

IT TAKES TEAMWORK

If you are interested in starting an older adult ministry at your church, involve others. Organize a team including the pastor and lay leaders and be creative.

Connect to others already doing ministry. Give the name of a contact person at the church to your district superintendent and to the Council on Older Adult Ministries. You'll learn about opportunities for education and service and can share your success stories with others.



RESOURCES

Books

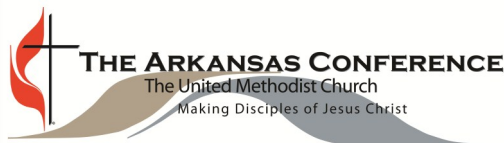
- *Aging and Ministry in the 21st Century*
 - *Designing an Older Adult Ministry*
 - *The Graying of the Church*
- all of the above by
Dr. Richard H. Gentzler, Jr.

DVD

- *New Beginnings: The Gifts of Aging*, a video produced by the United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministry

On-Line

- Center on Aging and Older Adult Ministries, General Board of Discipleship, www.aging-umc.org



Council on Older Adult Ministries
Rev. David Smith
1001 Maryott
Harrison, AR 72601

Phone: 870.365.6678
E-mail: flyfisher01@cox.net

ARKANSAS CONFERENCE

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the
Transformation of the World

OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



CONFERENCE COUNCIL
ON OLDER ADULT
MINISTRIES

WHAT WE KNOW

A recent survey of churches in the Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church revealed the average age of our members is 57. What a wonderful ministry opportunity to develop resources to support the needs of older members. And more than that, to reach those in our communities who are facing some of the same challenges and concerns.

Some facts about older adulthood in America:

- Older adulthood can be described by attitude, function and lifestyle, not candles on a birthday cake.
- It's a time of multiple adjustments—professional, personal, financial, spiritual.
- It can be a time of loneliness and isolation.
- Older adults over age 65 comprise more than 12 percent of the U.S. population, and 30 percent are widowed.
- Older adults want to make sense of their life story, feel valued and productive and are looking to learn and stay active as well as to serve others.

IDEAS FOR OLDER ADULT MINISTRY

Determine the needs of older adults in your congregation. The Older Adult Ministry Council can help you with an on-line survey and other resources.

- Set aside a special Sunday recognition of older adults in your church and community.
- Involve older adults in mission projects that speak to them — an Alzheimer's or arthritis walk, care teams for nursing homes & hospitals, partnering with youth and children in an intergenerational program or project.
- Offer older adult Bible studies—Cokesbury has a series for just that purpose.
- Schedule programs on a variety of health, financial, exercise or current event topics.
- Take a field trip — even familiar places are more fun when shared with others.
- Provide a listening ear for those suffer-



ing loss or for caregivers.

- Schedule group exercise classes for various levels of physical activity.
- Form a group to take a class at a local community college on some area of common interest.
- Schedule a regular time for quilters, knitters or those who like to crochet to gather or to teach others.
- Provide opportunities for regular outings to dine, see movies or gather for fellowship as a group.
- Create mutual interest groups for the sharing of hobbies.
- Institute a program to enable recipe sharing, cooking and baking ideas or sampling each other's favorite foods.
- Set up "no member left behind" ride sharing programs.
- Facilitate a ladies' day out program.
- Generate interest in creating a "mystery trip" once a month.
- Provide respite opportunities for caregivers.
- Develop a community resource guide for things seniors might find interesting and helpful.
- Volunteer to help a local food pantry or other areas of community service.
- Sponsor a community resource or health fair.