

A Quick Start
GUIDE



**MEN'S
MINISTRIES**

A Quick Start Guide for the Men's Ministries Leader

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Introduction

In today's world, the churches that are strong and growing are those that are reaching out to men. Current research shows that men have a much greater impact on a family's church attendance than do women or children. When the father attends church, usually the whole family comes. Men's Ministries has emerged to support men in their roles as husbands, fathers, and committed Christians.

The Mission

The mission statement of Adventist Men's Ministries is to: "Galvanize the energy and resources of men for God, family, church, and community." (The definition of "galvanize" is to stimulate, or to startle into sudden activity.) Men's Ministries events that are well planned will leave a lasting impression on the men who attend. They will develop a firmer commitment to God, a stronger dedication to their families and a desire to share their faith with others.

Job Description for Coordinator

The duties of the Men's Ministries coordinator for the local church include:

1. Praying on a regular basis for the men of your church. Pray specifically for unity and understanding of the purpose of Men's Ministries.
2. Encouraging and facilitating meaningful spiritual, mental, and emotional growth among the men of the church.
3. Working with a small Men's Ministries team to establish goals and plans.
4. Developing and conducting on a regular basis a wide variety of programs and activities that will meet the various contemporary needs of a diverse male constituency.
5. Communicating with the church secretary and/or pastor when scheduling programs.
6. Serving as the Men's Ministries representative from the conference to the local church.
7. Assisting the conference director (when requested) in planning meetings or activities which will benefit all the men of the conference.
8. Communicating news of interest to men from other sources in the church's structure.
9. Giving reports to the family ministries committee and/or the church board.
10. Mentoring someone else in this ministry to develop the spiritual gifts that are desirable for a Men's Ministries coordinator, including encouragement, administration and shepherding.

Relating With the Church Structure

An enthusiastic effort to encourage the men in our congregations through Men's Ministries will help our churches grow. We must, however, be wise and purposeful in developing and presenting Men's Ministries. It is very important that Men's Ministries not become just another thing that takes men away from their families. There must be clear and meaningful goals, and concrete evidence that the goals are being achieved. Men need to return to their homes from events refreshed and recharged, determined to walk as Christ in the presence of their families and associates.

Work closely with your pastor in developing this ministry in your local church. Specifically ask your pastor for input. When a pastor is actively supportive of Men's Ministries, the ministry has a stronger foundation and greater momentum. If your pastor will invest time and energy in developing a core group of lay leaders, your Men's Ministries will be greatly enhanced. Remember to honor your pastor's schedule and other responsibilities by communicating plans and strategies in a clear and timely way.

When seeking the approval of your church board (or other authority) for your Men's Ministries activities, carefully explain the purpose of this ministry. The impressions people form will be largely positive if you assure and reassure that the goal is to help men grow in their roles as husbands, fathers and pillars of the church.

Avoid implementing too much too soon. Men's Ministries takes time to grow. Study the men of your church. Don't try to force an elaborate program for which they are not ready. Building a substantial, reliable foundation (which can survive growth and the challenges that come with progress) will help to ensure the long-term success of Men's Ministries in your church.

Steps for Starting Effective Men's Ministries

1. **Pray.** A ministry for men starts with a few good men who are committed to meet regularly to pray for the men in your church, for unity among them and for a clear purpose and strategy. Pray for guidance as this core group is established because this is the heart of effective Men's Ministries. This group provides the foundation of prayer, direction and leadership for the entire ministry.
2. **Develop your mission statement.** In consultation with your pastor and Men's Ministry team members, consider these questions:

Why do we exist as a ministry?

What is our purpose?

What do we want to see happen?

Make your mission statement short, simple and spiritual. Focus on growth and God's purpose for men. **Having clear goals is extremely important;** without a clearly defined purpose for the ministry you will lose focus.

Examples of mission statements being used by local Men's Ministries:

"Men on target to honor Jesus, love our families, and serve our churches and communities."

"Getting together because of Christ. Growing together in Christ. Going forth to serve Christ."

3. **Take a profile of your men** in order to find out more about the people you will be serving (see Profile, p. 10, and Evaluating the Profile, p. 11). You can also give a survey to the men in your church (see Survey, p. 12). Identifying their interests and strengths will help you in planning activities and programs.
4. **Define a plan** for accomplishing your mission and a method to measure the results. After praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have a brainstorming session where you write down all kinds of ideas. Don't reject anything as "crazy" or "unworkable." After you have let your creative juices flow and have compiled a lengthy list of ideas, you can review and rank them. (Save the list for future reference.) If you have difficulty, pause and pray specifically for wisdom in forming plans which will respect each man's spiritual journey and enhance his faith and commitment to God. When your brainstorming is finished remember to express your gratitude for the Spirit's presence and His gift of ideas.

Focus on flexibility and variety. A successful Men's Ministries program needs to offer a variety of entry points and opportunities for men to grow spiritually and to make relational commitments. Annual men's conferences and sporting events are great non-threatening entry points for a man. However, not all men will attend such events. Nor will all men commit to a small group. That's OK. Effective Men's Ministries are flexible – accepting men where they are and providing a variety of opportunities that honor the different levels of spiritual maturity in men.

In planning your activities keep in mind that your target is men. This does not mean that events including women and children are not vital to the health of families and churches. However, certain needs of men can best be met when men gather with other men. An effective Men's Ministry will be structured to provide an environment where men can share their challenges, weaknesses and triumphs with other men.

5. **Create a tentative calendar of events** to present to your church board for approval (or whatever authority your local church uses). Make sure to discuss it with your pastor first.
6. **Present Men's Ministries to the congregation** during a special Sabbath celebration. Ask your pastor to preach on issues relevant to men, and to allow time for introducing the Men's Ministries program. Be sure the purpose of Men's Ministries is clearly explained before the calendar of events is handed out. Men like to know not only where they are going, but why they are going there. Ideally, the first event will be scheduled within 2-3 weeks after the Men's Ministries Sabbath.

Maintaining Men's Ministries

1. Stay focused on the spiritual goal of making men of God. Make prayer and the conscious presence of the Lord a real part of each event. Even the recreational and social events should have a rich spiritual ingredient of prayer and Christ-centered conversation. Always lead on the high road; stay away from trivial, gossipy dialogue and close-to-the-edge jokes.
2. Ask your church to purchase a few books, DVDs or other materials each month (or as often as possible) that pertain to the Christian home, worship in the home, fatherhood and other subjects that specifically address the concerns of men living a new life in Christ. Carefully screen the material, catalogue it and have it ready to loan to your men. Occasionally hold up a book or other resource when the men are together, calling their attention to the quality resources that are available.
3. Compile a list of Bible promises that pertain to various situations and encourage the men to fortify their hearts and strengthen their commitments by memorizing these promises.
4. Develop a collection of meaningful songs to sing together. Take the time to seek out songs that speak to men about consecration, sacrifice, the home and strength in the Lord. If you are not musically inclined, ask someone who is to lead out.
5. Speak frequently about the holy calling of men as priests of the home. Encourage them in positive ways to prepare themselves for this role with daily prayer and Bible study. Occasionally ask someone to share with your group (or the whole church) his methods of conducting family worship and how it has blessed his home. When men are willing to talk about their priestly activities at home, this positive influence begins to spread throughout the congregation, creating a powerful force for building godly homes.
6. Keep in mind that men prefer projects that have an "end." Advertise projects and programs with specific start and stop times and dates.
7. Men like to "tinker" to make things better. Allow them to challenge the purpose and efficiency of projects and programs. Don't be threatened by their questions or suggestions.
8. Avoid exercises that make the male spirit feel uncomfortable such as sitting in a circle, holding hands, being asked to share their feelings or read in public. (If you need someone to read publicly, ask ahead of time.)
9. Use stories of honor, respect and integrity to stir the male heart. Men are challenged by illustrations of sacrifice, both in times of hardship and for the faith. Include male-directed words like competence, power, success, proving one's self and results.
10. Men learn best by the use of visual aids and by observation. Sitting idle and passive while someone "lectures" is terribly boring to a man of action. Whenever possible, use current technology and other devices to illustrate points.

11. Deal with the heavy and relevant issues. Address the everyday needs and questions of today's Christian man. With the help of experienced and godly mentors, wrestle with the issues of sexual integrity, work ethics, identity, controlling anger and building healthy relationships.
12. Remember that men tend to bond through participating in physical activities – rafting, biking, camping, sports, etc. Don't be tempted to think you are wasting time by spending it on such activities with other men. It may be the best witnessing you ever do.
13. Men and boys learn by observation, and men tend to follow leaders, not “programs.” Live what you believe in front of the men – without ever being coarse or rough in word or action. Remember Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
14. Hold up the Bronzed Man of Galilee as a powerful leader of men. Challenge the men by quoting Jesus' words: “No one having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:57-62). In other words, “Do you have what it takes? Are you fit to follow Jesus?” Call the men to action! Jesus was not a passive person. He daily confronted the religious order, the status quo, and the hypocrisy of the Jewish rulers. He walked on water, cast out demons, healed the sick and raised the dead. Jesus is powerful, bold, courageous, dangerous to complacency, confident and, above all, balanced in all aspects of life. Help the men of your congregation get to know Jesus, the role model for real men.

(Numbers 6-11 are reprinted with permission from “The Missing Men” by Minner Labrador Jr. which appeared in the February 2008 issue of Ministry.)

Eleven Unspoken Needs of Men

(Numbers 1-5 adapted from Men's Ministry by Steve Sonderman)

1. **Men Need Action.** Men's self-images are largely determined by what they do for work and what they accomplish. A man's goal orientation pushes him to achieve things and to focus until the task is accomplished.
2. **Men Need Safety.** One silent rule of masculinity has been “Thou shalt not show emotion.” Men are rarely open with one another unless there is a safe environment created by time and confidentiality.
3. **Men Need To Be Challenged.** In the Gospels we often see Jesus drawing a line in the sand and daring the disciples to meet Him on His side. It's no different today. Men aren't interested in a ministry that gets together to chew the fat. They want to be challenged to act, pray, behave and think in a way that glorifies God.
4. **Men Need To Get To The Point.** Don't waste time on fluff and trappings. Men want to know what two or three practical life applications they can take away from their time together.

5. **Men Need To Win.** Men have grown up with the pressure to win. Men's Ministries needs to have challenging yet achievable goals. Programs that aren't working must be set aside.
6. **Men Need To Dream.** Men grow up dreaming and scheming big. Involve the men in the brainstorming process of designing Men's Ministries. Encourage men to discuss their dreams during informal times as well, and to help each other finds ways of acting on them.
7. **Men Need Other Men Like Them.** Men naturally gravitate toward men facing the pressures they face and doing the same types of jobs they do.
8. **Men Need Help Working Around Daily Schedules.** How and when we do ministry with men will largely revolve around their lives at work. The most precious commodity for many men is time. How they divide it is crucial. Be sensitive when planning the number and length of activities. It is also important to offer activities at a variety of times.
9. **Men Need Healing.** Not many men go to work and hear what a great job they are doing. When they get home their kids usually don't thank them for working long hours so they can have a roof over their heads. And too often their wives are not lauding their performances as dads and husbands. Men need a refuge where they can heal and be encouraged in their roles.
10. **Men Need Freedom.** Men that are taught from boyhood to win develop a fierce independence. They have difficulty forming friendships with other men. Often, they would rather stand alone and fight alone than work together. Men's Ministries should strive for solidarity while at the same time respecting each man's need for space.
11. **Men Need To Identify.** We live in a time when there is generally a spirit of brotherhood among men. As Adventists reach out to fellowship with men of other faiths and traditions, they need encouragement to identify with the unique message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church leading up to the coming of Jesus.

Men rarely talk about their needs. The Men's Ministries coordinator, however, would be wise to consider them when developing Men's Ministries in the local church. For each need listed above ask: "How is this manifested in the men we serve? And how does that impact our plans?"

Building Effective Small Groups

Men's Ministries is more about relationships than programs. One of the best ways of accomplishing the objectives of Men's Ministries is to connect men through small group interaction. Two to seven men meeting together regularly is ideal.

When life gets tough men ask these questions: From whom should I take advice? With whom

can I be totally honest? Who will stand by me through my struggles? In small groups men can serve one another (Gal. 5:13), encourage each other (Heb. 10:25) and build one another up (Rom. 14:19).

The benefits men will receive from meeting in small groups include:

1. Finding opportunities to learn with other men how to live the Christian life.
2. Having a safe place where they learn to express love in healthy ways.
3. Having a place where they get to know other men in an accepting atmosphere.
4. Finding strength to face changes and struggles.
5. Enjoying spiritual freedom to worship and pray with others.
6. Discovering their spiritual gifts for serving others.

There are many resources available that give specifics on training leaders and starting small groups (see Resources, p. 16).

The Relational Diamond

In the game of baseball, players move from first base to home base on the diamond. The small group experience can be described as a “relational diamond.”

1. FIRST BASE

This is the acquaintance level.

Men begin to accept one another (Romans 15:7).

The goal at this level is building trust.

This is where you identify the group's purpose or design. How much emphasis will the group place on supporting one another? Will you focus on Bible study or on other materials? How much time will the group invest in projects?

You also decide what kind of group it will be. Will it bring together men with affinity (same preferences, for example, golfers) or diversity (different interests)?

Negotiate with the men about how long the group will last and whether it will be open, allowing anyone to enter at any time, or closed, allowing only those who started the process to be in the group until the agreed upon end time. Decide how much sharing of personal struggles and pain the group will allow. It is very important at this level to encourage the men to get to know one another by focusing on acceptance and time spent together.

2. SECOND BASE

This is the level where men begin to see themselves as friends.

Men begin to encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13).

The goal at this level is confidence in one another.

The group moves into deeper relationships. This level helps men to understand each other and to be committed to each other. Men will discover that they see things differently as they grow together. It is important to agree from the beginning that it is OK to disagree.

3. THIRD BASE

This is the level where men begin to see themselves as brothers in Christ.

Men begin to exhort (admonish) one another (Colossians 3:16).

The goal at this level is to create a sense of accountability in love.

At this level men learn how to worship more intimately. They agree to certain covenants which make accountability possible:

To be consistent in meeting

To affirm one another

To pray for one another

To be open

To be honest

To hold confidentiality

Giving permission to be held accountable

This type of relationship provides real freedom and acceptance. Within its confines, men express their commitment to worshipping God, to being themselves, and to being shaped into what God wants them to be. This is the level where significant change and growth takes place.

4. HOME BASE

This is the level where men begin to move toward leadership in their homes and other ministry opportunities.

Men begin to experience Christian maturity in building a Christ-like character (Romans 8:28-29).

The goal at this level is to coach another team such as family and friends.

At this level men begin to find their places in serving the family and the church. The group has been preparing for service; now they are ready to start the process of serving. The group also sees the need to continue in the process of sanctification.

Men will discover the unique contribution they will make through the acceptance of the great commission and commandment to reach out to those in need in their families, the church and the world.

Men will begin to recognize the tools they need to accomplish this call of representing Christ at home, in the church and to the world. Reaching home base means moving from being observers to being servant leaders.

Specific Ideas for Men's Ministry Activities

Planning events that involve physical activity is important. Just remember to focus on activities that build relationships, such as:

1. Cookouts with a softball game
2. Community service projects
3. Short-term mission trips
4. Annual retreats
5. Sporting events (or organized teams)
6. Father-son campouts and/or retreats

Specific Ideas for Men's Ministry Programs

1. Father-daughter banquets
2. Prayer breakfasts
3. Special communion services
4. Seminars on the following topics:
 - Real masculinity
 - Managing stress
 - Handling conflict
 - Witnessing in the workplace
 - Marriage enhancement
 - Financial management
 - Planning for retirement

Profile of the Men in Your Church

Effective men's ministries are tailored to fit the interests and needs of a specific group of men. They are not "canned" or replicated from another group simply because the other group was successful.

It is vital, then, to have insight into the attributes of the men of your church, to determine where they are spiritually and culturally. Who are the men in your church? To find out, complete the following simple questionnaire. Then evaluate it.

1. What is the size of your church?
 - a. 35-100
 - b. 100-225
 - c. 225-450
 - d. 450-700
 - f. 700+
2. How many full-time staff/pastors?
 - a. 1-2
 - b. 3-5
3. Is your church:
 - a. Evangelistic-oriented
 - b. Traditional
 - c. Progressive
 - d. Implementing nurturing/caring ministries
 - e. Other
4. What is the ethnic composition of the men?
(Label with percentages if possible.)
 - a. African-American
 - b. Anglo
 - c. Asian-American
 - d. Hispanic
 - e. Native American
 - f. Others
5. What is the primary cultural composition of the men?
(Label with percentages if more than one.)
 - a. Blue-collar
 - b. White-collar
 - c. Other
6. What is the average age of these men (from question 5)?
 - a. 60+
 - b. 50 - 60
 - c. 35 - 50
 - d. 25 - 35

Evaluating the Profile

Determine how many men are in the church by figuring 40% of the adult attendance.

How many men (that you are aware of) are active in Men's Ministries or men's small groups?

- a. This gives a general idea of how many men are not experiencing the support and encouragement of "shoulder-to-shoulder" relationships with other men.
- b. It also helps to discern the effectiveness of any current outreach to men.

The number of pastors in your church indicates the many responsibilities they carry and how increased lay leadership (from men and women) can help advance the mission of the church.

Knowing the general theological and practical values of your church helps identify Men's Ministry models which have similar philosophies of ministry and values. Try to understand these differences so that you do not erect unnecessary barriers with church leadership.

Insight into ethnic and cultural compositions will identify each man's history. Try to understand some of the cultural and racial pains, both historic and present, so you can experience healing as brothers in Christ. Don't attempt to impose ministry models from other groups of men with different cultures and interests (for example, a southern California white middle class Men's Ministries model will not fit a multi-ethnic inner city church in Chicago).

The age composition of the men affects things like meeting places and times and types of activities. Men over the age of 50 are more likely to devote a Sunday morning to be with other men. Men with children at home often prefer to meet on a week night rather than sacrificing a Sunday morning with their families.

Men's Ministry Survey

Information About You

Age:

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-64
- 65+

Marital Status:

- Single
- Married

Number of children: _____

Type of work: _____

Which of these issues are most important to you?

(Check two most important):

- Finding a job
- Relationship to wife
- Job security
- Male roles and identity
- Balancing work, home, and ministry
- Parenting skills
- Retirement
- Reaching other men
- Spiritual life
- Sexual integrity

A Man and his Family

Would you be interested in a monthly meeting on family issues (parenting, relationship to wife, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

If yes, when would be the best time for you to attend that meeting?

- Sabbath afternoon
- Week night
- Sunday night
- Sunday morning
- Another time?

What topics would you like to see addressed?

(Check two)

- Keeping the romance alive in your marriage
- Disciplining your children
- Surviving the teenage years
- Being the spiritual leader at home
- Handling conflict
- Communicating with your wife
- Other

Men in the Marketplace

How can we best help you integrate your Christian faith into your job?

- Monthly meeting with a speaker
- Weekly small group meeting to discuss the issues
- Monthly small group meeting to discuss the issues
- 3-5 week seminar on ethics, relationships on the job, etc.

Best time for these meetings:

- Weekday morning
- Weekday evenings
- Sabbath afternoon
- Sunday evening

Topics I'd like to hear addressed (Check top 3):

- Handling stress
- Changing careers
- Relationships on the job
- Sharing your faith with work associates
- Balancing home, work, and ministry
- Keeping your ethic/edge sharp
- Coping with failure
- Mentoring
- Planning retirement
- Resisting sexual temptations
- Avoiding the success obsession
- Men and the Word

Would a short-term mission trip be of interest to you?

- Yes
- No

What type of short-term mission trip would interest you the most?

- Construction project
- Business trip
- Medical trip

What would be a good length of stay for such a trip?

- Weekend
- 1 week
- 2 weeks
- 3 weeks
- One month or more

Retreats

If we would begin to have retreats as part of the ministry, would you be interested?

- Yes
- No

What type of retreat would interest you most?

- Teaching type
- Adventurous (canoeing, camping, fishing, etc.)
- Spiritual and personal renewal
- Networking with other men

And the length of the retreat?

- One night
- Two nights

How far would you be willing to travel for a retreat?

- 30 minutes
- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- 3 hours
- More than 3 hours

Man to Man

Are you currently attending a men's Bible study group?

- Yes
- No

If you are not in a group, would you be interested in attending a men's small group?

- Yes
- No

What would you like to see happen in that group?

(Check two)

- Study the Bible
- Talk about problems at home and work
- Pray for one another
- Discuss how you integrate your Christian faith into your work and family life

How often would you prefer to meet?

- Every week for one hour
- Once a month for three hours
- Every other week

When would you prefer the meeting?

- Early morning before work
- After work in the evening
- Lunch hour
- Over the weekend

Men's Conference

What type of seminars would you like to see at the Men's Conference? (Check three)

- Parenting
- Masculinity
- Relationship to wife
- Work ethics
- Changing jobs
- Dealing with retirement
- Balancing work, home, and ministry
- Finances
- Evangelism
- Growing as a Christian
- Other

What are your areas of potential interest for the Men's Conference? (Check all that apply)

- Publicity
- Organize events (retreats, golf outings, etc.)
- Work in the kitchen
- Lead small group
- Do telephoning
- Assist with work projects
- Marketplace Ministries

What do you personally want to accomplish through your involvement in Men's Ministry? (Check two)

- A closer walk with God
- Fellowship with other Christian men
- An outlet to vent problems or frustrations
- More involvement in the church
- A chance to meet other men
- Other

When the entire men's program is determined, I would like someone to contact me so I can become more involved or receive more information.

- Yes
- No

Optional information for us to get in touch with you.

Name _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Please list additional comments about the men's ministry you may have. Thank you very much for completing this survey.

Resources

Books available from AdventSource at www.adventsource.org or 800-328-0525

Effective Men's Ministry

edited by Phil Downer.

Catalog #351725

How to Build a Life-Changing Men's Ministry

by Steve Sonderman.

Catalog #351310

Men's Ministry In The 21st Century: The Encyclopedia of Practical Ideas

by Group Publishing.

Catalog #351670

Books available from the Adventist Book Center at www.adventistbookcenter.com

A Place for Us Guys

by Charles Burkeen.

Men of Power

by Jim Hohnberger.

Other Recommended Books

How To Lead Small Groups

by Neil McBride.

Available at www.navpress.com

The Search For Significance

by Robert S. McGee.

Available at www.thomasnelson.com

Official Adventist Men's Ministries Website

www.adventistmensministries.org

Other Men's Ministries Websites

www.floridaconference.com/men

www.minnerlabrador.com

For additional resources visit your local Christian book center or www.adventsource.org

This Quick Start Guide for Men's Ministries is full of important information to help you start or revitalize a ministry at your local church. This guide contains a job description, instructions for getting started, tips for maintaining a successful ministry, troubleshooting suggestions, recommended resources, and more. Whether you're new to this ministry or a seasoned volunteer, this Quick Start Guide will inspire you with lots of great ideas you can immediately put to use in your local church.

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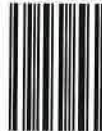


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