

What Happens When a Woman Is Called by God into a Leadership Role

The aim of the workshop is to support women who have a sense of calling into short-term or long-term leadership ministry. We will point to the biblical grounds of their ministry (in various contexts - church or other organisations) and talk about various phases of healthy female leadership (receiving the calling, getting equipped for the calling, getting spiritual support, the phase of standing faithfully in this role, time to stop and the phase of stepping down from that ministry, etc.). We will focus on the principles of healthy, non-manipulative, relational female leadership but also talk about its pitfalls, including burn-out and ways out of it.

Please note: *The European Leadership Forum seeks to unite evangelical leaders around the Gospel and the biblical worldview. The Forum does not take a position on secondary issues such as baptism, church structure, or the role of women in the church (complementarianism vs. egalitarianism) or even allow teaching on these topics. Therefore, this workshop will not advocate an egalitarian or complementarian position. It will seek to support and equip women who are called to leadership roles outside the church or men who want to help women in leadership.*

Dana Hanesova was born in Bratislava, Slovakia in 1961, where she was brought up in a welcoming Christian environment. She is grateful for having had the opportunity to study at a university (Information and Library Science and English) during difficult socialist times. In 1982 she married a pastor – joyfully following her most precious calling from God. During socialism both of their children – who would become ministers to churches in Slovakia - were born. After the Velvet Revolution, Dana was asked to teach English at a village primary school. In 1993, during the transition period of previous communist countries into democracies, she got the chance to study her dream field – education. She also started teaching at the newly formed Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission (DETM) at Matej Bel University where she has been teaching up till now. Her master's degree in education was followed by a PhD in 2003 in the art of teaching languages and in 2004 a minor in religious education. After several years of comparative research in the area of religious education in the European Union, she became a professor responsible for the teaching of religious education teachers. Dana has stayed in contact with primary schools via teaching R.E. and English to young learners at a Christian primary school in her town. Besides being a teacher, Dana has been a women's conference speaker, university researcher, and author of several books (e.g. about religious education in post-communist schools, educational programmes for the Roma minority, and making a shift from learning facts to learning to think). Her latest book *Teachers under the Microscope* was published in England in 2016. A special joy for her has been having opportunities to listen to and learn from children, students, and colleagues.

- I. Women - companions of men in *communio viatorum* glorifying God in this world
 - A. Created in **God's image**:

Gen 1:27: So God created mankind in his own image, in the *image of God* he created them; male and female he created them.
 - B. Saved to become **His children**

John 1:12: Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, He gave the right to become *children of God*.
 - C. Being made **co-pilgrims** – God's heirs and members of the Body of Christ

Hebr 11:13: All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were *foreigners and strangers on earth*.

1 Peter 1:1: Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ: To God's elect, *exiles* ...

1 Peter 1:17: Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as *foreigners* here in reverent fear.

1 Peter 2:11: Dear friends, I urge you, as *foreigners* and *exiles*, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.

D. **Called** and **empowered** by the Holy Spirit to carry out God's calling in various ministries via various gifts

Rom 12:6-8; Ephes. 4:11-13; 1Corin. 12:1,4,9,28; Rom 16

II. What does **the call of God into female leadership** mean?

A. How to 'hear' it? *vocatio interna* – *vocatio externa*, both under God's initiative (both short-term and long-term)

B. How to grow in it? Phases of the call into leadership:

1. getting equipped for the calling,
2. getting spiritual and other kinds of support
3. standing faithfully in this role and overcoming pitfalls/barriers/obstacles:

C. How to fulfill it and end it? Time to stop and step down

III. What is **healthy female leadership** and how do you nurture it?

A. What does it look like?

1. Full of love – non-manipulative

2. Full of peace – called, not driven
3. Full of joy – God-centred, not leader-centred - thankful, not dependent on circumstances (Hab 3:17)
4. Full of wisdom – based on the fear of the Lord, self-disciplined (Prov 1:7, Rom 12:2, 2Tim1:7)

B. How to nurture it:

1. By healthy relationship with God
2. By healthy relationship with own family, especially husband, if married
3. By healthy relationship with church members and colleagues
4. By healthy relationship with herself
5. By healthy attitude to ministry, work, and rest
6. By proper order of priorities and balance

C. Various leadership styles, their pitfalls and suggestions, e.g.

1. Participative
2. Situational
3. Visionary
4. Transactional
5. Value-based
6. Hierarchical

IV. Discussion

- A. Historic testimonies of three Christian women about their calling into leadership roles: Argula von Grumbach (1492-1554), Katharina Schütz Zell (1497–1562), Kristina Royova (1860-1936):

7. What was their calling?
8. What were their struggles and pitfalls in their leadership roles?
9. How did they overcome them, what was their healthy leadership based on?

- B. Our personal testimonies:

Suggested Readings:

Chambers, O. *So send I You: Workmen of God*. Grand Rapids: O. Ch. Publications A. Lmt., 1993

MacDonald, G. *Ordering Your Private World*. New Yourk: Oliver Nelson, 1985.

Madsen, S.R., Ngunjiri, F. W., Longman, K. A., Cherrey, C. (eds.). *Women and Leadership around the World*. IAP, 2015

Mckee, A. *Katharina Schütz Zell. The Life and Thought of a Sixteenth-Century Reformer* Vol. 1. Leiden: Brill, 1999, p. 40-41.

Nouwen, H. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad P.C., 1996

Schäfer, J. Argula von Grumbach. In: *Ökumenisches Heiligenlexikon*. 2016

https://www.heiligenlexikon.de/BiographienA/Argula_von_Grumbach.html Vogt-Lüerssen, M. *Frauenschicksale aus dem 15. und 16. Jahrhundert: Argula von Stauff (1492-1554) - Die kämpferische Reformatorin*. http://www.kleio.org/de/geschichte/renaissance/frauen/a_stauff/