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Center on Aging & Older Adult Ministries

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Grief Care

A Neglected Ministry

by Rev. Kenneth E. Reed, Ph.D.

People long to live a full, vital life. We need vitality and energy for exploring the wonders of the world and relationships created by a gracious God. Too often, barriers to living that life are found in our failure to effectively grieve the loss of loved ones. The loss of a loved one changes our world forever. Our loved one's death represents many losses. Fully grieving these losses is a healing journey that restores our souls and renews our energy for understanding and living in a changed world.

This process of healing through grieving is a renewing spiritual journey. Jesus said, "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted (*made strong*)." In other words, those who thoroughly mourn the loss of a loved one will find new meaning and purpose in life and a closer relationship with God. Out of this relationship come newfound freedom and strength. Congregations have a responsibility to help members grieve. By facilitating the grieving process, we help them grow in the faith and learn how to live without their deceased loved one. Contrary to what most people think, time does not heal. Time gives space and opportunity to heal.

Society believes that a person "gets over" his/her grief in 3-6 months. The truth is that we don't 'get over' our grief. We heal by going through it. Healing through grieving is a process that requires much effort and this takes time. In reality, it takes about three years to fully grieve and develop another stable lifestyle after

the death of a significant loved one. Herein lies one of the reasons grief care is often a neglected ministry. Most pastors state that lack of time interferes with providing adequate bereavement care. As one pastor put it, "Bereavement care is a priority, but after the funeral when it gets on the 'to do' list, it goes to the bottom of the list due to more pressing congregational priorities. I just go on and feel guilty." Many busy pastors hope that members of the congregation will provide the support and care grieving members need, but in most instances this does not happen. Grieving is a lengthy process unique to each individual; it does not fit well with the busy, restrictive schedules of our society. This, coupled with society's general lack of understanding regarding the grieving process, deprives grieving members of the love and support they need, intensifying their feelings of isolation and abandonment.

"There are times when you reach out to others because they need it, not because they ask for it," is the way a husband who lost his wife after a long struggle with cancer put it. Months after his wife's death he shared his anger with the pastor for not ministering to him after his wife's funeral. The pastor assured the older gentleman that he was there for him; all he had to do was ask. The unfortunate part of this interaction was that the man was asking for help by sharing his anger and disappointment; the pastor missed still another opportunity to minister.

Be sensitive. Grieving is hard work and it is a long time before the bereaved person has energy to spare. "Never!" was the thought that popped into the mind of a widow and active church member when her minister asked her when she was going to be ready to assume more responsibilities within the church following the death of her husband. Lack of sensitivity and compassionate caring grows out of lack of knowledge and experience. This increases the pain and sense of alienation and loneliness the bereaved are experiencing.

When we fail to acknowledge the significance of someone's death, we have failed to affirm the significance of that life as well. One pastor who lost her brother in a tornado experienced added disappoint-

ment and hurt over the lack of support she received from her denominational leadership. "They sent me a postcard when my brother died. That's all they did." Unfortunately, 97% of our churches don't provide bereavement care beyond ten days after the funeral. While we can't do the grieving for others,

our support and encouragement can help them on this difficult journey. Lack of bereavement care for grieving members is a source of disappointment, pain, and anger that is rarely addressed by pastors and denominational leaders. Most grieving members do not feel free or worthy to share their anger. Rather, they make excuses for their pastors, such as "he/she is too busy." And this thought accentuates their pain and anger. Failure to effectively grieve often becomes a lifetime source of struggle and conflict within interpersonal relationships for individuals.

Lack of bereavement care can lead to poorer participation in the life of the church, reduced church attendance, transfer to a church that is "more caring," or abandoning the church community altogether, putting the church as well as the bereaved at risk.

There are about 120,000 deaths annually in The United Methodist Church. On average there are three close family members who will grieve each death. That means 360,000 family members plus extended family and members of the congregation will be grieving annually. That is a lot of sadness and pain that can have a negative impact on the survivors and the congregation. It is also a missed opportunity to nurture members in the Christian faith. An ongoing grief care program fosters a more loving, caring spirit among members and provides a practical way for members to express their love and concern. Especially in our aging and older congregations, it is imperative that we take the lead in caring for those who are grieving.

***"Only when grief finds its work done
can God dispense us from it."***

Henri Frédéric Amiel, 19th-century Swiss writer/critic



Rev. Kenneth E. Reed, Ph.D. is an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church. Ken, who lives in Indianapolis, has developed the Healing Through Grieving Program (see box on opposite page).

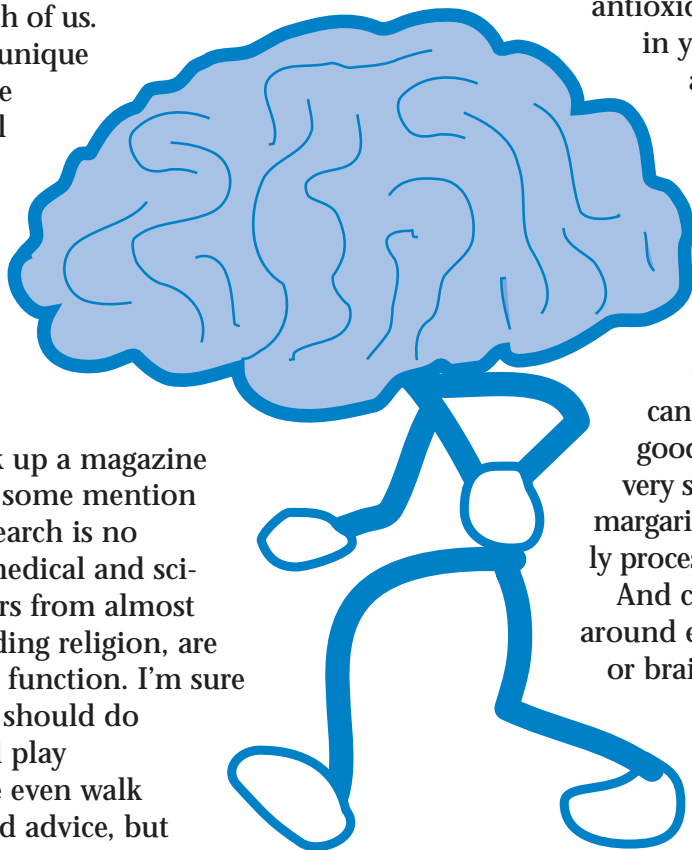
Mental Aerobics

by Barbara Bruce

God created the brain to be the most amazing organism in the universe and gave one to each of us.

Consider this: You are unique in God's creation. There never has been nor will there ever be a brain just like yours. It is in your very best interest to do active maintenance to keep your brain fit. You will need it every day till you die.

You can hardly pick up a magazine or newspaper without some mention of the brain. Brain research is no longer simply in the medical and scientific field. Researchers from almost every discipline, including religion, are studying human brain function. I'm sure you all know that you should do crossword puzzles and play "Jeopardy" and maybe even walk every day. All very good advice, but there is much more you can do to maintain brain fitness. Read on.



First things first. Change your diet. Your brain and body function as a whole unit. You cannot separate them. What you do for one, you do for both. Fill up on lots of fruits and vegetables—the darker, more intense the color, the better. These items contain antioxidants which help destroy free radicals in your system. These free radicals damage your entire system and help build plaque, which can cause great harm.

Drink lots of water. Your brain is 78% water. To keep it functioning optimally, you must keep it hydrated. Cut back on bad fats—the kind that clog your arteries. Clogged arteries don't allow sufficient blood to flow to your brain. Include olive and canola oil in your daily diet to increase the good Omega 3 fatty acids. Eliminate (or use very sparingly) butter and hydrogenated margarine. Decline fried foods and avoid highly processed food. Eat more fish and chicken. And control your portion size. Carrying around extra weight is not good for body or brain.

Second, exercise. You knew it was coming, right? To keep oxygen flowing to your brain you must exercise daily. Walking swimming, and biking are all good exercises.

continued on page 4

Healing Through Grieving

Healing Through Grieving is a program developed by Rev. Kenneth E. Reed, Ph.D. It is a series publication sent to a survivor over a period of 16 months. Each 8-page issue is designed to facilitate and actively engage the bereaved in the grieving process. It is a practical way for busy pastors and congregations to ensure that their grieving members receive help and support for 16 months of the bewildering, painful journey through grief. The pastor or director of older adult ministries gives the *Healing Through Grieving* folio, which comes with the first issue

and resource materials in it, to the survivor. Once a staff member follows up to confirm that the bereaved member is receiving monthly mailings, nothing more is required of the staff.

Grief Healing, Inc., mails the remaining 15 issues on a monthly basis directly to the recipient of the program. An individual program costs \$150; 5 or more programs to the same address, \$125 each. A Reference Copy is also available and comes with information for supplementing the *Healing Through Grieving* Program with educational and support groups.

For information, contact Grief Healing Inc., PO Box 781643, Indianapolis, IN 46278-8643; toll-free 888-822-9820; www.ghpublications.com.



Not only is moving good for your brain by bringing it much-needed oxygen, it also provides a brain break from routine. Get in the fresh air,

perhaps meet new folks, talk about your day, and so forth. Aim for an hour of some form of exercise 3-5 days a week.

You don't have to join an expensive health club to reap the benefits of exercise. Purchase a good pair of walking shoes or a bicycle (and helmet) and you're good to go. Swimming is good for folks who have problems with joints and can't deal well with running (or sometimes even walking). Get your exercise in whatever way is most appealing to you and that you will incorporate into your lifestyle.

Third, challenge your brain every day. Do crossword puzzles, Jumbles, word searches, jigsaw puzzles. As these become too easy, move up to the next level of difficulty. Take a course. There is a woman in my Mental Aerobics class who is also taking a woodshop class. She's learning new techniques, meeting new people, and keeping her brain fit. Another way to keep your brain challenged is to participate in "Disciple," "Christian Believer," "Witness," or other in-depth Bible study class. Or, teach a Sunday school class. You'll be amazed how much you can learn by teaching. Learn something new to keep your brain challenged.

Fourth, incorporate newness and novelty. Give your brain a workout. Get it involved in doing everyday tasks in new ways. I have my students read a paragraph upside down. I invite them to brush their teeth or eat a meal with their non-preferred hand. We know from experiments with people who have had

strokes that the brain can be rewired to learn new ways of doing things. If these tasks seem too much, start small. Sit in a different pew in church or a different seat at the dinner table. Find a new route to work, church, or the mall.

The fifth suggestion is love. We are communal beings. You survive and function better in community than in isolation. The more contact with others—physical and emotional—the better your brain responds. Hug someone today!

The essence of Jesus' message is love of God and neighbor. When you do for others within and beyond your faith community, you are living out Jesus' teachings and doing some good for your brain as well.

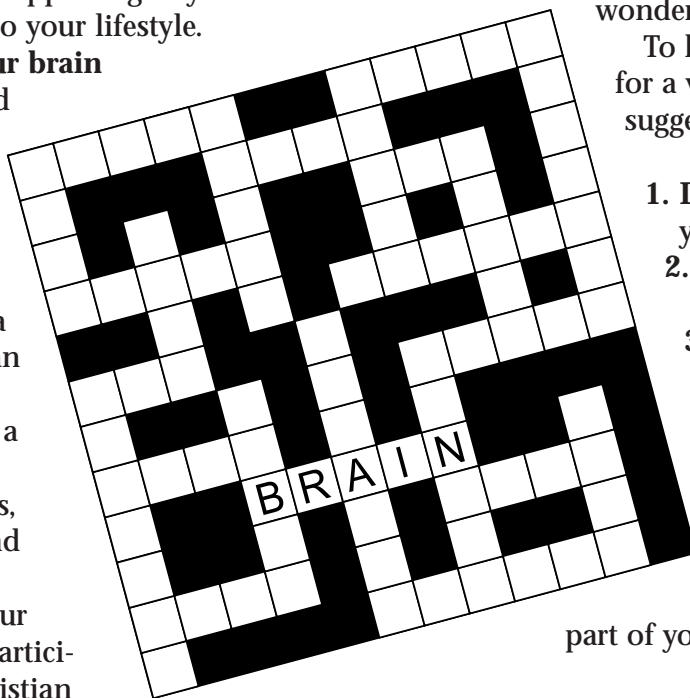
I do a fair amount of work with caretakers in nursing homes. When we talk about this suggestion of love, they tell me wonderful stories of the people they care for and how well they respond when they are shown love. This show of love can be as simple as a smile, a small touch of the hand, or a pat on the back. These same techniques work in church as well.

Taking time to focus on another person does wonders for both of you.

To keep your brain fit and functioning for a very long time, practice these five suggestions.

1. **Diet**—change your diet, change your life.
2. **Exercise**—get some every day or almost every day.
3. **Challenge**—give your brain something to think about each day.
4. **Newness and novelty** are good brain aerobics.
5. **Love**—find someone to hug each day.

Incorporate these five practices as a part of your lifestyle to keep your brain fit!



*Barbara Bruce is an educator, author, and national speaker. She serves on the Older Adult Ministry Team for the Western New York Conference and is a freelance curriculum writer. Barbara has written several books including *Our Spiritual Brain: Integrating Brain Research and Faith Development* (Abingdon, 2002) and a new book coming out in February entitled *Mental Aerobics: 75 Ways to Keep Your Brain Fit* (Abingdon, 2004). Barbara will be presenting at the Bridging FaithWalks Adult Ministries Conference in San Francisco in February 2004.*

Sexuality and Older Married Couples

by Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., D.Min.

Sex and aging are often linked to negative humor that is filled with disdain and apprehensiveness about growing older. We have all heard jokes about “dirty old men” or “sex-starved old women.” Certainly some of this reflects negative feelings about older people and aging in general or what is often called “ageism.” Among the stereotypes of ageism is the myth of desexualization: If a person is old (or getting old), he or she is finished with sex. There is a widespread belief in our culture that sex is only for young people.

Misinformation surrounds the issue of late-life sexuality. For example, there is a common presumption that sexual desire diminishes with age, but this is not necessarily the case. According to a recent survey by the National Council on Aging, among married respondents age 65 and older, more than 68% said having a sexual relationship will be important in making their later years “meaningful and vital.”

The Bible provides evidence that in biblical times some couples were sexually active in their later years. For example, we read in Genesis, “Now Abraham and Sarah were old; advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, ‘After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?’” (Genesis 18:11-12). Even though Sarah had “grown old,” she gave birth to her son, Isaac. The same is true with Zechariah and Elizabeth, who “both were getting on in years” (Luke 1:7); yet, Elizabeth in her advanced age gave birth to John (the Baptist).

It is important to remember that sexuality is often a delicate balance of emotional and physical issues.

... there is a common presumption that sexual desire diminishes with age, but this is not necessarily the case.

How you feel may affect what you are able to do. For example, men may fear that impotence will become a more common problem as they age. But, if they are too concerned with that possibility, they can cause enough stress to trigger impotence. Likewise, a woman who is worried about how her looks are changing as she ages may think her partner will no longer find her attractive. This focus on youthful physical beauty may get in the way of her enjoyment of sex.

Older couples face the same daily stresses that affect people of any age. But they may also have the added concerns of age, illness, retirement, and other lifestyle changes. These worries can cause sexual difficulties. Some people may experience decline in sexual desire and activity with advancing age. Such a decline can be seen as part of the normal aging process. Nevertheless, older people in reasonably good health should be able to have active, satisfying sex lives.

Following are ten ingredients for older couples who want to continue an active, satisfying sex life.

1. Follow a healthy lifestyle—exercise, eat nutritious foods, drink lots of fluids like water or juices, don’t smoke, and avoid alcohol.
2. Try to reduce the stress in your life.
3. Make your spouse a high priority.
4. Pay attention to his or her needs and wants.
5. Take time to understand the changes both of you are facing.
6. Keep in mind that sex does not have to include intercourse.
7. Try different positions and new times, like having sex in the morning when you both have more energy.
8. Don’t hurry—you or your partner may need to spend more time touching to become fully aroused.
9. See your doctor regularly.
10. Keep a positive outlook on life.

Sexuality is a gift from God. The basic human need for affectionate physical contact, which is apparent even in newborn babies, persists throughout life.



Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr. is Director, Center on Aging & Older Adult Ministries, Nashville, TN. rgentzler@gbod.org

Symposium on Older Adult Ministries for Annual Conference Leaders

On March 27-29, 2003, a Symposium on Older Adult Ministries for annual conference leaders was held at Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville, TN. The United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries and the Center on Aging & Older Adult Ministries of the General Board of Discipleship jointly sponsored the event.

The purpose was to provide resource information and training to support older adult ministry on the annual conference level. Every annual conference received an invitation and information about the Symposium. A total of 45 annual conferences were represented with nearly 100 persons, including leadership, in attendance.

The opening plenary speaker was Dr. Jane Marie Thibault, Associate Professor of Clinical Gerontology, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY. Jane provided an overview of trends in aging and older adult ministries. Staff from the various boards and agencies related to the United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries provided a panel discussion concerning the work each agency is doing in the area of older adult ministries. Throughout the conference, various workshops on issues pertaining to older adult ministries on the annual conference level were conducted. In addition, a forum was held to discuss proposed legislation regarding a Conference Council on Older Adult Ministries which will be presented at the 2004 General Conference in Pittsburgh.

Bishop Violet Fisher led a closing worship service, which included Holy Communion and an anointing service for Symposium participants. Bishop Fisher challenged the participants to advocate on behalf of and to provide leadership for older adult ministries in their annual conferences.



North Central Jurisdiction Representatives

UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries meeting March 25-27, 2003



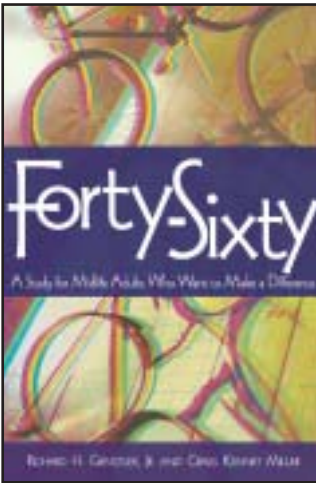
UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries

At the spring meeting of the United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries various proposals were adopted, including

- a resolution entitled “Deficit Spending and the Elderly” protesting spending to finance foreign conflicts;
- a resolution inviting all general board and agency executives to evaluate compliance with a General Conference call to examine pension policies;
- a resolution endorsing the creation of a chair in gerontology at Africa University; and
- legislation calling for the elimination of mandatory retirement for UM lay staff, pastors, and bishops.

In addition, reports were received from the various jurisdictional representatives and staff of boards and agencies. Dr. David Maldonado, president of Iliff School of Theology, addressed the Committee and spoke about the need for greater emphasis on gerontology studies in theological education. The Committee hopes to receive funding to conduct a Symposium on Older Adult Ministries with seminary professors in pastoral care and Christian education to be held during the next quadrennium (2005-08).

Book Review



Forty-Sixty

A Study for Midlife Adults Who Want to Make a Difference

By Richard H. Gentzler, Jr. and Craig Kennet Miller
Discipleship Resources, 2001

Forty-Sixty: Recipe for Success in Older Adult Ministry Education

This unsolicited book review is provided by Dian Steitz.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 book, **FORTY-SIXTY: A Study for Midlife Adults Who Want to Make a Difference**
- 1 Study Group or Adult Sunday School Class
- Stir in a handful of curious minds, fully open.
- Pepper with a college-age teen, or 20- or 30-year-old to add spice.
- Thicken with any number of adults beyond their 60s who will add their wisdom and experience while creating deeper flavor to the mix.
- Stir ingredients together slowly during an introductory class session. While stirring, let all know that their various perspectives are their uniquely valuable contributions in the weeks to come.

- Slowly simmer over 10 weeks, gently adding a new ingredient each week, such as dialogue on relationships, myths and realities of aging, pre-retirement, child/parent and grandchildren issues, spirituality, loss, and life-long learning.
- Result will be a savory stew of laughter, wisdom, and spiritual and personal growth.

This was the experience of Trinity United Methodist Church, Elkhart, IN, when the Generations Class selected *Forty-Sixty* for their summer book study. While the book could be studied by a group of same-age adults, the diversity of the Generations class deepened the dialogue due to the contributions of over two dozen adults in all seasons of life from first-time expectant parents to grandparents multiple times over.

Forty-Sixty worked as a bridge, deeply connecting youthful disciples with mature disciples and helping both sides better understand each other. Even those who felt they were too young for the study came away with a deepened, enlightened, more thoughtful look at aging and their attitudes and choices related to this life stage.

Those who fell between 40 and 60 years of age found the book “thought-provoking,” and “very worthwhile.” They learned to think about aging in a way that was positive and “hopeful.”

Forty-Sixty is an excellent resource for introducing midlife Christians to the spiritual and practical challenges presented by a future defined by “the age wave” Americans now face.

(Editor: Thank you, Dian, for writing this wonderful review!)

Certification Course in Older Adult Ministry

If you are interested in taking a seminary course in older adult ministry or are participating in the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Certification Program in Older Adult Ministries, the following course is being offered at Wesley Theological Seminary:

Course Title: *How to Plan a Comprehensive Ministry with Older Adults*

Course Instructor: Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr.,
Director, Center on Aging & Older Adult
Ministries General Board of Discipleship of
The United Methodist Church

Course Dates: 3 weekends (Friday & Saturday)
February 27 & 28, 2004
March 19 & 20, 2004
April 16 & 17, 2004

For registration information, contact:

Dr. Susan Willhauck
Wesley Theological Seminary
4500 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016
Phone: 202-885-8688 or 202-885-6482

For Certification information contact:

Rev. Sharon Rubey
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
PO Box 340007 • Nashville, TN 37207
Phone: 615-340-7400
Email: srubey@gbhem.org



Older Adult Ministries EVENTS

October 16, 2003

Older Adult Ministry Seminar

Sponsor: Spirit Lake United Methodist Church

Location: Spirit Lake UMC, Spirit Lake, IA

Contact: Rev. Jim Stiles

712-336-3115

Fax: 712-336-4677

Email: umcsl@iowaone.net

October 18, 2003

Conference on Aging:

"Building New Ministries"

Sponsor: Ottumwa District

Education Committee

Location: Knoxville UMC, Knoxville, IA

Contact: Joan Ervin, 641-856-4443

Email: wjervine@iowatelecom.net

November 13, 2003

Conference on Older Adult Ministries

Sponsor: Baltimore-

Washington Conference

Location: Frederick, MD

Contact: Vivian McCarthy,

410-309-3400

Email: vmccarthy@bwcumc.org

January 31, 2004

Conference on Aging

Sponsor: Tennessee Conference & Belmont UMC

Presenter: Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr.

Location: Belmont UMC,

Nashville, TN

Contact: Rev. Linda Johnson,

615-383-0832

Email: Linda@belmontumc.org

February 10-13, 2004

Bridging FaithWalks Adult Ministries Institute

Sponsor: General Board of Discipleship

Presenters: Maddy Dychtwald (Age Wave), Dr. Dan Church (GCOM), and many more

Location: Westin San Francisco

Airport Hotel, San Francisco, CA

Contact: Jennifer Oatsvall,

tollfree 877-899-2780 Ext. 7083

Fax: 615-340-7071

Email: AMI2004@gbod.org

February 27-28, March 29-30

April 16-17, 2004

Older Adult Ministry Course

Sponsor: Wesley Theological Seminary

Instructor: Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr.

Location: Wesley Theological

Seminary, 4500 Massachusetts Ave.,

NW, Washington, DC

Contact: Dr. Susan Whillhauck,

202-885-6482

Email: swillhauck@wesleysem.org

March 27, 2004

Leadership Academy

on Older Adult Ministries

Presenter: Dr. Richard Gentzler, Jr.

Sponsor: South Indiana Conference

Contact: Sandy Harlan,

812-332-5788

Email: sharlan@sicumc.org

March 28-30, 2004

Jubilation 2004

Sponsor: Holston Conference

Location: Glenstone Lodge, Gatlinburg, TN

Contact: Cecil Harville

Email: cecjanhar@msn.com

April 14-17, 2004

Joint Conference on Aging

Sponsor: American Society

on Aging and National

Council on Aging

Location: Hilton San Francisco,

San Francisco, CA

Contact: Rodney Jackson,

registrar@asaging.org

415-974-9643

www.agingconference.org/jc04

(next Joint Conference:

March 10-13, 2005, Philadelphia,

PA, Philadelphia Marriott)

April 27-May 7, 2004

General Conference of

The United Methodist Church

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Information: www.umc.org

May 6-9, 2004

Norman T. Allers Academy

on Older Adult Ministries

Presenter: Dr. Henry Simmons

Location: Rosalyn Center of

Richmond, Virginia

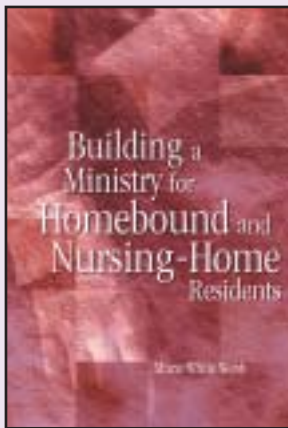
Contact: Rev. Chris Hughes,

888-525-3586

Email: chughes@sejumc.org

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Rosalie Jenkins Lawson. Rosalie received her doctor of philosophy degree from Boston University and was active in the aging field and in older adult ministries. Dr. Lawson served as a member of the Advisory/Coordinating Committee for Older Adult Ministries from 1989 to 1992 and as a consultant to the United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries from 1997-2000. A gerontologist, she was the author of *Our Congregation's Ministries with Older Adults*, published by Discipleship Resources in 1983. Her husband, Marvest A. Lawson, preceded Dr. Lawson in death. Dr. Lawson was a faithful advocate on behalf of the needs of older adults and a dedicated servant of our Lord in older adult ministries. Her wisdom and expertise will be greatly missed.



Building a Ministry for Homebound and Nursing-Home Residents

By Marie White Webb

"In this practical resource, Marie Webb gives clear evidence of her understanding and insight into ministry with people who are homebound or living in continuing-care retirement communities. Full of helpful ideas, this book invites readers into the world of the

frail elderly and provides valuable information to equip clergy and laity for this important ministry. This approach allows readers to gain a better understanding of some of the issues concerning aging and ways to develop a ministry that meets their needs."

*Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., Director,
Center on Aging & Older-Adult Ministries General Board
of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church*

Building a Ministry for Homebound and Nursing-Home Residents includes

- Sound information about the needs and characteristics of the frail elderly;
- Helpful advice for organizing and implementing a ministry of visitation
- Suggestions for leading worship in care facilities;
- Guidance in dealing with grief, fears, and end-of-life issues;
- A model for training volunteers who will be participating in ministry with the frail elderly.

(DR403) ISBN 0-88177-403-0 • 64 pages; \$9.95



Adult Ministries Institute 2004

February 10-13, 2004
Westin San Francisco
Airport Hotel
San Francisco, CA

Event Purpose

To provide faith-forming experiences, train, support, equip, resource, network, spiritually nurture, and inspire leaders of adult and older adult ministries in local church, conference, and jurisdictional settings. This invitation is extended to clergy, lay, paid, and volunteer leaders. The event will include plenary sessions, worship celebrations, workshops, resource centers (event bookstore and exhibits), networking opportunities related to the different areas of adult ministries.

AMI 2004 Event Office
Registration or Program Questions?
Contact Jennifer Oatsvall, Event Assistant
Toll-Free: 877-899-2780 ext. 7083
Email: ami2004@gbod.org

Gentzler Earns CSA Designation



Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., Director of the Center on Aging & Older Adult Ministries for the General Board of Discipleship, Nashville, TN, recently completed a comprehensive course on priority senior issues. The course is conducted by the Society of Certified Senior Advisors, a national organiza-

tion that helps leaders understand changing senior needs. Dr. Gentzler has successfully completed the course work and examination and has earned the Certified Senior Advisor, CSA designation. Gentzler, a clergy member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church, is a nationally recognized teacher and writer in the field of aging and older adult ministries. As a Certified Senior Advisor, he will participate annually in continuing education provided by the Society in an effort to keep abreast of the financial, medical, social, and spiritual concerns of aging and older adults. As a leader in older adult ministries, if you would like to know more about the Society of Certified Senior Advisors, contact Dr. Gentzler: tollfree 877-899-2780 Ext. 7173 or rgentzler@gbod.org.

United Methodist Older Adult Ministry Grants

In partial fulfillment of the Comprehensive Plan, at the Committee on Older Adult Ministries Meeting in August, the United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries approved the following grant applications:



UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries

Assisted Living Ministries

Montrose UMC

Formoso, KS

Awarded: \$1,500

3 long-term residences for older adult worship experience

Claire Community Bible Study

Claire Memorial UMC

Irvington, KY

Awarded: \$1,500

Expansion of social/Bible study program for older adults

Senior Ministries

FUMC of Washington

Washington, IL

Awarded: \$1,000

Homebound and respite care

Older Adult Council

College Corner UMC

W. College Corner, IN

Awarded: \$800

Outreach to seniors in geographic area

Faith Stories of Deaf Seniors

Christ UMC of the Deaf

Baltimore, MD

Awarded: \$2,000

Record faith stories of African American deaf seniors

Fairlington UMC Older Adult Ministries

Fairlington UMC

Arlington, VA

Awarded: \$750

Multi-faceted older adult ministry

God's Hand Caregiver Ministry

Red Bird Mission

Beverly, KY

Awarded: \$2,000

Home repair/adaptive equipment for seniors in own homes

Key-Stewart Senior Adult Ministry

Key Stewart UMC

Gallatin, TN

Awarded: \$1,250

Expansion of ongoing older adult ministry

Shelter for Dispossessed Widows

UM Women's Society

Maputo, Mozambique

Awarded: \$2,500

Total care of elderly women rejected by families & left to fend for themselves

Prime Timers "Cool Zone"

St. Paul UMC

San Antonio, TX

Awarded: \$1,800

Development of drop-in center for older adults

Open Hearts, Open Hands, Generations Plus

Faith-St. Paul UM Charge

Mooreville, NC

Awarded: \$750

Development of new ministry for older adults

My Friend's Place

First UMC

Bangor, ME

Awarded: \$750

Respite Center

F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

First UMC

Smithville, TN

Awarded: \$600

Expansion of Day Camp for Seniors

Older Adult Outreach

Capleville UMC

Memphis, TN

Awarded: \$2,000

Enlarging local church's existing outreach to older adults

Care Team Ministry

Broadway UMC

Council Bluffs, IA

Awarded: \$1,000

Training program for volunteers in church

Phillips UMC Older Adult Ministry

Phillips UMC

Lakewood, CO

Awarded: \$750

Older Adult Fair

First Annual Older Adult Spiritual Retreat of the Texas Conference Mature Adults

Texas Conference

Houston, TX

Awarded: \$2,000

Annual spiritual development retreat for older adults

Health and Wellness

Ministry for the Aged

La Mesa UMC

La Mesa, CA

Awarded: \$1,000

Regional conference to start older adult/caregiver ministries

Health and Wholeness

Fair for the Elderly

Covenant UMC

Plainfield, NJ

Awarded: \$1,500

Health and spiritual outreach to older adult housing project

Georgetown Interfaith Caregivers, Inc.
FUMC Georgetown
Georgetown, TX
Awarded: \$500
Volunteers to transport elderly

Wise & Wonderful
FUMC
Omaha, NE
Awarded: \$500
Holistic approach to older adults' physical, mental, social & spiritual development

Music Makers
First UMC
Hutchinson, KS
Awarded: \$2,200
Older adults with musical program visiting homebound

Shepherd's Center of the Pee Dee
Central UMC
Florence, SC
Awarded: \$1,400
Ecumenical program for older adults housed in a UMC

Senior Shopping Club
Scott's Run Settlement House
Osage, WV
Awarded: \$2,000
Transportation to purchase food & necessities; lecture series

GRAMS
Troy Annual Conference
Wilmington, NY
Awarded: \$2,000
Network to support older adult ministries

Aldersgate Folding Chair Theater
Aldersgate UMC
Toledo, OH
Awarded: \$500
Theater to nursing homes, retirement communities, pre-schools, etc.

Holston Conference Parish Nurse Program
Holston Conference
Knoxville, TN
Awarded: \$2,500
Holston Conference OAM team with UT School of Nursing

Prime Timers 50 Plus Group
Stillwater UMC
Dayton, OH
Awarded: \$500
Parish Nursing Program Health Fair

Senior Connections
Evangelical UMC
Washington, IL
Awarded: \$500
Wellness program for older adults

Senior Saturdays
Monroeville UMC
Monroeville, PA
Awarded: \$500
Intergenerational enrichment programs for older adults

REACH!
St. Paul UMC
Pine Mountain, GA
Awarded: \$2,000
Spiritual nourishment & social recreation for older adults

Faith Companions
Belmont UMC
Nashville, TN
Awarded: \$450
Trained faith companions to visit homebound members

Older Women for Self-Empowerment
Western Volta Methodist Adult Women Conference
Ghana, West Africa
Awarded: \$2,500
Address issues affecting older women (health, social, spiritual, education)

Senior Academy of Learning
Oklahoma City University
Oklahoma City, OK
Awarded: \$2,000
Development of academy of learning for older adults

Just Older Youth Senior Outreach (J.O.Y.)
Mandell UMC
Chicago, IL
Awarded: \$2,000
Grandparenting program

Senior Enrichment Program
Central UMC
Atlanta, GA
Awarded: \$500
Intergenerational adopt-a-senior program

RC Fellowship for Seniors
Richards Chapel UMC
Troy, OH
Awarded: \$1,500
Ministry with seniors across all cultures

Holy Living for Whole Life Ministry
Wesley UMC
Naperville, IL
Awarded: \$1,000
Holistic ministry for an aging congregation

Senior Hearts Ministry
FUMC Port Isabel
Port Isabel, TX
Awarded: \$1,000
Promote cardiovascular wellness for urban seniors

Alzheimer's Caregivers Time-Out
Park Avenue UMC
Valdosta, GA
Awarded: \$1,000
Adult daycare respite

Kids and Keenagers
FUMC Dodge City
Dodge City, KA
Awarded: \$1,000
Program involving children and seniors in nursing homes

Young at Heart
First UMC
Gatesville, TX
Awarded: \$1,540
Health ministry and reading/ESL program to older adults

Senior Wellness and Outreach
St. Mary UMC
Hogansville, GA
Awarded: \$1,880
Health/safety issues and nutritious meals for older adults

Support for the Elderly
Hays District - UMC
Hays, KS
Awarded: \$1,200
Services to older adults during disaster events

The General Board of Discipleship of
The United Methodist Church
Center on Aging & Older Adult Ministry
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Nashville, TN 37203-0003
www.aging-umc.org

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OLDER ADULT MINISTRY



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An Urgent Call to Action

At the August 2003 meeting of the UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries, committee members adopted the following resolution:

Urgent Call to Action

The United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries is deeply concerned and troubled about the declining quality of life for older persons. We call to your attention the following issues that impact the spiritual and physical well-being of older persons in the United States and worldwide.



From left: Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., Director, Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries, Shirley Painter, Chair, COAM, Hazel Bennett, Secretary, COAM, Julius A. Archibald, Jr., Vice Chair, COAM

- Privatization of public services
- High cost of pharmaceuticals that fuel exorbitant profits for drug companies at the expense of adequate health care for older persons
- Tax cuts for the very wealthy which have significantly reduced funds for health, education, and basic public services
- Undermining federal regulations protecting workers' rights and pension guarantees
- Vast increase in military spending that has reduced other public expenditures
- Diminishing the role, influence, and worldwide programs of the United Nations system while failing to cooperate in a world community
- Dismantling environmental treaties that have compromised human health, including older persons

We ask you to study, pray, reflect, have public dialogue, and take action to counter the negative effects of these public policies.

*Signed: Shirley Painter, Chair
UM Committee on Older Adult Ministries*