

## Meeting 6 - Mentor Spotlight (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 has been a highlight for you in ministry this last month?

### Mentor Spotlight—55 minutes

*To share with the mentees:* When we become a Christian, we are invited into Christ's ministry. We are a group of pastors who have all acknowledged that Christ has asked us to serve in his ministry with our "daytime hours" and for a paycheck. This month we're going to spend some time chatting about ministry, with a spotlight on the mentor sharing from her experiences. These questions are simply designed to provide jumping off points for discussion. Feel free to make this exercise your own by offering your own questions. Reviewing these questions may bring up some other things that you want to ask your group mentor regarding their experience in ministry or regarding your own!

*A Note to the Mentor:* Share the document, *25 Questions to Ask a Mentor* (page 3) via email or screen share and invite each group member to ask the mentor a question. Create a space of openness by modeling vulnerability and take care not to fall into three temptations of mentoring:

- **Creating a protégé who is your mini-me (clergy clone).** Help mentees identify their authentic pastoral style, instead of just trying to emulate you.
- **[Un]intentionally communicating your style is the right way.** Part of your job is to point them to other Exemplars. This will help them to see value in identifying personal/professional authenticity.
- **Telling war stories about your own experience.** Listen first, share second. Value transparency in sharing stories but remember that each context may be very different. Resist making your experience normative.

Do as many "rounds" of question-asking as time allows and enjoy the chance to share more fully about the ways that Christ has invited you into his ministry.

### **A Shared Reading—Prayer for a New Beginning, by John O’Donohue—10 minutes**

We now want to share in the reading *Prayer for a New Beginning* written by John O’Donohue (page 4). This reading connects with our previous discussions, as we are reminded again of the “openings” or “opportunities” that God is always bringing along our path. We want to recognize the promise of these opportunities and the call that God offers us within each one. We know that this call prepares us and paves the way for our future ministry. *Share your screen or email the prayer in advance. Ask someone to read the prayer for the group.*

- Notice the word or phrase that shimmers for you
- Share what you noticed (or what came up for you) with your group

### **Inviting Responses—10 minutes**

- Is there anything that you’ve wanted to say that you’ve not said yet?
- What are you looking forward to in the month ahead?
- What would you appreciate support/prayer for in the month ahead?
- Confirm your next meeting time.

### **Closing Prayer—5 minutes**

Remind mentees of the Group Commitments, one being prayer for one another. Share any updates or prayer concerns within this group. Ask each person to pray for another person. Agree upon this prior to praying.

## 25 Questions to Ask a Mentor

*Adapted from 25 Questions to Ask a Mentor by Jo Miller*

### **Stories**

*Ask your mentor to tell a story from her career. Some questions to consider:*

1. What was your church like when you first got there?
2. Think back to five years ago. Did you envision this is where you would be?
3. Can you tell me about a time when you had a difficult relationship with a group in the church? How did you handle it?
4. How did you learn to embrace failure?
5. What's the most important leadership lesson you've learned and how is it valuable?
6. Tell me about a recent setback and how you recovered.
7. Tell me about a member of your first church who taught you how to be a pastor.
8. How did you build the skill of always speaking so engagingly in front of others?

### **Situations**

*Identify a challenging situation and share it with the mentor. Ask your mentor to act as a sounding board. Some questions to consider:*

9. The year ahead holds challenges (because...). What advice do you have for me?
10. Who are the people I need to align with in the church to achieve success?
11. What advice can you offer on nurturing my spiritual life?
12. How do you successfully stay connected to other clergy colleagues?
13. When trying to gain buy-in to implement a new program, what tactics have worked for you?

### **Self-awareness**

*Ask a question that invites your mentor to contribute to your self-awareness. Some questions to consider:*

14. Where do you see my strengths and what should I focus on to improve?
15. What do you see as some of my blind spots?
16. How do you think others perceive me?
17. How I am viewed by leadership?
18. Do I come across as poised and calm?
19. Did everyone understand what I presented at the last meeting?
20. How could I have communicated my idea more clearly?

### **Skill-building**

*Identify a skill you currently want to develop and ask your mentor for advice or resources. Some questions to consider:*

21. How do you approach risk-taking?
22. What new skills do I need to grow my leadership skills?
23. How can I become a more connected preacher?
24. How can I become better at cultivating leaders?

**OR,** 25. Come up with your own question!

## Prayer for a New Beginning

by John O'Donohue

In out-of-the-way places of the heart,  
Where your thoughts never think to wander,  
This beginning has been quietly forming,  
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.  
For a long time it has watched your desire,  
Feeling the emptiness growing inside you,  
Noticing how you willed yourself on,  
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.  
It watched you play with the seduction of safety  
and the gray promises that sameness whispered,  
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent,  
Wondered would you always live like this.  
Then the delight, when your courage kindled,  
And out you stepped onto new ground,  
Your eyes young again with energy and dream,  
A path of plenitude opening before you.  
Though your destination is not yet clear  
You can trust the promise of this opening;  
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning  
That is at one with your life's desire.  
Awaken your spirit to adventure;  
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;  
Soon you will home in a new rhythm,  
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.