

Ageing Ministry Opportunities
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Ageing is becoming a predominant theme within the world, nation and the church. Because of maturing generations, lower birth rates and declining populations, older adults will become the norm, rather than the exception.

Some quick facts:

- **Every eight seconds someone is turning 65 years of age (10,000 daily)**
- **Every 67 seconds someone is being diagnosed with Alzheimer's**
- **By 2035, there will be more older adults than children**
- **By 2060, almost ¼ of the nation's population will be over 65 years of age. (Between 9-100 Million)**
- **The average Lutheran is way over 60 years of age**

What will be the churches response?

Proverbs 16:31- "Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life."

We can either believe that the ageing church will decline/die, or we can see ageing as an opportunity for outreach, discipleship, care and congregational renewal.

1. Discipleship- (bible study, prayer, worship)

When discipling mature adults, we need to focus on these areas-

- **End of life/eternity**
- **Meaning/Purpose/Legacy**
- **Sickness/Health**
- **Loneliness/Isolationism**
- **Passing on the faith**
- **Service**
- **Relationships/Activity**

- **Grieving/Death**
- **Loss of Independence**
- **Care Giving**
- **Intergenerational Ministry**

Psalm 71:17-18- "O God, from my youth, you have taught me , and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me until I proclaim your might unto another generation, your power to all those who will come."

2. Care

- **Visitation/Well Check**
- **Counseling/Mental Health**
- **Care Giver Respite/ Social Day Care**
- **Age/Retirement Planning**
- **Helping to Build Relationships**

3. Outreach

- **Triple A- Area Agency on Aging www.n4a.org**
- **Adult Protective Services (Social Services) neglect/abuse**
- **Adult Vacation Bible School**
- **Lunch and Learning**
- **Support Groups (Widows, care givers, grief, children of aging parents)**
- **Social/Recreational**
- **Where Mature Adults "Hang Out" Personal Invitation**

What might a comprehensive, congregational senior ministry look like?

- **5'S- Spiritual -Sharing -Service -Social -Self**

Other resources can be found at <https://thenalc.org/aging-ministry/>

What are some things that Holy Scripture says about aging?

1. Longevity- Throughout the first chapters in Genesis, we're told of great longevity into the hundreds of years. **After the flood, Genesis 6:3 shares that humans could live to 120 years of age. In Psalm 90:10, the years of living are between 70-80.**

2. Promises-

- Ruth 4:13-16-The widowed and childless Naomi is blessed and restored
- Isaiah 46:3-4- From birth, to old age and gray hair, God will always carry
- Joel 2:28-29- Spirit poured out on aging
- Luke 2:22-35- Simeon encounters Christ Child before death

3. Witness-

- Joshua 24:14-28- Final words to the Israelites before death
- Psalm 71:8-9- Mouth full of praise, even in old age
- Psalm 71:17-18- Sharing faith to future generations
- Psalm 92:12-15-Bearing fruit in old age

· II Timothy 1:5- Faith shared to Timothy from mother, grandmother

4. Service-

· Genesis 18:9-15-Sarah/Abraham going to have baby (Isaac)

· Exodus 7:1-7- Moses/Aaron called to confront Pharaoh

· Joshua 14:6-14- Caleb ready to serve again

· II Samuel 19:31-40- Barzillai helping King David in multiple ways

· Luke 1:5-25- Elizabeth/Zachariah having baby-(John the Baptist)

5. Example-

· Titus 2:1-6- How older men/women should conduct themselves

APPENDIX.

NALC Resources: missions.nalcnetwork.com/category/senior-ministry

2020 Mental Health Resources: mhanational.org/events/older-adults-isolation-during-covid-19

Recommendations for Additional Reading:

- "Catching the Age Wave: A Handbook for Effective Ministry with Senior Adults" by Charles Arn
- "White Unto Harvest, Evangelizing Today's Senior Adults" by Charles Arn
- "Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century: Step-By-Step Strategies for Reaching People Over 50" by David Gallagher
- "Aging and Ministry in the 21st Century" by Richard Gentzler
- "A Vision for the Aging Church: Renewing Ministry for and by Seniors" by James Houston and Michael Parker
- "Aging as a Spiritual Journey" by Eugene Bianchi
- "One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church" by Gary McIntosh

Books on Grandparenting Ministry:

- "Biblical Grandparenting: Exploring God's Design, Culture's Messages, and Disciple-Making Methods to Pass Faith to Future Generations" by Josh Mulvihill
- "Extreme Grandparenting" by Tim and Darcy Himmel
- "Passing on the Legacy: 7 Keys for Grandparents Making a Difference" by Catherine Jacobs
- "Please Pass the Faith: The Art of Spiritual Grandparenting" by Elise H.R. Remp
- **"The Power of A Godly Grandparent" Stephen and Janet Bly**

Senior Ministry Websites

www.seniorministry.org
aloaserves.org
retirementreformation.org

Grandparenting Websites

www.christiangrandparenting.net
www.passthelegacy.wordpress.net
www.legacycoalition.com

Intergenerational Ministry Websites

- faithwebbing.com
- crossgenlife.org
- genonministries.org