

Mid-Atlantic OAMNews
Happy Holidays!!

This newsletter is sponsored by:
Older Adult Ministries Committee
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, PC(USA)
Sunnyside Communities
The Presbyterian Homes, Inc. of North Carolina



Mid-Atlantic OAMNews – is a monthly e-newsletter dedicated to the promotion of spiritual health and well-being of older adults and their families – offering information, resources, model ministries, stories, and humor!

Talking Points – Did you know.....?

- Every 15 minutes, a Presbyterian retires
- 35% of Presbyterians are age 65+
- Median age of a Presbyterian is 55
- Median age of active pastors is 48

Quotables

A definition of caring: ~to invite and encourage another person to grow~

Freda Gardner, former Moderator of the PC(USA): *The need for a Biblical understanding of the church is more than great. Until we understand what it means to be the Body of Christ we can't be about the business of healing the world. The Bible was written to support the Body of Christ.*

And more from Freda: *There is no retirement from discipleship. It may change in form but there is no end to discipleship.*

A Sermon: *Undimmed Vision* by Rev. Aaron Fulp-Eickstaedt, offers some excellent themes about aging. Click here to read Aaron's sermon.

Advent Litany for the Generations, by Jan McGilliard
Click here for the Advent Litany





Book Review: *Circles of Care*, by Ann Cason

Circles of Care: How to Set Up Quality Home Care for Our Elders, by Ann Cason
Forward by Reeve Lindburgh
Reviewed by Jan McGilliard, Associate for Older Adult Ministries
Synod of the Mid-Atlantic

At a time in history when one-quarter of American families are involved in caregiving, Ann Cason's book brings a holistic perspective to a tender subject. The *Circle of Care* refers to all who may become involved in a caring situation: family and helpers, friends and neighbors, health, legal, and religious professionals, even the mail carrier, grocer, or hairdresser. It also embraces the bevy of feelings and events that accompany providing or receiving care.

Cason's vast experience and deep compassion permeate the pages of this excellent guide to caring for someone in their own home. All aspects of care (physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual) are considered and a team approach is advised. Practical, realistic examples fortify the topics which include: arrangements of daily care, assembling a care team, helping the elder accept their new life; enriching the elder's environment, working with mood swings, confusion, and memory loss; easing the transition to a nursing home; caring for and being with the dying.

We all want to age with grace and dignity. Ann Cason reminds us that it is best done with a *circle of care*. A good companion book is Reeve Lindburgh's **No More Words**, a memoir of her mother's last years. Anne Morrow Lindburgh's care was overseen by Ann Cason.

ISBN#1-57062-471-2

Quotes: *"The goal is not to change anyone but to let all of our various agendas relax into awareness and acceptance. The circle helps both elder and caregivers feel at home, wherever that may be."*

"Care is not just one person doing something for another. The attention has to be on creating an environment in which all the members of the circle take care of one another."

"Caring for an old person can be very humdrum without occasional celebrations. Look for excuses to have a party...Uplifted spirits can carry people through untold difficulty."

"The stimulation of people of ideas, or breaks in routines can disrupt a pattern of confusion or a stuck emotion, allowing it to settle or pop open and dissolve. The older person's panic and your panic can thus become the catalyst for developing confidence in yourselves and each other."

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events!



March 12-16, 2003: ***Making our World a Good Place to Grow***: 2003 Joint Conference of the National Council on the Aging and the American Society on Aging.

March 31-April 2: Adult Retreat at Massanetta Springs Conference Center, Harrisonburg, VA. Theme TBA

May 12-16, 2003: Skills in Older Adult Ministry at Montreat Conference Center: ***Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow***.

October 6-10, 2003: Fall Older Adult Conference at Montreat

October 15-18, 2003: Generations United International Conference: ***Uniting Generations to Build a Better World***, at the Hilton Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

October 21-23, 2003: Adult Retreat at Massanetta Springs Conference Center, Harrisonburg, VA Theme TBA

October 23-25, 2003: POAMN (Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network) Annual Conference, in Tempe, Arizona at the Fiesta Inn. Theme: Health, Spirituality, Well-Being. Workshops: Conscious Aging, Native American Spirituality, Reader's Theater, Grief, Healthy Ministry, Low Impact Exercise, Taize, Needs Assessment, Presbytery Representatives, Introduction to Older Adult Ministry

Newspaper clippings (Boston Globe)

Study reveals broad bias against elderly in U.S., even among themselves: Using a novel test that employs a rapid succession of faces or names to study attitudes, psychologists found that unconscious prejudice against the elderly among all age groups is even more widespread than unconscious racism. More than 80% associated old faces with negative words such as "failure" or "agony," while similar bias against blacks showed up in only about 70% of white and Asian test-takers. Most surprisingly, researchers found that the old people among the research subjects were every bit as biased against other old people as young people were.



The key to such attitudes is that many old people do not, or cannot, think of themselves as old. In such a youth-loving society, psychologists say, it is not surprising that many elderly people deny having entered old age. To consider: how the media portray old people in everything from TV shows to birthday cards that joke about being "over the hill."

Just presented at the Gerontological Society on Aging conference: A study found that in a group of 660 people age 50 or older who were interviewed in 1975, those who had positive views about aging had a definite survival advantage. "A more positive view on aging predicted that a person would live on average seven years longer" than those with more negative views, said Becca Levy, an author of the study and asst. professor in Yale's Dept. of Epidemiology and Public Health.

Ability to handle stress is key to longevity, centenarians say (Boston Globe)

New research suggests that those who live to be 100 are less likely to dwell on problems and have a better ability to handle stress than those who die younger. "Life has a way of mixing grief with joy, evil with good, darkness with light," said Charlotte Chipman, who lives in Newton, Mass. "You have to be good at handling this, and go along with whatever comes your way." A small study of female centenarians found low levels of neuroticism among the oldest people. So did a similar study in Japan. Neuroticism typically includes symptoms of anxiety, obsessions, and phobias. Studies of other groups of centenarians around the world suggest that centenarians have higher morale than other seniors and that psychological health is more important than physical health in maintaining well-being late in life.

"The two major things you need to do is exercise your brain and manage your stress," says Margery Silver, Associate director of a New England study of centenarians.

NCOA Week (The National Council on the Aging) – a weekly newsletter of current events and issues on aging is regularly posted on our web site.

Global Action on Aging – a weekly newsletter dedicated to issues of aging in the U.S. and around the world is posted on our web site.

NEW WEBSITE OFFERS HIGH-QUALITY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Editor's Note: What kind of volunteer opportunities are being offered for seniors in our congregations? Are they meaningful?

There's more to volunteering than stuffing envelopes.

As nonprofit budgets shrink and the healthy, active elder population grows, organizations must learn to tap in to the expertise and vast knowledge of this volunteer base. But newer generations of elders, in turn, are seeking meaningful, intellectually stimulating opportunities to address real problems facing individuals, families and communities.

Senior Corps' new Web-based volunteer recruitment system (<http://www.joinseniorservice.org>), links Americans ages 55-plus with top-quality volunteer opportunities in their communities. Live since April 2002, the online database is easily accessible -- and free -- to elders and nonprofits around the country.