



How to Start Women on Mission

Missions Discipleship for Women

Women on Mission is a missions discipleship group designed to equip adult women to become active disciples of Christ as they live on mission for Him. Those involved in Women on Mission seek to live out missions through missions projects, ministries, prayer, giving, and Bible study. The purpose of the missions group is to provide every person with the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel.

How to Start Women on Mission

1. **Pray.** Involve your church leadership in seeking direction for starting and leading Women on Mission.
2. **Determine the focus.** Women on Mission groups often focus their involvement around a feature in *Missions Mosaic*, such as the missionary spotlight or Bible study features. Groups also meet around common missions project interests.
3. **Identify leaders.** Identify a group leader and others willing to lead. Provide leadership development as needed. Consider participating in WMU or state leadership training.
4. **Choose resources.** Review available resources and choose the best ones for your situation.
5. **Order resources.** Each woman should receive *Missions Mosaic* to help her grow in her knowledge of missions. Order by visiting wmu.com/adults or calling 1-800-968-7301.
6. **Check the calendar.** Schedule a time and location to meet.
7. **Promote.** Invite all women to attend through personal contacts, email, Facebook, or flyers.

Contact your local Baptist association, your state WMU office, or national WMU for training opportunities.

To learn more, visit us at wmu.com/adults (click on “Adults on Mission”).

For additional information, contact national WMU adult consultant Linda Clark at lclark@wmu.org.

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Women on Mission Leaders

Women on Mission leaders serve with others to become active disciples of Christ who live on mission for Him. The leader of a Women on Mission group promotes missions involvement and equips women to engage in missions.

What does a Women on Mission leader do?

A Women on Mission group leader guides and assists her group in planning, carrying out, and evaluating the work of the group.

Specific responsibilities of a Women on Mission group leader include the following.

- Help women understand the purposes of Women on Mission.
- Lead women to set goals, and assist them to make and carry out plans for their missions experiences.
- Nurture women to recognize their value in Christ and explore how to fulfill Christ's purposes.
- Guide women to develop their leadership potential as they use their interests and skills.
- Keep records and report activities of the Women on Mission group.
- Serve on the Women on Mission planning team or WMU leadership team, if the church has these.

Customize your leadership to fit the size of your church and its mission strategy. A Women on Mission group can have more than one leader to accomplish the work of the group. You can appoint other leaders to spearhead one-time events, short-term activities, or ongoing missions projects. As you customize the leadership of your group, you help women discover how they can dynamically impact your church and proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Women on Mission Coordinator

If your church has two or more Women on Mission groups, you may need a coordinator. Women on Mission coordinators have the following responsibilities.

- Help group leaders set goals and make specific plans for their groups.
- Guide groups to plan missions activities that involve all women.
- Invite women to serve as Women on Mission group leaders.
- Coordinate training for leaders.
- Prepare and maintain the Women on Mission budget.
- Provide resources and materials.
- Keep records and report results.
- Represent Women on Mission if your church has a WMU leadership team.



Ways to Organize Women on Mission

What are the options for gathering to learn about missions? There are many different ways small groups of women can come together to accomplish God's missions purpose in the world. These small groups form the foundation for the work of Women on Mission.

Mission Action Groups

Mission Action Groups are developed by women who want to engage in hands-on missions. Led by a Women on Mission leader, these groups focus on doing missions and telling others about Jesus through evangelism and community ministry. Their service may be accomplished by ongoing or one-time events. The work of missions action groups can include volunteering at food pantries and crisis pregnancy centers, work with refugees, ministry to the homeless, teaching English as a second language and literacy missions, job skills training, and other ministries.

Affinity (or "Special Interest") Groups

One way to form a Women on Mission group is to gather women with common interests, hobbies, or similar life stages. These groups help women develop the missional characteristics of learning about missions, praying for missions, supporting missions, and doing missions and telling others about Jesus. For example, knitters may meet together to pray for the recipients of the projects they are knitting. These groups' meetings are flexible, as are the guidelines for when or how long to meet. For example, stay-at-home moms may choose to meet during nap times, play dates, or in the evenings when dads are home.

Traditional Groups

Traditional groups can gather for the purpose of equipping themselves with the missional characteristics of learning about missions, praying for missions, supporting missions, doing missions, and telling others about Jesus. Traditional groups may also come together with a more targeted missions focus, such as contemporary missions, prayer, or Bible study.

Individual Involvement

Even if a woman doesn't participate in a group, she can still be part of global Women on Mission. She can use Women on Mission resources to be involved in missions and grow in missions discipleship.



What Happens in a Women on Mission Group?

Women on Mission engage in a variety of activities, depending on the purpose of their group. Several options are listed here.

Women on Mission Meetings

Many Women on Mission groups meet on a regular basis. The group can focus on one or more of the missional characteristics: learning about missions, praying for missions, supporting missions, or doing missions and telling others about Jesus. WMU has a variety of resources and leadership helps you can use for Women on Mission group gatherings. *Missions Mosaic* features articles on prayer, Bible study, current missions service, and ministry. *Women on Mission Leader* provides leaders ideas for creative group activities and suggestions for using *Missions Mosaic* articles in meetings.

Missions Projects

Missions projects are hands-on experiences for Women on Mission. Missions projects provide opportunities for women to influence the world for Christ. Whether short- or long-term, international, national, state, or local, participants grow in missions discipleship as they touch people with the gospel message. Missions projects are an excellent entry point for involvement in Women on Mission.

Prayer and Support of Missions

Praying and supporting global missions are integral components of Women on Mission. Women are encouraged to participate in associational and state missions offerings, as well as offerings for North American and International missionaries, and to pray consistently for missionaries. *Missions Mosaic* includes Prayer Patterns, a monthlong devotional series that also features a missionary birthday calendar and weekly articles about missionaries. The annual Week of Prayer for North American Missions, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, Week of Prayer for International Missions, and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering encourage prayer and support of missions efforts. You can also contact your state Baptist convention and Baptist association for information about more local missions offerings and materials.

Missions Events

Missions events, such as weekend retreats, Week of Prayer observations, celebration experiences, and missions fairs, are all avenues for involving women in Women on Mission. Missions events can be key entry points for new or occasional Women on Mission participants.



Planning for Women on Mission

In any movement, large or small, proper leadership is needed if it is to succeed.

—Linda Clark

Women on Mission leaders desire to help women grow in their faith by learning about missions, praying for missions, supporting missions, doing missions, and sharing their faith in Christ. Much of the success in instilling these characteristics hinges on effective planning.

Overarching Plans

Overarching plans form the foundation for your more specific plans.

- Determine if you will make overarching plans for an entire year or just part of a year, such as a quarter.
- Create plans using your church calendar, your church WMU calendar, and *Missions Leader: WMU Planning Guide*.
- Make note of the events your Women on Mission group will participate in, such as the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® or the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®.
- Schedule plans for missions projects, mission trips, or prayer retreats.
- Place dates on the church calendar.
- Review and adjust plans as needed.

Specific Plans

Specific plans are essential for Women on Mission meetings and events. Your plans will depend on the interests of your Women on Mission group. Your group may be a traditional one that focuses on current missions efforts or missionaries. Or you may lead a Bible study or prayer group or a group that gathers to work specifically on missions projects. Regardless of the type of group you lead, it is important to carefully plan your regular monthly gatherings. Our Planning Tips and Ideas for Planning an Event will help you as you plan.



Planning Tips

Planning will help in organizing projects and having interesting presentations that result in making missions exciting for the women in your church. Here are a few tips to help you.

- **Subscribe** to *Women on Mission Leader* for presentation ideas, activity sheets, posters, and step-by-step suggestions for using the articles in *Missions Mosaic* each month.
- **Work ahead.** Don't wait until the week of your meeting to start planning!
- **Read the feature article you wish to focus on.** The annual *Missions Leader: WMU Planning Guide* contains an overview of each month's Bible study, prayer, and missionary topic in *Missions Mosaic*. Use this planning guide to help you think about the information, supplies, and personnel you will need.
- **Determine the format of your gathering.** Vary your presentations of missions information—interviews, role-playing, storytelling narratives, panel discussions, etc. Don't fall into the habit of always doing the same thing!
- **Decide on how you will “set the missions scene.”** Obviously, a monthly Bible study requires less setup than a missionary spotlight presentation. Nothing is less interesting, however, than chairs always arranged the same way and an agenda identical to the previous month! Plan in advance so you have time to gather props, make copies of activity sheets, choose videos, etc.
- **Enlist others to help with the missions information.** Be specific about what you want them to do. Give them the information they'll need to role-play, tell a story, or lead a discussion. Give your speakers a timeframe, and stress the importance of staying within it.
- **Enlist teams to help with gathering details.** Arrange for food (There *must* be food!), promotion, someone to lead the Prayer Calendar, set-up help, etc.

- **Write an agenda.** If you aren't in charge of the gathering itself and are only giving the missions portion, work with the person in charge to develop an order for business, prayer, missions presentation, ministry projects, etc. Assign time to each agenda item so everyone's time is respected. This means no 45-minute-long business sessions!
- **Evaluate after each gathering.** Did the set-up go smoothly? Were the presenters prepared? How could you help them better share the missions information? What do you *never* want to do again? Did you allow enough time to cover the topic? Was the information presented in a creative way? What did you forget to do?

Taking the time to follow this list of tips will give you confidence that you are motivating group members to engage personally in missions. WMU's wonderful, thoughtfully written materials are designed to help you create exciting missions experiences for adults!



IDEAS FOR PLANNING AN EVENT

How do I plan successful missions events?

Have a purpose in mind

What do you want to accomplish? Your overall purpose should drive your planning.

Identify your audience

Plan for and communicate specifically to them. There is a definite link between planning and promotion—they have to be done together.

Set the calendar

Pay attention to other events on the church calendar, community calendar, and even prime-time TV. Each of these calendars can affect the success of your event. As needed, adjust beginning and ending times as well as the date. You will never find a date convenient for everyone, but do avoid major conflicts for your audience.

Choose a theme for the event

Let program participants know the theme, and ask them to relate their part of the event to that theme. Build everything around the theme—from decorations to printed materials to the titles you give to speaker messages.

Involve different people at the event

This builds attendance and creates a climate of inclusiveness.

Start on time

Starting the event on time is vital. Even if people are still coming into a general session, start on time. Start with elements, such as an opening song, that allow time for late participants to arrive.

Plan with the end in mind

Too often we think about the starting time but give little thought to the time we will finish. If an event goes too long, especially at night, people get restless and childcare becomes an issue. To end on time, assign a specific amount of time to every item on the event's agenda, add up the assigned times, and make sure your total program fits the time available. Let each participant know exactly how much time is assigned. Include the ending time in your publicity, but plan to end earlier than the announced ending time.

Make the event enjoyable!

Have something interesting or fun for everyone.