



WELS NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LUTHERAN LEADERSHIP

Rethinking Congregational Partnerships

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Churches often approach ministry by dividing the genders. There are instances where this is necessary to uphold scriptural principles. However, there are also many gospel ministry efforts where those complementary gifts are best used together. This practical presentation talks about how to better align the unique gifts of men and women within gospel ministry.

A. Why Do We Need to Rethink Congregational Partnerships?

1. A New Model
2. Format of the New Model

YOUR TURN: Can you name these?

A “co-worker” of Paul?

A spiritual influence on Timothy?

A servant of the church whom Paul asked to deliver an inspired letter to a congregation?

B. A Shift In Thinking

1. We Are Partners
2. We Are Better Together

**“Diversity is being invited to the party;
inclusion is being asked to dance.”**

-Kadi Cole

3. We Get To Show What It Looks Like

4. Statistics Don't Lie

YOUR TURN: Reflect on the partnership blessings. What are you most excited about?

C. Here's What You Need To Know

1. We Have Different Operating Systems

Thinking / Processing / Viewpoint	
Women	Men
Spaghetti Every thought and issue connects to every other thought and issue in some way. Life is much more of a process for women than it is for men.	Waffles Thinking is divided into boxes that have room for one issue only. The first issue goes in the first box. The second in the second box, and so on. Life deals with one box at a time and one box only.

Approach To Problem Solving / Action	
Women	Men
Connection-Oriented Thoughts, emotions, experiences, etc. are all connected making every detail important. These are sorted out through discussion and reflection. This builds connection with others and is a priority for women.	Goal-Oriented There is a preference for the "boxes" that offer success and have proven effectiveness. This approach focuses on the task at hand. This way allows for the decisiveness and flexibility to quickly move from one thing to the next.

Communication	
Women	Men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long conversation to explore solutions • Asks (many) questions to understand and connect • Gives advice indirectly • Relationship-oriented RAPPORT talk • Conversations are bonding events (shared experiences) • Uses and reacts more to non-verbal cues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on facts and proven success • Direct and short answers because the answer is already known • Gives advice directly • Task-oriented REPORT talk • Conversations are negotiations for status (action and storytelling) • Uses and reacts less to non-verbal cues

2. We Have Unique Internal Challenges

3. Seek to Understand

4. Meet on Different Terms

5. Study God's Word Together

YOUR TURN: What benefits do you see the opposite gender bringing to the way you do things?

D. What You Can Do to Avoid Pitfalls that Lead to Miscommunication

1. Lean into Clear Communication

2. Integrate Leadership Training with Spiritual Growth

3. Pair Gift Identification and Serving Opportunities

4. Be/Find an "Other"

	Male Mentor	Male Sponsor	Female Coach
Synod	Pastor Advisors	Adult Discipleship	WELS Women's Ministry
Congregation	CoM or MAT	Called Workers	MAT, Member, Connection Call

5. Consider your "people practices"

YOUR TURN: Questions

E. Next steps

(Re)Sources

Rethinking Congregational Governance - Jay Zahn and Hailey Meier

Heirs Together-Rich Gurgel, Kathie Wendland

Spiritual Gifts Assessment-Vallesky

Developing Female Leaders-Kadi Cole

Better Together-Danielle Strickland

The 5 Male Instincts-Chase Replogle

[With Gen Z, Women Are No Longer More Religious Than Men](#)

[Behind the Steep Decline in Church Attendance Among Women](#)

[GI Joe -Now I Know and Knowing is Half the Battle](#)

[The Transition Bridge](#)

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