

Marriage Ministry Launch Checklist

Purpose

The Marriage Ministry Launch Checklist is designed to help pastors, church leaders, and ministry teams organize the essential steps required to establish and launch a biblically grounded marriage ministry.

This checklist may be used by churches of any size. The ministry does not need a large budget, a large team, or an extensive program calendar to begin. A church can start with its current capacity and grow the ministry over time.

Use this checklist to:

- Clarify the ministry vision
- Assess church readiness
- Identify leadership
- Select resources
- Prepare facilitators
- Organize logistics
- Promote the ministry
- Conduct the first ministry experience
- Evaluate the launch
- Establish the next steps

Section One: Establish the Ministry Vision

Ministry Purpose

- ☐ Identify why the church wants to establish a marriage ministry.
- ☐ Describe the marriage-related needs currently visible within the congregation.
- ☐ Determine how the ministry will support the church's mission and discipleship efforts.
- ☐ Identify the primary purpose of the ministry.

Possible purposes include:

- ☐ Marriage enrichment
- ☐ Biblical marriage education
- ☐ Communication development
- ☐ Conflict prevention
- ☐ Couple discipleship
- ☐ Premarital preparation
- ☐ Marriage restoration support
- ☐ Purpose and spiritual gifts development
- ☐ Couple leadership development
- ☐ Preparation for ministry service
- ☐ Develop a written marriage ministry vision statement.
- ☐ Review the vision statement with the pastor or designated church leader.
- ☐ Confirm pastoral approval to move forward.

Ministry Vision Statement

Our marriage ministry exists to:

Primary Ministry Goal

Section Two: Assess Church Readiness

- ☐ Complete the Church Marriage Readiness Assessment™.
- ☐ Review the church's current marriage, family, and couple-related activities.
- ☐ Identify existing programs that may connect with the marriage ministry.

- ☐ Determine the level of pastoral support.
- ☐ Identify potential leaders and volunteers.
- ☐ Review available meeting spaces.
- ☐ Assess available technology.
- ☐ Determine whether childcare may be needed.
- ☐ Review the church's communication systems.
- ☐ Identify available financial resources.
- ☐ Determine whether books, workbooks, assessments, or leader materials will be purchased by the church or participants.
- ☐ Identify possible barriers to launching the ministry.
- ☐ Develop a plan for addressing the most significant barriers.

Current Strengths

Current Limitations

Immediate Needs

Section Three: Identify Congregational Needs

- ☐ Distribute a marriage ministry interest survey.
- ☐ Invite married couples to identify their preferred topics.
- ☐ Ask couples which program formats they prefer.

Possible formats include:

- ☐ Workshops
- ☐ Small groups
- ☐ Classes
- ☐ Retreats
- ☐ Conferences
- ☐ Couple assessments
- ☐ Self-guided studies
- ☐ Virtual sessions
- ☐ Hybrid sessions
- ☐ Ask couples which days and times are most convenient.
- ☐ Determine whether childcare affects participation.
- ☐ Determine whether cost affects participation.
- ☐ Identify the most requested marriage topics.

Possible topics include:

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Conflict resolution
- ☐ Respect
- ☐ Emotional connection
- ☐ Biblical marriage roles
- ☐ Purpose
- ☐ Spiritual growth

- ☐ Financial unity
- ☐ Parenting
- ☐ Decision-making
- ☐ Intimacy
- ☐ Marriage restoration
- ☐ Ministry service
- ☐ Review the survey results with church leadership.
- ☐ Select the top three to five ministry priorities.

Top Congregational Priorities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Section Four: Secure Pastoral and Leadership Approval

- ☐ Present the ministry vision to the pastor or church leadership team.
- ☐ Explain the identified congregational needs.
- ☐ Present the proposed ministry structure.
- ☐ Identify the first recommended ministry experience.
- ☐ Present the estimated budget.
- ☐ Explain the proposed registration process.
- ☐ Present the facilitator preparation plan.
- ☐ Review confidentiality and referral procedures.
- ☐ Confirm the ministry's reporting structure.
- ☐ Receive approval for the launch date.

- ☐ Receive approval for promotional materials.
- ☐ Receive approval for the selected resources.
- ☐ Identify the church leader responsible for final decisions.

Approval Information

Pastor or Church Leader: _____

Date Presented: _____

Approval Date: _____

Conditions or Recommendations:

Section Five: Form the Marriage Ministry Team

- ☐ Appoint a marriage ministry director or coordinating couple.
- ☐ Identify a pastoral advisor.
- ☐ Recruit ministry team members.
- ☐ Confirm each person's willingness to serve.
- ☐ Review ministry expectations with all team members.
- ☐ Assign responsibilities.
- ☐ Establish a team meeting schedule.
- ☐ Create a ministry communication system.
- ☐ Establish accountability to church leadership.
- ☐ Pray together for the ministry and participating couples.

Possible Ministry Team Roles

- ☐ Pastor or pastoral advisor
- ☐ Marriage ministry director

- ☐ Coordinating couple
- ☐ Teaching facilitator
- ☐ Small-group facilitator
- ☐ Administrative coordinator
- ☐ Registration coordinator
- ☐ Communications coordinator
- ☐ Hospitality coordinator
- ☐ Prayer coordinator
- ☐ Childcare coordinator
- ☐ Technology coordinator
- ☐ Follow-up coordinator
- ☐ Assessment coordinator
- ☐ Referral coordinator

Team Members and Assignments

Pastor or Pastoral Advisor

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Marriage Ministry Director or Coordinating Couple

Name or Names: _____

Responsibilities:

Teaching Facilitator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Administrative or Registration Coordinator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Communications Coordinator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Hospitality Coordinator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Childcare Coordinator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Follow-Up Coordinator

Name: _____

Responsibilities:

Section Six: Define the Ministry Structure

☐ Determine the ministry's primary audience.

Possible audiences include:

☐ All married couples

☐ Newly married couples

☐ Long-term married couples

☐ Engaged couples

☐ Husbands

☐ Wives

☐ Couple leaders

☐ Ministry-minded couples

☐ Couples seeking enrichment

☐ Determine whether participants must be church members.

- ☐ Determine whether the ministry will be open to the community.
- ☐ Decide how often ministry activities will be offered.
- ☐ Determine whether the ministry will begin with one activity or multiple activities.
- ☐ Establish participation expectations.
- ☐ Establish attendance expectations.
- ☐ Establish confidentiality expectations.
- ☐ Establish facilitator accountability.
- ☐ Determine how pastoral referrals will be handled.
- ☐ Determine how professional counseling referrals will be handled.
- ☐ Create a preliminary annual ministry calendar.

Initial Ministry Format

- ☐ One-time workshop
 - ☐ Four-week class
 - ☐ Six-week class
 - ☐ Eight-week class
 - ☐ Twelve-week class
 - ☐ Small group
 - ☐ Retreat
 - ☐ Conference
 - ☐ Couple assessment experience
 - ☐ Leadership development program
 - ☐ Self-guided resource program
 - ☐ Other: _____
-

Section Seven: Select the First Ministry Experience

- ☐ Match the first program to the congregation's identified needs.

- ☐ Select a program that fits the church's current capacity.
- ☐ Confirm that the program is biblically grounded.
- ☐ Confirm that the program has clear learning objectives.
- ☐ Determine the number of sessions.
- ☐ Determine the length of each session.
- ☐ Select the teaching resource.
- ☐ Select the participant materials.
- ☐ Select the facilitator materials.
- ☐ Determine whether an assessment will be included.
- ☐ Determine whether a workbook will be included.
- ☐ Establish the expected outcomes.

Possible First Ministry Experiences

- ☐ Church Marriage Readiness Workshop
- ☐ Blueprint Series™ Overview Session
- ☐ The Respect Blueprint™ Study
- ☐ The Love Connection Blueprint™ Study
- ☐ The Marriage Purpose Blueprint™ Study
- ☐ Spiritual Gifts Assessment for Couples
- ☐ Marriage Purpose Planning Workshop
- ☐ Couple Communication Workshop
- ☐ Marriage Ministry Interest and Information Session
- ☐ Other: _____

Selected Ministry Experience

Title: _____

Purpose:

Target Audience:

Number of Sessions: _____

Session Length: _____

Expected Outcomes:

Section Eight: Select and Prepare Ministry Resources

- ☐ Review the selected book or curriculum.
- ☐ Review the leader guide.
- ☐ Review the participant workbook.
- ☐ Review all assessments.
- ☐ Review discussion questions.
- ☐ Review presentation materials.
- ☐ Determine the number of books needed.
- ☐ Determine the number of workbooks needed.
- ☐ Determine the number of leader guides needed.
- ☐ Determine whether digital resources will be used.
- ☐ Confirm permission to reproduce any materials.
- ☐ Order or print materials.
- ☐ Prepare participant folders.
- ☐ Prepare facilitator folders.
- ☐ Prepare attendance sheets.
- ☐ Prepare feedback forms.
- ☐ Prepare action-planning worksheets.
- ☐ Prepare pens, paper, name tags, and other supplies.

Resource Inventory

Resource	Quantity Needed	Quantity Available	Action Required
Books			
Workbooks			
Leader Guides			
Assessments			
Participant Folders			
Feedback Forms			
Promotional Flyers			
Other			

Section Nine: Prepare Facilitators

- ☐ Select facilitators approved by church leadership.
- ☐ Confirm that facilitators understand the ministry vision.
- ☐ Provide facilitators with all required resources.
- ☐ Review the lesson objectives.
- ☐ Review the biblical foundation.
- ☐ Review the teaching structure.
- ☐ Review discussion questions.
- ☐ Review assessment instructions.
- ☐ Review confidentiality expectations.
- ☐ Review participant boundaries.
- ☐ Review crisis and safety procedures.
- ☐ Review professional referral procedures.

- ☐ Practice the first lesson or workshop.
- ☐ Review time-management expectations.
- ☐ Assign specific teaching responsibilities.
- ☐ Assign specific support responsibilities.
- ☐ Schedule a final facilitator preparation meeting.

Facilitator Preparation Topics

- ☐ Ministry purpose
- ☐ Biblical foundation
- ☐ Lesson objectives
- ☐ Teaching methods
- ☐ Modeling
- ☐ Guided practice
- ☐ Couple discussion
- ☐ Participant assessment
- ☐ Feedback
- ☐ Confidentiality
- ☐ Sensitive disclosures
- ☐ Safety concerns
- ☐ Professional referrals
- ☐ Pastoral follow-up

Section Ten: Establish Safety, Confidentiality, and Referral Procedures

- ☐ Develop a written confidentiality statement.
- ☐ Explain that participants control what they choose to share.
- ☐ Prohibit public criticism or humiliation of spouses.
- ☐ Explain that facilitators are not professional counselors unless appropriately licensed.

- ☐ Identify the circumstances under which confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- ☐ Establish procedures for responding to threats of harm.
- ☐ Establish procedures for responding to domestic violence.
- ☐ Establish procedures for responding to child abuse disclosures.
- ☐ Establish procedures for responding to suicidal statements.
- ☐ Create a current professional referral list.
- ☐ Review the referral list with facilitators.
- ☐ Identify the pastor or leader responsible for crisis decisions.
- ☐ Protect participant records and assessment results.

Referral Resources

Licensed Marriage Counselor

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mental Health Professional

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Domestic Violence Resource

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Crisis Resource

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Additional Support Resource

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Section Eleven: Establish the Budget

- ☐ Identify available ministry funds.
- ☐ Estimate the cost of books and workbooks.
- ☐ Estimate printing costs.
- ☐ Estimate promotional costs.
- ☐ Estimate childcare costs.
- ☐ Estimate hospitality costs.
- ☐ Estimate technology costs.
- ☐ Estimate speaker or facilitator costs.
- ☐ Estimate room or facility costs.
- ☐ Determine whether participants will pay a registration fee.
- ☐ Determine whether scholarships will be available.
- ☐ Determine whether the church will subsidize materials.
- ☐ Secure budget approval.
- ☐ Establish a process for collecting and recording payments.

Proposed Budget

Expense	Estimated Cost	Approved Amount	Final Cost
Books			
Workbooks			
Printing			
Promotion			
Childcare			
Hospitality			
Technology			
Facility			
Facilitators or Speakers			
Other			
Total			

Section Twelve: Select the Date, Time, and Location

- ☐ Review the church calendar.
- ☐ Avoid conflicts with major church events.
- ☐ Review community and school calendars when appropriate.
- ☐ Select the program start date.
- ☐ Select the program end date.
- ☐ Select the meeting day.
- ☐ Select the meeting time.
- ☐ Reserve the room.
- ☐ Confirm room capacity.

- ☐ Confirm accessibility.
- ☐ Confirm restroom access.
- ☐ Confirm parking availability.
- ☐ Confirm childcare space.
- ☐ Confirm technology access.
- ☐ Confirm setup and cleanup times.

Event Information

Program Title: _____

Start Date: _____

End Date: _____

Meeting Day: _____

Meeting Time: _____

Location: _____

Room Capacity: _____

Registration Deadline: _____

Section Thirteen: Create the Registration Process

- ☐ Determine the maximum number of participants.
- ☐ Create an online or paper registration form.
- ☐ Collect participant names.
- ☐ Collect email addresses.
- ☐ Collect phone numbers.
- ☐ Collect spouse information when appropriate.
- ☐ Ask about childcare needs.
- ☐ Ask about accessibility needs.
- ☐ Explain the cost, if applicable.

- ☐ Explain the attendance expectations.
- ☐ Explain the confidentiality expectations.
- ☐ Provide the program dates and times.
- ☐ Provide a registration confirmation.
- ☐ Create a waiting list if needed.
- ☐ Track registration numbers.
- ☐ Send reminder communications.

Registration Goal

Number of Couples: _____

Maximum Capacity: _____

Registration Fee: _____

Scholarships Available: _____

Section Fourteen: Develop the Promotional Plan

- ☐ Create a clear program title.
- ☐ Write a short program description.
- ☐ Identify the primary benefits for participating couples.
- ☐ Create a registration call to action.
- ☐ Create a promotional flyer.
- ☐ Create a bulletin announcement.
- ☐ Create an email announcement.
- ☐ Create a text-message announcement.
- ☐ Create social media graphics.
- ☐ Create website content.
- ☐ Prepare worship-service announcements.
- ☐ Ask pastors and ministry leaders to personally invite couples.

- ☐ Ask current participants to invite other couples.
- ☐ Establish the promotional start date.
- ☐ Establish the promotional schedule.
- ☐ Establish the registration deadline.

Promotional Message

Program Title:

Short Description:

Participant Benefits:

Call to Action:

Registration Link or Instructions:

Section Fifteen: Prepare the Meeting Space

- ☐ Confirm room reservation.
- ☐ Determine the seating arrangement.
- ☐ Arrange tables and chairs.
- ☐ Create a welcoming registration area.
- ☐ Prepare directional signs.
- ☐ Prepare name tags.
- ☐ Prepare participant materials.

- ☐ Prepare facilitator materials.
- ☐ Prepare pens and supplies.
- ☐ Set up presentation equipment.
- ☐ Test microphones.
- ☐ Test projector or television.
- ☐ Test internet access.
- ☐ Test presentation slides.
- ☐ Prepare background music if appropriate.
- ☐ Prepare refreshments.
- ☐ Prepare childcare areas.
- ☐ Confirm room temperature and lighting.
- ☐ Identify emergency exits.
- ☐ Assign setup responsibilities.
- ☐ Assign cleanup responsibilities.

Section Sixteen: Prepare Participant Communication

- ☐ Send registration confirmation.
- ☐ Send program dates and times.
- ☐ Send location and parking instructions.
- ☐ Explain childcare procedures.
- ☐ Explain what participants should bring.
- ☐ Explain whether advance reading is required.
- ☐ Explain confidentiality expectations.
- ☐ Provide contact information for questions.
- ☐ Send a reminder one week before the program.
- ☐ Send a reminder one or two days before the program.

- ☐ Notify participants of any changes.

Participant Communication Schedule

Communication	Date	Responsible Person	Completed
Registration Confirmation			☐
One-Week Reminder			☐
Final Reminder			☐
Follow-Up Message			☐

Section Seventeen: Conduct a Final Readiness Review

Complete this review approximately one week before the launch.

Leadership

- ☐ Pastor or church leader is informed.
- ☐ Marriage ministry leader is prepared.
- ☐ Facilitators are prepared.
- ☐ Support volunteers are confirmed.
- ☐ Emergency contacts are available.

Participants

- ☐ Registration list is current.
- ☐ Participants received confirmation.
- ☐ Participants received reminders.
- ☐ Childcare needs are confirmed.
- ☐ Accessibility needs are addressed.

Resources

- ☐ Books are available.
- ☐ Workbooks are available.

- ☐ Assessments are prepared.
- ☐ Leader guides are prepared.
- ☐ Participant folders are prepared.
- ☐ Feedback forms are prepared.

Facility

- ☐ Room is reserved.
- ☐ Seating plan is confirmed.
- ☐ Technology has been tested.
- ☐ Signs are prepared.
- ☐ Childcare space is prepared.
- ☐ Hospitality is arranged.

Communication

- ☐ Final announcements have been made.
- ☐ Registration is closed or finalized.
- ☐ Ministry team received the final schedule.
- ☐ Church staff received relevant information.

Follow-Up

- ☐ Attendance process is ready.
- ☐ Feedback process is ready.
- ☐ Referral process is ready.
- ☐ Follow-up responsibilities are assigned.

Section Eighteen: Launch-Day Checklist**Before Participants Arrive**

- ☐ Pray as a ministry team.
- ☐ Review the program schedule.

- ☐ Confirm facilitator assignments.
- ☐ Set up the registration area.
- ☐ Arrange participant materials.
- ☐ Test all technology.
- ☐ Check seating and room setup.
- ☐ Confirm childcare readiness.
- ☐ Confirm refreshments.
- ☐ Place directional signs.
- ☐ Prepare attendance records.
- ☐ Prepare feedback forms.

As Participants Arrive

- ☐ Welcome participants warmly.
- ☐ Confirm registration.
- ☐ Provide name tags.
- ☐ Provide participant materials.
- ☐ Direct children to childcare.
- ☐ Answer logistical questions.
- ☐ Introduce ministry team members.

During the Program

- ☐ Begin on time.
- ☐ Explain the ministry purpose.
- ☐ Review confidentiality expectations.
- ☐ Present the biblical foundation.
- ☐ Follow the lesson plan.
- ☐ Encourage participation.
- ☐ Protect couple privacy.

- ☐ Monitor time.
- ☐ Address questions appropriately.
- ☐ Provide practical application.
- ☐ Explain the next steps.

Before Participants Leave

- ☐ Collect feedback.
- ☐ Record attendance.
- ☐ Provide follow-up resources.
- ☐ Announce the next ministry opportunity.
- ☐ Respond privately to participants requesting support.
- ☐ Thank participants.
- ☐ End with prayer.

After Participants Leave

- ☐ Secure participant records.
- ☐ Clean the meeting space.
- ☐ Store remaining materials.
- ☐ Record follow-up needs.
- ☐ Contact the pastor regarding urgent concerns.
- ☐ Conduct a brief team review.

Section Nineteen: Evaluate the Launch

- ☐ Review attendance.
- ☐ Review participant completion.
- ☐ Review feedback forms.
- ☐ Review facilitator observations.
- ☐ Identify what worked well.

- ☐ Identify what needs improvement.
- ☐ Review budget performance.
- ☐ Review communication effectiveness.
- ☐ Review registration effectiveness.
- ☐ Review childcare and hospitality.
- ☐ Review technology and facility needs.
- ☐ Review participant requests.
- ☐ Review referral needs.
- ☐ Prepare a written launch report.
- ☐ Present the report to church leadership.

Evaluation Questions

Did the program accomplish its primary goal?

What worked well?

What challenges occurred?

What did participants request?

What should be changed before the next program?

Section Twenty: Complete Participant Follow-Up

- ☐ Send a thank-you message.
- ☐ Provide promised resources.
- ☐ Contact participants requesting pastoral support.
- ☐ Contact participants requesting professional referrals.
- ☐ Invite participants to the next ministry opportunity.
- ☐ Encourage participants to complete their action plans.
- ☐ Provide a follow-up discussion question or activity.
- ☐ Ask participants whether they would recommend the program.
- ☐ Invite qualified participants to consider future leadership roles.
- ☐ Record follow-up completion.

Follow-Up Schedule

Follow-Up Action	Responsible Person	Due Date	Completed
Thank-You Message			☐
Participant Resources			☐
Pastoral Follow-Up			☐
Professional Referrals			☐
Next Program Invitation			☐
Leadership Invitations			☐

Section Twenty-One: Establish the Next Steps

- ☐ Decide whether the first experience should be repeated.
- ☐ Decide whether the program should be revised.
- ☐ Select the next ministry topic.
- ☐ Select the next resource.

- ☐ Schedule the next activity.
- ☐ Update the annual planning calendar.
- ☐ Identify additional facilitators.
- ☐ Schedule facilitator training.
- ☐ Review future budget needs.
- ☐ Develop a participant retention plan.
- ☐ Develop a leadership development plan.
- ☐ Establish measurable goals for the next 90 days.
- ☐ Present the continuation plan to church leadership.

Next Ministry Experience

Title: _____

Purpose:

Target Audience:

Proposed Date: _____

Resource Needed:

Leader or Facilitator:

Marriage Ministry Launch Summary

Church Information

Church Name: _____

Pastor or Church Leader: _____

Marriage Ministry Leader: _____

Launch Program: _____

Launch Date: _____

Number of Registered Couples: _____

Number of Participating Couples: _____

Launch Results

Primary Success:

Primary Challenge:

Most Important Lesson Learned:

Next Ministry Priority:

Final Launch Approval

The marriage ministry team has reviewed the planning, leadership, resources, safety procedures, promotion, logistics, and follow-up requirements for the proposed ministry launch.

- ☐ The ministry is ready to launch.
- ☐ The ministry is ready to launch with minor adjustments.
- ☐ The ministry requires additional preparation before launch.

Required Adjustments:

Pastor or Church Leader: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Marriage Ministry Leader: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Ministry Commitment

Our church is committed to developing a marriage ministry that is biblically grounded, practical, welcoming, responsible, and responsive to the needs of couples.

We will:

- Honor God's design for marriage
- Support husbands and wives
- Equip ministry leaders
- Protect participant privacy
- Respond responsibly to safety concerns
- Provide appropriate referrals
- Evaluate our ministry efforts
- Build according to our current capacity
- Continue growing as God provides opportunity

We recognize that a sustainable marriage ministry can begin with one clear vision, one prepared team, one practical resource, and one faithful step.