Church of the Brethren Older Adult Ministry

**Reading Program**

**Bibliography Listing by Category**

Select a total of nine books to read, preferably from a variety of categories. You may wish to check with your local library to see which books they have available.

* Indicates that this book is required reading

### AGING/FUTURE DEMOGRAPHICS

**Age Power: How the 21st Century will be Ruled by the New Old** by Ken Dychtwald. Tarcher Putnam, 1999.

The baby-boom generation is about the transform into the largest elderly population in human history, changing how everyone lives. No business, family or home will work tomorrow as it does today. This book will help you better understand the dynamics of the baby-boomer population.


This book provides excellent guidance for doing religious research. It covers practical skills such as the design of questionnaires, the proper use of data gathering methodologies and ways of analyzing research findings.


The results of the MacArthur Foundation Study on aging. Find out how the way you live—not the genes you were born with—determines health and vitality.

### CROSS CULTURAL/CROSS GENERATIONAL


Over the past decade, researchers and policy makers have shown considerable concern over the increases in grandparent-maintained households within African American families. This concern has stimulated a proliferation of research on grandparent care giving on a wide range of issues such as the impact of multiple roles on health, problems and needs, social support, role satisfaction and emotional/physical wellbeing.


A comprehensive study of generational dynamics within congregations. The authors examine current religious and spiritual trends and reveal how these changes can offer opportunities for enriching a congregation’s faith and spiritual life. In addition to information and commentary, this book offers ways congregations are bridging the gaps and connecting the different worlds the generations inhabit to create stronger, richer and more vibrant religious communities.

The author explores the reasons why communicating with older adults is sometimes so frustrating and offers strategies and skills for overcoming these difficulties. The book aims to help readers understand the conflicting and previously unappreciated developmental tasks of older adults, recognize how these tasks can interfere with our ability to communicate, learn new skills to enhance intergenerational communication and become advocates for our elders.


Through the use of oral history, the author tells the story of an extended family in the Georgia-South Carolina low-country. Family members talk about schooling, relatives, work, religion, race and their love of the place where they have lived for generations. “Absorbing and original”.

DEMENTIA


Look beyond the challenges of Alzheimer’s and focus more energy on creating moments of joy. The book has 5 sections: Understand the Person with Alzheimer’s, Powerful Tools to Create Positive Outcomes, Let’s Talk Communication, Memory Enhanced Environments, Enhanced Moments. Each section contains short “chapters” such as “Remember Their Greatness,” “You are Wrong, They are Right,” “Be Like the Sun,” and “Honey, Dearie, Sweetie” to help care givers and others create those moments of joy for people with dementia.


A form of care giving, championed by internationally recognized expert Joanne Koenig Coste, is significantly improving the lives of Alzheimer patients and their families. Since 1973, Coste has been advocating a compassionate and common-sense approach to Alzheimer's care known as habilitation. Habilitation uses easy techniques to help people with the disease and their care partners on the journey through Alzheimer's. (www.learningtospeakalzheimers.com)


This novel provides a hauntingly accurate portrayal of a young woman’s descent into Alzheimer's Disease. The story will appeal to those dealing with the disease and may prove helpful to their experience. It is viewed by some as a “must read.”

GRIEF AND LOSS


This book guides us through the process of grieving all the events that take meaning from our lives so that we can learn to live again. The author draws from her clinical pastoral background and her own personal experience with grief.

The author explains the differences between grief and mourning as he encourages mourners to acknowledge death and embrace the pain of loss. Sections for journaling provide opportunity to write down thoughts and feelings about grief and loss.

**LEGACY/LIFE STORIES**


A life-review workbook, this book could be used by an individual or with an individual to record their spiritual stories.


The process of preserving our legacies and passing them along to future generations is as important for the writer of a spiritual will as it is for the person for whom it is intended. The author shares personal experiences, quotations and tools to help the reader create a written record of beliefs, values and traditions to share with others. *Freed was a keynote presenter at the 2009 National Older Adult Conference (NOAC) of the Church of the Brethren.*

**LIFE TRANSITIONS**


This is a fascinating and life-affirming book in which the author debunks harmful myths about aging and illuminates the biological and emotional foundations of creativity. He shows how the unique combination of age, experience, and creativity can produce exciting inner growth and infinite potential for everyone, particularly those in the “second half” of life.


Written by one of our most celebrated spiritual writers, the book invites the reader to embrace older age as a natural part of life that is both active and contemplative, productive and reflective, and deeply rewarding. The many dimensions of aging—the purposes and concerns, struggles and surprises, the potential and joys—are explored. The author contends that the gift of older age is not merely being alive, but rather it is the gift of becoming more fully alive than ever. A lesson in how to live, regardless of our chronological age.


From the riches of Scripture, the authors offer a vision of aging as a time of great wisdom and grace. They draw on contemporary books on aging, including sociological, psychological, medical and philosophical studies. They include accounts of their own experience of aging as well as the voices of others who have reflected deeply on their own journey through the later years of life. This book is a reflection on the good news of God’s good work in each and every person.
The author draws on his own personal life and his many years of ministry, as well as the wisdom of poets and philosophers, to explore family relationships, sex, retirement, illness and death, solitude and fear of the vast unknown. This book deals with concrete problems but reflects a biblical spirituality that is nonsectarian and deeply human. Firmly rooted in down-to-earth living, it provides instruction and inspiration, honesty and hope.

The anti-aging bias prevalent in our society has prevented us from thinking about old age in a way that will create a good elderhood. The author, by removing our ageist blinders, provides a motivational and visionary blueprint for old age as a healing force in society.

**OLDER ADULT MINISTRY**

A “how to” guide that provides practical ideas and models for adult ministry (including older adult ministry) in local congregational settings. *Gentzler was a keynote presenter at the 2006 National Older Adult Conference (NOAC) of the Church of the Brethren.*

This book is designed to encourage and facilitate individual and/or group study. The reader will learn much about the aging process and the developmental stage of older adulthood as well as new ways of helping your congregation develop an intentional and comprehensive ministry by, for and with older adults. The book contains various exercises that will help guide your personal and/or group reflection.

Important information necessary for understanding our aging society and the impact longer life is having in our congregations and communities.

The author helps us understand frail elders, provides guidance for visitation and offers suggestions for leading worship in a group setting. Clergy, chaplains and lay leaders who plan and direct ministry to the homebound and nursing-home population will find this book spiritual, encouraging and practical.

Timely information on how to develop and strengthen ministries with older adults. The book offers data on the needs and life issues of older adults. Congregations will find this book a helpful tool in understanding the needs of older adults and in creating effective older-adult ministries.


**Engaging in Ministry with Older Adults** by Dosia Carlson. The Alban Institute, 1997.
A helpful and practical book which describes various models for older adult ministry.

The author, a veteran pastor to older adults, offers step-by-step plans for older adult ministry, including practical ideas, specific outreach activities and event ideas, reproducible resource pages, worksheets and more.

**Working the Gray Zone: A Call for Proactive Ministry by and with Older Adults** by Charles G. Oakes. Providence House Publishers, 2000.
This book discusses the role of older adults in God’s scheme of things and proposes that, in God’s design, individual purpose never dies. The author reveals a proactive pursuit of productive and meaningful ministry in both religious and marketplace settings. Exciting older adult ministries are described and innovative ways to remove the barriers to fulfilling purposes are prescribed.

**SPIRITUALITY AND AGING**

This book is about being loved by God and learning how to allow ourselves to receive that love. It is written to enrich the spirituality of older adults who are still searching for “something more” to allow them to experience the abundance of life that Christ has promised to us. The book will benefit older adults, as well as pastors, families and healthcare providers who seek to serve, love and care for older adults. Thibault was a keynote presenter at the 2008 National Older Adult Conference (NOAC) of the Church of the Brethren.

“...create a radically different aging process characterized by adventure, passion, mystery and fulfillment. ...ways to use your life experiences to nurture, heal and perhaps save both a younger generation and this world.” (from the book cover)

The author and colleagues sent surveys to 2620 “boomers” and conducted telephone interviews with many of the respondents. The book opens with the life stories of seven people taken from these interviews, emphasizing their spiritual growth and how they were influenced by such factors as family background and exposure to 1960s values. Also explored is spirituality vs. religiosity, seekers vs. traditionalists, and fundamentalism vs. mainstream.

This book presents the first serious theological reflection on what it means to grow old, not only in our culture, but particularly as a Christian. Eighteen first-rate Christian thinkers survey biblical and historical perspectives on aging, look at aging in the modern world, and describe the “Christian practice of growing old.”
The authors, both of whom are national leaders in health ministries, offer a practical and engaging primer on developing a variety of initiatives for all who are concerned and interested—pastors, parish nurses, lay leaders and concerned parishioners. The book mixes real-life congregational case studies with vital information to equip congregants in helping people manage illness, navigate the healthcare labyrinth, avoid or manage disability and even provide some life-saving and preventative medical services.

“Is there any good news in the Good News for older adults?” One of several questions the author raises and answers in her book. Many older adults experience a spiritual crisis as they face what seems to be ongoing diminishment. How does the Good News speak to their fears? What promises does the gospel offer for living a life of continued growth, love and wisdom? (from the book cover)

The later years take us into the heart of the central Christian paradox of death/resurrection. It is in living the pattern of that mystery that people discover the graces of life’s winter season and share them with us all. (from the Introduction)

This book is a ministry resource for older adults as they journey through the later years of life. The authors have excerpted from important works that address the issues of spirituality in older adults and have developed pathways for spiritual growth.

Church of the Brethren

Older Adult Ministry Reading Program
Church of the Brethren
Older Adult Ministry
1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, IL  60120
(847) 742-5100 ext. 302
(800) 323-8039 ext. 302
kebersole@brethren.org