

Leadership

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“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Mt 5:13–16, NIV)

You are the salt of the earth. In this passage, Jesus emphasizes to the disciples and to us that we have both the calling and the responsibility to be influences in the world. When you take on the role of leadership, you become the salt of the earth.

What Is Leadership?

Walter Lippman says, “The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind in others the conviction to carry on.” Ralph Nader says, “The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.” A Teal Trust Web site offers the following definition: “In *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, John Maxwell sums up his definition of leadership as, ‘leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less.’ This moves beyond the position defining the leader, to looking at the ability of the leader to influence others – both those who would consider themselves followers, and those outside that circle. Indirectly, it also builds in leadership character, since without maintaining integrity and trustworthiness; the capability to influence will disappear.”¹

Servant leadership is a calling from God. Leaders spend time in prayer seeking guidance and wisdom. Being a leader is more than managing a set of tasks or acting as a figurehead. Being a leader requires that we attempt to create new words, new meanings, new orders, new behaviors that will lift us all to a higher level of awareness and interaction. To be a leader in the community of God demands that we are motivated by love and service, not power.

¹Quotes in this paragraph are from The Teal Trust, www.teal.org.uk,

Qualities of a Leader

- Believes that she is a child of God and acts accordingly
- Knows that what she is doing is important but understands that she is not indispensable
- Recognizes that good programming comes from adequate planning for weeks/months ahead
- Explores new possibilities for growth in persons and in program
- Is willing to risk new methods, new ideas, new philosophies, without giving in to despair if they fail
- Recognizes and is comfortable with and confident in her own style of leadership
- Grows in the direction of her challenges
- Is sensitive to the needs of others because she recognizes that she has needs of her own
- Is intrigued by what “could” be done rather than coerced by what “should” be done
- Is willing to designate assignments and assume the responsibility of seeing that they are carried out
- Perceives that involvement is the sure road to commitment
- Respects each person’s freedom to make special choices regarding responsibilities without feeling guilty
- Affirms all women
- Recognizes that everyone needs a sense of self-respect and self-fulfillment
- Lives in close relationship with God and with others

Questions Responsible Leaders Ask

A responsible leader is aware of the trends affecting women in the world, in the community, in the congregation, and in DW/Christian Women’s Fellowship. The assessment of these trends helps in the development of goals and objectives for the DW/CWF:

- How is our DW/CWF increasing the awareness of its members toward greater involvement?

- What are the goals of our DW/CWF as it grows in awareness of the global community?
- Do we have a leadership bank of women in our congregation that lists their interests, experience, and skills?
- What is our policy to ensure that women's names are submitted to the nominating committee for all the offices in the congregation? Do we encourage women to say yes when approached by the nominating committee to serve as an elder, deacon, DW/CWF president, or board moderator?
- What responsibilities are taken toward the development and growth of an inclusive eldership and a diaconate?
- What are our legislative responsibilities?
- What is our responsibility to the ecumenical community?
- Have we thought of having a congregational DW/CWF workshop which would include leadership skills training and interest groups?
- Is our DW/CWF functional or relational? That is, is our primary goal to “get the job done” or “to help people grow”? Note: Many leaders are beginning to discover that, while they program their year according to the functions of the DW/CWF and the tasks which need to be accomplished, the needs which the women express are relational, conveying a desire for more personal interaction and communication. How should we handle this?

Leadership Styles

Openness to a variety of leadership approaches is helpful. Yet the leader will want to stay aware of those which are most appropriate for her leadership situation and comfortable with her leadership style. Everyone does not use the same style of leadership; the leader will be most effective when she identifies and uses her own style. When she wants to use a new approach, she might ask other group members for input.

Following are models that show different ways of thinking and speaking about communication and leadership styles that are used in groups. It is important to

understand your leadership style and your group's communication style in order to create a well-balanced environment.

Model 1

A Reconciler is one who strives to settle or resolve differences and establish close relationships within the group.

A Sharing Leader demonstrates the desire to divide tasks and decision making among group members.

A Peacemaker is one who encourages diversity and works through conflict. In other words, everyone is able to wear the "Plays Well With Others" T-shirt at all meetings.

An Encourager is able to give support to members of the group by knowing when to offer a word of praise, challenge, or confidence.

A Teacher is one who offers methods of accomplishing work.

A Delegater is one who can identify and break down a task and assign responsibility to others.

An Enabler is one who recognizes specific skills in others and empowers them to use their gifts.

Model 2

Pioneering Leadership. Pioneering leaders are willing to push themselves and take appropriate risks to discover and reach long-term goals. In a Christian context, we can quote Philippians 3:13: "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead." Pioneering leaders are passionate about the vision, and are wholly committed to it. Paul is a great example of a leader who was focused on pushing out the boundaries of the church, despite the personal risk.

Strategic Leadership. Leaders who can break down visions and large aims into manageable chunks are vital for the church. Strategic leaders have the insight and focus to work out ways of achieving the vision, the "how", and are able to persuade the rest of the church to accept this plan. When Nehemiah led the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he demonstrated great strategic leadership in dividing the work up

and keeping the task manageable. His plan was so good that the walls were rebuilt in fifty-two days. Strategic leaders can bring common sense to a difficult task – able to help people see how the seemingly impossible can be achieved. However, like pioneers, they can be less engaged with the implementation of a task, preferring to leave this to others.

Management/Administration – All churches require good stewards and managers, people with gifts of administration (Acts 6). Any vision or change will require leaders able to plan and problem-solve, delegate and organize.

Without this gift, the best plans may well not get implemented! The apostles delegated the practical tasks of sharing food and taking care of the widows to those gifted with the necessary skills, including Stephen and Philip.

Managers are often underappreciated, having a leadership style that is less visible than others. However, much of the work simply would not get done without them. They are able to organize and follow through on all the necessary tasks and activities to ensure that the project is completed on time. They may struggle to relate to the visionary pioneers – dreaming of achieving the impossible is not their home ground!

Encouraging Leadership. Paul was a great encourager – his letters to the early churches contained exhortation and encouragement as well as teaching. Encouraging leaders are able to motivate whole churches, teams and individuals. They have great discernment about people's gifts, feelings, and motivation, and are able to release them into fulfilling their ministries. Who doesn't need encouragement?

Encouraging leaders have the knack of knowing when a quiet word can spur people on, when to challenge and when to support, when to coach and when to give space. Occasionally they may cause friction by appearing less "involved" than other leaders – sometimes people want more than just encouragement.²

Model 3

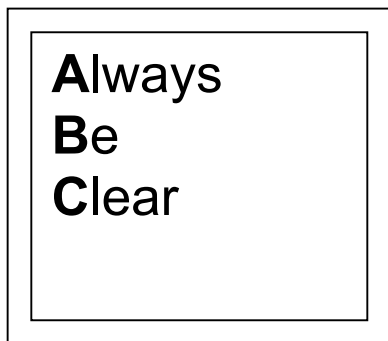
On the Leader to Leader Institute Web site, www.pfdf.org, you will find resources on leadership styles. One resource from Daniel Goleman will give you information outlining different leadership styles such as **coercive** – do what I tell you; **authoritative**

²Information taken from The Teal Trust, www.teal.org.uk.

– let’s do this together; **pacesetting** – do as I do now; **coaching** – Try this, **democratic** – what do you think; **affiliative** – how do you feel. The Web site explores how each style builds and impacts the community, and when it is appropriate to use each style. There are many other models available if you are willing to do the research. Check the www.teal.org.uk Web site as well.

THE ABCs OF LEADERSHIP³

Leaders come and go. Styles of leading change with the times. The reasons for a group’s existence evolve. But this set of **ABCs of Leadership** will remain constant.



**Always Be Clear
about whose agenda
should be in the forefront
of a meeting.**

Early in your term as the leader, you should help the group come to an understanding and decision about what makes a group who meets as Disciples of Christ women different from any other group of women who meet.

If the group agrees that the life and teachings of Jesus should guide the items on the agenda, then that is how you measure suggestions and ideas. This could be a valuable exercise for your group.

³Article by Josephine “Jo” Elkins.

If yours is a CWF group, it has a stated purpose. It might be a valuable exercise for your group to examine that purpose statement carefully and decide to consciously use it as the yardstick by which to measure the suggestions for what your group may be doing.

Whatever guidelines are accepted by the group, you, the leader, must **Always Be Clear** about what kinds of things do and do not appear on the **AGENDA**.

**Always Be Clear
about what method
will be used
when arriving at
a decision.**

To be effective, members must make some decisions. Some groups are moving away from the strict and formal method of parliamentary procedure outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*. Voting by a show of hands of those in favor and those opposed sometimes fosters a mood of "we win and you lose" among the members.

One method used by some groups lets the leader guide the discussion until a consensus is reached. Most of your members are probably more familiar with the "yea" and "nay" votes, and may resist any change. But if you are interested in a less divisive method of arriving at a decision, do some investigation and reading about consensus building. It may bring some new life into some otherwise rather dull and mundane meetings.

Regardless of what method is used, the leader must be comfortable with the process and see that the group will **Always Be Clear** about what **METHOD** will be used in decision making.

**Always Be Clear
about the details
necessary for carrying
out the decisions.**

When your group determines that a project is to be undertaken, you should see that everyone has a clear understanding of all responsibilities.

You need to be clear in letting the group know if you will be appointing and assigning people for a task, or asking for volunteers. You may be aware of a person in your group with a special skill for a specific job, and asking her to serve in that capacity would be wise.

There are times when asking for volunteers opens the door for new persons to serve while relieving those who feel they have served their time in that position.

Both group and leader need to clearly understand just what is to be accomplished and who is to do it. Whether it is researching a need at a local shelter, publicizing the annual All-Daughter Dinner, or leading the study at the next meeting, there needs to be clarity about *who* is to do *what* and *when*. **Always Be Clear** about the **DETAILS** accompanying the completion of a project.

**Always Be Clear
about your role as a
leader.**

You have accepted the responsibility of leading, not the responsibility of doing everything yourself. An effective leader will see that others in the group are involved so that all may claim ownership of the ministry and service, as well as the fellowship.

If your group is a small one, attempt projects that can be accomplished by a few, and then enjoy and celebrate its success. Don't dwell on the inability to accomplish some large task that might have been a part of the group's history.

If your group has many members, help enlarge their vision so all can be involved.

Regardless of the size of the group, you can lead them in understanding that this is a new century, that many things have changed in the last few decades, and will continue to change in the next decades. And some change is OK. Now is the opportune time for discussing new ideas and different ways of being a group of Disciples of Christ women in worship, study, and service. But remember, change frequently does not come easily or quickly. **Always Be Clear** about just what the **ROLE** of a leader isn't, as well as what it is!

You have accepted the call for leadership at the beginning of this new century. But you must also remember that first; you are a follower, a student, a disciple of Jesus,

the Christ. Be true to that calling. Engage yourself in a regular program of prayer, study and devotion. Then you will be better prepared.

Planning and Preparing for Leadership

The success of the DW/CWF depends on the extent to which the leadership is willing to plan and prepare with adequate deliberation.

Developing a Useful Schedule:

To develop a useful schedule a leader needs to know the exact nature of her responsibilities. She might ask herself such questions as: What meetings am I to attend? How do my responsibilities build upon each other and how do they relate to the responsibility of others? When does each task need to be completed?

Personal deadlines can be set for the leader's tasks. Are these deadlines realistic in light of other responsibilities? Schedule the entire year so that all tasks will be accomplished at its conclusion. Here are some things to consider as you develop your calendar for the year:

- Appoint a nominating committee two months before the election
- Receive report of nominating committee one month before the election
- Elect new officers two months before they assume office
- Appoint leaders for committees
- Attend district, area, cluster, or regional institutes, workshops, assemblies
- Set up a meeting to confer with outgoing president regarding ongoing program
- Meet with executive committee to plan calendar for the next year
- Look for *Annual Manual for Leaders*, distribute to officers
- Provide leadership resources for those with whom you work
- Consult with minister and others regarding possible DW/CWF goals in the new year
- Invite minister to executive committee meetings and general meetings
- Meet with budget/finance committee to plan budget
- Evaluate previous year's goals and the progress toward them

- Represent DW/CWF in ecumenical meetings (Church Women United Special Days)

Planning with the Executive Committee

Every leader plans meetings. The most important one is the first –the meeting to plan the year ahead. Outlined below are things to consider as you plan this meeting.

Preparation

Following spring workshops, spend a day in a retreat setting, away from routine pressures. This enables creative, productive and more complete planning. This kind of commitment now will save hours of frustration and patchwork planning later in the year.

- Allow enough time to accomplish planning for the year. Choose a time compatible with the schedules of those attending. This is a priority time commitment. Time given now will save time later.
- Review the ongoing DW/CWF goals and current goals of the congregation.
- Distribute job descriptions to members prior to the planning meeting for their review.
- Prepare a packet for each officer, including group leaders, of materials such as an executive committee roster, bylaws if available, previous year's calendar, a blank calendar for the new year, previous year's budget, blank paper, and other items that might be helpful during the planning meeting.
- After attending the Spring Event that relates to the International Christian Women's Fellowship (ICWF) theme for the year, familiarize yourself with new materials. Encourage the Study, Worship and Social Action officers to do the same.
- Have available flipchart or blackboard, markers, chalk, paper and pencils.

Building a Detailed Agenda for Planning Meeting

Worship—The leader needs to assign responsibility for worship for this meeting. Persons to consider might be either the outgoing or the incoming worship director. Worship which reflects the feelings of the participants at that moment is

most strengthening and sustaining. Questions to consider when planning worship might be: What feelings will the participants bring with them when they arrive? Will they be anxious, frustrated, overburdened, excited? How will the participants feel at the conclusion of the meeting? What would be a helpful theme to begin and end the planning and to set the tone for a creative year ahead?

Community Building—Allow time to get better acquainted and for personal sharing.

Review the agenda or plan for the day making adjustments as necessary.

Orientation—The new officer orientation is held at the first meeting of the executive committee, which is typically the planning meeting. As early as possible prior to the meeting, each member of the new executive committee studies all the job descriptions for a better understanding of the responsibilities and lines of accountability. When the executive committee members understand the interrelationships of responsibilities, they are able to function more effectively as a unit. Then the members discuss the following types of questions:

- Is this how I see my task?
- What would I add and/or delete on my job description because of my understanding of my task/office?
- Is this how I see the tasks of the other officers?
- To whom on the executive committee am I most closely related/accountable?

Inform group leaders and directors of study, worship, social action and membership that monthly reports will be gathered at executive meetings.

Invite the outgoing officers to come for the beginning of the planning meeting to share their experiences and/or develops a brief evaluation form for outgoing officers, including the following:

- Most helpful knowledge gained
- Mistakes to avoid
- Experience which was most helpful
- Basic things an officer needs to know in order to do the task effectively

Review the purpose statement for your fellowship in addition to the DW purpose statement. If your fellowship develops its annual theme around the current DW/CWF general program theme statement, review this as well.

Determine how your group will come to decisions. If using **Robert's Rules of Order**, present recommendation as a motion, obtain a second, have brief discussion, vote. If using **Consensus Method**, present recommendation, share explanation, have brief discussion, note apparent will of group, check for consensus, be clear about decisions. (See The ABC's of Leadership.)

Setting Goals—Prior to developing new goals, it is wise to assess goals from the previous year to determine if they were met and, if not, will they be a part of the ongoing ministry of the fellowship. Following determination of goals, developing strategies to implement the goals while enthusiasm for the task is fresh is important. Once goals and strategies are in place, a periodic evaluation of goals is necessary to check progress and determine whether strategies need to be revised. As goals are developed, some questions might be discussed:

- What needs have DW/CWF members expressed?
- What does the DW/CWF want to see happen in the next year?
- What is the Christian responsibility of the DW/CWF to the church, the immediate community and the global community?
- What changes have to be made to accomplish these goals?
- What tools are available to implement these goals?
- Will goals be carried on to completion or dropped?
- Should certain programs/activities be discontinued to make available time and energy for new programs/activities?
- What previous programs have produced the greatest interest and filled the greatest number of expressed needs?

Develop a comprehensive calendar for the year including programs, social action projects, fellowship events, etc. You might include some or all of the following:

- Regional activities
- General meeting dates
- Executive Committee dates

- Week of the Laity
- Church Women United Special Days
- Opportunities for the treasurer to give information about outreach and Disciples Mission Fund at the general meeting
- Date for nominating committee to begin work
- Date for receiving nominating committee report
- Election of officers
- Date to meet with the treasurer/finance committee to develop budget to support program
- Date to present budget goals and general plans to the fellowship

Assign responsibilities/tasks. Assign responsibilities/tasks to appropriate persons. Setting a deadline or time schedule for each responsibility is helpful.

Arrange for accountability. Decide who checks on what and whom, to be sure that the plan is progressing on schedule. Note: Responsibilities are interrelated. This checkup is not supervision but mutual concern and interdependence, which are inherent in responsible program building.

Summarize. Restate the decisions made. Writing these decisions on newsprint and posting is helpful.

Review: Review the agenda. Has everything been accomplished? If another meeting is needed, set the date and time now. If not, review responsibilities and lines of accountability.

Closing worship

Adjourn

Effective Meetings

HELPFUL HINTS

Setting an Agenda

The president, moderator, or other leader of the group builds the agenda ahead of time and makes it available to the executive committee, either by listing it on

newsprint or providing copies at the meeting. For less formal meetings, a handout of the agenda is not necessary. An order of business for the agenda might be as follows:

1. Call to order
2. Opening prayer or worship
3. Review and approval of agenda
4. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting.
5. Correspondence
6. Acceptance of written reports of committee members. A copy of each report should be supplied to each member of the committee. Committee members should lift up highlights of report and any action items.
7. Unfinished Business (The leader checks with the secretary to determine from the minutes which items have not been completed.)
8. New Business – for example:
 - a. General and regional communications
 - b. Discussion and action from committee member's reports
 - c. Formulation of the recommendations to go to the general meeting for action.
 - d. Evaluation of goals not covered in committee members reports
9. Closing prayer or worship
10. Adjourn

Keeping the Meeting on Track

- Prior to the meeting, familiarize yourself with the business to be discussed.
- Begin on time. Don't back up for latecomers.
- Keep the discussion relevant to the subject at hand. Call the group back when the discussion gets off track. Remember, there is a delicate balance between creative thinking and getting off track.
- Keep the business meeting moving so that each agenda item receives the consideration necessary.
- Post a piece of newsprint or have a piece of paper nearby to keep track of questions, concerns, issues that are not relevant to the current discussion but that will be addressed at a later time.

Physical Arrangements

- Make arrangements with the pastor or church secretary for use of the room.
- Arrange for sufficient light for planned activities.
- Set the room temperature to a comfortable level.
- Consider a variety of room arrangements that enable a more effective program:
 - Chairs placed in a circle** provide an intimate setting
 - Chairs in a square position**, better eye contact
 - Chairs in a semi-circle**, greater listening
 - Tables and chairs**, good work space
- Arrange for any audiovisual equipment needed and do a practice run to assure that it is operational. Remember that if you are in a large room, you will need a microphone even if the leaders think they have a voice that can be easily heard.
- Arrange for easels, newsprint, white boards, and markers if necessary.
- Arrange for other supplies as needed

What Goes in the Minutes

The notes of the secretary follow the format of the agenda. Minutes for formal business, committee, or event planning meetings might include the following:

1. Names of group, type of meeting, place, date and time of meeting
2. Indication of the major agenda items by underlining them or identifying them in the left margin
3. Names of the people present and the members absent (of a committee)
4. Any corrections and the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
6. The exact wording of motions, name of originator of the motion, name of person who seconds (optional), action taken on the motion (passed or failed). *Caution: Note the contents of a motion, read it back aloud, get corrections and understanding of the group that this is the wording desired.*
7. Exact wording of an action or any secondary motions or any additional decisions regarding the motion
8. Concise descriptions of agreements made when the business procedure by consensus is used
9. Main points made in discussions, especially in notes of the committees

10. Assignments/responsibilities for any members of the committee, noting name of committee member, responsibility assigned/assumed and date due
11. Reports presented. Get in writing copies of all reports presented at the meeting, along with the names of those who took part in developing the report. Also note any action taken on the report.
12. Conclusion: Respectfully submitted, Mary Doe, Secretary

BE BRIEF. BE ACCURATE. BE CONCISE.

Planning the Budget

Who

In a small fellowship, the executive committee constructs the budget. In a large fellowship, the finance committee, chaired by the treasurer and made up of the treasurers of each group, develops the budget.

What

The budget for DW/CWF is the estimated income and estimated expenditures for the coming year.

How

1. Estimate the income. Use income received during the previous year as a basis on which to start the budget-building process.
2. Consider the attendance and participation by the membership.
3. Anticipate an increase in giving.
4. Study the sources of income:
 - pledges by members;
 - regular monthly offerings;
 - special offerings or special projects;
 - individual gifts on a special occasion or for a special purpose;
 - other sources that are in harmony with the DW/CWF purpose.
5. Outline the expenditures.

Sample Budget

Disciples Mission Fund (May range from 51% to 90% of the budget)	
DW/CWF Resources	
Study	
Worship	
Social Action	
Membership	
Organizational Supplies	
Leadership Development	
Church Women United	
Local Church Concerns	
Global Women Connecting	
Other Fellowship Concerns	
Regional Retreats	
Workshops	
Quadrennial Assembly	
TOTAL	

Types of Meetings

Executive Committee

Meetings are held as needed, usually monthly or preceding a General Meeting if General Meetings are scheduled less frequently.

Purpose

- To conduct the primary business of the DW/CWF;
- To receive and discuss the reports of the officers;
- To establish and evaluate the goals and objectives of the organization;
- To recognize the concerns of the congregation which directly or indirectly affect the functioning of the DW/CWF;
- To formulate recommendations for actions to be presented at the DW/CWF general meeting.

General Meetings

In the traditional model, meetings are usually held monthly and last approximately two hours.

Purpose

- To share in program/study, worship, and fellowship.
- To provide opportunities for growth in spiritual life enrichment and educational development.
- To open doors for creative ministry.
- To provide educational and hands-on opportunities related to social action goals.
- To hold brief (ten-minute) business sessions as necessary, either at the beginning or end of the meeting. It has become increasingly popular to post minutes from previous meetings, executive meetings, and treasurer reports, bringing only those business items that require action on the part of the entire fellowship. While executive committee conducts the business of the organization, members at large may be informed of actions necessary and of opportunities and

problems confronting the organization in general. The general membership is provided with an opportunity to take part in any major decision making, yet their time investment at the general meeting is primarily for corporate and individual Christian growth.

Group Meetings

In the traditional model, group meetings are held monthly either prior to the General Meeting or on another day/evening convenient for each group. The ICWF study materials and social action projects are usually the foci for the group. In non-traditional groups, the focus could be any of a variety of study topics, a common handcraft, meals etc. For more information about small groups, see the Membership Development Module.

Purpose

- To provide a small group experience for spiritual life enrichment and educational development.
- To provide an opportunity to develop deeper relationships among members of the congregation.
- To provide fellowship opportunities.

Nominating Committee

Selecting a Candidate

- Read carefully the job description of the office to be filled.
- Be aware of the kind of experience necessary for the task or office.
- Use the Leadership Bank you have developed
- Be aware of the interests of women in the congregation. Often people develop skills in the area of their special interest and so can provide valuable leadership in these areas. Match the skills with the office or task.
- Match the experience with the responsibility. Even though a woman has not been active in the DW/CWF, she may have gained useful experience in another

organization or in employment. Offer her a chance to use this experience in the DW/CWF.

- Challenge women with an opportunity for growth and leadership. Often people become “comfortable” in one office or task and are reluctant to move to a new challenge. This reluctance keeps two people from growing—the woman who is reluctant to move and the woman who can grow by taking her place.
- When a person surfaces as the best candidate for the job, allow her to make the decision about accepting it. No member of the nominating committee can decide for her.

Approaching a Candidate

- Inform her of the nominating committee’s awareness of her unique gifts as they relate to the particular task.
- Be explicit about the job, beyond the information given on the job description. State details of the task to be performed, i.e. the time necessary to fulfill the task and the number of meetings she will be expected to attend.
- Give a copy of the job description to the candidate to review after being approached.
- Suggest that the nominee contact the person currently serving in this capacity for answers to any questions and to secure her predecessor’s continued support and guidance.
- Encourage the candidate to consider this task in relation to her own goals for personal growth. For the nominating committee to use words like “ought,” “should,” or “must” would be to play on the candidate’s guilt rather than to build on her commitment.
- When the candidate accepts the responsibility, the members of the nominating committee
 - support her as she prepares to fulfill the task

- suggest possibilities for appropriate additional training (workshops, retreats, mission/outreach conferences, academies, etc.)
- are sensitive to opportunities for praise when she succeeds

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a natural part of any group dynamic. Conflict is a part of moving a group to a common understanding. Conflict becomes negative when we don't deal with it in a positive way. Even though most of us do not like conflict or confrontation, we must find positive ways to address the conflict within any group.

Read through these scriptures as you prepare to deal with conflict in your community and think about the attitudes and behaviors we are called to in the scriptures:

“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”
(Eph. 4:1–3, NIV)

“There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (Eph. 4:4–6, NIV)

“Live creatively friends. If someone falls into sin, forgivingly restore him, saving your critical comments for yourself. You might be needing forgiveness before the day is out. Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed, share their burdens, and so complete Christ's law. If you think you are too good for that, you are badly deceived.”
(Gal. 6:1–3, *The Message*)

Look up the scripture references below, and note the conflict(s) that you find in the text.

Item #	Scripture Text	Parties Involved	Nature of Conflict
1	Matthew 5:23–24	<i>Brother or Sister</i>	<i>Unspecified Grudge(s)</i>
2	Matthew 10:34–36	<i>Christian’s Family</i>	<i>One believes, others don’t</i>
3	Matthew 16:22–23	<i>Jesus vs. Peter</i>	<i>Jesus’ suffering and death</i>
4	Matthew 18:13	<i>Jesus vs. Disciples</i>	<i>Bring little children</i>
5	Matthew 18:16–18	<i>Church members</i>	<i>Unspecified, perhaps intense</i>
6	Matthew 20:24	<i>Jesus vs. Disciples</i>	<i>Jealousy over James and John</i>
7	Matthew 23:1ff	<i>Jesus vs. Pharisees</i>	<i>Stubbornness to believe</i>
8	John 8:44	<i>Jesus vs. Pharisees</i>	<i>Jesus called Satanic</i>
9	Philippians 4:23–24	<i>Euodia vs. Syntyche</i>	<i>Interpersonal Conflict</i>
10	Acts 15:36–40	<i>Paul vs. Barnabas</i>	<i>Take/leave John Mark</i>
11	Galatians 1:10	<i>Paul vs. Galatians</i>	<i>Doubt Paul’s Integrity/Authority</i>
12	Galatians 2:11	<i>Paul vs. Peter</i>	<i>Follow Jewish Rituals?</i>

This shows us that conflict is a normal part of every church’s life and every Christian’s life. Spend a moment thinking of any other examples; first from the Bible, and then also from your own life. The entire Bible is in some respects a record of conflict—between God and mankind, between all mankind, and between the forces of good and evil. Since the Bible is a record of conflict, it is also a record of forgiveness.⁴

The Floor

The Floor is a conflict resolution model for two or more people. Choose a time and a place where you have freedom to speak openly. Choose the topic you want to talk about, and an object you will call “the floor.” This might be a pencil, a paperweight, a box of tissue, etc. Decide who will speak first and hand that person “the floor.” The first speaker will share her thoughts. The second speaker listens, preparing to tell the first speaker what she heard. When the first speaker is finished, the second speaker

⁴Copyright The Teal Trust, www.teal.org.uk, used by permission Also see the Christian Board of Publication Web site at www.cbp21.com for resources on conflict resolution.

then repeats the information she heard with no commentary. The first speaker will then acknowledge whether she has been heard correctly. If not, she'll repeat what was not heard. The second speaker will repeat the process of reporting what she heard. When this section is finished, the first speaker hands "the floor" to the second speaker for comment. And now is the time for the second speaker to comment on the first speaker's issues and share her own. The first speaker becomes the listener, ready to repeat the information heard. Again, if the second speaker did not feel as if she had been heard, she may repeat her comments. This process continues from one speaker to another until resolution has been found.

This feels like a very artificial method of communicating, but it allows for each person to have an opportunity to really share what he or she is feeling and practice active listening. And this process does take practice. You might choose to have a facilitator explain it to the group. The facilitator is there to guide the process, but does not participate in the conversation.

Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation

Importance of Issue⁵

As part of our process of discernment on racism, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has embarked upon a courageous and faith-inspired journey. This journey will help us to recognize, understand, and begin to dismantle the systemic racism within our denomination. We can celebrate the process that made us realize that racism is one of the most pervasive, disruptive, and oppressive forces at work in North America today, that racism is sin, and that when we work to eradicate this sin we must start "in our own backyard." The ICWF Executive Committee has chosen to actively participate in this process by funding an anti-racism/pro-reconciliation team.

⁵Edited from an article written by Kathy Jeffries for *Guideposts for Leaders*.

We *Must* Get There from Here⁶

It is, in the end, a call for wholeness. The church should reflect the love of Jesus Christ in everything she is and does. Christ's prayer for the church was "that they should all be one." Anything that diminishes or separates a portion of the body of Christ must be eradicated. Racism is a sin that corrodes the body from within. If we are true to our call as disciples, we will continue to strive for wholeness. There is no quick fix for racism. It will require time and a deliberate effort to dismantle and eliminate the racism that exists in every manifestation of our church. We have already begun. The work must continue.

It is difficult for many of us to embrace this struggle. Some see how far we've come and don't understand why people still cry "racism." Others see the condition exists but have no idea how to confront the problem. Some have wondered why, with the changes in laws and attitudes, the movement toward wholeness seems to be stymied. All of these positions are understandable. None are excusable. Ignorance is no excuse. We cannot accept that if we can't see racism, it's not there. We cannot write racism off as something too big for us to ever overcome. And we cannot keep addressing the symptoms instead of the problem.

In my experience with the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation training, one of the first points that led me down a new road of understanding was the definition we were given of racism. I was one of those perplexed by how things could get so much better while staying pretty much the same. Hearing racism defined as racial prejudice plus the misuse of power of systems and institutions was an "Aha!" moment. Something that I had always been aware of as a woman of color but could not name that was a fact of my daily existence. Now it not only had a name, but was tangible. And if it is tangible, then it is beatable! It becomes a matter of getting past the symptoms and understanding what is causing the symptoms. And it becomes a matter of recognizing that racism is sin, whether it is individual or institutional. And with this comes the realization that the ball is firmly in our court. We can no longer write racism off as something only God can address. It is true that only God can change a heart, but we can change a mind. And we

⁶Article by Kathy Jeffries.

can change systems and institutions. At this point then, if we are not part of the solution, we are part of the problem.

I have many times referred to the women of the church as the vanguard of the struggle to dismantle racism in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in the Church universal, and in the world. As with most manifestations of sin, those most acutely affected are the “least of these,” the poor, women, and children. But what is not so apparent is that racism adversely affects all of us. It corrupts and destroys. Racism is pervasive and insidious, and is in some ways so much a “part of the landscape” that we cannot recognize it for what it is. Racism is a justice issue and a righteousness issue. It cannot be educated away. It will take years to dismantle what took years to establish. So, sisters, today is the day to start!

What should we as Christian women do?

- First, we need to learn. If we are going to eliminate racism, we have to understand what it is and how and why it functions.
- Contact your regional office or Reconciliation Ministries in the general office and find out how to begin the AR/PR training.
- If your congregation or region has a team, ask about joining. Or if you are not interested in joining a team, ask about attending an AR/PR workshop.
- Encourage your congregation or region to sponsor one or more if they aren’t already doing so.
- Think about inviting two members of the ICWF AR/PR team or your regional AR/PR team to resource a retreat or learning fair.
- Be an advocate! It’s true for the church as it is everywhere; the squeaky wheel gets the grease!
- Ask what is happening with the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation initiative in your region and in the general church. Inquire as to how far we have come. Encourage continued progress.
- Click on the Reconciliation Mission icon on the homepage at www.Disciples.org for current information.

In the process of dismantling racism, the education piece is not the hardest part. What comes next will take the women of the church being armed with an understanding

of racism and the passion and determination to see the end of it. Some of us will plant seeds that we will see flower; some of us will plant acorns that those who come after us will tend and nurture. But we all must act. We cannot be in God's will and continue to let racism fester. We must pray. Pray for God's guidance. Pray for strength. Pray for courage. Pray for wholeness. Pray...study...act.

**“But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an
ever-flowing stream.”**

AMOS 5:24

The Leader Apprentice Ministry (Formerly THE ENABLER MINISTRY)

History – The Leader Apprentice Ministry, established in 1996 by Janis Brown as a leadership development program for African American Disciples women, is now aimed at equipping all ethnic Disciples women to serve not only in the home congregations, but also in the regional and general arenas of church life.

The Leader Apprentice Ministry is designed to

- encourage and strengthen participants through Bible study and spiritual disciplines and introduce participants to the women's networks.
- provide cross-cultural leadership and training opportunities to enhance talents, develop new skills, and affirm gifts and graces for ministry.
- provide history and current information on the ministries of Disciples Women.
- create opportunities for participants to become actively involved in resource development and networking events of Disciples Women.
- provide history and education on the structures and history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Convocation and the DW /CWF.

If you would like more information on this program, nominate a woman to the program, or find out who has been a part of this program in your region, contact the Office of Disciples Women (see www.discipleswomen.org or call (888) 346-2631.).

Leadership Web Sites

Web sites offer an abundance of leadership materials: Christian Leadership World (www.Teal.org.uk) offers materials on

- Leadership Definition
- Leadership Model
- A Leader's Character
- Leaders & Prayer
- Moving into Vision
- Influencing Society
- Enabling the Body
- Leading the Team
- Coaching Individuals
- Leadership Styles
- Leadership Skills
- Leadership Factbook
- Leadership Books
- Bible Studies

One page on mentoring offers:

- Coaching - Why should I? We're not a sports team
- How do I start helping people grow their gifts?
- Who should I focus on? I haven't time for everyone.
- What authority should I give away?
- Coaching - How can I? I haven't been trained.
- What about the whole church - the broader picture?
- Doesn't all this take too much time?

Also consider the following Web sites:

- Dr. Stuart Palmer of Deakin University in Australia (deakin.edu.au/~spalm/srp70733.html) offers a process for different hats a leader can wear with groups or problem solving.

- White Stag Leadership Development (www.whitestag.org/resources/sb217.htm) offers ideas and resources on sharing leadership.
- Seafield Research and Development Services (www.srds.ndirect.co.uk/leader01.htm) offers a variety of leadership styles for decision making and the Ten Commandments for Leadership.

Communication

When CWF was established in 1949, communication was accomplished over the telephone, through letter writing, newsletter articles and the mimeograph machine.

It is one task to create an excellent program, but it is another to communicate what that program is to the population of our churches. In the twenty-first century, technology allows us a multiplicity of methods to communicate. People need to hear things six times, preferably in six different ways, before it sinks in. The best way is still **personal invitation**. The next would be over the **telephone**, because it is still personal. **Newsletters** and **flyers** are still effective tools, but in a day of desktop publishing and Web sites, everything we send out needs to look well done and professional.

In communicating, we need to think about who is our audience. If our audience is women who do not use the computer, then we need to train ourselves in **direct mail** and **bulk mail**. If our audience is computer-savvy women, we need to use **Web sites** and **e-mail**.

Advertise projects, events, and meetings well in advance to the whole congregation and, when appropriate, to the whole community. Placing ads in the local newspaper or radio station, as part of the pre-movie advertising at a theatre, or on your own church's Web site can expand your audience. Most media outlets also offer community event listings, in which nonprofit groups can publicize events or meetings for free. Developing a database of women in your region is can be a valuable way to gain access to an inexpensive way to publicize events, activities, social action information, current legislative information, etc. Update the database regularly by sending an annual e-mail to the list to verify addresses. Hold a phone-a-thon once a year with volunteers from your cabinet or commission to call churches in your region and verify information.

Contact the PODW for samples of database and direct mail programs and information on how to develop a Web site. The following is an example of how the Department of Church Women in the Southwest is acquainting their members with computer technology. This mini-lab could be provided at any of your women's events as wither a workshop or as a drop-in location for women to use during free time.

Gigabyte Station⁷

(An Opportunity to Learn Basic Computer Skills)

During the weekend Regional Assembly of Women of the Christian Church in the Southwest in June, we plan to have a small computer lab set up for women who want to learn basic computer skills and how to navigate the Web.

Our hotel is providing us with a secure room and will supply, for a fee, a high-speed connection. Four women are bringing their personal laptops and will serve as the trainers. We will provide them with a short script which will help them guide women to several sites: The region's Web site, www.ccsw.org, the Disciples Women's page on that site, the national Disciples Web site, www.disciples.org, and Disciples Women Web site, www.discipleswomen.org. This mini-computer lab will be available on a come-and-go basis during free time. Each trainer will be responsible for taking her computer to her room overnight and bringing it back the next day.

We have decided not to have a printer available, but to have samples of the resources available. We will encourage the women to find a computer with high-speed connection at home for downloading, since currently some of the larger files are difficult to download on a dial-up connection.

In this same room, during our Focus Group sessions on Saturday afternoon, a member of the ICWF Communications Team will share the vision and we will begin to gather information for the database. She will use an adapted Power Point presentation to share the vision.

With this simple start, we know women will venture out and learn even more on their own, and encourage other women to take advantage of resources on the Internet.

⁷Submitted by Virginia Pingleton, Director of the Department of Church Women Christian Church of the Southwest

Web Site Mentoring

As mentioned in the Introduction to this manual, if you do not have access to a computer, this could be an opportunity to make a connection with women in your church to help you find information on the Web sites. It will give you the opportunity to build a relationship with women in your congregation who are currently not involved in DW/CWF by and give them an opportunity to learn about the ministries of DW/CWF.

Another idea for women who do not have access to a computer comes from the Illinois/Wisconsin Region⁸. Ask a woman in your congregation to be a “Web watcher.” A Web watcher’s only task is to keep abreast of what is on the Disciples Women Web site. She need not be an active member of any group, simply someone who uses the Internet with ease and frequency. When something new comes up, she can notify the leader of the group(s) and download it in paper form for them.

This takes advantage of our individual gifts without burdening someone with just one more thing. It also keeps someone who may not be very active in frequent conversation with the women’s groups and missions without making her feel that her inactivity is “bad.” You’ve just asked her to do something she loves to do!

Power Debriefing⁹

This group process is best used as an icebreaker to start conversation and deepen it quickly, or it can be used as an evaluation tool at the end of a meeting or conference.

Create a set of about twenty questions ahead of time. This is more than you need, but a longer list gives you options as a leader. If you are using this as an icebreaker exercise, these questions should relate closely to the content you will be covering, yet be open-ended. If you are using it at the end of the session, you are using it as a “packing tool,” helping people take home information. Your goal is to motivate the participants to do something with what they learned from your meeting/training when they return to their usual setting.

⁸Edited from an article by Shirley Martinson, staff for Women’s Ministries in the Michigan Region in the Annual Manual/Leadership Resource

⁹Article by Cathy Myers Wirt.

The two types of power debriefing are:

The *good idea exchange* and the *taking it home with power exchange*. The basic model is one of “testimony” and not problem solving. The idea is to get people to experience speaking in brief/focused sentences and to be heard by one person. The basis of this exercise is that everyone gets to talk and everyone gets to listen. This works because in other debriefing exercises, only a few people get to speak and many ideas don’t get spoken or explored. The whole group does not have to hear every idea in the room for the debriefing to be powerful. Part of this exercise is trusting the Holy Spirit to guide you to the conversations you need to create and experience. Any movement of spirit in the room affects the whole room. The other common aspect of these two exchanges is that they involve using time pressure to get folks to focus their comments – to get to the heart of the issue on the table.

Good Idea Exchange

Use a flip chart. Ask persons in the group to name one good idea they have received (if at the end of your meeting) or bring (if at the front of your meeting). Give them fifteen to thirty seconds to express the idea, *and no more than that*. Put the name by the idea, or the name of the person who suggested it. Tell people to pursue the idea on their own time with the person named on the chart. This method gives invitation to future conversations.

Taking It Home with Power Exchange

Explain to the group that you will be doing a different process. Compare it to speed dating. Sets of persons meet and have five minutes with each person to see if there is possibility for a relationship. The theory is that people will talk more deeply and quickly when time is limited.

Ask each person to find a partner using only eye contact and waving. Try to get them to *not speak* between steps – this makes it faster and maintains intensity. The idea is deep focus. At the same time, if group members do speak, as leader you must keep your attitude light. *Do not* express disappointment that they have trouble staying quiet, as that will disrupt them. Make non-insulting jokes about their having trouble following the rules; usually, they are trying.

When all are paired up, ask them one of your prepared questions and tell them they have one minute for both of them to have a turn answering the question. Do not give them thirty seconds each and butt in with the instruction for the other pair member to answer. Sometimes a forty-five/fifteen-second split needs to happen. While you *are* micromanaging their conversation at a deep level, this kind of extra tight management is too disruptive and may divert them. They need a tad of freedom in this tight process to move in their own conversation.

After a minute is up, ask everyone to find new partners, *again without talking*. Ask a related question, but be careful that it is not one that requires retelling something from the first answer. Otherwise, they lose time trying to catch up from the last turn.

Sometimes you will ask the twosomes to stay together for a second follow-up type question, but give *only one question at a time* or you will dilute the pressure and they will be simply talking. This technique does not work for more than one topic at a time; the gift of the process is FOCUS.

As leader, you can keep track of the time, but don't forget to simply cast your gaze across the room during each interchange, and pray for the partners as you see the expressions and intensity on their faces. They are engaged in holy conversation. Give thanks and rest in the joy of the moment. This keeps you focused and light and helps to fill the room with more awareness of the present Holy Spirit.

When it seems the exercise has run its course, or your time is up for some other reason, leave about five minutes to talk about the process itself and close it down.

Ask what they noticed/learned/liked/didn't like about the process. Ask them about one of these aspects at a time. Make sure they get to talk, and by now they are usually used to being brief. Reward the behavior of one-word or one-phrase answers. This process has several positive aspects:

- The tool teaches concise speech.
- It is respectful of all persons in the room.
- It has the advantage of not getting people stuck in conversations that are not working, because you keep moving the people around.
- It does not hold the room hostage to the person that talks too much.
- It does not allow people to hide in the room and not share their gifts.

- It works for extroverts who like to talk, and it works for introverts who like to talk to one person at a time.
- It trains extroverts to learn to be more concise. It trains introverts to speak their thoughts.

Remember: Pray before...during...after the process

And...

Have fun!