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Interim Editor
Marvin Simmers

Publisher
Miriam Dunson
Associate
Older Adult Ministries
Phone Toll Free:
888-728-7228 Ext. 5487

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Spirituality: Health and Well-Being Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network 2003 Conference

The 136 participants, from 36 states, in the annual POAMN conference, held at the Fiesta Inn, in Tempe, Arizona, October 22-25, were inspired and challenged by Ms. Marty Richards' two keynote addresses on the conference theme, *Spirituality: Health and Well-Being*. Richards is in private practice in Washington State, where she is a consultant on aging. In her first presentation on "Spirituality: Health and Hope and Well-Being", Richards explored spirituality and hope and their integral relationship to well-being as persons age. She pointed out that adults have different perspectives on spirituality, shaped by their life experiences - religious and otherwise.

Richards' second keynote presentation was "Keeping the Spirit Alive Through Intergenerational Connections". In this address, she focused on the importance of sharing between generations, both in the family and in the congregation, as a way of maintaining well-being, improving communication, and building community. See are summaries of the addresses on the continuing pages.

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2003 POAMN Conference Highlights

- ❖ 136 conferees, from 36 different states
- ❖ Dinner and opening session at Cook College & Theological School
- ❖ An ice cream social, sponsored by Presbyterian Senior Services of New York City
- ❖ Keynote speeches by Martha "Marty" Richards
- ❖ Inspiring worship, led by Rev. Dr. Dosia Carlson
- ❖ Tributes to Rev. Dr. John Rhea, Rev. Richard Comfort, Rev. Dr. Richard Morgan, and Rev. Dr. Miriam Dunson
- ❖ Sixteen outstanding workshops on aspects of older adult ministry
- ❖ Conference offering of \$1,500 to Cook College & Theological School
- ❖ An evening of networking and sharing models of ministry with older adults in local churches and presbyteries
- ❖ An evening of entertainment by Alvis Robertson, a member of the Sioux Nation
- ❖ Closing worship, installation of officers, and Communion, led by Rev. Dr. Dosia Carlson



Participants came from across the country to network with each other and to increase their awareness and abilities for ministry with older adults.

**Please See POAMN Conference
Pictoral Pg10**

A MAN SENT FROM GOD WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN

A Tribute to John I. Rhea by William M. Clark



"There was a man sent from God whose name was John", the Fourth Gospel says in chapter 1:6 This John was John the Baptist, a man from the desert wilderness who saw his mission as the harbinger of the Christ. His message

suited the times: a call to repentance in fire and brim-stone language. He died early as a witness to his faith.

Another John, a special friend, was also sent from God with a mission and message. He was John Rhea, a young ninety-two year-old when he was ushered into the Church Triumphant on August the eleventh.

This John had a mission that he lived out to his dying day. That mission was to point to the Christ by serving others in his name. First, it was as Chaplain in the United States Army during WWII, from which he retired after twenty-six years and with the rank of Colonel. Then, it was to Richmond, VA as Director of Men's Work of the former PCUS. From there it was to Louisville to initiate a huge project of building Senior Citizens' facilities to provide shelter and care for older adults. When those centers were up and running, he moved on to the Presbyterian Center on Witherspoon Street and to the desk of Miriam Dunson, Associate for Older Adult Ministries, to volunteer for "something meaningful to do" with his life at age eighty-two. That opened yet another decade of serving others. This time, he was a helpmate to Miriam, especially to enact the General Assembly's call to organize a national association for retired ministers, their spouses or survivors (ARMSS). That's where I got to know John and to appreciate him as a human being and a winsome follower of Christ. From its beginning, ARMSS had the touch of John's hand, keen mind, and persevering heart. For he was the champion of the cause, place, continuing service and celebration of the legacy of retired ministers and their spouses.

John's message was suited to his times and calling. He was one of the "kingdom people" Jesus described in Matthew 25:35: "for I was hungry and you gave me food ... thirsty and you gave me drink...a stranger and you welcomed me...naked and you clothed me...sick and you visited me...in prison and you came to me." His message was a gentle and challenging invitation to join him in following the Christ by meeting the needs of all others, often God's forgotten ones.. He preached that message with his life.

This man sent from God was a giver and not a taker. He would give the clothes off his back and did! Pancreatic cancer had done its worst and the doctors dismissed him to the care of Hospice at his home for, at most, two weeks. Planning his life to the very end, he arranged for all of his clothes except his burial suit to be sent to Goodwill. "John being John" lived on for some two months. Not wanting to miss church, he sent for a couple of suits from Goodwill to attend church and other events. He called me just ten days before his death to tell me that the latest edition of the quarterly newsletter for ARMSS was in the mail due to the great work of Polly Marcum, the Administrative Assistant, and also to humorously share the story about having to get clothes from Goodwill because he had lived longer than anybody thought. The newsletter arrived on the day he died. I call him "The Miracle of Witherspoon Street" because so many good things came to pass at the Center from his heart and hand and the commitment of others around him!

BE PRO-ACTIVE

Find out the 800 number for your representatives both state and federal. It's time to exercise "government by the people."

In many of the states Medicare is being cut and elderly people without family or able friends are being turned out of nursing homes.

Older persons are finding the need to choose between food and medicine. In Washington a committee is trying to come up with a plan for medicines, but agreement seems to be elusive.



Miriam Dunson

MUSINGS BY MIRIAM

As I look toward retirement at the end of 2003, "musings" is the right word to use as a title for this article. I have been amused, and bemused as I have remembered the activities of these thirteen years in the Office of Older Adult Ministries. They have been good years, filled with satisfying activities, making new friends, traveling to new places, and I have put my heart and soul into the cause of older adult ministry. There have been very difficult times when budgets were cut, many times wondering whether or not we would join the many other denominational older adult ministry offices that closed for lack of funds. However, through the strong support of the decision-makers, the generosity of many of you out in the churches, and the careful leadership of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network (POAMN), we have survived.

Not only have we survived, but in my opinion, older adult ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in the best place it has ever been. Approximately 90 presbyteries have nominated representatives, called PROAMs (Presbytery Representatives in Older Adult Ministry), including about 140 persons. Many presbyteries have Older Adult Ministry Committees, as do many congregations. New resources have been developed, and a new one will be published in late 2004 under the working title of *Dimensions in Older Adult Ministries*, to be published by Geneva Press. Several other denominations are using the resources published by the Office of Older Adult Ministries, especially the Older Adult Week Planning Guide. Approximately 50 or more new leaders in older adult ministry have been trained at the annual conference each year. When this is spread over 13 years, that comes to about 650 new leaders trained, and that many more leaders whose skills have been enhanced by these efforts.

Although I will "retire" from my official duties, my passion for older adult ministry continues, and I intend to continue to put my energies into this important ministry in my retirement. I will be open to accept invitations to speak at presbytery or congregation events, lead workshops, teaching seminars,

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MIRIAM'S SONG

By Helen Morrison, Chair
 Congregational Ministries Division Committee
 General Assembly Council

The American Heritage Dictionary (Second College Edition) defines "zeal" as "Enthusiastic and diligent devotion in pursuit of a cause, ideal, or goal; fervor." "Passion" is also a word that fits the description of the Miriam of whom I speak in this tribute.

I came to know Miriam when she became Staff Associate in the Office on Older Adult Ministries. My experience with "aging" in our denomination began in 1982 when the PCUS/UPCUSA Joint Office on Aging opened in Atlanta. Dr. Tom Robb was the Director, and the Office was slated for termination at the end of 1988, when the denominational offices were relocated to Louisville. Thanks to Tom and many other faithful volunteers, we worked our way back into the system - so to speak - which gave birth to the present Office on Older Adult Ministries, in 1990. After a comprehensive personnel search, Miriam Dunson was called to be the Staff Associate for the newly formed office. Truly God's Spirit was leading the Search Committee and Miriam in this decision.

Miriam Dunson is truly a person whose life has demonstrated a "missionary" zeal. Prior to her coming to Louisville Miriam had served as a mission co-worker in Korea and later as the staff person in the PCUS who was responsible for enlisting and training mission co-workers for their ministry in our international partnerships. During her years in Korea, Miriam's understanding of "respect for elders" was strengthened mightily, and prepared her for the very different perspective our society has about older adults as she entered her new position. Miriam quickly discovered that the subject of "aging" is not revered in the society at large or in our denomination.

When my relationship with Miriam began, I had had almost a decade of involvement at the denominational level with older adult ministry. Having been one of the early "Older Adult Enablers," I was in on the organization of what we know now as the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network (POAMN). The thrust of POAMN was to be a support system and network for the Office on Older Adult Ministries.

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Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Margaret Suttle

The church where I serve is in the midst of exploring and experiencing 40 days of purpose, based on Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. This book and program have caught on in many churches of all denominations across the country. At the end of summer we were visiting our daughter and her husband in Raleigh, North Carolina. When we attended worship on Sunday, the pastor announced that he would begin preaching on the "40 Days" the next week. A few days later the subject came up when we were having lunch with two of the older women of the congregation. I remarked that our church would begin the "40 Days" program in October. One of the ladies, a delightful ninety-year-old, said, "I'm not sure what the big deal is. I know my purpose. It is to 'glorify God and enjoy Him forever.'" Spoken like a true Presbyterian!

Since then, while preparing for what would be happening in our congregation, I have reflected on her statement. I have been grateful, even smug, for being part of a creedal church, a church that expresses biblical teachings in its catechisms and creeds. It's too bad all churches don't have clear, written statements of belief, I thought. Isn't our purpose clear? Didn't we learn this in Sunday school or catechism class? If we learned this lesson well, why do we need to spend all this time discovering our purpose in life? Why indeed?

The more I reflected, however, the more my smugness subsided. Conversations covering a variety of circumstances and situations came to mind. I remembered grieving widowers whose whole lives revolved around their wives; women, suddenly alone, trying to cope, moving from one activity to another and finding no fulfillment in anything; retirees trying to discover who they were apart from their careers. My reflections had begun by pointing a finger at those who do not offer the rich tradition of instruction that Presbyterians do, but as they progressed I began to realize that the finger points at us as well.

It is not enough to memorize the words, to state the creeds, to recite the verses. They have to be internalized and most importantly, they have to reflect an intimate relationship with God. Without that relationship, life has no purpose at any age, but the lack of purpose is especially felt when one experiences loss or is confronted with crises identified with growing older. In her book, *A Deepening Love Affair*, Dr. Jane Marie Thibault tells a story about a widow who had come to her because of depression. For years the woman had led a useful Christian life, but her attention had been focused on the externals of religion—church attendance, performing good works, going through the motions. Even her prayers were perfunctory. She felt that something was missing – a personal, intimate relationship with God that provides meaning in life.

Thibault, a clinical gerontologist and faculty member at the School of Medicine in the University of Louisville, describes older years of life as "gift" and encourages those who have the gift to use it to deepen their relationship with God. The result of that deeper relationship is a blessing, both to the ones who have it and to those around them.

After weeks of reflection, my conclusion is one of renewed conviction. Spiritual growth and enrichment has to continue throughout all our lives. Planning for older adult ministry should begin with that as a priority. It is a matter of expression. Rick Warren says, "Living for God's glory is the greatest achievement we can accomplish with our lives" and his book offers practical instructions. Jane Thibault writes of an intimate relationship with God that makes life meaningful and inspires the reader to seek a deeper relationship with God. My North Carolina friend and I speak of our "chief end," knowing it is to glorify God and we try, with God's grace, to do just that. Three approaches – one practical, another contemplative, and the third theological – to one basic truth: we are made for God's glory! This is our purpose.

**See AGenda
On-Line**



<http://horeb.pcusa.org/olderadults>

Continued - Conference

Spirituality: Health and Hope and Well-Being

While spirituality is an intensely personal matter, we are able to relate to one another as spiritual beings by carefully listening and communicating the things that are important to us. Every person uses "cover terms," words and phrases that are packed with meaning and that help to identify the self and provide clues to others about who we are. For example, "Presbyterian" is a cover term that can mean many different things, depending on a person's frame of reference. Even so, those who know us as "Presbyterian" have some initial ideas and perceptions of us. "Home" is a cover term that may mean a place filled with childhood memories, though we are physically far away from there at the present time. After years of living in the same place, one may relocate to a new residence in a condo or nursing home, but it is "home" in name only. For meaningful communication, it is important to hear and understand the meaning of the message beneath the cover terms we all use.

Richards discussed several attributes of hope, and asserted that hope is an absolutely crucial factor in health and wholeness. Hope is an experiential process, by which we work at making sense of life and finding meaning and purpose in the things that happen to us. She pointed out that despair is suffering in which one finds no meaning.

Hope is also a rational thought process, by which we are able to set goals for our lives, seek resources to help us achieve those goals, exert our ability to act, and exercise some degree of control in our lives. Time is an important factor in this process, sometimes acting as a constraint, and at other times reinforcing hope.

Again, hope is a relational process that gives strength when shared. When we are in the "holding times" of life – those transitional periods that are not clearly defined and/or that create anxiety – shared hope affirms that we do not walk alone. We have companions who care, understand, and help us explore opportunities for living with renewed purpose.

Finally, hope is a spiritual and transcendent process, most often expressed by Christians as

the ultimate victory of life over death. This hope is not blind optimism, nor is it simply patting people on the head in the crises of life and assuring them there is nothing to worry about. Rather, it is an expression of hope that transcends earthly life, affirming that we are spiritual beings whose existence and worth are not confined to the dimensions of time and space.

Hope and spirituality are the integrating threads of our individual lives, and our life in community. Richards helped her hearers understand how hope and spirituality – absolutely crucial factors for health and wholeness – are woven together, and that we must have hope within us before we can help others to hope. The deepest expression of spirituality and hope is love, the ability to love persons enough to learn the song that is in their hearts, and to sing it to them when they have forgotten.

Keeping the Spirit Alive through Intergenerational Connections

In this address, one of the first points Richards made was the need to redefine the stages of human life in our nation. Life expectancy has increased greatly in the last several generations, so that it is no longer satisfactory to speak simply of childhood, youth, adulthood, and older adulthood when discussing the generations. In reality, what we have formerly considered to be older adulthood now embraces several generations: the younger old, the middle old, and the frail old. Longer life expectancy has a profound effect on family life, as evidenced by the rise of the "sandwich generation," adults who have responsibilities both for their children and for one or both parents.

The family is one system among many in our society, and each family is unique. Families have the potential to "grow" and "change" over time, and it is important to balance the competing needs of all the family members, from the oldest to the youngest. The needs for balance do not apply just to people living under one roof, but to the extended family as well. How are parents of children and young people supposed to balance the needs of their offspring with needs of parents who are depending upon them, whether nearby or across the country? There are no pat answers, but congregations can be catalysts for helping families address, in constructive ways, the unique demands they face.

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Continued - Conference

As people live longer, the challenges of coping with chronic illnesses will increase, and pressures on caregivers will mount. It is incumbent upon the church and the larger society to be increasingly aware of the needs of, and to provide appropriate support for, those who are caregivers. Richards very helpfully pointed out that chronic illnesses and disabilities are not restricted to older persons, for there are persons of all ages who have disabilities. However, with the increase in the number of older adults in need of care-giving, awareness has been raised to a new level. In ministry with families who face the challenges of acute and chronic illnesses, listening to the "message" beneath the words of conversation becomes a crucial skill for friends, family, and congregational members.

Richards identified a number of intergenerational concerns with which families must cope. Roles, rules, and secrets in family life are powerful dynamics that often are not apparent to those outside the family. Families struggle with realities of mortality and the impact upon the family. In seeking to balance the needs of all family members, often it is necessary to determine the shape, and limits of love and fidelity by wrestling with questions such as "How much do we owe our parents?"

Virtually every family experiences failures, disappointments, and brokenness of some sort. The ability to give and receive forgiveness, and to effect reconciliation is both a challenge and a spiritual gift to family members. Sharing the family's spiritual legacy across the generations is also a gift. Family members are enriched and nurtured when the members have opportunities to reflect upon family experiences and events, and their meanings.

Families also experience ethical and spiritual dilemmas across generations. Balancing members' needs with care-giving responsibilities, fostering generational reciprocity and mutual respect, making difficult choices, adjusting to changing roles and responsibilities, and dealing with unresolved issues of the past cannot be ignored if the family is to cope successfully.

When faced with the prolonged suffering of a loved one, basic beliefs about God may be put to the test. End-of-life decisions must sometimes be made when technology makes it possible to prolong one's life, even if the quality of

that life is in serious question. Sometimes families must seek to make the best choice from among an array of difficult choices. In all these situations, the faith community has a responsibility to offer both support and whatever guidance it can.

Richards addressed the importance of empowering the generations in the faith community and cited the work of Dosia Carlson, a minister in the United Church of Christ. In one of her books, Carlson made these points:

- Dispel the stereotypes about young and old;
- Allow the strengths of one generation to meet the needs of another;
- Bring people together to address the needs of all ages through cooperation and pooled resources;
- Develop an appreciation for rich cultural heritage, traditions and histories.

Richards concluded her address by naming creative approaches to connection in intergenerational sharing. Among these are:

- ✦ Keeping hope alive
- ✦ Focused education
- ✦ Story telling
- ✦ Ethical wills and spiritual legacies
- ✦ Rituals
- ✦ Sharing the arts
- ✦ Intentional intergenerational connections and dialogs

TOUCHING PEOPLE WITH GODS LOVE...ONE PERSON AT A TIME

*By Ruth Hamlin, Executive Director,
Presbyterian Outreach, Inc.*

Missouri River Valley Presbytery serves 11 counties in eastern Nebraska and southwestern Iowa. There are 58 churches spread across the plains serving congregations from inner city members to those who have chosen to spend their lives in the rural farm communities. Many of our churches are facing the effects of an aging congregation with few resources to address growing needs. Understanding this challenge, we are looking at health ministries and partnerships with other groups to expand the capacity of reaching our own members as well as the neighbors who need to know they are not forgotten.

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News From Presbytery Representatives Older Adult Ministries (PROAMs)

Presbytery of Scioto Valley

Ms. Jane Dickson and the Rev. Dick Milford serve as presbytery Coordinators for Older Adult Ministries and as the PROAMs for the Presbytery of Scioto Valley. Here is a sample of what is happening in older adult ministries in the presbytery:

- ◆ Sponsored an Older Adult Ministries workshop, led by Helen Morrison, at the presbytery's Presbyterian Spring Fest in April.
- ◆ Dick and Jane sent a questionnaire about older adult ministry to every church in the presbytery. The responses described a variety of programs, activities, and opportunities for growth and service. If you would like to obtain a copy of the questionnaire contact Dick Milford (614-818-0739) or Jane Dickson (614-861-3267).
- ◆ Dick and Jane contact all new pastors who are called to serve in the presbytery and provide them with ideas, suggestions, and information about available resources in older adult ministries.

Presbytery of Grand Canyon

Max and Bertie Platt serve as PROAMs for Grand Canyon Presbytery, which was the host presbytery for the annual POAMN Conference, held in Tempe, Arizona in October. Despite being heavily involved in preparing to host the conference, here is another achievement of the presbytery in older adult ministry:

- ◆ The Older Adult Concerns and Celebrations Subcommittee (OACCS) hosted the Presbytery's 20th annual Senior Recognition Luncheon in April. Persons selected by their own churches are honored for their years of service and dedication to the church and the community, and are presented with a certificate signed by the presbytery executive, pastor, and chairperson of the committee. Recipients of the award must be over 70 years of age, and may consist of couples. Typically, about half of the presbytery's 68 churches choose persons to receive recognition.



RESOURCES

Soulful Aging: Ministry through the Stages of Adulthood, by Henry C. Simmons and Jane Wilson. Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc. 2001. For ordering information, call toll free, 1-800-747-3016.

This excellent and comprehensive resource addresses the spiritual dimensions of aging in the various stages of older adulthood, and provides readings and outlines for group study and reflection. Users can pick and choose the segments of the book that are of particular interest to them, without having to read "from cover to cover." While many of the readings and exercises can be used with older adults themselves, this volume is especially helpful for leaders in congregations that have a high percentage of middle aged and older adult congregants, and for pastors who minister to older adults.

Thriving After 55: Your Guide to Fully Living the Rest of Your Life, by Henry C. Simmons and E. Craig MacBean. Richmond, Virginia: Prime Press, 2000. For ordering information, call 1-804-935-6800 (not a toll free call).

The authors address three questions with which older adults and their families must wrestle at one time or another: Where will you live? How will you pay for it? How will you live? This is the clearest, most comprehensive, and up to date treatment of these three questions that can be found anywhere today.

This book should be on every church library shelf, and required reading for every adult who is 55 years of age, but it is not too late for older adults of any age to read and profit by the wealth of information made available by the writers. It is an excellent resource to put in the hands of adult children who have, or will have, responsibility for helping to care for their parents.

Continued - Miriam's Musings

write articles, or whatever else I am capable of doing to support and enhance this ministry.

I will remain in Louisville until mid-summer of 2004. At that time, I plan to move back to the farm where I grew up. Many articles have been written in this column about my parents, especially my mother, who died two years ago at the age of 94. When she died, my sister and I inherited the family farm in Georgia, and that is where I will live, in the place where my family moved in 1934 when I was three years old. I have no childhood memories that are not connected with that beautiful 100-acre farm. There is a dog, perhaps a horse, and possibly even a motorcycle in my future. My doctor says: "A dog, by all means, a horse, maybe, but a motorcycle, absolutely not!" I did enjoy the motorcycle I used when I was in Korea, but I was much younger then!

How do I say "goodbye" to a position that has brought me such joy and fulfillment through the years? I don't know how, but I know I will cherish the memories, stay connected with my colleagues and friends as much as possible, and move on to my new life with eager anticipation to see what is waiting for me just around the corner. Thanks to all of you. It has been quite a trip! God bless.



NEEDED FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

SEND CREATIVE POEMS/PROSE

**Send articles about
what your church is doing in
inter-generational ministry.**

Send entries to:

**Marvin Simmers
marvinsimmers.AOL.com**

or

**1144 Bromley Road
Avondale Estates GA 30002**

Cont. Miriam's Song

When Miriam brought her considerable gifts, passion, and enthusiasm to the office it was like a breath of renewed life for a difficult and complex area of ministry. We had, and continue to have, devoted staff and wonderful resources to share in the arena of aging; the difficulty was how to gain support of persons in the denomination who would be, and are, experiencing the issues related to aging.

The past thirteen years of Miriam's service have demonstrated the tremendous impact of a small office - Miriam, an administrative assistant, and a Volunteer in Mission (VIM) - in older adult ministries. John Rhea, a wonderful model of a VIM was a great advocate for "Aging" and a great model of servanthood who aged beautifully. John's recent death has reminded many of us that actions speak louder than words. In his quiet way, John encouraged Miriam to stretch and to attain heights of which she never dreamed.

Writing is one of Miriam's many gifts, and she has produced many articles, books, older adult ministry guides, videos, and speeches. Miriam has the gift of "capturing the moment" in sharing stories that older adults have shared with her. Miriam's mother was a wonderful resource to Miriam and an example of one who aged gracefully. She participated in Miriam's work in telling the story of "aging."

In a recent conversation, Miriam told me that her official retirement date is December 31, 2003. However, she is interested in assisting and volunteering in the Office on Older Adult Ministries for a year. After that, Miriam plans to review the experience and follow where her life takes her.

The Office of Older Adult Ministries and POAMN have been working on a number of visions for older adult ministries. One vision has been to have the issues of older adults included in seminary curriculum. Through Miriam's diligence, and willingness to teach a short course in older adult ministries, one of our seminaries has begun to consider older adult ministries in a serious way.

It takes time and perseverance to raise awareness and develop sensitivity for older adult ministries in a "youth oriented society." Fortunately, Miriam has been a leader in this

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Continued - Miriam's Song

area and the whole denomination owes her a great debt of gratitude.

Longer life is an unexpected reward for those of use who live in the United States. As someone has said, "We need a Dr. Spock for old folks." The church is in the unique situation of being able to help all of us with a theology of aging, and Miriam, with her zeal, passion, and insights, has been a strong and persistent voice. She is able to articulate and interpret what many of us know in our hearts but cannot put into words.

My final words in this tribute are to Miriam. Miriam, continue to be passionate and sing your song. Take time to "smell the roses," rest your body and renew your spirit.

Put pen to paper (or tap on the computer) and enrich us with the words and experiences that have enriched your understanding of older adult ministry. Live as others have modeled for you - your Mother and John Rhea, in particular - and pass it on for others to see. Bless you, and thank you for your years of dedicated, faithful service and using so well the gifts God has bestowed upon you.

Peace,

Continued - Touching People

As the director of a faith based nonprofit organization located in the Missouri River Valley Presbytery, I am called upon daily to find creative solutions to the needs of our neighbors. Our nonprofit, named Presbyterian Outreach, has developed a ministry that recruits and trains volunteers to go into the home of ill or aged adults to provide the caregiver a break from responsibilities. We also equip our volunteers to make friendly visits with the homebound in an attempt to relieve their isolation and remind them that they are not forgotten.

In addition, we manage an equipment recycling program that collects, maintains and loans durable medical equipment. This program is a valuable tool to those in our churches and communities who are faced with the realities of a health situation. Every day we hear clients say, "I was praying for a way to get the equipment I needed and someone told me about Presbyterian Outreach."

During the coming year Presbyterian Outreach, through the resources of the PCUSA Older Adult Ministries and the Missouri River Valley Presbytery, hope to expand the outreach programs to educate and inform churches of ways they can work with their members to better serve the aging population that served us for so many years.



AUTUMN WISDOM

CIRCLE OF LOVE

By Betty Ingram



She labored long to hear the lusty cry
Of the son that lay swathed close by her side.
Could one so small see the love
This woman so freely gives?
She gazes in wonder at this precious new life.
As the years pass the mother nourishes the child
With gifts of patience and understanding.
She is near when he falters
and needs a reason to go on.
The situation is now altered; the child watches
As his mother shuffles down the long hall.

The woman is unaware that she is in a place
Where her life is structured and she is safe.
Her footsteps are unsteady as she sways.
His arms reach out to her in a circle of love,
A circle of love that knows no boundaries,
For the child is now the giver.

*Betty Ingram, a retired R. N., —
Elder of the Spencer Presbyterian
Church, Spencer, West Virginia*

**2003 CONFERENCE
FUN
FELLOWSHIP
TRAINING**



Roundtable Discussions



Entertainment



Installation of Officers



Miriam Honored



**COOK COLLEGE &
THEOLOGICAL
SCHOOL**

TEMPE, ARIZONA

Cook graduates hold leadership roles in tribal government, education, counseling, business and churches on reservations in the urban areas throughout the United States, Canada and Marshall Islands.

www.cookcollege.org

Cook College is an ecumenical Christian Institution of higher education with historical ties to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The college has a deep respect for indigenous cultures and is a distinguished provider of quality educational services to Native Americans and other nationalities. Established in 1890 by Rev. Charles Cook, the love of Christ is integral to the philosophy of Cook College and is present in their daily tasks.

Most of the students are from tribes and reservations, but there are also students from Pacific Rim cultures and non-native communities.



Outing to Cook College & Theological School

**NOMINATION FOR
POAMN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

POAMN accomplishes its ministry through the leadership of an elected Executive Committee and four appointed committees (listed below) from among the POAMN membership. If you are interested in serving on one of these committees, or wish to nominate a POAMN member to serve, please complete this form and return it to the Nominating Committee no later than January 21, 2004.

NOMINEE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

PRESBYTERY: _____ SYNOD: _____

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NOMINATED BY: _____

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CITY STATE ZIP _____

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I have attended ____ Conferences

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