaching, leadership, collegiality, empowering the laity, and flourishing in ministry...these are all aspects of pastoral leadership that are fueled by spiritual practices, study of scripture, and discernment. Ministry can feel overwhelming as it involves a very complex skill set as well as spiritual strength. As part of our time together in the next few months, we're going to be giving mentors an opportunity to share from their experiences and we want it to connect with where you are right now—your struggles, your learnings, and your needs.

Part 1: Review

Would you take some time to reflect on the following five areas (Preaching, Leadership, Collegiality, Empowering the laity, and Flourishing in Ministry) and identify your strengths, growing edges, and an area of opportunity for each one?

Preaching—planning, preparation and delivery

Strength:

Growing Edge:

Area of Opportunity:

Leadership—vision, management, and oversight

Strength:

Growing Edge:

Area of Opportunity:

Collegiality—cultivating strong relationships with other clergy and in your annual conference/denominational structure

Strength:

Growing Edge:

Area of Opportunity:

Empowering the laity—cultivating discipleship and discernment among congregation members/leaders

Strength:

Growing Edge:

Area of Opportunity:

Flourishing in ministry—self-care, spiritual practices, and healthy boundaries

Strength:

Growing Edge:

Area of Opportunity:

Part Two: Reflect

In the section below, you'll see several sets of reflection questions. Would you spend a few minutes on a question that "sparks" you? There's no need to answer all of them, just gather your thoughts on a couple of questions that resonate and be willing to share some thoughts with your group when you meet.

- **Spiritual Gifts**
 - Consider your spiritual gifts for a moment (if you'd like, read 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Romans 12:6-8 or Ephesians 4:11). What comes to mind about your own gifts? What questions come up for you?
 - What Spiritual Gifts have grown in you throughout your ministry? Are there some that you have not used recently?
 - What spiritual gifts do you most relish using? How might God be able to use those in your life right now?
- **Passions**
 - Give an honest assessment about your "passion" level for your ministry. What are the areas of ministry in which you are most passionate?
 - What can you do to make more space for an area of passion in your life? What could you stop doing so that you can start doing something life-giving?
 - Is there a social justice issue that "fires you up? What is one thing that will give you a stronger voice within this issue?
- **Opportunities**
 - Is there any "opening" of an opportunity in your life that holds promise?
 - What could you and 2 or 3 others realistically do about one of the things you named related to your gifts, passion, or spiritual growth?
 - Is there anything God is calling you to do to prepare for future opportunities?