

Cinde Lucas Overflow Ministries

www.CindeLucas.com
cindelucas@hotmail.com 931-766-2536

PLANNING A WOMEN'S EVENT

WHY HAVE A WOMEN'S CONFERENCE?

It is estimated by some that 75% of church attendees are women. Many, if not all, of these are tired, worn and frustrated. Women especially are running non-stop with kids, work, & church and they have little, if any, time left for themselves. There is no substitute for spending time with God. While there are many conferences and ministry retreats for women, most women will not attend them. There are several reasons for this.

- 1) Most women are very BUSY. The thought of packing and driving doesn't sound relaxing.
- 2) Many women have small children, and they don't want to leave them overnight.
- 3) Women want something convenient and at their back door.

Women are more likely to attend a small, local event. A women's conference/event offers women an opportunity to come, sit in the presence of God, drink in His Living Waters and leave refreshed, revived, and renewed to fulfill God's calling on their lives so that they can impact their homes, workplaces, communities and churches with the Kingdom of God.

PLANNING AND GETTING STARTED PRAY and seek God for His guidance. Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing, and we should do no less. God knows when and where to have a meeting and He alone knows who needs to participate. Jesus said we have not because we ask not.

Time of year: Timing is a crucial part of planning. What are you competing with? Events such as sports, graduations, and church events should be considered. Another thing to consider is weather. Southern regions don't have to worry about snow and therefore can plan event easier in January & February.

Day or evening: This differs from place to place also. Here are some suggestions to prayerfully consider for your area. Friday night, Saturday 10 to 2, Saturday evening or night, Week night, a luncheon event. You may also want to combine some of these.

LOCATION: Pray about where to hold an event. While a church building may be more accessible, it sometimes limits WHO will come. If you are focusing on your church or denomination, then a church building is wonderful. If, however, you are hoping to draw from the community, especially the unchurched, then pray about having it at a local community or civic center or meeting room of some type.

CONNECT WITH OTHER CHURCHES: One thing I have discovered is that including others is a must. Don't try to do it ALL yourself. Invite other churches to HELP you decorate, promote, organize and participate. Another great way to involve others is to invite a groups in your area, (musical, interpretive dance, sign language, children's ministries, ECT), to come and share their gifts and talents (1 Cor. 12 & Rom 12). This will also encourage people from other churches to participate in the event.

Note: It's great to involve local UMW groups, but be careful not to label your meeting as a UMW meeting. UMW is a wonderful organization, but most women who are not actively involved will probably not attend if they think it is a UMW event.

ENTHUSIASM IS CONTAGIOUS: If you feel led to have an event, then you need to be excited and enthusiastic about it.

SERVANT MINISTRY

Prayer / Ministry team is the core of any event. This group commits to praying before as well as during the event. If there are special needs, they may be called upon to pray with persons, also.

Planning committee: It is good to have 3 or more persons involved in putting together an event. It is **IMPERATIVE** that women be involved.

NOT a UMW event. UMW is a wonderful organization. However, women who are not *actively* involved in UMW will probably not attend if it is promoted through and as a UMW event.

Praise and Worship team and/or leader will lead singing and may also be called upon during ministry time.

Ushers & Greeters to help answer questions, welcome and register people, show people around and take up love offerings.

Overseer: A pastor or other person designated to keep their eyes and ears open throughout the event, just in case any disturbances or problems arise.

Childcare provider: Check with local high schools and/or 4-H clubs for young ladies who will even **VOLUNTEER** so that they can fulfill their club duties.

Guest Speaker will bring prepare and deliver the message and pray with ladies during ministry time.

Set up & Clean up crew: There are people who actually like doing this. **ASK** and you shall receive!

PROMOTOTING YOUR EVENT

About 8 to 10 weeks before the event, you will want to begin promoting the event. Keep in mind that

- a) Women are busy, so they need advance notice
- b) Women are busy, so they need to be reminded

Local Newspaper will usually run a Public Service Announcement for **FREE!** Most all have Community Calendar spaces too. But do try to run at least 1 good size add to promote your event. Newspaper is generally most effective 2 to 4 weeks prior to an event.

Local Radio stations will usually make announcements for free. Their schedule will determine when to do this, unless you are paying for radio spots.

Mail letters to local churches inviting them to come, along with a flyer announcing the event. Call before you mail the letter and ask if they'll run the event in their newsletter. This is good to do about 6 weeks prior to your event.

Postcards are an inexpensive way to invite people. This is good to do about 4 weeks prior to the event

Call District Superintendent offices. They are happy to attach your flyer to either their mail list and/or their email list. This is good to do several times before an event, beginning about 10 weeks prior to the event. Be sure to ask that your announcement be put into church newsletters and/or bulletins.

FLYERS posted around the community are an inexpensive way to promote an event, but are not the most effective.

PRAY! PRAY! PRAY! *Go prayer team!*

SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

This is a list I have compiled. You may not need all of them and/or you may need to add your own to this list. Store items in plastic container to be used again at your next event.

TABLECOTHS (plastic or cloth)

DECORATIONS for: tables, room, and worship area

PLATES, CUPS, NAPKINES, FORKS, SPOONS, COFFEE MAKER

NAME BADGES & SHARPIE PENS

REGISTRATION FORMS (include name, church, address, phone, email & prayer request)

BATHROOM BASKET (filled with Tylenol, dental floss, lotion, tums, ect)

GOODIE BAGS: note pads, ink pens, bookmarks, ect

DOOR PRIZES & GIVE AWAYS.

SOUND SYSTEM & MICROPHONE

CD PLAYER

OVERHEAD PROJECTOR or POWER POINT SYSTEM

SCREEN

KEYBOARD or PIANO

(some musicians and speakers provide sound equipment and instruments)

FOOD

Consider your time and budget. I've seen just about everything, so there is no "set" way!

Salads, sandwiches, catered dinners, covered dish, even sack lunches. Sometimes the food is provided by the group sponsoring the event, sometimes the ladies are asked to bring a dish. Sometimes it is catered and tickets are sold. You will have to pray and ask what will be best for your event.

COST

The cost varies, depending on what all you do or don't do. Things you should budget for will include:

Advertising, Meal, Honorarium and/or love offering for speaker/s and perhaps musicians to help cover their travel, hotel, ect

Ways to cover cost of event

You may want to consider a small registration fee to help defer the cost.

A love offering may also be taken at the meeting.

Check with your Conference and/or District. If you are holding an event that will include your district, there may be money available to help you.

Check your church's budget too, especially the evangelism part. If you are outreaching to the community, there may be \$\$\$ that you can use to help.

Most newspaper and local radio stations will advertise in the event or news section for free.

Utilize your district or conference email and mailing list.

Submit a request to your church finance committee.

Ask local stores, beverage and food companies (Pepsi, Coke, Lays, ect) and church groups to donate items.

REGISTRATION

When preparing your promotional materials, be sure to include the name and phone number and/or email address of the person(s) to contact for information and to register. Registration is not always necessary, but it will give you a better idea of how many women you can expect to attend. You will also want to be ready with the directions to your event.

SET UP

Once you have decided on the date and the place, you will want to arrange the room and the day. If you are planning a meal, you may want to have tables set up in the room you are using. Or, you may want to have separate areas for the conference and meal. If you are using a church building, try NOT to do the meeting and eating together. Fellowship halls don't usually have good acoustics and there is usually not a good area for ministry and prayer. Make sure you have a place that women can come and be prayed with. If an alter area is not available, set aside a few chairs for the ladies to use.

Here is a typical schedule for a Saturday event, which can be adjusted to fit your needs.

SESSION 1

9:30 to 9:55 registration
10:00am Greeting and opening prayer
10:00 to 10:25 Praise & Worship
10:30 to 10:45 Drama, dance, special music
10:45 to 11:45 Guest Speaker

12:00 LUNCH BREAK

Games and/or door prizes flow better during this time than trying to do them along with the session time.

SESSION @

1:00 to 1:20 Drama, praise & worship, music
1:30 to 2:30 Guest Speaker

Include time at the end of session 2 (and perhaps session 1) for prayer and ministry. It is important for women to be given an opportunity to COME and lay their burdens down. Depending on the number of women in attendance, you may need more than just your guest speaker to pray for and with women.

For a Friday night event, just eliminate one of the sessions. If you have a meal, you will want to do it at the beginning of the event. You may also want to have a short break do a second session after the break.

FOLLOW UP Be prepared to follow up with the ladies who attend, especially those who are not actively involved in churches. You might want to send thank you cards along with a special invitation to attend your church sometime, maybe send them an invitation to special events; VBS, Christmas or Easter programs, ect. You also want to let them know that you will be praying for them, too.

KEEP A JOURNAL

It is good to keep a journal so that you will know what went well and what did not.

Keep addresses of churches and attendees. Also keep a record of the expenses incurred.

Keep phone numbers of newspapers, radio stations, drama teams, musicians, speakers, ect.

MAKE IT AN ANNUAL EVENT: While your first event will take time, prayer and commitment it will be a tremendous blessing in the lives of all those, including YOU, who participate. If you decide to make it an annual event, and I hope you do, it is good to have it around the same time each year. Women will look forward to your next event and they will inevitable invite others to come with them next time!