

Older Adult Ministry

Iowa District West

May 2010

A RESOURCE TO CONSIDER

The mission of our District Older Adult Ministry Committee is “to provide resources to the congregations of the District for intentional, individualized, Christ centered ministry to older adults for the enrichment of their lives in service to God.”

A resource that I have found to be very worthwhile is a small 96 page booklet by Richard H. Gentzler, Jr. entitled “The Graying of the Church: A Leader’s Guide for Older Adult Ministry in the United Methodist Church.” Although this booklet was written back in 2002 by a Methodist for fellow Methodists, it nevertheless has a lot to say to us as Lutherans as well.

One chapter in particular, Chapter 5, stands out for me. It has the heading “S.E.N.I.O.R.S.: A Comprehensive Older-Adult Ministry.” The ministry model spelled out in the chapter has seven important components: spiritual, enrichment, nutrition and fitness, intergenerational, outreach, recreation and service.

When a congregation develops these seven components in their older adult ministry program, the result is a comprehensive, well-rounded, intentional, wholistic approach to older adult ministry. Spiritual, physical and emotional needs of older adults will be met. In addition, older adults will be actively utilized in reaching out to the needs of others.

As the older adult population continues to grow in our churches and in our communities, it is becoming more and more important for us to intentionally address this often neglected segment of God’s children. If you have an active, older adult ministry in your congregation, we praise God for that. If you don’t have such a ministry, we encourage you to consider one. You can start small and built it up from there. As the Psalmist states (71:9), “Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength is spent.” A congregation’s ministry to older adults and by older adults is one that God will bless richly.

Incidentally, the book, “The Graying of the Church,” normally sells for \$12.00, but Cokesbury is presently selling the books for \$3.60, a 70% discount. It would be a good time to pick up a few copies and share them with several key people in your congregation.

Also, if you have some unique ideas that you are currently incorporating into your congregation’s older adult ministry, please share them with me and allow me to share them with others through this monthly newsletter. It would be much appreciated. Take care and God bless.

Your Brother in Christ,
Rev. Curtis L. Foreman
Chairman of IDW Older Adult Ministry Committee

PS: Don’t forget the annual “Saints Alive” Retreat scheduled for August 20-22 at Camp Okoboji. The theme, “An Unchanging God in a Changing World,” will be of much value to the older adults of your congregation. More details will soon follow.