

# Embrace Today

## WM DAY PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

*“We press toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:14)*

**WM Director or Leader:** IPHC Women’s Ministries has as its mission to provide opportunities for spiritual growth, to facilitate women in their respective ministries, to build positive relationships thru fellowship and service, and to network across denominational, organizational, generational, ethnic and cultural boundaries. These are some wonderful goals but how do we go about accomplishing all this? We have such different life experiences – affected, for example, by age, marital status, employment, income, children, and health. A 28 year-old mom with 2 small children and a 55 year-old business woman with no children have totally different needs and interests.

If we want to reach women with the message of Jesus Christ, we must be aware of these differences. Women are spiritually hungry. Did you know in a 60 country Gallup Poll, 82% of women said, “God is very important for my personal life”. And...almost 7 out of 10 female respondents (65%), claimed to be deeply spiritual. Women need companionship and to belong. Women need parenting skills and support from other parents. Women need encouragement, purpose, emotional support and fulfillment. Once we understand what women need and crave, Women’s Ministries can investigate ways to meet these needs and develop programs, seminars and retreats to draw in the un-churched (as well as a great venue for the churched). We can help...we can love...we, the women of the church, can be Today’s Women Touching Tomorrow’s World.

**Commentator:** Embrace Today is about being “real” Christian women as we boldly face today’s challenges with innovative and astute ministry tactics. There is a popular book titled Who Moved My Cheese by Spencer Johnson, M.D. This book talks about 2 mice, Haw and Hem, and the change that takes place in their maze. Each day they go to the same location in the maze for their cheese until one day they notice something has changed. Suddenly the cheese is no longer in the same place. Thinking it will come back, and in fear of moving into the unknown maze further, the mice wait but nothing happens – still no cheese. The mice discuss their options. Haw decides to move on – to start looking for the cheese in new places. Hem is still unwilling to leave his comfortable place in the maze – even though he knows the cheese is no longer there. The forward-moving mouse, Haw, after some time, finds a new source of cheese – better and more abundant than even before. But, still, Hem has not found his way from the old place. These mice are like us. The way Dr. Johnson puts it is “Movement in a new direction helps you find new cheese”. In our case, we get to decide if we are willing to launch out fearlessly into the maze looking for new ways to effect change in our lives, in our ministries, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The idea for this year’s program came from an unusual source. A Girls’ Ministries Director in one of our IPHC churches was teaching her class of teenage girls. She thought they were paying attention but picked up that something peculiar was going on. There was an undercurrent between the girls that had nothing to do with the class and everything to do with their teenage entertainment. She discovered the girls had cell phones under the table in their laps and were texting each other during the class. She was faced with choices...ignore it; let them know she was on to them and correct the behavior; or...capture their interest by using the very thing they are into and love to do. She wisely chose to integrate their texting into the lesson and formed a new bond as a result. From this event, the idea took root that we can be most effective when we recognize and embrace the reality of today and look for ways to love women and girls into the gospel of Jesus Christ by incorporating their own interests and needs.

Today, we have put together 3 skits demonstrating potential real-life situations. This is our version of a Christian reality show titled “Embrace Today”!

## **Embrace Today: A Reality Show embracing Christian ideals in today's world**

You will need women and girls for the skits, a commentator for the opening and closing, and one reviewer during the freeze (could use a different reviewer for each scene).

Select a few key ideas that you want to get across and discuss them with your actors from each scene. Set the flow of the scene, i.e., the order in which you want the events to occur. Discuss how you want the characters to interact and decide where you want to freeze the scene. Exaggerate attitudes somewhat so the distress/situation is really clear. These kinds of scenes do best when not scripted but ad-libbed. Your actors will need a few rehearsals to get used to “playing” off each other. Make sure to give them a definitive time for the scene and its replay (8-10 min total suggested since you need to give reviewer about 2 min). During the “freeze” have the Reviewer recap the skit briefly and suggest possible solutions (all pre-planned). Then, roll the scene forward with the solution selected (one that will be most effective).

### **Some Suggested Topics for mini-skits:**

- Missionettes in a meeting with their adult advisor. She is passionately explaining something and girls are pretending to listen but are secretly texting each other on their phones. What should she do?
- Christian lady is trying to convince a non-Christian friend to attend a WM event. She is using lots of Christian “buzz” words” when the pastor’s wife walks in. She listens for a few seconds and does...what?
- Family scene in AM where a single, working mom (be sure to use some language so we know she is a single, working mom) is trying to get everyone situated, pray over their days, lunches made, pickups arranged. Everyone is talking and arguing at once. Rides or walk partners arrive for the kids and all leave except Mom who just puts her head on the table and weeps over the stress of time/finances. Her rideshare partner (friend from church) walks in to see what is causing the delay and does...what?
- Mom overhears her daughter being pressured on the phone to go to a wild party with all her friends. The daughter, not knowing that Mom heard all, starts in with the pressure to go. What does Mom do?
- Church women are gossiping about another women whose fiancé was seen having dinner with a co-worker at the local Marriott when he was supposedly out of town. The woman walks up to the group and her best friend gets to decide what, if anything, to say or do.

### **Sets:**

- Make sure the stage is pre-set with all three scenes if you are not using a projection to change the sets. You could cover the ones not being used with a screen and spotlight the active scene.

### **Technological activities (if available):**

- Set the stage with different projection backdrops – such as a house scene, a classroom scene, etc.

- Take it to another level and pre-film about 2 minutes of all, or one, of the scene participants doing something else together. Project this film prior to their scene (actors could be frozen in the dark below the projection). For example, have someone pre-film the Missionettes at the mall hanging over the balcony, blowing bubbles and giggling. A 2<sup>nd</sup> example might be to pre-film Mom loading the family into the car for church with everyone talking, arguing, demanding at once. A 3<sup>rd</sup> example could be a scene between 2 teenagers – one trying to convince the other that it’s okay to smoke marijuana. A fourth example could be a scene between a couple of church members where they are discussing a church event and using all the Christian “slang” possible (such as born in the spirit, speaking in tongues, slain in the spirit, set free from sin and death, laying on of hands...etc.).

### **Music Suggestions:**

- Use music as part of the scene (like a boom box played really loud), teenager practicing for a play, or as a “remark” (such as the Jaws music if you want to interject a lighter moment when the teenagers are discovered texting).
- Use a choir practice at the beginning of the scene w/Missionettes. Then, when the choir breaks”, you show the girls headed off to the class.
- Use a soloist or small group of singers in between the scenes (to cover set/actor changes). They would sing something relevant to the previous skit (no break to intro them – go right into the song).

### **Social Event:**

- Plan a fellowship after the service. Use that time to pass out a brochure/flyer inviting ladies to attend future meetings. Make sure your next meeting (and thus the flyer) includes a fun and creative pursuit – a special speaker or activity that sounds inviting. Our church WM is talking about a day’s event with a train ride to Santa Barbara for lunch and shopping. It is a chance to bond with new women, invite co-workers/neighbors in a non-pressured environment. Another fun activity might be an auction using monopoly money (everyone brings a non-used item to auction) followed by a brief and community-friendly devotional/message (not more than 10 min). Step into the water – wade out a little bit deeper!

### **Other program suggestion:**

- For a smaller event, select 3 women with a real and relevant story to tell about how the Holy Spirit helped them minister to another person in an unusual and innovative way. You may wish to have a speaker tie the 3 events together with a commentary/devotional at the end of this event. You can still use the opening remarks if you wish.
- You may wish to cut down on the number of skits and fill in the time instead with a speaker after the skit.