

Are You Ready?

If you are reading this, it is likely that either:

- A. God, by His Spirit, has placed this call upon your heart
- B. At least one family in your congregation (perhaps yours) could benefit from the support provided by a mental health ministry
- C. Both

Assuming that the above is true, here are some additional considerations as you assess your church's readiness.

1. As you pray about your ministry, ask God to give you willing partners to help you. This is not a ministry you can carry out alone; others in your congregation may be sensing the same call.
2. You will need receptive leadership: The senior pastor should strongly support the development of this ministry.
3. You will need stable leadership: The leadership of your church should be relatively stable. Pastoral leadership should not be in an unsettled state when you begin mental health ministry.
4. You will need some expertise: It is likely that there is at least one person in your congregation with some level of professional experience in mental health work. Find the person with some background and assess their willingness to offer guidance, expertise and counsel. Possible professions include: psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor/therapist, school counselor.
5. Accessible facilities: Churches launching mental health ministries often start with traditional special needs ministry. While physical barriers are not necessarily an impediment to a person with a mental illness, your church space communicates a message about the kind of people who are readily welcomed. Eliminating any significant physical barriers in your facility prior to beginning this ministry may enhance the effectiveness of your mental health ministry.

Are You Ready?



-
6. Seek God's confirmation through prayer and study: We suggest planned times of prayer with others in your church who feel called to begin this ministry. Moving forward with mental health ministry will require the support of lay leaders in your congregation.
 7. A heart of trust: If God confirms this through prayer and study, trust in Him and "just do it" in faith and ask God to order your steps.