



for clergywomen

THRIVING IN MINISTRY

CULTIVATING WELL-BEING WITH COACHING SKILLS





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Center for Ministry at Millsaps College is a partnership program between Millsaps College and the Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Center for Ministry's mission is to develop Christian leaders through lifelong learning. The Center's Thriving in Ministry program will support, resource, and empower clergywomen toward thriving during key season of their professional lives. The program will include small cohorts for personal connection, retreats for spiritual renewal and leadership development, group and individual coaching as well as Coach Approach Skill Training(ICF Accredited.)

A PROGRAM FOR CHRISTIAN CLERGYWOMEN



RESOURCES

Support, grounding community and spiritual renewal through personal connection, online group coaching sessions and individual coaching calls.



RETREAT

Two transformative retreats bring together cohort members for prayer, fellowship, continuing education, coach training and restoration.



TRAINING

Learning and using the basic skills of the coach approach and the art of well-being to create a culture of support that promotes vital ministry and pastoral well-being.



WHY CLERGYWOMEN?

Women remain less likely than men to lead the largest churches or to be senior pastors of mid-sized congregations; they are more likely to be associates; and they also receive less on average in compensation. The specific challenges clergywomen in leadership face are particularly concerning because they include a lack of opportunity for authenticity and membership in the larger clergy community, struggles in their relationships with significant others, challenges in attending to personal care and renewal, and difficulty in identifying role models and mentors, all of which the Flourishing in Ministry study (Notre Dame) identifies as extremely important for cultivating pastoral well-being.

This makes the challenges women face as they prepare for or transition into leadership all the more urgent, and even more important, to address.



WHY COACHING?

If you sense that faithful leadership today requires both excellence and wholeness, the Thriving in Ministry cohort is an invitation to practice a different way of leading. Coaching is not treated as an add-on or a technique, but as a way of being that reshapes how leaders relate to others, to their work, and to themselves. Through coach training, group coaching, and individual coaching, participants learn to release the exhausting role of fixer or expert and instead practice deep listening, shared discernment, and genuine curiosity.

This shift strengthens leadership effectiveness and nurtures holistic wellbeing. As leaders stop carrying everyone else's anxiety and surrender the need to have all the answers, their bodies settle, their minds open, and their spiritual awareness deepens. Coaching forms leaders who can remain present in uncertainty, collaborate rather than control, and trust wisdom already at work. In this way, leadership excellence and wellbeing are interwoven—each reinforcing the other—creating a more sustainable, spacious, and Spirit-led way of thriving in ministry.



U M B E R T I D E , I T A L Y

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program is structured in 12-month cohorts, made up of diverse participants. Each activity in the program builds specifically on research around pastoral well-being, especially that put forth by the Flourishing in Ministry Project and the Duke Clergy Health Initiative.

The program will include the following components for each cohort:

Diverse Cohorts

Large Group Retreats

Coaching

Coach Approach Skills Training



DIVERSE COHORTS

We will support designed clergy cohorts for clergywomen who are serving in pastoral ministry. The Center for Ministry's program will resource these groups to meet regularly, in person or virtually, over the 12-month cohort period, to pursue wellbeing and thriving. Grant funding will be used to resource the group to participate in two retreats planned and facilitated through the Center for Ministry. These Cohort groups will create an opportunity for pastors to nurture strong, positive relationships with other pastors, which are key to pastoral thriving. The composition of groups will include experienced clergywomen already effectively serving in ministry as well as clergywomen who have recently begun their ministries. All cohort members will gain the opportunity to cultivate their own lifelong learning, to receive continuing education credit, to spend time away on retreat and education, and resources to nurture their own thriving. They will also gain the rewarding experience of sharing their insight and wisdom with the other women in the group.



LARGE GROUP RETREATS

In addition to cohort learning sessions and individual and group coaching, the Center's Thriving in Ministry programming includes two retreats attended by all group members at the beginning and at the end of their 12 months together. These retreats ensure that participants will encounter important role models and mentors beyond the composition of their own cohort. These role models and mentors will be experienced pastors, scholars, coaches, or consultants brought in as facilitators, preachers, teachers, panelists, and guest participants. These retreats are also where cohort members will connect with one another, expanding the sense of belonging, and the opportunities to develop authentic friendships across both geographic and experiential lines. Finally, the retreat will include education and opportunities for reflection around personal and communal well-being, as well as 18 hours of Coach Approach Skill Training.



COACHING

During the 12-month participation period, we will provide clergywomen with seven 90-minute peer-group coaching sessions. Each participant will also receive 3 individual coaching calls. This coach approach is part of The Art of Well Being Coaching Course which invites clergy leaders to commit to simple, practical ways to cultivate positive energy, resilience, and creativity for adaptive and innovative leadership. This will support continued growth and learning, as well as the continuation of disciplines developed through participation in the Thriving in Ministry program.



COACH APPROACH SKILLS TRAINING

We believe every clergywoman will benefit by learning and using the coach approach skills in life and ministry. These skills are tools that can lead to living lives that are more Christ centered and having a greater impact on the world. The cost of the first two sections of the CAST training will be covered by the grant with an option to pay a reduced fee of \$700 for the final training segment and certification.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Applicants must be Christian Clergywomen (inclusive of femme-identifying nonbinary clergypersons) who are actively serving in a ministerial appointment within the United States. This includes local pastors, commissioned clergy, retired clergy, ordained elders and deacons. It is preferred that applicants will have completed at least one year in their current appointment.



WOMEN FINDING
CONNECTION &
COMMUNITY





WHAT TO EXPECT

Applicants must be willing to uphold the following
5 commitments over the course of the 12-month cohort...



EXPECTATIONS

1

REGULAR COHORT MEETINGS

Groups will meet with a coach each month for 90 minutes with 90 minutes of prep work. In the months that do not have a coaching session, groups will meet with the Program Director.

2

INDIVIDUAL COACHING SESSIONS

Each participant will attend three individual coaching sessions.

3

PARTICIPATION IN ONGOING WORK WITH THE COACH

During the duration of the cohort, each participant will be required to attend all coaching activities. Financial support will be provided from the Thriving in Ministry program.

EXPECTATIONS

4

ATTENDANCE AT
AND ACTIVE
PARTICIPATION IN
THE OPENING
COHORT RETREAT

At the beginning of the cohort period, there will be a retreat coordinated by the Program Director. This will bring together all participants in the cohort. Location and dates will be determined before the start of the cohort. All financial support will be provided by the Thriving in Ministry program.

5

ATTENDANCE AT
AND ACTIVE
PARTICIPATION IN
THE CLOSING
COHORT RETREAT

At the ending of the cohort period, there will be a retreat coordinated by the Program Director. This will bring together all participants in the cohort. Location and dates will be determined after the beginning of the cohort in coordination with the cohort participants. All financial support will be provided by the Thriving in Ministry program.

PARTICIPANT MEMORIES



REV. DR. BENETRA
MANGUM - JOHNSON

This has been a deeply meaningful experience for me. It has provided intentional space for self-care, and an opportunity to foster lasting sisterhood with women who truly understand the unique challenge of ministry. TIM has helped me strengthen my relationship with God through shared spiritual practices, vulnerability, and mutual support. I love this program and all the cool women I have had an opportunity to meet.



REV. RACHELE
BENEFIELD - PFAFF

She found the program, Thriving in Ministry, to be empowering being with fellow clergy women throughout the year to share struggles, celebrate joys and have a lot of fun.



REV. SANDRAS
ANDERSON

Thriving in Ministry has been a life changing experience and the saving grace for me, and the ministries of all the congregations that I shepherd.

PAST COHORT ACTIVITIES



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GRANT DIRECTOR

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FOR APPLICATION~ [CLICK HERE](#)
FOR RECOMMENDATION FORM~
[CLICK HERE](#)

*if you have questions, please reach
out to Rev. Sally Bevil*

I came so that they might have life, and
have it abundantly

John 10:10b