

**AS WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP:**

*A selection of scripture and quotes about aging*

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. *Romans 12:2 NRSV*

Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding? *Job 12:12 NIV*

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. *James 3:13 NIV*

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation...so that with the eyes of your heart, you may know what is the hope to which you have been called and what are the riches of God's glorious inheritance among the saints...  
*Ephesians 1:17-18 Oxford inclusive version*

How we decide to behave as elders will in all likelihood become the most important challenge we will face in our lives. *Ken Dychwald*

So the first question in active aging for me is – “if not now, when?”  
*Tana Durnbaugh*

Aging is not just decay, you know. It's growth. It's more than the negative that you're going to die; it's the positive that you understand you're going to die, and that you live a better life because of it.” *Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie*

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lives our growth and our freedom.  
*Victor Frankl*

Every day, think as you wake up: Today I am fortunate to have woken up. I am alive. I have a precious human life. I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself to expand my heart out to others for the benefit of all beings.  
*His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama*

**INVOCATION (in unison)**

God of our changing world,

Open us to your presence as we gather to worship. Quiet our busy minds and restless bodies so we can hear your transforming Word. Fill us with passion and purpose for your work. Touch our hearts as we dedicate this time, and our lives, to you. Amen

*Kim Ebersole*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Sisters and brothers in Christ, welcome! Our lives are filled with many turning points, seasons, crises, and transformations. The old passes into new beginnings. There is never a time in our lives that we are not aging. We grow, we live, and we grow again. As Christians we know God's love is always at work in us.

Today we celebrate Older Adult Month—whether we are the older adult, in middle adulthood, or are approaching adulthood. Let us celebrate time passing and time beginning anew as we seek to age with passion and purpose.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: In a changing world, we gather to give witness to the power of the Spirit's undergirding presence in our lives.

**All: May this worship be a time to affirm that life is a gift, that the gift is good, and that it comes from God.**

One: In a changing world, we hear God calling us anew to follow Jesus with purpose and passion.

**All: May this worship challenge us to open our ears, hearts, and lives to the Spirit of Life which makes all things new.**

*Deanna Brown*

**ASSURANCE OF GUIDANCE (listen)**

Brothers and sisters, prevent life from being a mere history lesson. Reminisce, laugh, weep, and pursue the fullness of life into which Christ leads us. He is the "pioneer and the perfecter of our faith." He is "the Alpha and Omega." Christ dwells within us – the beginnings, the endings, and the vast expanse of "in between." This is good news!

*Guy E. Wampler, Jr.*

## **RECOGNITION OF OLDER ADULTS and a PRAYER**

*Invite people age 50 and older to stand as able, or to raise their hand*

*To be read by pastor, board chairperson, or worship leader:*

In countless ways, our church has been and is being made more Christ-like by the talents, wisdom, and resources of persons 50 years and older. During Older Adult month, we extend to each of you our gratitude for all you have contributed in the past, all you give in the present, and all you will embody and teach us in the future. Let us pray together...

### *Unison Prayer*

God of all seasons of time,

We are humbly and boldly grateful for the gift of life.

We ask your gentle and vigorous blessing upon our older adults this morning.

May they know they are held and summoned by your love.

May they feel empowered by the knowledge that their lives are vital to the future of our world.

May they teach us to live fully, passionately, and gracefully in companion with the limitations of mortal life.

May they lead us to illuminating understanding of what it means to “become a new creature in Christ” with each passing year.

God of our life, we ask for your blessings and give our trust to you. Amen

*Adapted from 2008 Older Adult Month*

## **BY FAITH ~ RESPONSE TO HEBREWS 11**

**Read:** Hebrews 11:1-39 and 12:1-2

**One:** Our ancestors told and retold stories extolling heroes from their past.

**All:** **They cherished the memories of great moments of faith and life.**

**One:** The ancient Hebrews whom they remembered were bold, dynamic men and women;

**All:** **they moved forward into uncharted territories, believing in promise and venturing toward possibility.**

*Guy E. Wampler, Jr.*

## **A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR OLDER ADULTS**

*To be prayed by the pastor, worship leader, or in unison by the congregation.*

God of all the seasons of life, we thank you for the older adults who live among us, revealing to us the seasons of age and experience, reminding us to enjoy each day as your gift, and offering us perspective, courage, peace, and a vision of what it means to age with enthusiasm, purpose, and grace.

We recognize today that each of these dear sisters and brothers is a vital part of this family of faith, and that too seldom do we tell them of our gratitude. So we offer to them and to you our confession of that lapse and the loss we thus have sustained.

Now as we anticipate your grace, we also anticipate the grace of our ongoing journey with them. May we share with them our strength and eagerness and vision. May we learn from them dreams and wisdom and bravery. May we delight in each other. May we tell one another our own stories as they fit together into the story of your purposes and your kingdom on earth and in heaven.

May we simply hold hands with one another, creating ties that will bind us into the great communion of saints who have been, who are, and who are yet to be! Amen.

*Adapted from a prayer by Sonja Griffith*

## **RESPONSIVE READING**

One: Ancient Giver of hope, we live in an ever-changing world

**All: fraught with daunting, unending challenges,**

One: yet filled with wonderful opportunities unknown in previous generations.

**All: Give us a new sense of possibility and purpose as we live today and face tomorrow.**

One: Stir our emotions and arouse within us the confidence and courage to explore new paths, meet new people, make new memories, experience new life,

**All: because our journey – engendered by faith – is not over. Amen.**

*Guy E. Wampler, Jr.*

**CHORAL READING FOR THREE PEOPLE ~ Based on Romans 12:1-2**

Person 1: Sisters and brothers, here's what I want you to do, God helping you:  
Take your everyday,  
Person 2: ordinary,  
Person 1: life –  
Person 3: your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life –  
Person 1: and place it before God as an offering.  
All 3: Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for God.

Person 2: Do not be conformed,  
Person 1: don't follow the customs,  
Person 3: don't be fashioned according to this world.

Person 3: Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture  
Person 1: that you fit in without even thinking.  
Person 2: Don't let the present age keep you in its cocoon.

Person 1: Instead,  
Person 3: metamorphose into the new mind.  
Person 2: Let God change the way you think –  
Person 3: be transformed,  
Person 2: *re*-formed –  
Person 1: by the renewing of your minds.  
Persons 2&3: Renew your minds.

Person 1: Fix your attention on God.  
Then you will know what God wants you to do.  
Persons 2&3: You'll be changed from the inside out.  
Person 1: God brings the best out of you:  
Person 3: what is good,  
Person 1: what is right;  
Person 3: and acceptable,  
Person 1: and is pleasing.  
Person 3: What is perfect.  
Person 1: Fix your attention on God.  
All 3: You will be transformed!

*Kim Ebersole*

## A CHORAL READING IN THREE PARTS

*“Behold, I Make All Things New”*

- 1 BEHOLD, I make all things new.  
2 This is a day when we celebrate the new in a changing world.  
3 And you think that’s good news? What’s wrong with the old?
- 2 I remember the CoB Annual Conferences at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, when Brethren arrived with a 10-dollar bill and the 10 commandments...and didn’t break either one of them.
- 3 I remember when we were the BYPD.  
1 BYPD???? Beautiful Young Precocious Dunkers?  
3 No! We were the Brethren Young People’s Department.
- 2 I remember when women did NOT wear earrings to church.  
*And I remember the days when only the women wore earrings.*
- 1 What happened to those Saturday drives into town –to the filling station and 5 ‘n Dime, the moving picture show and soda shop?
- 3 What happened to the days when hula-hoops and Slinkys provided festive fun?
- 2 What happened to the days when people understood me when I asked where the nearest telephone booth could be located?
- 1 Or when I called something ducky or the cat’s pajamas  
3 Or said: fifty two skidoo!
- 2 When was the last time you heard these heart-warming phrases?  
3 Ain’t got much gumption  
1 Well, I’ll be a Monkey’s uncle!  
3 You aint’ just whistlin’ Dixie.  
2 Well, I declare!

- 1 Isn't it more expressive to say,  
2 *Don't get your bloomers in an uproar*  
1 Rather than "calm down"?  
3 *Or he's just a bump on the log.*  
1 Instead of "He's lazy"?  
2 *Or God willing and the creek don't rise.*  
1 Instead of "if it all goes well"?
- 3 Do you remember ice boxes and washboards, and rumble seats?  
2 How about crinolines?  
3 and outhouses?
- 1 Clearly, some things *are* meant to stay in the historical archives!
- 2 But who wants to live in a culture where classic fairytales are condensed to  
60-second sound bites?  
3 And cell phones become a utensil at dinnertime.  
1 And the internet highway carries hundreds of billions of messages every  
day.
- 3 Land o' Goshen!
- 1 Imagine a world where we could breathe the air.  
2 Where we could turn *off* the television  
1 Or even turn *on* the television with the right clicker.
- 2 Violence, oppression, exploitation, and "globulation."  
3 Reality TV, alienation and lack of forbearance.
- 1 Who wants this media-drenched, data rich, channel surfing, computer-  
gaming, high band width, multi-tasking virtual age?
- 3 And yet...  
2 Listen!  
1 Listen!

3 Behold, I make all things new. (Rev. 21:5)

1 This is a new day. We will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)

2 Sing unto the Lord a new song. (Psalm 96: 1)

3 I will put a new spirit within you. (Ez. 11:19)

1 If anyone be in Christ, they are a new creation (II Cor 5:17)

2 God led the people of Israel – not by the familiar way but by the  
roundabout way of the wilderness..... (Ex. 13: 18)

1 Isn't God always calling us to be made new?

2 "To unlearn the follies of a lifetime

3 To see through inbred self-deceptions

1 To deepen understanding , compassion," and conviction.

All: What does it mean to think anew?

1 To remember that our salvation is not defined by Botox or plastic surgery  
or what we own...

2 Have you ever seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul?

3 To know that we are not burdened by years but gifted *with* years.

3 To know that we can listen –

1 even though we wear hearing aids –

3 See with God's eyes –

1 even with bifocals –

3 and walk the talk –

1 even though we sometimes walk slowly.

2 Martin Buber wrote, "To be old is a glorious thing when one has not  
unlearned what it means to begin."

3 Emily Dickinson wrote, "We turn not older with years but newer every  
day."

2 Behold, I make all things new.

3 Behold, I make all things new.

1 Behold, I make all things new.

- 2 Here I am, God.  
3 Here I am, God.  
1 Here I am, God.

All: Make us new!

*Deanna Brown  
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## **BENEDICTION**

One: As we go, we dedicate ourselves to be passionate and purposeful followers of Christ.

**All: Renewed and transformed, we go forth to offer God's shalom and Christ's peace to a hurting and broken world.**

One: We praise God for wisdom and strength as we serve in Christ's name.

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen**

*Kim Ebersole*

## **SUGGESTED WORSHIP RESOURCES**

***Hymnal: A Worship Book, Brethren Press, 1992***

Unison and responsive readings, prayers, and benedictions

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| #661 We gather as pilgrims on a journey...          | #718 We give you thanks for the founders of your church... |
| #664 Watch! Wait!                                   | #720 Listening God, you hear our prayers..                 |
| #672 With all your saints across the generations... | #725 God of guidance...                                    |
| #675 Come, Lord...                                  | #729 ...be transformed.                                    |
| #677 O living Christ, come...                       | #735 Transforming God...                                   |
| #692 O God, you rule the world...                   | #751 Generous God, you gave us life...                     |
| #704 Seek God who may be found...                   | #759 God, I'm worried...                                   |
| #706 Because of God's great love...                 | #763 We came to worship, we go now to serve...             |
| #711 Jesus taught us to speak of hope...            |  |



**SUGGESTED WORSHIP RESOURCES, continued**

***Hymnal: A Worship Book, Brethren Press, 1992***

Hymns

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| #135 God, whose purpose is to kindle | #307 Will you let me be your servant |
| #142 Brothers and sisters of mine    | #389 Take my life                    |
| #163 Obey my voice                   | #395 Here I am, Lord                 |
| #226 You are salt for the earth      | #507 Gracious Spirit, dwell with me  |
| #299 New earth, heavens new          |                                      |

***Hymnal Supplement, Brethren Press, 2001-2005***

Unison and responsive readings, prayers, and benedictions

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| #1055 May God...grant you instead, passion | #1126 Listening prayer for unspeakable times |
| #1079 A prayer for the path                | #1134 Passion prayer                         |

***Hymnal Supplement, Brethren Press, 2001-2005***

Hymns

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| #1058 Go forth for God | #1078 I was there to hear your borning cry |
|------------------------|--|