

# The New Church Year: Starting it Right

## Planning for Success

- Planning for the September through August church calendar should begin during the preceding summer. The earlier plans are made, the more likely promotion efforts are to be successful.
- Leaders of women's ministries should come to the meeting with records from the previous year's activities plus any evaluation information or suggestions that might have been gathered.
- The atmosphere of the initial planning session should be open with everyone able to express herself freely. A free-wheeling, brainstorming atmosphere where all ideas are welcome encourages the greatest creativity.
- Leaders should come with some ideas in mind. Members may be assigned to bring a list of ideas to consider in various categories, e.g., meal functions, mother-daughter events, outreaches for the unchurched, mission emphasis, etcetera.
- Consult the resource, *Building Women's Ministries: Blueprints for Women's Ministries Leadership*. This is a notebook giving 27 yearly plans from 27 churches identified as having excellent women's ministries programs. It is available for \$12.99 at [www.womensministries.cc](http://www.womensministries.cc) or by calling 423-478-7168.
- Browse on the above website for other resources such as: *Resource and Guidebook*; *T.I.P.S.* volumes I and II, and many other items.
- Work using a large calendar with as many of the local and state church dates filled in as possible. Consult the pastor and other church staff members as appropriate before advertising any potential dates. Overlapping dates can destroy both events.
- A theme may be selected to cover the entire year or each activity and event may stand on its own.

## Kick-Off Event

- The purpose of a kickoff event is to attract as many women as possible to your overall women's and girls' ministry emphasis for the upcoming church calendar year. This event usually takes place in late August or September.
- This first event should have some drawing card that will "hook" the ladies for the year. That, of course, will vary from church to church and culture to culture.
- This can be a time for recruiting volunteers for certain events, certain ministries, etcetera.
- There might be a "parade of ministries" highlighting what is to come. There might be booth displays, a booklet, PowerPoint presentations, skits, etcetera, to introduce what the church is planning for women.
- The format might be a meal function, a sleepover, a retreat, a seminar, a worship service with a high profile speaker, etcetera. The purpose is to attract potential year-long participants and to inform them of what is ahead.
- This initial, high-energy event should end on a positive note of anticipation.