

2015 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide

Presbyterian
Older Adult
Ministries



NETWORK





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A Letter from Our Co-Sponsor: Florida Presbyterian Homes

Dear Friends,

I first saw Maya Angelou at a LeadingAge conference in 2005. At age 77 she spoke to a packed ballroom about her outlook on life, aging and the power of the human spirit. I remember clearly how captivated I was along with the rest of the audience as she started singing "This Little Light of Mine". This same song describes the work of POAMN and the friends I have who are participating in your ministry, including Helen Morrison, Bill Young, Bill Cooley, David Drane, and Dick and Barbara Huggins. I commend you for all that you do to strengthen the church and serve those who are the oldest among us. When I think of the retirement community where I serve or the congregation where I worship, our ministries are strengthened through the participation of older adults. As I witness their dedication and their accomplishments, the words of the song continue: let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Florida Presbyterian Homes is a single campus retirement community located in Lakeland, Florida. We were started by the Presbyterian Church in 1955 to create homes where older adults could live in Christian fellowship. We are one of many Presbyterian organizations around the nation who are joined in membership through the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (www.pahsa.org). Together we offer a broad array of resources that may be helpful as you plan and execute your older adult ministries.

We are delighted to be a co-sponsor of the 2015 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide along with Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services, and Presbyterian Homes and Services, MN. Thank you for all that you do to strengthen ministries to older adults through leadership training, communication, networking and publishing this guide. You are doing work that truly makes a difference.

May God richly bless your ministry,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Hehn".

John M. Hehn
Executive Director

Florida Presbyterian Homes
16 Lake Hunter Drive
Lakeland, Florida
www.fphi.org

A Letter from Our Co-Sponsor: Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services

Dear Friends,

It all began in 1921, when a local minister of the Sidney Presbyterian Church joined a growing effort within the Dayton Presbytery to establish a home for older adults. With mounting support from other local Presbyteries, the group petitioned the Synod of Ohio to establish such a home in west central Ohio. The minister, Rev. Wilbert Blake Love, appealed to his congregation to support this campaign. Not long after, however, Rev. Love's 7-year-old daughter, Dorothy Love, was tragically struck by an automobile only a half-block from her home. Moses Russell, a ruling elder from Rev. Love's congregation, was moved by the tragic loss to donate a 294-acre tract of land in Dorothy's memory. Following the Ohio Synod's approval for the establishment of a home for the aged, the Russell land would later become the site of Dorothy Love Retirement Community, the first of twelve retirement communities known today as Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services (OPRS).

Built upon the principals of the Presbyterian Church, the same Christian values that led to Mr. Russell's generosity continue to guide our work today. We are proud of our ministry in serving older adults and we consider it a privilege to partner with other Presbyterian organizations in membership to the Presbyterian Association of Homes and Services for the Aging.

Just like the Dayton Presbytery over 90 years ago, OPRS recognizes the power of Presbyterian congregations to influence positive change in their local communities. As such, we are honored to co-sponsor the 2015 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide. It is our hope that this guide can serve as a resource for your members as you navigate the vast array of services for older adults. Mr. Russell gave a gift that inspired a generation of service. Within that same spirit, we know that each of you gifts something special every day. May your work be blessed.

Respectfully yours,



Laurence C. Gumina
President/CEO

Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services
1001 Kingsmill Parkway
Columbus, OH 43229
www.oprs.org



A Letter from Our Co-Sponsor: Presbyterian Homes and Services

Dear Friends,

Presbyterian Homes & Services (PHS) is honored to be a co-sponsor of the 2015 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide along with Florida Presbyterian Homes, Inc. and Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services. The mission of Presbyterian Homes & Services – *to honor God by enriching the lives and touching the hearts of older adults* – reflects the commitment and purpose we have in common with the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN).

Presbyterian Homes had its beginnings in 1946 when a committee, appointed by the Synod of Minnesota of the United Presbyterian Church, considered the current and future needs of older adults in Minnesota. In 1953, Presbyterian Homes of Minnesota was incorporated, the predecessor of Presbyterian Homes & Services. Margaret Paden, widow of a Presbyterian minister, stepped across the threshold on June 15, 1955 as the first resident of the new Presbyterian Home in Arden Hills, Minnesota. The Presbyterian Home was built on 20 acres of lakeshore property in Arden Hills donated by Lillias Joy, a life-long Presbyterian and a Sunday school teacher at House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Today, 5,900 employees and 2,500 volunteers serve over 25,000 older adults through 42 PHS-affiliated senior living communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. The PHS continuum of care reaches into the larger community through Optage[®] home and community services. As a faith-based, non-profit organization, PHS upholds our stated values of Christian Ministry, Ready and Engaged People, Operational Integrity, Service Excellence and Stewardship as measures of our faithfulness and effectiveness in our mission for God and older adults.

I commend the work of POAMN, its leaders and members. They reach across and within Presbyterian Church U.S.A. congregations and organizations to provide valuable resources for those who serve older adults. Together, may we answer the call to serve and uphold the spiritual, physical, social, and emotional well-being of older adults.

Together in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel A. Lindh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Daniel A. Lindh
President and CEO
Presbyterian Homes & Services
2845 Hamline Avenue North
St. Paul, MN 55113

P resbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network Frequently Asked Questions

Developing and Planning an Ongoing Ministry in Your Congregation

Church and society are faced with challenges shaped by revolutionary changes in the demographics of the nation and the world. Building an effective ministry to senior adults involves knowing the basic characteristics of boomers, middle adults, older adults, and senior adults. In particular how they relate to the church and spirituality. It calls for careful planning in deciding what action to take. Older adults must play a major role in deciding where the church will focus its resources.



Here are a few questions for you to ponder or use as you wish in your planning and evaluation process.

“With increasing numbers of older adults in our church, we need to focus more on their needs. Where do I begin?”

Specific information about the church demographics and age groups will help in the planning process.

What demographic/age group will make up the group?

What are the basic characteristics of your group?

What is the breakdown in the number of boomers, middle adults, older adults, and senior adults?

Does your church maintain an up-to-date data bank or information service regarding older adult services in the community?



Specify who will be responsible for the principle role in planning and implementing the ministry.

Is there a staff person (other than the pastor) or a lay person responsible for older adult ministry in your church?

Does a committee/council help in the planning of older adult ministries?

How do we raise awareness and generate interest from our session leaders?

In what ways can older adults make important contributions to the life of your congregation?

In what ways are older adults already engaged, involved, and included in the ministry of your congregation?

What are the areas that need to be addressed?

What does your church "do well" for older adults?

Accurate information regarding older members is essential to developing a holistic ministry in a congregation. Develop and approve appropriate surveys and then develop a plan for sharing general findings and comments with the pastor(s), session, and the congregation. You can find models at www.poamn.org.

Has an older adult survey been made in the last 4 years to determine needs and response of members to meet those needs?

If no, do you need an older adult survey form for members 55+?

In the planning process determine if there will be a caring committee to focus on specialized ministries with older persons facing problems.

Does your church currently offer regular support services and resources to older adult caregivers?

Does your church operate a systematic home visitation program for older adult shut-ins?

Does this include the homebound and those in nursing homes as well?



Does your church provide decisive encouragement for ministry and volunteerism by seniors (VBS, mission trips, visitation, mission projects, leading Bible study in a care facility)?

Does your church partner with other churches in meeting needs of seniors?

[This survey consists of excerpts adapted from Older Adult Ministry. A Guide for Session and Congregation, published in 1991.]

QUESTIONS TO AID IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

- 1) In Older Adult Ministry (OAM) what are we trying to do? (Purpose statement)
- 2) What are the specific matters with regard to OAM that we are trying to work on? (Issue)
- 3) What is a specific thing we want to accomplish in addressing an issue? (Goal)
- 4) How will we accomplish it? (Action Plan)
- 5) What are some tasks we need to do? (Objective)
- 6) Who will do each task? (Responsibilities)
 - a. When will each be done? (Time Frame)
 - b. What kind of help do we need? (Resources)
- 7) How will we know when we are finished? (Evaluation)
- 8) What does success look like, and how well did we do? (Evaluation)



[This survey is adapted from: Gallagher, Dr. David P., Senior Adult Ministry In The 21st Century.]



PRESBYTERIAN OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES OLDER ADULT SURVEY

1. What is your marital status?

Married Widowed Divorced Separated Never Married

2. What is your gender? Male Female

3. What is your age? _____ **Month** _____ **Day** _____ **Year** _____

4. How would you describe yourself?

Not active Moderately active Very active

5. Do you believe that you could be utilized more by the church? Yes No

6. Rank the following needs according to their importance to you (1 for most important, 6 for least important):

- _____ Socialization (interaction with others)
- _____ Physical activity
- _____ Bible Study
- _____ Mental stimulation
- _____ Spiritual growth
- _____ Support in areas such as health, finance, transportation, respite, visitation, etc.(circle)
- _____ Serving/contributing

7. How would participating in our church activities/programs benefit you?

- _____ Fellowship with other Christians
- _____ Meet new friends
- _____ Personal growth (emotional, Spiritual growth, relational, intellectual)
- _____ Learn new skill
- _____ Evangelism for friends/relatives
- _____ Entertainment
- _____ Support (in times of need and change)
- _____ Keep me serving
- _____ Other (please list) _____

8. How would you describe your involvement in volunteer activities (church work and/or community service)?

- I have been a volunteer in the past
 I would like to be a volunteer
 I am a volunteer now
 I have no interest in volunteering

Please list areas in which you have served: _____

9. As far as your level of involvement in volunteer work is concerned, which of the following is you?

- Under involved Just right Involved too much

10. The following are some examples of how we as older/mature adults might become (or already are) involved in service. Please check any area(s) in which you might be willing to serve.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital visitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Home visitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transporting the sick and disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible study and discussion leader |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer coordinator or prayer team | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour and travel coordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House sitting | <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other areas _____ | |

11. What activities/programs would you like to see provided through our church?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly or quarterly meetings or potlucks | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly or quarterly time of dining out | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible studies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly or quarterly catered meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Sing-along |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adult Sunday Recognition | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme dinner nights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intergenerational Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver Support Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver Classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Craft and/or demonstration classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational seminars/speakers | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group outreach projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Day trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge, Maj Jong, Chicken Foot Dominoes | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support groups (Alzheimer's, Parkinson, ALS, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events on Special Days, Veteran's Day, Grandparents Day, "Senior Prom" etc. | |

Other _____



12. What gifts, talents, and/or skills would you like to use to assist with this ministry?

13. What challenges do you face?

14. How can our church enhance/improve its service to you and your family?

15. Would you like to be part of a team who is serious about helping to plan events for our Older Adults? Yes No

16. Do you attend our events? Yes No

If yes, how can we enhance/improve this ministry?

17. How do you think our church views its midlife and beyond community?

18. Does your church have a Church Council/Committee/Team on Older Adult Ministries?
 Yes No

19. Does your church have a paid Church Staff Coordinator/Pastor/Director for Older Adult Ministries? Yes No

20. Does your church have a Church Volunteer Coordinator/Director for Older Adult Ministries? Yes No

21. Do you have any other ideas or comments that might help in this ministry? Your thoughts are important to us. Please use the space provided to give us your suggestions. _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer this Survey.

Optional Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____





A CONGREGATIONAL/COMMUNITY PROFILE

Name of Church _____

City & State _____

Date Prepared _____

Your Congregation

Age	Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Ages	_____	_____	_____	_____
80+	_____	_____	_____	_____
70-79	_____	_____	_____	_____
60-69	_____	_____	_____	_____
50-59	_____	_____	_____	_____
40-49	_____	_____	_____	_____
30-39	_____	_____	_____	_____
20-29	_____	_____	_____	_____
10-19	_____	_____	_____	_____
0-9	_____	_____	_____	_____

Men Women

How many older adults are

(1) living with relative other than spouses	_____	_____
living with non-relatives	_____	_____
living alone	_____	_____
(2) employed	_____	_____
looking for work	_____	_____
retired	_____	_____
(3) married	_____	_____
separated/divorced	_____	_____
widowed	_____	_____
(4) living in inadequate or inappropriate housing	_____	_____

	Men	Women
(5) do not have use of a car do not have access to public transportation	_____ _____	_____ _____
(6) able to go out only with help housebound bedfast	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
(7) have no relatives nearby have no living relatives	_____ _____	_____ _____

What are some of the most urgent or unmet needs of older people in your congregation?

YOUR COMMUNITY

	Men	Women
How many older adults live in the community near your church?	_____	_____
How many are		
(1) living with non-relatives living alone	_____ _____	_____ _____
(2) separated/divorced widowed	_____ _____	_____ _____
(3) living in inadequate or inappropriate housing	_____	_____
(4) do not have use of a car do not have access to public transportation	_____ _____	_____ _____
(5) able to go out only with help housebound bedfast in a long-term care facility	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____



YOUR CHURCH PROGRAM

List the organizations in your congregation to which older adults belong.

Which of the following activities/services are part of your church program with older adults?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Adult church school | _____ | Homebound Visitation | _____ |
| Fellowship groups | _____ | Telephone reassurance | _____ |
| Counseling | _____ | Pre-retirement course | _____ |
| Adult education | _____ | Santa to Seniors | _____ |
| Meals on Wheels | _____ | Intergenerational Event(s) | _____ |
| Death and Dying course | _____ | Health/exercise group | _____ |
| Adult Day Program | _____ | Day of Care | _____ |
| Respite for Caregivers | _____ | Art Class | _____ |
| Minor Home Repair | _____ | Older Adult Choir | _____ |
| Life Review | _____ | Mentoring | _____ |
| Game Day(s) | _____ | Defensive Driving | _____ |
| Classes/Activities | _____ | Caregiving Classes | _____ |
| Caregiver Classes | _____ | Volunteer Companion | _____ |
| Foster Grandparents | _____ | Senior Expo or Health Fair | _____ |
| Parish Nurse | _____ | Short Term Mission Service | _____ |
| Shepherd's Center | _____ | Social Networking with Seniors | _____ |
| Cards for Seniors | _____ | Widow to widow transportation | _____ |
| Care Teams | _____ | Counseling/group for adult children | _____ |
| Disease Support Groups: | | | |

List _____

Are there other ministries that are particularly needed?

Other _____

Is there an OAM Committee, Session Member, Deacon, or Committee Chair with responsibilities for older adults? _____

PROGRAMS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**Which of the following programs for older adults are available in your community?
(Mark 1 - located at your church; 2 - within walking distance of the church; 3 - not within walking distance)**

Senior center	_____	Long-term care facility	_____
Nutrition site	_____	Foster grandparents	_____
Shepherd's center	_____	AARP chapter	_____
Senior citizens' club	_____	Health screening program	_____
Transportation	_____	Senior community	_____
Home aid program	_____	Employment	_____
Adult day care	_____	Information/referral	_____
Community mental health center	_____		

Does your congregation have a special relation to any of these programs (for example, provide space, staff, volunteers, board members)? _____

Is there an Area Agency on Aging in your community/county? Is your church related to it in any way? _____

Are there other services or activities for older adults that are particularly needed in your community? _____

Thank you for taking the time to answer this Survey.

Optional Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



M odel Worship Service For Older Adult Sunday

By Rev. Mike Fonfara

Will You Celebrate the Older Adults in Your Parish on May 3rd?

For most Christians, the worship service is the central part of their faith. It presents an opportunity to gather to enjoy the Trinity, embrace friendships, strengthen their faith, grow personally, and enrich important values. Presbyterians know how to worship!

Presbyterians know how to value their older adult members, too! They form the heart of our congregations. Their presence, wisdom, role modeling, resource sharing, and love for the PC(USA) sets the tone for other members.

Each year, the General Assembly schedules the first Sunday in May as a special Sunday to celebrate the joy of our older adult presence and participation. Older Adult Sunday is May 3rd this year. Are you getting ready for this special worship day?

To help congregations prepare for Older Adult Sunday, the following is presented to stimulate worship ideas, help preparation plans, secure resources needed for worship, and fill Sunday, May 3, 2015 worship with joyful praise of God as well as older adult ministries.



P reparation Phase

Here are some ideas you might find helpful.

1. Begin planning now!
2. Gain pastoral and Session support (and funds) to host the Older Adult Sunday focus on Sunday, May 3rd.
3. Recruit a group of motivated members to serve as the planning committee.
4. Have this planning committee choose preferred ways of recognizing older adults and their ministries on May 3rd.
 - a. coffee hour before worship, after worship, or both;

- b. corsages for the ladies and a lapel flower for the men or other forms of recognition;
 - c. youth group members escort older adults to their pew seats;
 - d. recognize the oldest and longest members in worship;
 - e. provide transportation to and from home for older adults who do not drive; and
 - f. use your imagination to do the things that bring honor to God, say “thank you” to older adults, build fellowship among church participants, make for good worship, and allows people to enjoy the event.
5. Follow this old business adage. “Plan your work and work your plan!”

The point is made. Planning is crucial for any successful celebration.

Worship Resources

Pre-Worship Prayer:

God of All Days, we gather your presence to praise you and honor those among us who have longevity, experience, commitment, grace, and strong faith. Please join us in this celebration of Older Adult Sunday. Thank you for your love and gifts of blessed members. Amen.

Call to Gather: Psalm 42:1-4 (NIV)

As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.
² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?
³ My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”
⁴ These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how I used to go to the house of God
under the protection of the Mighty One
with shouts of joy and praise
among the festive throng.



Let us gather to worship God with joyful praise and festive hearts!



Hymn: (Since there are many hymnals used in PC(USA) congregations, choose a favorite one.)

Invocation and Prayer of Confession:

Almighty God: Look upon us as we join in worship and receive our praise. See the depth of our faith. Know how much we love you. Feel our pain over sins committed and Christian duties left undone. Please have mercy upon us in the name of Jesus. Receive our gratitude now and for all the days of our lives. Amen.

Scripture Text: Psalm 71: 14-18 (NIV)

Hasten, O God, to save me;
come quickly, Lord, to help me.
² May those who want to take my life
be put to shame and confusion;
may all who desire my ruin
be turned back in disgrace.
³ May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!"
turn back because of their shame.
⁴ But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who long for your saving help
always say,
"The LORD is great!"



Message

Hymn: (Like above, choose a congregational favorite.)



Recognizing Older Adults and Their Ministries (Done as previously planned.)

Benediction:

Eternal God,

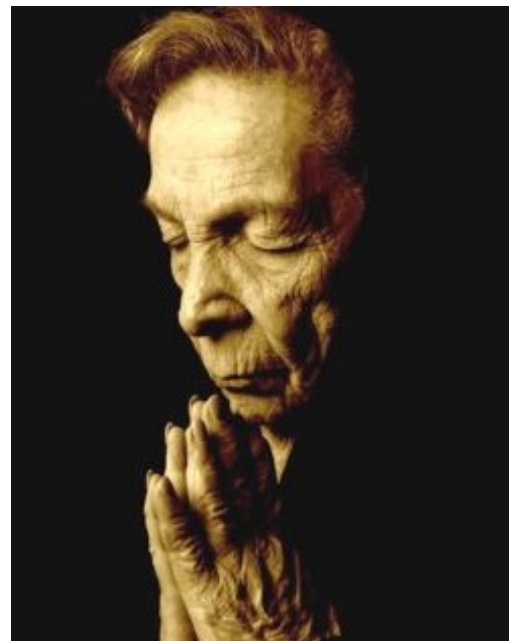
For the gift of this congregation, we thank you.

For the seasons of life, we thank you.

For the honored older adults in our midst, we thank you.

For all of us gathering together to fulfill Christ's mission, we thank you.

Eternal God, we leave with grateful hearts! Amen.



Older Adult Sunday, every first Sunday in May, presents you with an opportunity to recognize a great strength of your parish, those older adults who use their wisdom, energies, and resources to further Christ's mission. Begin planning now to make your congregation's Older Adult Sunday celebration an event that members of all ages will appreciate.

Rev. Mike Fonfara, D.Min., serves God's cause as an honorably retired pastor in Tampa Bay Presbytery (Florida) providing spiritual direction, professional storytelling, Christian meditation training, and local studies into the Celtic and Native American cultures from which he comes. He is an experienced workshop leader and brings enthusiasm as well as vitality to the classroom. Mike has served on the POAMN's Executive Committee in various capacities, and also is a member of the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors (ARMSS).



C

hecklist for Welcoming Seniors

Submitted by Rev. June Begany

As you look at your church building and think about your congregation's worship services and programs, use this list to help determine if you are welcoming for seniors. This list might also help you determine places where you need to improve. Not every idea or program is appropriate for every congregation, but this might help you plan for the future. Check each line where you believe your church has done a good job.

E

ntering the Building

- 1. Are there rails or banisters at the steps?
- 2. Can the thresholds be easily stepped over or can a wheelchair get over them without assistance?
- 3. Are rugs or runners secured or are there corners that could catch a walker, wheelchair or foot if someone wasn't picking up their feet?
- 4. Are steps adequately lighted?
- 5. Do step edges need to be marked or highlighted?
- 6. Are ramps or elevators clearly indicated?
- 7. Are there proper places to stow walkers or wheelchairs in the sanctuary so they are both out of the way of other worshippers but accessible to the person?
- 8. Are aisles wide enough to easily accommodate wheelchairs or scooters?
- 9. Does the church emergency evacuation plan include a section for helping those with disabilities leave safely?
- 10. Could an EMS team easily reach a person in need?

9 – 10 checks: Your building is fairly easy for seniors to enter.

7 – 8 checks: Your building is fairly welcoming but you need to take a closer look.

6 or less checks: Take a closer look at your building and consider some improvements for safety and making your building more welcoming.

W

orship

- 1. Is the light adequate to read the pages?
- 2. Are large print options for bulletins, Bibles and hymnals provided?
- 3. Are there hearing devices to amplify sound?
- 4. Are the treble and bass lines in the speaker system adequate to cover a range of voices?
- 5. What adjustments can an individual make if the musical instruments are too loud?



- _____ 6. Are the hymn books and Bibles easy to hold?
- _____ 7. Are the pencils or pens used easily held by someone with arthritis?
- _____ 8. Are options offered at times such as communion for people who have trouble walking?
- _____ 9. If a screen is used is it easily visible? Is the print of adequate size?
- _____ 10. Are print options offered for those with hearing impairment?
- _____ 11. Do ushers assist all people but particularly those with difficulty walking or seeing to their seats? Do they offer assistance at the end of the service to leave?
- _____ 12. Are wheelchair areas close enough for people to see and hear?

10 – 12 checks: Worship is easy for seniors

8 – 10 checks: Seniors might find some challenges

6 – 8 checks: You've made a good start but work needs to be done

5 or less checks: Seniors might find it difficult to worship with you

Coffee hour

- _____ 1. Are there trays with cup holders so a person could carry food to the table?
- _____ 2. Are there runners to assist someone with a wheelchair or walker in getting food?
- _____ 3. Are decaf options offered at all times?
- _____ 4. Are veggies, fruit and other healthful options offered?
- _____ 5. Is there a plan to make sure everyone is engaged in conversation?
- _____ 6. Are any options offered such as puzzles or crosswords for people to do?
- _____ 7. Are chair exercises offered for those who need to wait for another?
- _____ 8. Is there an awareness of what to do, whom to call if someone has a food allergy and has a reaction?
- _____ 9. If a screen is used in this room is it easily visible? Is it of high enough quality that images and words can be read from most parts of the room?
- _____ 10. Is there a microphone in this room? Is it well adjusted?
- _____ 11. Are there safe areas for children and are they at a safe distance so that those using walkers, wheelchairs or canes get safely to a seat without disrupting the play space for the youngest members?
- _____ 12. Are there structured interactions between the youngest and oldest members so people become part of a community together?
- _____ 13. Are bathrooms equipped with handrails? Are there stalls with higher toilet seats? Is it possible to install automatic flush, automatic towel dispenses or automatic hand dryers?

11 – 13 checks: You are a church that has made fellowship easy

8 – 10 checks: You're working at being more welcoming

6 – 7 checks: You've made a good start but there is more work to be done

5 or less checks: Seniors and others will have difficulty participating here



O^{ther}

- _____ 1. For evening events, are there drivers or a church van to pick up those wishing to attend but who no longer drive at night?
- _____ 2. Is the lighting that was adequate during the day still adequate for evening events?
- _____ 3. Do thresholds need different markings for evening use?
- _____ 4. Is there a defibrillator?
- _____ 5. Is there easy access (yet still safe for children) to a first aid kit?
- _____ 6. Is there easy access to a phone if medical help is needed?
- _____ 7. Are there people who know what to do in case of:

Stroke	Heart attack
Diabetic reaction	Dizziness
- _____ 8. Are the phone numbers for help easily available?
- _____ 9. Is there a way to notify relatives or those concerned if an older person has a medical event at church?
- _____ 10. Is there a need to be aware if people are taking medications with strong side effects?
- _____ 11. Is there an awareness of people who have strong allergies to odor such as from flowers?
- _____ 12. Is there a need for a church friend for each older person with a disability who would watch out for them?
- _____ 13. Can chairs be easily moved by people to sit or take to another place?
- _____ 14. Is there a system for regular phone contact or visiting for those less able to get out?
- _____ 15. Is there a process to add or drop people to the home bound or buddy list?
- _____ 16. Is there a process to send bulletins, service CD's/DVDs to those not regularly able to attend?
- _____ 17. Is there a readily available form for people to indicate the preferences they have for their Memorial Service?
- _____ 18. Is there a holiday meal served at the church or is there a way to insure that seniors do not have to have holiday meals alone?
- _____ 19. Is there a program, process or material to help people deal with grief? Is there any special material or help in dealing with suicide?

17 – 19 checks: This congregation is doing a great job of meeting needs

14 – 16 checks: This congregation has a good start at reaching out to others

11 – 13 checks: You've begun doing serious thinking

10 or less checks: You need to take a hard look at your programs and your preparedness

June Begany has been the Associate Pastor of Old Stone, First Presbyterian Church in Cleveland for the past 24 years. She has run their food pantry, worked with the Mission/Urban Wellness Committee and with Education. In addition June calls on hospitalized members and works with the Marriage preparation program. Previously, June trained tellers for banks in New Jersey and taught in the Cleveland Public Schools. June enjoys reading mysteries, knitting and her water aerobics class among other activities. She has been married to her husband Paul, an engineer, for 34 years.

Caring for Aging Parents from a Distance

By Michele Hendrix

If you live in a different city or state from your aging parents or family members, you may not be on hand to notice or even address any sudden changes in their health or day-to-day needs. More and more Americans are finding themselves in this situation. Though there are a number of contributing factors, there is an overall increase in our society's mobility that contributes to this surge in long distance caregiving.

Living out of state only compounds the logistics and shortens the time frame in which to deal with caregiving decisions. This presents an extra challenge, from additional time and stress to financial worries. Whether it's simply gathering information about your loved one's care needs, or coordinating senior living and medical services, caregiving at a distance involves a substantial investment of resources.

About one third of long distance caregivers are helping someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, reports a 2004 MetLife study. According to a MetLife/National Alliance for Caregiving report, it's estimated that about 34 million Americans are caregivers for an older parent — and of that number, 15% live one or more hours away from the care recipient. A fourth of long-distance caregivers reported that they were the primary or only caregiver; however, in many cases a sibling or other relative provided help.

Even seniors 65 and older are increasingly mobile, reports MetLife: The number of seniors who have switched states over the last decade has increased 65%. And when those seniors experience a change in being able to care for themselves, it's often up to the adult children living some distance away to coordinate senior care. Caregiving is not easy for anyone, not for the caregiver and not for the care recipient. There are sacrifices and adjustments for everyone. When you don't live where the care is needed, it may be especially hard to feel that what you are doing is enough and that what you are doing is important. It often is more important than you realize.

Many long-distance caregivers provide emotional support and occasional respite to a primary caregiver. Staying in contact with your parents or family members by phone, email, or Skype might also take some pressure off the relatives who live close to your loved ones. Long-distance caregivers can play a part in arranging for professional caregivers, hiring home health and nursing aides, finding resources, or locating a care facility.



Some long-distance caregivers find they can be helpful by handling things online - locating helpful resources, researching health problems or medicines, paying bills, or keeping family and friends updated. There are some long-distance caregivers who help a parent pay for or towards care, while others step in to manage finances. Keep in mind that some of the continuum of care facilities will also offer a week of care for your loved one so that family caregivers can have a short respite break.

Communication is an important aspect to coordinating a loved one's care. Set up schedules and assign each family member a specific role of responsibility. Think about your schedules and how you might adapt them to give respite to a primary caregiver or to coordinate holiday and vacation times. I make several trips a year to Alabama to see my mom living in a wonderful care facility located on the church property. While I am there I also provide encouragement, support, relief, and respite to my sister and her family who lives about 45 minutes from our mom.

Being a caregiver, even a long-distance caregiver, can be very rewarding. It also can leave you frequently exposed to stressors like family dynamics, a disruption in the household, financial worry and changes in roles, routines and health conditions. Some families find that it works to have the



long-distance caregiver come to town while the primary caregiver is on a family vacation. Many families report that offering appreciation, reassurance, and positive feedback to the primary caregiver is an important, but sometimes forgotten contribution.

Long-distance caregivers can be helpful no matter how far away they live. There is no one right way to be a caregiver; everyone's situation is different. You will find that, among a host of things, family dynamics, financial resources and the ability of your parent(s) to provide guidance for the support that they desire will shape your

situation. Coordinating and researching senior care and resources can be a huge challenge even in the best of circumstances. There are many challenges one faces when taking care of aging parents from a distance. When you add in the factor of distance, there are additional issues that may crop up.

Get organized. Compile notes about your loved one's medical condition and any legal or financial issues. Include contact numbers, insurance information, account numbers and other important details. Share this information with other family members. It is important for everyone to be in the loop.

Take care of necessary paperwork. Know where to find all legal, financial, and insurance documents, including birth certificates, social security cards, marriage or divorce decrees, wills, and power of attorney before an emergency happens. Also, know where to find bank accounts, titles, sources of income and obligations, and auto, life, homeowner's, and medical insurance papers. Review these documents for accuracy and update them if necessary.



Research your loved one's illness and treatment. This will help you understand what your loved one is going through, the course of the illness, what you can do to prevent crises and how to assist with disease management. It might also make it easier to talk to your loved one's doctors.

Kee in touch with your loved one's providers. In coordination with your loved one and his or her other caregivers, schedule conference calls with doctors or other health care providers to keep on top of changes in your loved one's health. Be sure to have your loved one sign a release allowing the doctor to discuss medical issues with you - and keep a backup copy in your files.



Ask your loved one's friends or church for help. Understand long-distance caregiving is not a one-person job. Long-distance caregivers should assemble a team that includes at least one set of local eyes and ears. Whether that is figuring it out with cousins in your hometown, or friends of the family, or hiring people, you are going to need additional support. Stay in touch with your loved one's friends, neighbors, or church family. If possible, ask them to regularly check in on or visit your loved one. They might be able to give you insight and information that can help you understand what's going on with your loved one on a regular basis.

Contact the aging network. Contact the local Department on Aging in your relative's community. This agency can help you identify helpful services, including obtaining a caseworker. Use the National Eldercare Locator Service at (800) 677-1116 to find local aging agencies.

Seek professional help. If necessary, hire someone to help with meals, personal care and other needs. A geriatric care manager or social worker also might be helpful in organizing your loved one's care.

Communicate and schedule regular family meetings. As a long-distance caregiver, you may coordinate many moving parts. Set regular check-in times to discuss your loved one's care at an online family meeting. Involve family and friends in the check in and discussion. Phone, Skype, or Web Chat can easily arrange this. Discuss your goals, air feelings and divide up duties. Appoint someone to summarize the decisions made and distribute notes after the meeting. Be sure to include the loved one in need of care in the decision-making process.



Encourage your family caregiver to network with others by joining a support group – and you join one too. This can be an important outlet and means of encouragement for both of you to consider. It is helpful to share information, and receive support from others who are experiencing many of the same conditions and challenges. Joining an online community support group can also help you connect to others experiencing many of the same issues and concerns.

Plan for emergencies. Set aside time and money in case you need to make unexpected visits to help your loved one. Consider inquiring about taking unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Regularly check to see if they need specific help. When asked, most caregivers tell church members they are “doing okay” and don’t need help. However, if a specific action plan is in place, most caregivers will accept the offer. Be sure to set a specific date. If you don’t, they will not likely take you up on your offer. Try taking some of the pressure off your family member who lives in the same town with your loved one who needs care.

Stay in touch. Send photos to your loved one and to your family. Arrange to have photos sent to you as well so you can see how they are doing. Try sending your loved ones short digital movies of yourself. Send cards or e-cards. Set a time each week for phone calls with both of your loved ones – the care recipient and the family caregiver. Acknowledge their efforts and celebrate even the small successes with them.

Caregivers need your prayers. Maintain constant contact with caregivers asking how you may pray more specifically for their needs as well as for the family member for whom they are caring. Follow up on those prayer needs and become an advocate for helping meet some of those needs.



If you are a long-distance caregiver, you are definitely not alone. There may be as many as 7 million people in your same situation in the United States including more than three million Baby Boomers, that provide or manage care for a relative or friend over the age of 55 who lives at least an hour away. That is according to the “Handbook for Long-Distance Caregivers” according to the National Institute on Aging. And you don’t have to live across the country to be a “long-distance” caregiver. Anyone who lives an hour or more from the person they are caring for is considered a long-distance caregiver.

Be kind to yourself. Living out of town does not mean you aren't involved or that you don't care. Get support by connecting with others who are long-distance caregivers through a support group or an online community. There are no simple answers or solutions. Each person's situation is different. Each child has a different relationship with his or her parent, and this may also determine the level of your involvement. You need to think about your parent's needs and your own needs as well.



Once you've had enough time to really assess what the true needs of a loved one are, you'll probably be able to create a really solid plan of action and care for them, even though there may be thousands of miles between you. Planning for the future, continually gathering information, and taking care of what's needed right now are the three main areas of focus for a long-distance caregiver, and while it may be stressful, it's not impossible, especially if you remember that you don't have to take this walk alone.



The good news is that with so many of us involved in care from a distance, there's lots of information to help. Here are a few additional sites I used as a reference for this article offering resources, checklists, and specific tips to help you in your long-distance caregiving journey.

Administration on Aging's Eldercare Locator. Helps to find local resources for the elderly. Phone: 800-677-1116. Website: www.eldercare.gov

AARP - Tips for the Long-Distance Caregiver. Helpful tips to keep in mind while contemplating caring for your parent from a distance. Website: http://www.aarp.org/relationships/caregiving-resource-center/info-09-2010/pc_tips_for_long_distance_caregiver.html

be Smart. be Well. Provides practical information about long-distance caregiving. Website: besmartbewell.com/caregiving/long-distance-caregiving

CareZone. A simple online tool to take care of yourself and your family. Keep everything organized and easily coordinate with the people that matter to you. Website: www.carezone.com

Children of Aging Parents. Provides information, referral service and educational outreach. Phone: 800-227-7294. Website: www.caps4caregivers.org

ElderLawAnswers. Provides news and explanations of Medicaid coverage of long-term care, Medicare benefits, estate planning, guardianship, and other legal issues affecting seniors. Website: www.elderlawanswers.com



Family Caregiver Alliance. Provides information, education, services, research and advocacy for caregivers. Phone: 800-445-8106. Website: www.caregiver.org

The MetLife Caregiving Cost Study: Productivity. Conversation that focuses on issues of family caregiving. Website: www.metlife.com/.../mmi-caregiver-cost-study-productivity.pdf

Morningside Ministry – mmLearn.org. Online training and information for caregivers. Improving the quality of care received by older adults. Website: www.mmlearn.org

National Council on Aging Benefits Check-Up. Checks eligibility to receive benefits. Website: www.benefitscheckup.org

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers. Locates geriatric care managers in your area. Phone: 520-881-8008. Website: www.caremanager.org

National Eldercare Locator Service. The Eldercare Locator, a public service of the US Administration on Aging and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, can help find resources for older adults in any community in the United States. Phone: 1-800-677-1116. Website: www.eldercare.gov/Eldercare.NET/Public/Index.aspx

National Family Caregivers Association. A support organization for caregivers. Phone: 800-896-3650. Website: www.caregiveraction.org

National Institute on Aging. Handbook for Long Distance Caregivers. Website: www.nia.nih.gov

PBS NEWSHOUR. How to care for your aging parents from a distance. Website: www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/long-distance-caregiving-parents

***Michele Shultz Hendrix** is a native of Texas. She is passionately involved in advocacy, consulting, program development, research, Christian care-management, and the development of resources in the area of Older Adult Ministry. Michele was appointed and served on the 2003 GA Task Force for Older Adult Ministry working with middle governing bodies on issues of aging and the church. She recently finished 16 years as Director of Encore 50+ Adult Ministry at Grace Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas, and has worked in the field of Older Adult Ministry for 25 years. Michele has worked closely with churches and organizations in the development of programs and resources related to Older Adult Ministry and Pastoral Care with Older Adults. Michele is currently a licensed Master Trainer for Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Michele is married to Dale Hendrix; they have 5 adult children and 13 grandchildren.*

W hat is Old Age For?

By Quentin Holmes

“Ageism” is still alive and kicking... Just because someone is older, say over age 65, their thoughts and ideas are often dismissed or ignored.

“It is high time for a change in societal attitudes. Given the importance of aging in our lives and the impact aging has on our families and our society, a new openness and even curiosity about human aging would seem more warranted. The time has come for our wondrous longevity to emerge from the long shadow cast by the vigor and virtues of youth.”
(Dr. Bill Thomas)

Imagine gathering a group of your friends for a fine meal and conversation. Desert has been served and everyone is lingering over tea or coffee... Someone makes an announcement that they have discovered an ancient path to human development that is all natural, subtle...but transformative, and requires decades to experience fully. ONLY mature adults may sign on...for the young are unprepared to accept what it has to offer. There is a murmur of general approval, and several of your friends say, “Tell us more.” The person then describes four key points about aging:

- 1) **Aging requires life** - When we speak of the aging of machines, buildings or cities, we are employing a metaphor. Inanimate objects can and will decay, but they cannot age. Aging is an active process that requires the force of life. A building does not live and thus cannot age, though its human occupants must. Being alive is a prerequisite for growing old. The challenges of longevity are insistent, they cannot be set aside by those who find them unpleasant.
- 2) **Aging is natural** - Aging is within us, not imposed on us. While environmental conditions can accelerate or retard aging, the process itself is part of the human being. How a species ages is one of its defining characteristics. A mouse lives two years, not 200. An oak tree grows to maturity in 50 years, not five. So it is with us – homo sapiens... When and how we age is written into our being.
- 3) **Aging is gradual** - We don't have to think about breathing in order to breathe, and we age whether or not we wish to do so. Aging is a gradual, rhythmic, highly-choreographed process. It holds no surprises, as its course and



consequences are well known to all of us. No one goes to bed at the height of vitality and wakes up old. Aging is more like water flowing inexorably over a stone. This is the source of aging's power.

- 4) **Aging requires maturity** - Some movies, CD's DVD's and even books are available to "mature audiences." We label these out of concern that the ideas and images that they contain will overwhelm younger, less-mature audiences. We restrict tobacco and alcohol for similar reasons. There are many things best reserved for people with the good judgment that comes with age. Old age gives us access to a collection of experiences and insights that are beyond the capacity of the young to understand or fully appreciate.



"Scientific theories about how we all age all merely accept without question the doctrine of youth's perfection. They focus on decline and pay little heed to the steady emergence of new gifts and capacities. This tunnel vision is the root cause of their failure to fully explain aging. They fail because they are the product of a culture mired in misunderstanding of age and aging." (Dr. Bill Thomas)

"Life is a gift of God, and aging is a natural part of living, involving the whole lifespan from birth to death. Older adults are not a different category of persons, but are simply those persons who have traveled further along on the journey." (Task Force on Older Adult Ministry - 204th General Assembly PC(USA), 1992)

Quentin A. Holmes is a Deacon at Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene, Oregon. As a young scientist he helped Project Apollo send American astronauts to the moon. His profession was scientific research – specializing in remote sensing and computer vision. Quentin and his wife, Jane, are retired and reside in an environmentally-friendly home in the woods on the Mohawk River above Marcola, Oregon. Quentin currently is Chairman of the Older Adult Ministries Team for the Presbytery of the Cascades. He also serves as editor of POAMN Network News (PNN).

Carlisle Institute for Lifelong Learning

By Charles Spears, Second Presbyterian Church, Carlisle Pennsylvania

The Carlisle Institute for Lifelong Learning was created to provide opportunities for intellectual stimulation for older members of the greater Carlisle area. After several initial conversations with church members, Pastor Jennifer McKenna convened a group of interested individuals to explore possible ways of pursuing this endeavor. An advisory group was eventually established, milestones established and tasks agreed upon.



After exploring several models, the group agreed to start with a modest offering, with one session in the fall of 2014 and a second in spring of 2015. After a time of brainstorming, the group identified five areas that would most likely be of interest to potential participants:

- Eliminating Clutter in One's Life and Surroundings
- Mysticism
- Appreciating Classical Music
- Understanding the Geology of Central Pennsylvania
- Gardening with Native Plants

The format was designed to best meet the needs of the potential audience, one that would offer convenience of location, frequency and time. It was decided to hold the first session on the Tuesdays and Thursdays of October. Classes would be 75 minutes long, with some being offered in mid-morning, some in late morning and some in early afternoon.

In looking for a convenient location for the program, the group decided to explore the possibility of using Second Presbyterian Church. The building was ADA-accessible and offered a number of meeting places for the various classes. The church's Older Adult Ministry team agreed to sponsor the Institute, which then



exempted the program from building rental expenses. The Session was briefed on this proposal and gave its blessings. Coordination between church staff and advisory group members took place in order to ensure the timely use of meeting spaces and technical equipment.

With the format determined, the advisory group then began to identify possible instructors for the classes. After another brainstorming session, possible presenters were identified and group members volunteered to make contact. Former professional colleagues, church members, family members, local college faculty and community resources were among the resources identified and contacted. It was decided to offer the instructors a small stipend for their services, with funds coming from registrations fees paid by participants.



Once the instructors were established, publicity materials were prepared and a great deal of personal recruiting began. Thirty-five people participated in the pilot program, 20 percent of whom were from the greater community. Based on feedback and evaluation, the advisory group is working to present another series of classes in April 2015 and hopes to double the number of participants.

Charles Spears is a native of Lexington, Massachusetts and has been married to his wife, Jean, for nearly 50 years. He graduated from Eastern Baptist College, with a BA in history, and from Andover Newton Theological School, with a Master's Degree in Religious Education. He served as Director of Religious Education at Fort Monmouth, NJ for nearly 40 years, where he was responsible for the religious education of soldiers and family members of all faith groups. Upon retirement, he and his wife moved to Carlisle, PA to help his son with the care of their two grandchildren. He is an elder at Second Presbyterian Church in Carlisle and currently serves as chair of the Older Adult Ministry team.

Coney Boys: A Unique Ministry for Older Adult Men

By Gene Swift, Grosse Ile Presbyterian Church, Grosse Ile Michigan

Origins:

Every Tuesday, a rustic little pub in our village serves delicious, coney-dogs (also known as chili-dogs), for a buck and it became my custom to eat lunch there, every week. On one such occasion, in 2010, I sat reflecting upon a senior gentleman in our congregation who had recently lost his wife. My thoughts soon migrated to others like him who, for whatever reason, might be longing for male companionship. That day, I made a commitment to share my Tuesday aloneness and my love for coneys with them. I targeted the retired men of our congregation, envisioning a group consisting of men with wives who needed time alone, men fighting boredom or depression and others who simply missed the companionship they enjoyed at their former workplace. Initially, a half-dozen men responded to my email invitation to gather at one o'clock, for food and fellowship. Our numbers have increased steadily ever since. In the summertime, we average sixteen men and in mid-winter, when outdoor activities are limited, our numbers swell to nearly two-dozen. Tables are reserved to accommodate our group and Mary Kay, our dedicated and attentive waitress knows every man by name. (And, she bakes us cookies, at Christmastime!). After paying the tab, all surplus dollars that remain are donated to a local food pantry. In 2014, we contributed over \$400. Because several Coney Boys have introduced friends from outside our congregation, I believe it is fair to say, Coney Boys is also an outreach program.

Description:

Coney Boys is a gender-specific, social group, modeled after the Red Hat Society: we have no officers, no dues, no by-laws, no agenda, no mission statement, etc. This formula succeeds because there are no encumbrances or expectations of its members, whatsoever.



Objectives:

The goal of the Coney Boys ministry is to provide a safe, comfortable environment where senior church men may meet regularly to enjoy camaraderie with their peers, share a meal and engage in friendly discussion. They share joys and concerns, discuss their interests, celebrate birthdays and celebrate life, in general. The Coney Boys' Grace describes the lighthearted timber of a typical gathering:



“Oh Lord, we give our thanks this day for family, food and friends...
and lift our thoughts in praise to You, from whom all good descends.
The Coney Cronies gathered here are grateful to our God...
for the gracious gift of another day, on the green side of the sod!”

Guidelines:

- Select a name for the group and elect a 65+ year-old Elder to launch and facilitate the project.
- Meet at the same time and same venue each week, to avoid confusion.
- Reserve tables and ask for a dedicated waitress, if possible.
- Limit sessions to one-hour.
- Demand nothing of participants: allow them to show-up, as desired.
- Ask the last person to arrive to offer the blessing.
- Introduce first-timers and ask each regular participant to say his name.
- Mail a paper placemat adorned with humorous comments, a smudge of mustard and the signature of all in-attendance to members who are ill or have missed consecutive events.
- Round-up the tab, tip and tax for each participant and collect the money.
- Donate surplus dollars to a local food pantry to encouraging generosity.
- Encourage laughter and loud conversation.
- Discourage joke-telling. It can get out-of-hand, if allowed.
- Avoid discussing politics.
- Never allow one individual to dominate a session.

Endorsements:

Coney Boys is posted in our church’s Sunday bulletin and has its own account number. Our pastor attends regularly and promotes Coney Boys by inviting other pastors. This project is endorsed by our Adult Nurture Committee’s Task Force on Aging and has prompted the formation of a senior women’s group. Coney dogs play an important role but the actual key to Coney Boys’ success is a simple, loose format and the opportunity for fellowship that it presents. Coney Boys is the first men’s group to survive, in our church’s 50-year history. The steady growth, the fact our members return week after week and the noise level at a typical Coney Boys session offers the best evidence of its success and prompts me to encourage other churches to develop a senior, men’s ministry of their own, based on this model.

Gene Swift is a retired Ford motor Company Engineer. He lives in Grosse Ile, Michigan, a small, island community, twenty miles south of Detroit. He is a 22-year member of the Grosse Ile Presbyterian Church (GIPC). Gene and his wife, Lynne, have two adult children (one a pastor) and eight grandchildren. Gene has served on several church committees, is a past Board of Deacons Moderator and past Mission & Stewardship Commission Chairman. He currently serves on a task force on aging called, “The York Connection” and writes bi-monthly articles for the GIPC newsletter, addressing senior issues, called, York Tips. He also relishes his role as “Chief Coney Boy.”

KEYS Partnership with SAReads

By Jane Warren, First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio Texas

Pat McCleary, Director of Older Adult Ministry at First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio and I, as co-president of the KEYS group (Keeping Everyone Young in Spirit) wanted our ministry to have a specific service project and SAReads came to our attention.



SAReads is a division of Literacy San Antonio, whose mission is to bring all San Antonio children up to grade-level reading by third grade. To implement this they partner with schools, libraries, after-school programs, as well as retailers like Barnes and Noble and Half Price Books to hold book drives which collect large numbers of books.

In the case of Barnes and Noble, they have held a Christmas holiday book drive in which they asked customers to add one children's book to their purchase which would be donated to SAReads. In 2013 that effort provided over 7500 new books, and their goal for this season is 10,000!

The objective is to get the books into the hands of young children who do not have books in the home. Experience shows that children who do not have the exposure to books in the home, or see parents reading regularly are much slower to develop strong reading habits. So, SAReads is responding to needy schools and after-school programs by supplying books that the children may take home, as well as supplemental reading for the classroom. They need assistance in preparing these books for distribution.

This is where the KEYS fit in. In seeking a project that would be of interest to older adults and also be inclusive of those with mobility limitations, SAReads was a perfect choice. The work includes labeling, cleaning/mending older books and sorting and packaging by age or reading level. We created considerable promotional material for church newsletters, Sunday bulletins and posters encouraging, not only our immediate KEYS members, but any church members who were interested in spending two Tuesday mornings a month helping us. It is an extremely pleasant few hours working around a big table, enjoying each other's company in fellowship while providing a needed service benefiting young San Antonio kids. This ministry has been a blessing to many youngsters, as well as a pleasure for those who have participated in the book preparation.

Jane Warren has been a very active member of First Presbyterian Church since she and her husband, Spence, arrived in San Antonio 15 years ago. She has served as a Deacon, an officer of KEYS Adults, Sanctuary Choir, Literature and Bible study Circles, and is a regular participant in the Loaves and Fishes Ministry – serving monthly dinners to less fortunate members of the community. Originally from Kansas City, MO, she and her husband have lived all over the United States. They had two sons and have four grandchildren. As a widow now, Jane's passions include music, reading and serving in whatever capacity is most needed.



Living our Life Like it is Golden!

By Dr. Ronald Hopkins, Congregation of First Christian Church, Richmond Virginia

When I heard of a continuing Education class on “Older and Aging Adult Ministries”, I enrolled, not knowing what to expect. However I was convicted that in my heart, this is where and why God called me to the church.

My 65 member congregation average age, counting the under fifty age group is, about 65 to 80. Let me say, upfront. “I love where, and with whom, God has placed my wife and I”.

Taking this class was an eye-opener to what God is calling us to do and be. I see this program/process as an opportunity to help many of our older adult and aging congregations and communities to reach out to the neighborhoods that have had demographic changes within the communities that surround them.

I began to look for more opportunities to learn, and “stumbled” on POAMN. I immediately joined; started looking at back issues of the planning guide and found an opportunity to become certified. I found that a training and certification process was being offered in October 2014 through the Annual Conference of ARMSS and POAMN. I wasn't sure I could afford to attend; however, I was notified that scholarship funds were available for first time attendees. I applied and received funds to assist with personal resources available. I was truly blessed and prepared to attend.

I met many new friends and also renewed with former acquaintances, from when I attended seminary at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1995; Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1999; and Union Presbyterian Seminary, 2006. The overall days and time spent together at this conference were very fruitful!

Dr. Ronald Hopkins born in Gary, Indiana was educated in the Gary, IN and the Dayton, OH public school systems. He is an Air Force Veteran, having served for four years active duty, which included one year tour in Vietnam. He and his family moved to the Washington DC area to start a career in computers at The Pentagon. While working he received a higher calling that he ignored for about ten years until he finally accepted who and what he was called to be. Ronald then continued his formal education by attending Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA where he earned his Bachelors of Liberal Studies degree and went on to attend Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, VA where he earned his Masters of Divinity Degree. Ronald proceeded to further his studies at the University of Chicago, The Divinity School, where he received a Masters of Arts Degree. Eventually, Ronald returned to further his education at Union Presbyterian Seminary and received the Doctor of Ministry Degree in May of 2006. He is currently assigned as Pastor / Teacher to the Congregation of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and has been since 2003. He and his wife Judith have three daughters, and four grandsons.

Older Adult Ministry Certificate

The Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL) at Columbia Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN) are pleased to announce a new partnership that will better equip churches and faith-based organizations to address the needs of older participants. Beginning in April 2015, the CLL will be the host location for the Older Adult Ministry (OAM) Certificate Program.

Jan L. McGilliard will serve as the OAM Certificate Program Coordinator. She is a member of the POAMN Executive Committee, and is a past president of the organization. McGilliard holds a M.S. from Virginia Tech in Adult Development and Aging, a Certificate in Gerontology, Certifications in Intergenerational Programming and Lay Preaching. She is a Ruling Elder in the PC(USA) and lives in Blacksburg, VA.



The program is open to participants from any denomination or faith tradition. Four core classes and a capstone project are required to complete the Certificate Program. Two classes will be offered each spring at the CLL; participants may begin with any of these scheduled classes. Pre-course reading and post-course assignments are required. The certificate course of study may be completed in 24-36 months.

The course schedule through the spring of 2016 is listed, below, and includes two opportunities prior to the partner events launching in April 2015. Program fees for each course at the CLL are currently set at

\$200 per course; guest rooms and campus dining are available at the time of registration. Limited scholarship funds are available through POAMN; contact Jan McGilliard for additional information.

OAM courses offered at the CLL in 2015 **The Process of Aging and Implications for Ministry**

April 12-15

Instructor: Mary Ann Johnson, PhD

Teaching for Transformation

April 16-18

Instructor: Rev. Joyce MacKichan Walker

**OAM Classes at the CLL in 2016
(Registration opens in spring 2015)
Spiritual Formation and Older Adults**

April 11-13

Instructor: Henry C. Simmons, PhD

Framing Theological Questions with Older Adults

April 12-16

Instructor: Rev. Marvin Simmers, EdD

Contacts:

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Jan McGilliard
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www.poamn.org

To register for either 2015 course please visit:
<http://www.ctsnet.edu/older-adult-ministry-certificate-program>

Be a Part of the Network!

The Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN) is actively addressing the new challenges and ever changing needs of our church's aging membership, and advocating on behalf of our older adult members. POAMN members include pastors, educators, and many others who work with older adults within our congregations, presbyteries, and retirement communities.

The POAMN Executive Committee asks all of us to pay our annual POAMN membership dues. These dues represent our financial investment in the ongoing work of POAMN, the publication of POAMN Network News our newsletter, and provide funds for scholarships. POAMN's primary focus is to facilitate networking among older adult ministries colleagues through training conferences, specialized educational workshops, and forums for sharing ideas and experiences with others from across the nation. In addition, a certification course is offered specific to the administration of older adult ministries. Discounted registration fees to POAMN sponsored training events are made available to all POAMN members.

Please prayerfully consider renewing or becoming a new POAMN member.

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P OAMN Membership Form

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Preferred Phone - Indicate Type (i.e. cell, home, work) _____

E-Mail _____

Synod _____ Presbytery _____

Church _____

Other Organization _____

I wish to become a member of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN)

New Member Renewal

Membership Type:

\$50 Individual \$75 Couple
 \$35 Affiliate (non-voting) \$125 Institutional, Church & Judicatory Membership

To continue POAMN's ministry to older adults and those engaged in ministries for older adults, additional gifts are welcome including those in honor or memory of someone.

Extra gift of \$ _____ to POAMN

Gift of \$ _____ enclosed in honor / memory of: _____

(include address if you would like family notified of gift): _____

Gift to support membership of another person or church: _____

Please enclose membership fee with this form and return it with your check payable to:

POAMN
Cindy Wright, Treasurer
120 Stevens Avenue
Solana Beach, CA 92075

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