Introduction to Women's Ministries

Dorothy Eaton Watts

Leader Certification Program
Level 1
Women's Ministries Time Line

• 1844 Ellen Harmon receives her first vision.
• 1874  First Dorcas Society formed in Battle Creek, Michigan, by Mrs. Henry Gardner.

• Mrs. S. M. I. Henry becomes a national evangelist for the Women’s Christian Temperance Union.
• 1896  Mrs. S. M. I. Henry joins the SDA Church after attending Battle Creek Sanitarium for treatment.

• 1898  March 30, Mrs. Henry given a ministerial license by the General Conference. She begins work of Women’s Ministries encouraged by Ellen G. White.
• 1899  Mrs. Henry produced a weekly page in the *Review* called “Women’s Gospel Work.” She traveled extensively promoting Women’s Ministries.

• 1900  Mrs. Henry dies. Nine member committee continues a short while, then disbands. Organized work of Women’s Ministries stops.
• 1913  Dorcas Society becomes part of the Home Missionary Department, later the Lay Activities and then the Personal Ministries Department. It focuses on helping the poor.

• 1915  Ellen White dies.
• 1980  Dallas GC Session, President Neil C. Wilson calls for church to find ways to organize and use vast potential represented by women’s talents.

• 1985  Annual Council establishes Women’s Ministries Advisory Committee. Betty Holbrook is appointed Chair Person.
• 1988 Karen Flowers becomes head of the Women’s Ministries Advisory Committee. They formulate a mission statement for Women’s Ministries, the same one now in use by the WM Department.

• 1989 Karen Flowers presented a study on women in leadership in the world field to a Commission on the Role of Women at Cohutta Springs. The meeting recommended that the GC open an office of Women’s Ministries with a full-time director for Women’s Ministries.
• 1990 Annual Council, October 4, voted to open an office of Women’s Ministries. Rose Otis, elected the director of Women’s Ministries.
• 1995 Women’s Ministries given full departmental status at the GC Session in Utrecht. Ardis Stenbakken is elected as Associate Director. By the end of 1995 the following divisions had established a Women’s Ministries Department: AID, ESD, NAD, APD, SAD, SPD, SUD, TED, and SAUC.
• 1996 - EAD, EUD, and IAD establish a Women’s Ministries Department. First Women’s Ministries World Advisory held in March.

• Dorothy Eaton Watts chosen to replace Rose Otis who resigned to become a Vice-President for the North American Division.
• 1997  At Annual Council, Ardis Stenbakken was chosen to replace Dorothy Watts who resigned when her husband became President of SUD.
Overview of Women’s Ministries Programs and Resources

- Scholarship Program
- International Women’s Day of Prayer in March
- Women’s Ministries Emphasis Day in June
- Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day
- PALS Program
- Women’s Ministries Handbook
- Leadership Certification
• Resource Materials
• Seminars
• Newsletter
• Devotional Book
• So You Want to Begin a Literacy Program
• Women’s Ministering Evangelism Manual
• Women’s Ministries web site: http://wm.gc.adventist.org
• Abuse Emphasis brochure