



A Publication of  
Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.)  
Church Leader Support  
Older Adult Ministries

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

**In This Issue**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| A Word from the Retiring Editor             | 1   |
| A word from the New Editor                  | 1   |
| Older Adult Matters                         | 2   |
| Musings by Miriam                           | 3-4 |
| Presidents Corner                           | 4   |
| Accepting the Retirement Challenge          | 5   |
| Autumn Wisdom                               | 7-9 |
| What Some Older Men Say About Aging         | 7   |
| Still Clowning Around After All These Years | 7   |
| Poem - Dependency                           | 7   |
| Recent Books                                | 8   |
| Upcoming Conferences                        | 9   |
| That Hymn Reminds Me                        | 11  |

# AGEnda

Number 101

March 2003



Dr. Richard "Dick" Morgan

## EDITOR RETIRES, NEW EDITOR NAMED

After serving as volunteer Editor of AGEnda for over ten years, Richard Morgan is retiring as of this issue. Publisher Miriam Dunson is happy to announce that Marvin Simmers will assume the position of editor beginning with the next issue.

## A WORD FROM THE RETIRING EDITOR

It was in the summer of 1992 that I agreed to become the volunteer editor of AGEnda. Now, more than 42 issues later, the time has come for a change. Heraclitus once wrote, "The only thing that is constant is change."

How appropriate that my final issue be focused on *Aging and Older Men!* Most of the articles in this issue are written by "older" men. However, age is relative. As Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to his friend, Julia, "I would rather be 70 years young, than 40 years old!"

It has been a joy to work with Miriam Dunson, who is the heart and soul of older adult ministry in our church. She has offered constant encouragement and advice as this publication has doubled in readers in the past ten years. I am also indebted to all the writers who so graciously gave of their time and talents in making AGEnda such a much-read quarterly.

I am delighted that Marvin Simmers will become the new editor, and I am convinced that the quality of this quarterly will greatly improve. Believe me, "the best is yet to be!" and this crucial ministry for/with older adults in our church will grow and grow.

## THANK YOU, RICHARD MORGAN

For more than ten years, in the midst of a busy schedule as parish associate and author, Richard Morgan has unselfishly volunteered his considerable writing and editing skills as the editor of AGEnda. This will be his final issue of AGEnda, as Richard now turns to other ministries that have been on the "back burner." As one who has watched AGEnda grow from a quarterly newsletter of a few thousand to over ten thousand copies per issue, I have been heartened and gratified by the excellent and timely content of this vital newsletter.

Until a permanent editor is found, I will serve as the interim editor of AGEnda. I pledge to all of you that I will do my best to maintain the high standards that Richard Morgan has set for AGEnda. Many of you have enriched our newsletter by your poems, articles, and reflections about older adulthood, and I encourage you to continue. Send your contributions to the Office on Older Adult Ministries, and I will get them from Miriam.

If you want to correspond directly with me about some matter related to AGEnda, you may send an e-mail to [marvinsimmers@aol.com](mailto:marvinsimmers@aol.com), call me at 404-289-4565, or write to my address, 1144 Bromley Road, Avondale Estates, GA 30002.

Richard, thank you for all you have done and are doing in older adult ministry, and thanks especially for your vision and expertise, which has made AGEnda the outstanding resource that it is today. Marvin Simmers



Rev. Dr. Marvin Simmers

## OLDER ADULTS MATTER!

*By Dr. Bill Guilford*

Some of the brightest and bravest people are those who in the ninth decade of their lives are always more eager to share a laugh than to complain about aches and pains. A take off from St. Francis's Serenity Prayer: "God grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones I do, and the eyesight to know the difference."

So if you're ripe in years already, or moving in that direction, it may be useful to remember this comment when you are just dying to advise the young. It's hard to resist when you know so much and they seem to know so little, but unsolicited advice can be risky business and comes across as pompous, sometimes even a bit hypercritical. There are some old people who have lived perfect lives because they were so full of learning about falling from grace, but they lived to learn better. Robert Louis Stevenson said that the old love to give good advice, because by that time they can no longer do much else.

Simply to have lived a long time with some reasonable measure of integrity, kindness and good cheer is one of the truest forms of heroism possible. To be sure, a quiet heroism, with no parades, applause or medals, but heroism nonetheless. Simply to ENDURE. To survive the small and large betrayals that so deeply hurt us at one time or another, to discover that a dear friend was not truly a friend at all; to know the loneliness as children grow up and leave empty rooms behind; to lose a lifelong partner, to sense the slow ebbing of strength and energy and still greet each day with optimism. What an achievement. But some good listener out there is thinking. "Well, its nice of you to say those things, but you must not have met some of the older people I know who turn into tire-some preachers so full of unrequited advice that we want to scream."

I like the courage and good humor with which so many people face their declining years. Instead of complaining about aches and pains and disabilities, they tell jokes about them. Like, "When you knees buckle, but your belt won't; when your back goes

out more often than you do; when you realize there's no sense asking anyone to read aloud since everyone speaks in such a muffled voice you can barely hear them; and when you finally know all the answers, there's nobody asking you questions."

Then there's what finally happens to our eyes and our mouths. The faces of age make a fascinating study, mainly because faces reveal character far more often in older people than it does in the young. A thoughtful reflective life imprints itself on one's face as the years pass.

Spirituality is a many-sided quality of human existence. It takes us into everything that touches our lives. Broadening our spiritual horizons may turn out to be the greatest challenge that older people face. At every state of spiritual growth, the greatest ally you have is your body. When we feel sensations that are body-centered, such as hunger and thirst, pain and pleasure, we do not regard them as spiritual experiences, but spirituality must also be sensuous because a spiritual person is one who lives fully in the present moment, which means living fully in the body.

The Bible asks us to "rise up before a person with white hair, and honor the person of one who has grown old.

Prayer: Remind us on this particular day, Gracious God, that somewhere on any day, someone who has lived long and well deserves a moment of honor and an assurance of love. Amen

*Dr. Bill Guilford is Parish Associate for Older Adults at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

\*\*\*\*\*

**LOOK FOR A NEW RELEASE**

*Dimensions of Older Adult Ministry*

**in the Spring of 2003**



Rev. Dr. Miriam Dunson

## MUSINGS FROM MIRIAM

Since this issue is about men, I want to dedicate my "Musings" to three men who have been supporters, advisors, consultants, and very good friends through the years that I have served as Associate for Older Adult Ministries for PC(USA). I am very fortunate and greatly blessed by my associations with these three outstanding servants.

### Richard L. Morgan

Dick Morgan has served as Editor of AGEnda since August 1992, and has raised the circulation of this important resource to more than 11,000. He not only has written many thought-provoking articles himself, but has enlisted writers nationwide who voluntarily devoted their wisdom and writing skills to make this resource increasingly popular and helpful. In addition, Dick has written almost a book a year, published by Upper Room Books, all of which are about the concerns of older adults. Among his most popular books are *Remembering Your Story: A Guide to a Spiritual Autobiography*, *No Wrinkles on The Soul*, *Autumn Wisdom*, *With Faces to the Evening Sun: Faith Stories from the Nursing Home*, *From Grim to Green Pastures*, and others. He is currently serving as editor for a new resource to be published in late 2003. The new resource has a working title of "Dimensions in Older Adult Ministries" and is a compilation of the writings of 14 authors. The book is 15 chapters, and Dick wrote two of the chapters.

In addition to his editorship, his published writings, and serving as Interim Pastor in several churches, Dick has been a popular speaker, keynoting conferences across the nation, leading innumerable workshops, and working closely with the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network and Older Adult Conferences at Montreat, North Carolina. Dick is especially known for his storytelling skills.

On a personal note, Dick has been a friend and strong supporter to the Office of Older Adult Ministries. It has been a rich blessing to have the privilege of working with Dick for these 10 years. It is with some sadness that I agreed to his letting go of the responsibility of serving as editor for AGEnda. He has done a magnificent job and has

made this quarterly newsletter an important resource for older persons, and for those who work with them. THANK YOU DICK, AND WE ARE NOT FINISHED WITH YOU YET!

### Marvin L. Simmers

During my grieving over Dick's reducing his work load by turning loose of AGEnda, a bright light was shining on the horizon, by the name of Marvin Simmers. Marvin has agreed to serve as editor for the foreseeable future, and we are most grateful to him. He brings skills in editing and writing, but more than that, he knows outstanding writers across the nation who can be called upon to provide articles using their expertise in the various themes chosen.

Marvin retired two years ago from serving as Coordinator at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville in the Christian Education Program Area for the Pastors, Educators and Lay Leader Support Team, under which Older Adult Ministries was located. He published and/or edited innumerable books, articles, magazines, curriculum materials, church officer training guides and study guides. He was strongly supportive of all of his staff members, clearing the way so we could do our work to the best of our abilities. His deeply spiritual approach to life touches all who know him. He was chosen as Christian Educator of the Year a few years ago by the Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators (APCE), and has served as Chaplain of the Presbyterian Mariners for three years. Personally, Marvin has been my friend, confidant, consultant, advisor, teacher, and very caring supervisor for the twelve years that I have worked at the Presbyterian Center. I look forward to continuing to work with Marvin as he serves as Editor of AGEnda.

### John I. Rhea

It is hard to know what to say about John Rhea. He walked into my office in 1993 asking if there was anything he could do to have "meaningful involvement" in Older Adult Ministries. He appeared just following a serious downsizing and restructuring of the offices. From the General Assembly, there appeared on my desk the mandate asking for the establishment of an Association for Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors, but no funds accompanied this mandate. I handed the file to John Rhea and said, "John, this is your legacy." Without funding, he has indeed founded this new organization that seeks to identify the needs and

John I. Rhea - Continued

desires of retirees and provides an annual convention for fellowship, meaningful involvement, continued learning and inspiration.

In June of this year, the Seventh Annual Convention of the Association of Retired Ministers, Their Spouses or Survivors (ARMSS) will be held in Louisville, Kentucky. It has met in Florida, California, Missouri and Louisville, moving around to be accessible to retirees all over the nation. John has organized a Presbytery Representative network that includes representatives in approximately 140 presbyteries who stay in touch with retirees and plan activities as needed. These representatives support the work of presbyteries by serving on committees, filling pulpits, and participating in the ministry of the presbytery. John also publishes a quarterly newsletter that is sent to approximately 11,000 persons.

John has been involved in older adult ministries for many years in Louisville. He is the founder of several older adult service centers, providing home repairs, and other services as needed. His office wall is covered with plaques from a dozen or more organizations who have honored him for his faithful and unwavering commitment to service. He received the Life Achievement Award from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary three years ago, and a year later received the prestigious "Bell Award" for his service to the community from the City of Louisville.

This extraordinary man has served for ten years as a full-time volunteer in the Office of Older Adult Ministries. The only compensation he receives is his parking fee. He has traveled to presbyteries around the nation to lead workshops on "How to do a Needs Assessment in a Congregation." He has written a very popular, and well-used book entitled *Adult Children Caring for Their Parents: A Training Design*. This book is made up of six sessions that can be used in group study or with support groups.

Personally, John has been my right-hand man, my daily supporter and friend. If John had not been a part of our team with his strong organizational and leadership skills and his commitment to the cause of older adults, Older Adult Ministries would not be where it is today. At the age of 92, he has boundless energy, a very positive attitude, and he experiences the joy of living every moment of every day. What a joy it is to work with John, the greatest of the saints of the church.

## Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries



### PRESIDENTS CORNER

Dear Friends:  
As acting President of POAMN this year it is a privilege to be able to come into your home through this copy of AGenda. Since I've been out of the POAMN loop for several years, perhaps it is appropriate to re-introduce myself.

The year 2003 marks my 30th year in the field of aging, and it still seems like just yesterday that the young twenty-two year old was breaking into a relatively new and rapidly growing discipline. It was seven years more until, in 1980, the discovery of my favorite part of working with/for older adults dawned...lay ministry. Eventually, after several paid positions as director of older adult ministry with Presbyterian congregations, it became clear that God had other plans for me for the next twenty-three years.

Although unfortunate events have brought us together again in this way, now suddenly, there is the opportunity again to engage in my favorite professional emphasis, older-adult ministry, and I'm excited to be able to work with you for what we hope is a short while.

Wendy Lustbader in her book, "What's Worth Knowing," quoted sixty-two year old Gerald Huntley as saying:

"I can't stand people who sit around waiting for God to get them what they want, as if God's got nothing better to do. They complain about their lot in life, how they don't have this or don't have that."

I don't have much sympathy for that kind of talk. I'd rather hear what you've done lately for someone else, or what steps you've taken to get out of the pickle you're in. You've got to do your part. You have to make some kind of an effort. That's the divine in us—making use of the gifts we are given.

Mr. Huntley has pointed to one of the keys to successful aging, and together we would do well to take Mr. Huntley's advice.

Continued on Page 8

## Accepting a Retirement Challenge

*By Wesley Stevens, HR*

Retirement began for me on October 1, 1997 after forty years of ministry, the last twenty-seven years as the administrator of Holly Hall, a Christian Retirement Community in Houston, Texas. I had planned to spend some volunteer time ministering to the spiritual needs of the elderly. However, something else entered my life for which I was totally unprepared, giving me a different knowledge to pursue and a different group of people to serve.

A year before my scheduled retirement, one of the ministers at our church, St. Luke United Methodist, in Houston, asked me if I would serve on a committee to start a ministry outreach to prisoners. I could not refuse, in part because of the heart-breaking experience of having a daughter in prison. At a very personal level, I understood Hebrews 13:3, "Remember those in prison as though in prison with them."

I first became familiar with established organizations that sponsor special ministries to prisoners. While helping to find ways for the church to become involved, I had the opportunity to go into a men's prison where I was asked to lead a communion service, to counsel offenders and to participate in a closing ceremony for a victim-offender reconciliation program.

After my retirement, my wife, Marilyn and I began a hospitality ministry at the L. G. Plane State Jail. We worked the long lines of visitors all morning, giving out cups of cold water, providing information for first-time visitors and keeping a clothes box handy in order to loan items of clothing to those who arrived not dressed according to facility guidelines. We talked to people young and old, some of them tired from traveling long distances. We saw children, whose mothers were in prison, under the loving arms of grandparents.

As our hospitality work continued, our help list for the visitors grew longer. We were allowed to go inside to confirm visitor eligibility and to obtain other information about visits, taking special care of first-time visitors. We answered questions concerning health care services and other inmate issues. I was sometimes asked to be with family members and their incarcerated loved one when a message of death or serious illness was to be delivered. When I became aware of a special situation, I was allowed to go into the visitation area to have prayer with an inmate and her visitor.

During the period of time when the outside ministry of hospitality welcomed visitors, the idea of a build-

ing where visitors could wait was informally mentioned to us by the Administrator of Chaplaincy Services of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Shortly thereafter, he spoke at our church and the Women's Choir from the L. G. Plain State Jail sang. Present at the worship service that day was the president of Houston Endowment, Inc., a well-known philanthropic organization. He was inspired by the choir and later helped us to obtain a grant of \$200,000 which set the stage for successfully raising another \$100,000 to complete a Family Visitors' Center on state owned land. The Dedication Ceremony for the Family Visitors' Center, with over 100 people in attendance, occurred on the morning of September 11, 2001.

On Saturday, December 22, 2001, the doors of the Family Visitors' Center were officially opened. Two hundred and eighty-six visitors came into the facility that day to wait for their visits. A friendly welcome was extended to them by six volunteers. Coffee and reading material was available and a children's corner featured books and toys donated by our church. The toys were expertly made by retired men in the church's woodworking shop.

In addition to my retirement work as Volunteer Coordinator for the Family Visitors' Center, I am called by staff members of churches when someone they know has been locked up in the Harris County Jail. After I visit the one in jail, Marilyn and I talk to his or her family members, offering information and consolation. We are often contacted by churches in the Houston area to give programs on our particular ministry. Once a month I visit one prisoner on Texas' Death Row, a contact began when he was at the Harris County Jail following a call I received from his grandmother.

Every other weekend, Marilyn and I visit our daughter, now located at a prison in central Texas. When we worked with the family members on the board walk-way leading into the L. G. Plane State Jail, we were sometimes asked by a curious visitor, "Why are the two of you doing this?" Our answer was, "Because we have stood where you are standing."

Getting so busily involved with prison ministry was not what I had planned for my retirement. However, there was no other response I could make to the invitation. I keep before me the words of Jesus from Matthew 25:40, "Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

## AUTUMN WISDOM

(Note: All writers are men)

### WHAT SOME OLDER MEN SAY ABOUT AGING

No man is ever so old but he thinks he can live another year. Cicero

Life is like riding a bicycle; you don't fall off unless you stop pedaling. Claude Pepper

I don't feel ninety. In fact I don't feel anything till noon. Then it's time for my nap. Bob Hope

How old would you be, if you didn't know how old you was? Satchel Paige

I'll never make the mistake of being seventy again. Casey Stengel

The young man knows the rules; the old man knows the exceptions. Oliver Wendell Holmes

There's always one hill higher with a better view, something waiting to be learned I never knew. So 'til my days are over my prayer is, "never fill my cup, let me go on growing up." Art Linkletter

No wise man ever wished to be younger. Jonathan Swift

I am glad you are 70 years old; it is better to be 70 years young, than 40 years old. Oliver Wendell Holmes

There is no such thing as retirement in terms of the purpose of God. God's calling is never completed until that day God calls us to live with him. Jitsuo Morikawa

God grant me the serenity to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to run into the people I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference. Anonymous

Aging is one of the most essential human processes, one that can be denied only with great harm. Every man and woman who has discovered or rediscovered his or her own aging has a unique opportunity to enrich the quality of his or her own life and that of every fellow human being. Henri Nouwen

You can't help getting older; but you don't have to get old. George Burns

A man is not old until regrets take the place of dreams. John Barrymore

When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people. Abraham Joshua Heschel

### SAMARITAN'S GAUNTLET

*By Troy Lewis*

I run sort of a gauntlet at nursing homes. I see people in wheelchairs lined up desperate to make human contact with anyone, but I rush by trying to avoid eye contact and guilt. I tell myself, that I must pass by them so I can help the person I planned to see. But most of the time I feel like the Priest and the Levite and I pray that some Samaritan will come along after me.

Fortunately for me, sometimes my neighbors will not let me ignore them. I remember a lady I would see alone in the hall every time I went to visit my nursing home parishioners. She would sit there holding a child's doll and try to get everyone who passed by to look at her "baby." If you stopped, she would ask you to hold the doll so she could hold on to you for a moment. I am ashamed to admit that I regularly avoid her.

One day, when I was taking the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper to a member of my church, the lady with the doll spotted the room I went in and followed me. By the time she inched her wheelchair the length of the hall, we had just finished the sacrament. The doll lady may have been watching from the doorway before my friend and I noticed her. In a very kind voice my parishioner said to her, "Mary, what do you want?" The old woman looked at me, held out her doll and said, "Baptize my baby?" My parishioner looked as surprised as me.

Continued Page 7

I hope it is not a breach of the Book of Order, but I had baptized a doll before. In fact, even though Presbyterians only baptize once, I had baptized one doll so many times I quit counting. When my daughter was three or four and wanted my attention, she would bring her favorite doll named “New Baby”, and ask me to baptize it. At first I was reluctant, afraid God might strike me down for such a sacrilege, but after the fifth or sixth baptism, I figured it was more important to God that I show love for my little girl than quibble with her over the finer points of Presbyterian polity.

Remembering the “New Baby” liturgy, I took the old lady’s doll and asked her, “Do you love your doll?” “Yes” she answered. “Will you take care of this doll?” “Yes” she answered again. Then I ask the doll’s name, which was her name, and said, “Mary, I baptize you in the name of the creator of all things precious.” The old lady smiled like a little girl who knew her father’s love and I felt more like a Samaritan than a priest.

Maybe we need more Samaritans and fewer priests.

## STILL CLOWNING AROUND AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

*By Doolotz the Clown  
aka Bud Frimoth*

“I’m nearly 89, do you think I can take your ‘Clown Funshop?’” asked Mina.

“I don’t see any reason why you can’t,” I replied.

So 89 year old Mina joined with five other men and women over the classical retirement age to take the 20 hour training to become clowns. We also had those not even near retirement.

So how did Mina and the others manage? Well, you have to work around wrinkles and lines that aren’t smooth like teenagers or young adults. The feet don’t prance around like the times you used to be able to dance the night away. But the one basic element of clowning the younger set couldn’t possibly have been the length of life experience.

Now younger clowns may be able to have cuter mad up faces and can move about more quickly, but let me have those older clowns. They’re the ones who have the ability to know that some experiences just aren’t worth worrying about

and that waiting for a response may provide a few serendipities.

These are clowns that go into hospital wards using their understanding of life to lift a sorely needed spirit weighed down by both pain of body and deep life concerns. At a festival setting they can get to the level of the young adult whose body is confined not only to a wheel chair, but to the ravages of cerebral palsy. They can meet them face to face and discover a smile or giggle along with a marvelous look of amazement that someone is taking the time to just “meet me where I am.”

Yes, the supple bodies of these aging clowns are long gone, but delight in finding ways to bring a moment of unanticipated joy to another far outweighed the slower step and possible painful bend.

These non-verbal clowns with simple caring touch and smile, lifted another person for a few moments to be filled with smiles, giggles and down right awesome responses.

As teachers of the class, our 25 years of clowning in churches, street parades, classrooms...places near and far, remind us that “The joy of the Lord is our strength” and it’s something even our mid-70 year old bodies can still manage as we put one foot in front of the other to share a moment of mirth with another person. It’s a rewarding involvement that my wife and I have experienced as a means of grace.

## DEPENDENCY

*By Charles E. Treas*

He reaches up to you  
and you reach down and pick him up,  
extension of yourself, sticky-fingered.  
Holding you, he hangs on tightly  
with dependency that makes you proud.

He reaches out to you  
and you reach out to this young man  
Extensions each of the other, you are,  
and you converse as equals.  
You each need comfort from the other;  
you are proud, each of the other.

He reaches down to you,  
and you reach up to him. Aging,  
you need this firm support  
Holding him, you hang on tightly  
with dependency that makes you proud.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Newer Books for Older Adult Ministries**

*The Creative Age.* Gene D. Cohen. New York: Harper Collins 2000

*Aging, Spirituality and Religion.* Volume II, Melvin Kimble and Susan McFadden, Editors. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003 (chapters written by Presbyterians Henry Simmons, Stephen Sapp, Richard Morgan and others)

*The Spirituality of Men: Sixteen Christians Write About Their Faith.* Augsburg Fortress Publishers. 2001. Cost \$16.85. ISBN # 0-80063-4470

*Embracing Aging, Changing and Dying.* Ram Dass. Penguin Putnam, 2000

*Aging Well,* George E. Valliant, Boston: Little, Brown, 2002

*Men's Bible Studies Series.* Curriculum Publishing PCUSA 1997, Available from Presbyterian Distribution Service Tele: 502-569-8263

### President's Corner Continued

Many of you are making use of the gifts you've been given through ministry to/with older adults in your congregations. I hope you will consider another gift available to you: POAMN's annual conference. The conference this year will be held from October 22-25, in sunny Tempe, Arizona, a suburb of Phoenix. Our theme is Spirituality: Health and Well Being. Workshops will be available covering a variety of topics dealing with staying healthy both physically and spiritually. Workshops will also be offered for those of you interested in starting an older adult ministry or wanting to hone skills or improve the programs you already have. Brochures for the conference will be available in May, and will be sent to POAMN members, seminaries, and presbytery resource centers with the request that they share the information with each congregation. Brochures can also be received by calling Polly Marcum at 502-569-5472, e-mail [pmarcum@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:pmarcum@ctr.pcusa.org) or Miriam Dunson at 502-569-5487, e-mail [mdunson@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:mdunson@ctr.pcusa.org) or call toll-free 888-728-7228 and the extension number which is the last four numbers of the phone number.

I challenge you take Mr. Huntley's words to heart, and to take a further step in doing God's work with the gifts you have been given. See you at the conference!

God Bless, Pat Baker

## **OHIO PRESBYTERIAN RETIREMENT SERVICES Makes a Special Gift for AGenda**

Because of the generosity of the Ohio Presbyterian Retirement Services, the cost of printing and mailing the August, November and January issues of AGenda were covered completely. The gift of \$16,000 was received at a time when the account which covers the cost of publishing AGenda (Extra Commitment Opportunity Account No. 048097), was almost depleted.

We are most grateful to this organization for their generosity, interest and support for this very popular and well-used resource which we call "AGenda."

Since many of the 11,000 on the mailing list of AGenda are now receiving it on line, the cost will decrease, although hundreds of you have requested that you continue to receive a hard copy. Our guess is that it will now cost approximately \$3,500 per issue published. If others who read this are interested in participating in the support of this important resource, you can send your donations to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Central Receiving Department 97600, Louisville, KY 40297-7600, designated for Extra Commitment Opportunity Account No. 048.

*3rd Annual National Symposium  
On  
Aging & Spirituality*

***AGING TOGETHER: WHO NEEDS WHO??***

**SAVE  
THESE  
DATES**

**OCTOBER 26-29, 2003  
ADVENT CHRISTIAN VILLAGE  
DOWLING PARK, FLORIDA  
(Fly into Jacksonville)**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

**JAMES GAMBONE, PHD**

Nationally known for intergenerational  
dialogue programs

Author: *ReFirement: A Boomers Guide to  
Life After 50*

**THE REV. RICHARD MORGAN**

Author: *Remembering Your Story: A  
Guide for Spiritual Autobiography  
and  
No Wrinkles On the Soul*

**BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND**

Lynn Huber, PhD  
Marty Richards, MSW  
Stephen Sapp, PhD  
Jane Thibault, PHD  
and Others

Worship services coordinated by  
The Rev. Linda Whitmire

Music and Theme Interpretation by  
Ed Kilbourne

**For More Information Contact:**

**Jerry Buchert**

**386-658-5410**

**gbuchert@acvillage.net**

## NEEDED FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

CREATIVE POEMS/PROSE

**Subject: *Thoughts on Aging***

**Send Your Articles To:**

**Marvin Simmers**

**marvinsimmers@AOL.com**

**or**

**1144 Bromley Road**

**Avondale Estates GA 30002**

### **Man Alone: Interviews from Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church**

*"As a man being alone it's a life of no longer having a loving companion to share the everyday experiences, confidences and complete enjoyment of life"*

Bill Shearer

*"I married in 1950, raised three children, and now enjoy three grandchildren...alone."*

Ruth died a painful death from Leukemia in 1988. So I started my life alone and single. At first I tried to carry on as both father and mother. I kept the house exactly as it was. Tried to have holiday celebrations with the children in the "old homestead." I soon realized that pathway wasn't working. We enjoyed the traditional family meals and customs, but without Ruth, it was a rather empty experience and painful.

As the hours and days and weeks and months and years passed, I settled into a state of numb existence, an empty house with no one to talk to. Go to bed alone at night; wake up alone in the morning; try to eat breakfast alone. Sometimes the food just wouldn't go down. Not touching another person is a terrible experience. No one to confide in, and no future to plan with my wife.

Even the normal activities of life became

painful...dining out and even vacationing became hurtful as I saw couples enjoying retired life together with conversation over a delicious meal or a walk on the beach.

During this period of time, the aging process kicked in and I had my cataract operations and glaucoma. About a year and a half ago, my life was rescued when I completely tore my rotator cuff. After surgery, my daughter and son-in-law put me up in their guestroom as the process of rehab commenced. Ginger took me to physical therapy twice a week for months and Larry helped me shower and dry off. You really can't dress with one arm in a retainer strapped to your body.

*I am now a brand new person with a new life.*

I prepare the evening meal for the family. We eat supper together. I sleep in the guestroom and go to my house every day where I do my stained glass and painting (acrylic on canvas). I deliver meals-on-wheels twice a month and then I joined church at the urging of my 9-year-old granddaughter. Through the attentive care and concern of many people at the church, I have gotten involved. I'm now the librarian for our church's Wednesday night tutoring program for children from West Philadelphia and a member of the Senior Adult Council and I get to clean up after the brunches.

Life is urgent again...I keep a calendar and look forward to contact with people who care!

Ron Hugo

### **Honorable Service Grants Available**

**Westminster Retirement Communities of Florida** and its Foundation, in recognition of faithful service to the Presbyterian Church by its ministers, missionaries, and church educators, are committed to providing Honorable Service Grants to help meet retirement housing and long term health care needs of these servants. For additional information call: 407-839-5050

**THAT HYMN REMINDS ME . . .**  
 Abernathy Center July 2002

For years, hymns have been a powerful way to express our faith. We often associate particular memories with specific hymns. These memories may help shape our faith. What hymn has special meaning for you?

1. Name of hymn
2. Special memories associated with this hymn
3. Describe your location when singing this hymn
4. Tell about the people who were with you
5. Recall your feelings about this hymn
6. How does it help express your faith

Send responses to: Dr. Dositia Carlson  
 71403 N 17th Street  
 Phoenix AZ 85021

*Dr. Carlson will be the worship leader at the POAMN Conference in Tempe Arizona on October 22-25, 2003.*

**PRESBYTERIAN OLDER ADULT MINISTRY NETWORK**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL (Preferred) \_\_\_\_\_

Synod \_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Organization) \_\_\_\_\_

- Please Find  \$30 Full Membership  New  Renewal  
 \$20 Affiliate Member  
 \$100 Organizational Member

**Make Checks Payable to:**  
 POAMN Treasurer  
 c/o Rev. Rod Richardson  
 2331 Quail Circle Road  
 Tupelo MS 38801

**LET YOUR FRIENDS KNOW**

**WE ARE ON-LINE**  
**<http://horeb.pcusa.org/olderadults/>**

**If your friends need a hard copy, they can call toll free:**  
**888-728-7228 ext. 5472**  
**or E-Mail their name and address to:**  
**[pmarcum@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:pmarcum@ctr.pcusa.org)**

We cannot send the newsletter by e-mail. We hope you will visit the site often to receive all the information and resources for Older Adult Ministries.

If you have difficulty reviewing any of the documents, there is an option on the home page to download **FREE** Adobe Acrobat Reader and you will be able to view the available documents.

We are trying to minimize the printing/ mailing costs of this publication to conserve funds for resource development.

We are developing a new database to be used for AGEnda distribution to those persons who do not have access to the web. If you need a hard copy, please let us know. If you leave a telephone message, please speak clearly, slowly, spell as much as you feel comfortable and don't forget your zip. If you contact us by e-mail don't forget to include your complete mailing address.

Presbyterian Church U.S.A.  
Room 1617  
100 Witherspoon Street  
Louisville KY 40202-1396



Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Louisville KY  
Permit No. 1215