



## New York Conference Women's Ministries

# Two women met for tea...

## Reaching Out to the Wandering

### Shepherding Outside of Church

Meeting the needs of women is a dynamic, ever-changing field. Inevitably there will be women who opt to 'take a break' from church. This does not mean, however, that we throw up our hands, look to the sky and say 'I tried Lord!' Now is not the time to give up, it is time to change your approach.

There are many reasons why someone leaves the church. Here are a few for your consideration:

1. **Disconnected.** While we all want to believe that we go to the best church in the district, it is important to remember that what fills our spiritual and social needs doesn't necessarily fill someone else's. A flexible church takes into consideration the varied needs of its members and strives to meet those needs rather than enforcing a stringent 'do it our way or else' attitude. Jesus met people's needs in such a loving way that they sought him out after running to get their friends, family, neighbors. That should be what our ministry looks like too!
2. **Inability to connect with the church's vision and direction.** Even great churches won't appeal to every person that walks through the door. Too big, too small, too legalistic, too friendly, too focused on missions, not mission-minded enough.....the list is endless of course! Adapting to a changing congregations needs, being in tune with members rather than being rigidly fixed on a 'my way or the highway' approach.
3. **Spiritual Loss.** As we meet the ups and downs of life our spirituality often changes as well. Some people weather storms clinging to a strong faith in God's divine direction, others kick and scream their way through trials, and some turn their backs on God altogether. Does God get offended with our responses? Certainly not! He continues to draw near, to place people and events in our paths that will bless and nurture us. You guessed it! As Christ's ambassadors we should take the same approach to all people coming in to and leaving our church.
4. **Relationships gone bad.** It is easy to offend and much harder to restore. Proverbs 18:19 says 'a brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle'. Whether an offense is real or supposed there is restoration work to be done. Again the Bible gives us counsel regarding how to handle offense.... 'If you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift" (Matt. 5:23-24). Extend the hand of friendship, seek forgiveness, find ways to reach out and embrace your sister.

So, where do you begin shepherding women who are wandering? I think you know. Run to Abba, tell Him your concerns, place all in His arms, seek His counsel, and trust that He has a plan for restoration.

**Heart Call: Women reaching women  
who are taking a break from church**

Is available at [adventsource.org](http://adventsource.org)

*For the Son of man is come to seek and  
save that which was lost. Luke 19:10  
You are in our prayers as you shepherd  
wandering women  
Blessings,*



Lynee & Tina

A Ministry for Every Woman