

## Resource Guide for Older Adult Ministries

ISSUE 64

2021 WINTER

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Good Morning from Oregon,

The theme of this issue of *PNN* is, *Lo, I am with You Always*. The year 2021 is here, and this Biblical verse is just as timely today as it was back in Jesus' time.

Four articles in this issue of *PNN* share insights on *Lo, I am with You Always*:

- "President's Reflections" by Pat Baker
- "MEMO from Membership" by Linda Rauenbuehler
- "An Anecdote" from Dr. Richard L. Morgan
- "God is Always with Us" by Quentin Holmes

Other articles in this issue include:

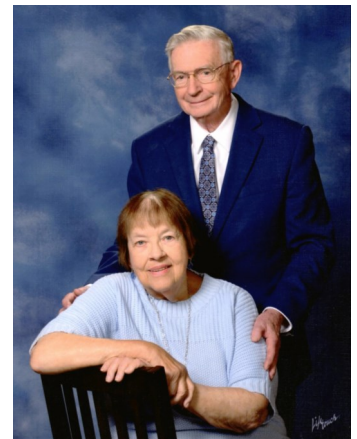
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- "A Great Find" by Pat Baker
- "Spirituality: Our Most Valuable Resource in Our 'Third Thirty' by Chris Pomfret
- "Drive-by 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Margaret" by Quentin Holmes
- "Pray for Peace this Night and in the Days Ahead" by Rev. Holly Ulmer
- "Upcoming POAMN Events" by Lillian Rhudy & Adrienne Knight

*PNN* is your newsletter. We need you to send us short notes about things you have done or ideas that your group has found to work. Many older adults are in our congregations. By the power of God, plus our faithfulness and our warmth, we can reach out.

Thanks be to God!

*Quentin A. Holmes*

Quentin Holmes / Marcola, OR



Quentin & wife, Jane, Holmes

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### PRAYER OF PROTECTION

The light of God surrounds me.  
The love and peace of God enfolds me.  
The power of God protects me.  
The presence Of God watches over me.  
Wherever I am, God is, and all is well.

Amen



Pat Baker  
POAMN President

**POAMN PRESIDENT’S REFLECTION**

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I’m sure many people have also said this phrase to you in the past few weeks. Most of my friends, colleagues, and family were more than glad to see 2020 behind us. I don’t know about you, but saying “HAPPY NEW YEAR” hasn’t been easy for me this year. We were all hoping that the pandemic would stay in 2020 and not follow us into 2021. Well, it did follow us, and on top of that, the events at the United States Capitol the first week of January were all but happy. I found myself feeling several different emotions when someone said “HAPPY NEW YEAR” to me. What brings me hope is the theme of this winter newsletter, “Lo, I am with you always,” Matthew 28:20.

Besides this passage, I find myself turning to the Psalms, as a lot people do when they are looking for comfort. This week I was studying Psalm 139. The notes in my Bible say, “It’s sometimes considered a prayer for help; but most of the prayer talks about and celebrates the reality of being known by God, so it can also be considered a psalm of trust.” Now is a time that we all need help and to be reassured that God’s light overcomes the darkness.

Continuing with a little bit more about myself; most of my work with and for older adults throughout my 47+ year career has been as a bureaucrat working for federal, regional, state, and local programs that served the older population. I got lucky in the early 1980’s when I was able to get away from government work as we were starting our family and go to work at a church as Director of Older Adult Ministry. I did not have a hard time convincing the church that they needed someone in older adult ministry as much as they needed a youth leader. I challenged them to look over the congregation each Sunday and notice all the white heads. Over the next nine years I worked in two different churches as a lay leader in that role. During that time, my husband felt the call to the ministry. After seminary, he was called to two small churches in southwestern Oklahoma, and I headed back into government work.

I retired from government work mid-summer of 2018 and I’m pleased to say that I’m now back with a church in Tucker, Georgia, doing what I love the most, older adult and caregiver ministry. Last year marked my second year in the ministry, and I was just feeling comfortable to be back in the church when COVID -19 hit.

I’m challenged every day to serve the older adults and caregivers in my congregation. However, I know that God is with me always, and I trust that he will help me and lead me on the right path.

Pat Baker  
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“The butterfly counts not months but moments,  
and has time enough.”

(R. Tagore)



**A Grandmother is Someone Special!**



Linda Rauenbuehler  
Membership Committee Chair

## MEMO FROM MEMBERSHIP

“**Lo, I am with you always**” is the theme of this issue of the POAMN Network News

Has there ever been a time in our lifetime that we need to be reminded more that we are not alone and that God is with us? I find these words comforting amid tumult on multiple fronts. We have a pandemic raging, which seems to be getting worse even after losing more than 403,000 people. We have political unrest. The racial injustice that has been going on for hundreds of years is being exposed more every month. Our environment is in trouble. I live in the Las Vegas valley, and we went for 240 days (8 months) with no measurable rain, while other places are experiencing extremes in all kinds of weather. All these factors, plus numerous others, are in the forefront of everyone’s life.

I believe God is right in the middle of everything that is happening now. Like a conductor who directs an orchestra, God is opening the eyes of everyone to the evil, corrupt mess we have made of this world.

In last Sunday’s sermon at our church, the minister talked about the congressman who went back to help clean up the mess created by the rioters. Everyone in our online congregation was encouraged to look around for ways we can pick up the broken pieces that we find.

Our world is in horrible turmoil, but I am going to try to listen more carefully to the role God wants me to play in cleaning up the mess. For me, remembering the words, “**Lo, I am with you always,**” are comforting and reassuring.

### Membership Renewal for 2021

If you have not already done so, **now is the time to renew your membership for 2021.** An application for renewal is at the end of this newsletter, or you can print one off from our website at [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org) and send it to our Treasurer, Lynne Trout, with your check. You may also apply online using PayPal. As we are 501(c)(3) organization, additional gifts are graciously accepted and are tax-deductible. I am looking forward to seeing what 2021 brings for POAMN. Exciting opportunities are being planned to continue connecting people who have an interest in older adult ministry.

### Certificate of Older Adult Ministry

POAMN collaborates with Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, on classes leading to a Certificate of Older Adult Ministry. Please check out this wonderful opportunity. Information can be found by going to Columbia Theological Seminary and looking under Lifelong Learning.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Rauenbuehler  
POAMN Membership Chair

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“Gratitude derives from a characteristic of the soul:  
it is the most fertile land we can cultivate within ourselves,  
it is the key to making sense and seeing the value of the miracle of life to which we are witness.  
Gratitude is itself a prayer, being grace multiplied by grace.

I believe that gratitude is the fruit of an awareness we must tend and expand every day:  
let us be aware of the beauty around us, of everything we have, that we may exude grace.

(Andrea Bocelli)

## PRAY FOR PEACE THIS NIGHT AND IN THE DAYS AHEAD

Rev. Holly Ulmer, Chaplain / University of Maryland

The full opening clause of our Constitution is: **“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America.”**

Those of us who follow in the way of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, let us witness at this hour by denouncing all violence, and embody Christian LOVE for the safety and wellbeing of everyone.

Let us join our hearts and hands and prayers with our dear interfaith brothers and sisters at this critical hour.

Let us fervently pray for the restoration and continuation of national order and democracy.

Fervently pray this night and in the days ahead for peace in Washington DC and across our nation; for the peace and well-being of all Americans; for the healing of our divisions; for the peace and well-being of the world.

Fervently pray for our national and local leaders that they provide calm, clarity, and healing guidance in this critical hour, and in the days ahead.

Fervently pray for all law enforcement charged with protecting our democracy.

Fervently pray this night and in the days ahead for PEACE, as we seek to faithfully follow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Let us fervently, and with confidence place our trust in the Living God, who through the centuries brings order to creation, and blesses those in need with strength, courage, healing and hope.

In this hour let us love God with all our hearts, minds and souls, and indeed all of our neighbors.

In Christ’s Holy Name, we pray.

Amen.

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### 3-2-1 INDIVIDUAL MUG CAKE RECIPE

submitted by Cindy Wright / Escondido, CA

This is a super easy, portion controlled dessert that you can keep in your pantry and make literally in a minute.

- Mix together in a ziplock bag: 1 cake mix (dry, any flavor you like) and 1 angel food cake mix (dry). That's it, just 2 cake mixes ... dry.
- Remember to spray (or grease w/ butter) a microwave safe mug so clean up is easier.
- Mix inside the mug: 3 tablespoons "cake mix" and 2 tablespoons water.
- Microwave for 1 minute. (This is where the 3-2-1 name comes from.)
- Let cool and add ice cream, whipped cream, fresh fruit, or chocolate chips...whatever best accompanies your yummy, warm little mug cake!

My grands know I always have a ziplock of 3-2-1 cake mix ready to go for after school snacks or for dessert if I haven't baked something more elaborate.



*[Editor's NOTE: Rev. Eileen Lindner gave the Keynote Address, "Concluding Well: Generativity and Spirituality," at the 2010 POAMN National Conference in Orlando, FL, in October 2010.]*

### **WIRED: MISSIOLOGY MIDST PANDEMIC**

by Rev. Eileen W. Lindner, PhD  
Volunteers in Global Service

As 2020 ended and 2021 was ushered in around the world, the traditional news coverage of familiar New Year festivities gave testimony to a new reality. No fireworks over the Sydney Harbor bridge, a quiet socially-distanced crowd at the Eiffel Tower, and a nearly-vacant Times Square with confetti raining down, not on crowds of a million gathered but to the damp and vacant city streets.

It is now so axiomatic to lament our inability to join in familiar communal routines in our circumstance of global pandemic that our regrets have often obscured new opportunities that have emerged under the same conditions. Many parish pastors across the United States, having hastily arranged for online worship in March, have found themselves warming to the subject. Now, nine months later, worship attendance is up by considerable margins and inventive approaches to musical ministries have enriched the quality of worship. Moreover, congregations have learned new applications of online technology for delivery of Christian Education programs, Confirmation Classes, and pastoral care. It is not too much to say that the pandemic has not only enabled, but required, the church and its members to appreciably up their technological game, with the result that more of them are participating in worship on a regular basis.



Rev. Dr. Eileen W. Lindner

*Volunteers in Global Service*, a small fledgling program which seeks to match older adults with short-term international volunteer service opportunities, likewise is finding itself transformed in unpredictable ways as a result of the pandemic. VGS was conceived as a practical way to enable and encourage those with a lifetime of experience to match their skills and interests with needs expressed by those in other countries to provide short-term, much-needed expertise in a cost-effective manner. Older adults found opportunities to invest their skills in teaching, administering, providing music or arts education in global contexts that had not been possible on a longer-term basis in the midst of busy careers.

Even the modest size of the program was effectively erased in March 2020 when the global pandemic made such travel impractical both logistically and from a health standpoint. Shortly, health insurance for such programs became unavailable, and international laws prohibited much of the international travel services. Even if logistical arrangements could be made, neither older adult volunteers nor sponsoring agencies abroad felt comfortable in conducting in-person programming in light of local social distancing and quarantine regulations.

After the first few stunning weeks of the global shut down, new dynamics began to emerge. Large international service agencies, both denominationally-related and parachurch organizations, no longer able to maintain in-country personnel, shifted their priorities toward increasing the online capacity of international partners in many countries. Indeed, in the first six months of the pandemic it is estimated that the online capacity of the southern hemisphere increased by a staggering 800 per cent. European and American agencies, foreseeing the long-term inability to travel, made the decision to provide international partners with hardware and software that would facilitate the maintenance of their programmatic relationships despite travel limitations. At the same time, global technology companies and nation states scrambled to provide better and more numerous platforms to support online programming.

For a small program like VGS, these events have transformed the potential for more older adults to serve in

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more service settings by doing so online. As we now adjust our sights for 2021, we are exploring with partners in numerous countries a host of new opportunities for service. The potential for providing ESL classes online, or assisting in developing or translating interpretive materials, or offering graphic design classes, or helping design a funds development program in India, Cuba, Palestine, or Guatemala in the context of pandemic can now be accomplished virtually. The readily available technological capacity is matched by a new and expanded availability of new resources of older adult volunteers. Without the need to travel, older adults are far less limited by health concerns when their service will take place online from the ease and comfort of their own homes.

There is still much to learn about the dimensions of service that may be possible to offer and to receive in a virtual setting. But it is already clear that the pandemic provides a context for new patterns of cooperation and collaboration in cyberspace. The convergence of technological advances, availability of skilled and willing volunteers, and expanded imaginations about the kinds of services that can be conveyed virtually holds bright promise for expanded global service. As an old James Russell Lowell hymn teaches, “new occasions teach new duties”. As we enter into the second year characterized by a global pandemic, the duty before us is to live into the limitless possibilities of collaboration that may, ironically, arise from a global scourge.

For more information contact: [volunteersgs@gmail.com](mailto:volunteersgs@gmail.com)

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## ELOQUENT LISTENING

by Quentin Holmes, Deacon  
Central Presbyterian Church / Eugene, Oregon

We are currently living in a very tumultuous time! Grown men and women are wrestling with how to constructively deal with the huge rift between different visions of what makes the United States of America a nation. American history tells us that when our nation was born in the 1770's there was a great push for independence of the American Colonies from the rule of King George III of England, AND an intense struggle between competing visions of what form of government was best-suited to our new nation. Federalists, like Alexander Hamilton, envisioned a strong national government with the individual states functioning under it. On the other hand, Thomas Jefferson envisioned a republic wherein each individual state was a partner alongside the other states, with the Federal Government focused on dealing with things on an international level. The tensions between these two different visions, or variants of them, have been hotly contested –at times violently contested– in our country since the 1770's. Those tensions are very much still operative today.

New forms of dialogue and listening are developing to offer people opportunities to develop their thinking on important issues, learn new perspectives, and participate more fully in the democratic process. Transforming violence is also developing training and formats that will enable people to learn skills and create good environments for transformative approaches to challenging issues. Eloquent Listening is one of those.

One cultural example of Eloquent Listening is the Respect Café which originated in 2001 shortly after the horrendous events of 9/11. The Respect Café provides a chance for people to listen, learn, and understand one another across lines of difference. The Respect Café can be created by anyone, anywhere. The Café includes a brief introduction to “Eloquent Listening,” followed by structured conversations with people from a wide range of backgrounds. People describe the kind of questions they would like to be asked about their cultural backgrounds (as distinct from the stereotyping questions they are often asked). Participants in the Café then ask questions in order to learn new perspectives and have greater understanding of people from diverse backgrounds.

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Examples of Respect Café participants and their questions are:

- An Iraqi man who feels sad that people in the west mainly think about Saddam Hussein when Iraq is mentioned. He wants to be asked about the Iraqi people in all their diversity.
- An Englishwoman of mixed race wants to be asked about whether she would choose to be white in order to avoid the painful realities of racism.
- An Irishman wants to be asked about how he feels about being lumped into the general category of “white people” in a way that ignores his heritage.

### **Training in Eloquent Listening**

Training in Eloquent Listening is conducted on an ‘asset-based’ model. In Part One, it is assumed that everyone in the room already knows about good listening from their own experience of having someone listen very well to them. The training collects the knowledge of all the participants and allows people to value their collective wisdom. In Part Two, people are asked to reflect on a question about their cultural identity/heritage that will enable listeners to develop more respect for their identity and a deeper understanding of complexity of their experiences (see Respect Cafe above).

Here are the insights about eloquent listening that have been generated by participants. Typically, you start with this list and ask participants to speak for two minutes each about which of these points has been most important to them. Then people have an opportunity to add new points.

- Assume the other person has a good intention.
- Really pay attention – I want to know about that person. Be curious and interested.
- Assume that I don’t know what the other person is going to say.
- Be patient – let people develop their ideas.
- Empathize – try and put myself in their place.
- Enjoy what the person says – appreciate diversity of perspectives.
- Acknowledge a connection between myself and the other person.
- Cultivate respect for the speaker.
- Make appropriate responses and ask good questions.
- Take responsibility for my reactions and emotions.
- Be centered and maintain focus on the other person.
- Stay on the topic – focus on what the person is saying.
- Lengthen my attention span.
- Constantly intervene with myself to break habits and patterns (interrupting, reacting strongly based on my beliefs, etc.).
- Redirect attention to what the person is saying – prevent the conversation from going off at a tangent.
- Don’t interrupt – open my ears.
- Be totally present.
- Believe the person really has something important to say. People who seem boring, wrong or ignorant can prove interesting if I really focus attention on them.
- Ask questions that evoke the depth of the other person.
- Notice similarities and common ground.
- Look at people in a friendly way.
- Be accepting rather than judging.
- Have open and accepting body language.

The principles of Eloquent Listening are worthy of being cultivated in each of our daily lives. Doing so can foster meaningful dialogue between individuals with radically-different, firmly-held opinions and is one step towards transforming violence into coexistence.



## SPIRITUALITY: OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE IN OUR “THIRD THIRTY”

By Chris Pomfret / New Orleans, LA

At the POAMN National Conference (my first) in Oct 2014, I had an epiphany when the keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Nancy Copeland-Payton, talked of something growing inside us in our later years, whether we knew it or not, when everything else seemed to be declining. When challenged to name it, some of us plumped for wisdom, experience, and other similar obvious traits, but the real answer was *our spiritual growth*. Since that day, spirituality and its growth within us has fascinated me. How do we find it within ourselves, and how do we use it to best effect as we go through our Third Thirty years of life?

As you might imagine, there are a wealth of books coving this rather mysterious word, but one particularly good one and relatively recent one is by the Rev. Sheila Macdonald Macgregor titled, *“Re-Designing your Life: A Practical Spirituality for the Second Half of Life*. Sheila was at the 2017 POAMN conference in Concordia, Chicago, but, as I am in my Third Thirty, I can’t remember if that’s where I procured a copy of her book. Nonetheless, it provided me with what I call a down-to-earth understanding of spirituality as opposed to the often lofty and complicated definitions of the word.

What follows is a synopsis of a workshop that I will lead at the upcoming APCE (Association of Presbyterian Church Educators) conference in February. The intent is to enable any of us to find our spirituality and use it as we progress through our Third Thirty. A conclusion of my deliberations over the past few years is that it doesn’t need to be complicated, but it does need to be found and recognized, which, arguably, might be harder than practicing it.



As my respected POAMN colleague, Dr. Janet Miller, pointed out to me, we should always be in search of our spirituality; the searching never stops, with which I agree, but also add that it doesn’t mean that we can’t use what we’ve found as we continue to search for more elements. But first, what is the definition of spirituality? Disappointingly, Webster’s Dictionary offers many circular references. That also suggests to me that the word is full of mystique and intangibility, so we need to decide for ourselves what it means to us. Digging deeper, there are ample definitions proffered by others, such as Alfred James at <https://www.pocketmindfulness.com/> who says, “Spirituality

exists within a unique, unbreakable relationship between the heart and the mind. It is an internal harmony that allows one to endure the most harrowing of circumstances”. For me, that seems rather complicated, so I then found something a little more digestible in a “Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNR)” site <https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2020/01/13/spirituality-krista-tippett>. The author, Krista Tippett, says spirituality is, “How we interact with others, with living more contemplatively, and with appreciating nature and the natural world.” Finally, the Himalayan Institute suggests that “the goal of spirituality is to heal and empower yourself” (<https://www.himalayaninstitute.org/wisdom-library/what-is-spirituality-what-is-religion>). While I like the words, it doesn’t help us to understand how to reach the goal. Hence, we need to discover spirituality for ourselves and use it to attain this ultimate goal.

The search for our spirituality is, I suggest, an inward, mental one, as opposed to an external searching of the physical earth. We need to resolve what constitutes being spiritual. For each of us, the ingredients will be unique but nonetheless contain a lot of commonality. For instance, spirituality might mean for us things like: Being at Peace with our Age and our Mortality; Feeling Gratitude for Life; Practicing Forgiveness; Providing Effective Mentorship; Leaving a Legacy; Harvesting our Lives; and Showing Appreciation to Others.

Maybe searching for our spirituality is recognizing these and other elements that we feel are part of the portfolio for ourselves. Once we have our “list,” further meditation and prayerful contemplation is needed to deter-

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mine *how* we practice them, which will promote and develop our spirituality. The “how” aspect clearly opens a floodgate of ways and means, some of which are understandably inter-connected and might include:

1. **Accepting Help:** Our natural instincts are to let our ego rule and show people how capable we are of doing things; whereas, if we let our spirituality kick in, we will accept peoples’ offer of help, whether we need it or not, and be encouraged to do so by realizing that when we accept help, we give to the person offering the help.
2. **Practicing Grace:** Within this is selfless behavior in our day-to-day life. It is hard to predict when such occasions will arise. We will know them after they have happened, and so we need to act “instinctively spiritually,” as opposed to “instinctively humanly”.
3. **Showing Humility and Modesty:** One example might be listening to others, who might have intense and overt opinions, and offering softer responses, as opposed to trying to “top” their remarks.
4. **Talking about Death:** First, we need to become comfortable with our mortality. Ways to do this might be writing an “ethical will” and also our life story/life review. There are many books covering these, and clergy overtly promote the benefits of so doing, both for the individual and those who will read them. Another way that I have personally practiced is to think about my own end of life and how I am going to feel, even though I don’t yet know how my life might end. I mentally rehearse not being fearful of a long slow death due to cancer or other disease, or knowing that Alzheimer’s is stealing my mental faculties.
5. **Being Civil aka...The Golden Rule:** We all know this is the way to be, but perhaps we don’t let our spirituality rule our mind each day as much as we should so that exercising the Golden Rule is, again, instinctive rather than an afterthought.
6. **Helping Others “Invisibly”:** When we are spiritual, we don’t do good things for the publicity or recognition. If we help someone, our spirituality can help us draw a feeling of internal warmth and “feel-good” from which we alone can draw a wealth of well-being. We can all think of people who have done things for us, knowingly or not, which involved no money but were infinitely valuable to us at some stage of our lives.
7. **Minimizing Denial and Maximizing Realism:** We know that denial is one of the most prevalent and aged human traits, and few would argue that it is a trait to cultivate. We are all familiar with the Bible’s many references to denial, and while it’s within our DNA to lie and deny as a form of primeval self-protection, our spirituality can take over, if we let it, to diminish or maybe eliminate these instinctive behaviors. One of the biggest examples of denial is our inevitable aging. This is arguably *the* starting place for our spirituality to attack and neutralize.
8. **Exercising Mindfulness:** For me, this is the overarching and all-encompassing element: being present in the moment, aware of the situation we’re in, whether people are around us or not. Mindfulness includes waking up every day and pausing to think about the life we have, the world we are in, its beauty, the people around us, and vowing to live the day showing gratitude and appreciation for everything, be it fellow humans, animals, or the physical world around us and our life, even if it is not all we’d like it to be at that moment.



My hope is that the above “scratching of the surface” of spirituality will inspire you to seek, find, and recognize your own. Spirituality is our most valuable attribute as we age. I suggest that we forget the complex/fluffy definitions. Simple words work well for those of us who prefer a “grass roots,” as opposed to scholarly,

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approach to spirituality. But spirituality is not delivered to one's door in an Amazon box. One has to: Search for it; Find it; Practice it continually; then, Repeat, over and over again.

For me, spirituality in one word is *mindfulness*. If that doesn't cut it for you, some clergy say that mindfulness is another word for prayer.

#### SOME GOOD READING

- Sheila Macdonald MacGregor: *Redesigning Your life; A Practical Spirituality for the Second Half of Life*. (Friesen Press 2018)
- Robert C Atchley: *Spirituality and Aging*. (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press 2009)
- Eugene C. Bianchi: *Aging as a Spiritual Journey*. (New York Crossroad 1990)
- Craig Kennet Miller: *Boomer Spirituality. Seven values for the second half of life*. (Nashville, Disciple Ministries, 2017)
- Rabbi Salman Schachter-Shalomi and Ronald S. Miller: *From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing. A Revolutionary Approach to Growing Older*. (New York, Time Warner Books 1997)
- Paul R. Stephens: *Aging Matters. Finding Your Calling for the Rest of your Life*. (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmann's Publishing House, 2016)

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### A GREAT FIND

by Pat Baker, Director of Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries  
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Tucker, GA

I was just starting to hit my stride, after one year in older adult ministry, when things came to a halt last spring. I don't know about you, but in 2020 (and continuing into 2021) I was/am always on the outlook for great websites and other social media sources to help me get through these unprecedented times. My planning of fun get-togethers, visitation, trips, and special programming slowed down considerably after March, 2020. I started looking for other things to do, more tools for my toolbox, when a friend introduced me to the Women's Ministry Toolkit. I especially loved the category of "Icebreakers" and could immediately see uses for the materials.



The Women's Ministry Toolbox is an online resource for women serving in women's ministry as a team member, Bible study facilitator, or small group leader. The founder is Cyndee Ownbey, who states that "ministering to women has become her joy and passion for over twenty years." The sign-up to get the materials is free. Even

though I don't serve only women, most of the older adults under my care are women. The website address is <https://womensministrytoolbox.com/>

The category of "icebreakers" is my favorite. Some of its offerings are *8 Great Team Building Icebreaker Games*, *The Best Social Distancing Icebreakers*, and my favorite, *Isolation Icebreaker Questions*. <https://womensministrytoolbox.com/category/icebreakers/>

One of the few things I could do in Older Adult Ministry, when isolated at home, was to make personal telephone calls to check in with everyone. Having the Isolation Icebreaker Questions helped to guide me on suggested questions I could ask to get a conversation started. I've had to do a few adjustments on the questions, as they are for all ages and some do not pertain to older adults. An example of that would be changing the question, "What's your best newbie home-schooling tip?" to "What do you remember about school as a child; did you ever home-school your children?" or "What tip would you offer to parents who are homeschooling their children?" I hope this one small tool will be helpful, and I pray that all of you can be creative during this time of isolation, as you continue to minister to older adults in your churches.

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## GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US

by Quentin Holmes, Deacon  
Central Presbyterian Church / Eugene, Oregon

*“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)*

In Matthew chapter 28, Jesus appears to the disciples and speaks to them. Jesus gives them The Great Commandment: “. . . go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

In his gospel, Matthew does not describe the resurrection itself. He describes the discovery of the empty tomb, and Jesus’ appearances afterwards to his disciples. Matthew doesn’t try to describe the mystery of the resurrection; he simply presents it as matter of testimony and proclamation. To my mortal mind, Matthew is telling us that Jesus’ death and resurrection was a BEGINNING. That now, we - people living then and people living now - are to go forward in Jesus’ stead. AND, in good times and terrible times and in-between times, God will be with us ALWAYS.

When life is flowing smoothly and things are going great, it is easy for most of us to feel that God is with us. However, when life comes down on us really hard, it is not at all easy to recognize that God is with us.

When I was in my late teens and early twenties, I wanted more than anything else to become a jet fighter pilot and perhaps someday earn a Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in aerial combat. That dream ended abruptly when USAF medical doctors informed me that I had poor eyesight (this was news to me!) and was therefore disqualified from becoming an Air Force pilot. At the time (1959), it felt like God had abandoned me. So, instead of entering active duty with the Air Force upon graduation with a Bachelor’s Degree in 1960, I went to graduate school for seven years, earning a Ph.D. in Theoretical Physics. Upon entering active duty with the Air Force in 1967, I was immediately “assigned” (i.e., loaned free of charge) to NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston, Texas. There I worked in the Lunar Trajectory Section and helped develop mathematical techniques to compute and optimize Apollo spacecraft trajectories from the Earth to the Moon. That was the most difficult job I ever held. Truth be told, our Section was only one small group in what must have been thousands and thousands of engineers and scientists all across the USA, united by a common goal - to send three American astronauts to the Moon, land on the surface of the Moon, and then return them back to the Earth. Over a year after Apollo 11 landed on the Moon at the Sea of Tranquility on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969, I was invited to a formal awards ceremony. Can you imagine my feelings when USAF Captain Quentin A. Holmes was called forward and Apollo 11 Astronaut Buzz Aldrin (then a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force) pinned a Legion of Merit Medal on me? The Legion of Merit is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

It ranks one above a Distinguished Flying Cross Medal! Honestly, I was totally overwhelmed and felt deeply humbled at the same instant. I realized then that God had been with me all those years ago when the Air Force informed me that I had poor eyesight and that I was disqualified from ever becoming an Air Force pilot. Unbeknownst to me, that was a BEGINNING, not an end!

Thanks be to God!



**Apollo 11 Astronaut Buzz Aldrin awarding the  
Legion of Merit Medal to  
USAF Captain, Quentin A. Holmes (Dec. 1970)**



## DRIVE-BY 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR MARGARET

by Quentin A. Holmes, Deacon, Central Presbyterian Church / Eugene, Oregon

What do you do when a beloved older adult in your church turns 90, and the governor of your state has declared your county at “Extreme Risk” for COVID-19? Gatherings beyond your personal small bubble are NOT allowed because the daily number of new cases of COVID-19 keeps shattering records. Answer, you get creative!

Margaret Prentice is one of the dear older adults in our congregation. In addition to having served multiple times as a deacon, helping start our Prayer Shawl Ministry, preparing and arranging the elements for communion on Sundays, Margaret has a deep and abiding passion for serving the older saints in our church. Margaret loves to walk outdoors with a small number of friends from church.

To celebrate Margaret’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, Patty MacAfee, and others who enjoy walking with Margaret, decided to hold a Drive-by Birthday Party. Birthday Party Invitations were sent out electronically, and people were asked to R.S.V.P. Thinking this would be an ordinary gathering, several people responded with messages like, “Gee, I would really love to come. But I can’t take the risk of getting exposed to COVID-19.” Others, who may or may not have understood that the birthday party would be a “Drive-by” event, responded in the affirmative.

In a more normal era this birthday party would have involved real plates from Scotland, Irish linen napkins, and a home-made cake, with long-time friends talking and fellowshiping over English tea.

Thus it was that on a bright, sunny afternoon (highly unusual for Oregon at this time of the year), between 1:00 – 3:00PM, some 23 cars drove by Patty MacAfee’s garage in the South Hills of Eugene, Oregon. There they found a small group, “socially distanced”, standing in the driveway. Attendees were asked to roll down their car windows and say “Hi” to Margaret. Each person in the car was given a plate of delicious, home-made carrot cake to take along home. No, it was definitely not the same as a regular birthday party. However, the warmth and love we all feel for our friend Margaret – God’s love – and the joy that Margaret has brought into the lives of others during her 90 years, and counting, was all that really mattered.



90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Margaret Prentice

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“Be very careful never to forget what you have seen the Lord do for you. Do not let these things escape from your mind as long as you live. And be sure to pass them on to your children and grandchildren.”

(Deuteronomy 4:9)

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother, Lois, and your mother, Eunice, and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.”

(I Timothy 1:5)

## AN ANECDOTE FROM DR. RICHARD L. MORGAN

Among the many, many articles, talks, and books written by Dr. Richard L. Morgan, one of the most helpful to those of us that were in our mid-70s at the time was a video entitled, *Aging as a Spiritual Journey*.

In it, Dr. Morgan described four gateways to spiritual growth as an older adult, with the fourth gateway being “Leaving a Legacy.” He illustrated that with the following anecdote:

“It has been my joy to record many stories in the past 25 years. I remember a little black lady who came to one of my workshops and said she was going to write her story for her family.

She even titled it, *The Book of My Life*, and all the chapters rhymed: Spills, Drills, Thrills, Mills, Bills, Pills, and Wills. When she shared her sad story of surviving an abusive husband, the murder of her son, her present husband’s poor health, she burst into song. ‘*All the way my savior leads me, what have I to fear beside? Can I doubt his tender mercy, who through life has been my Guide.*’



**Dr. Richard L. Morgan**  
Receiving POAMN Legacy Award from  
Jan McGilliard (October 2013)

What a moment of real faith. Remembering our stories is more than recollecting our past; it reminds us of when God was present. God’s story, your story, my story, and when the three intersect it is a spiritual moment. Beyond material wealth or possessions, your story is your legacy – it is how you will be remembered after you leave this earth.”<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> *Aging As a Spiritual Journey*, a video by Dr. Richard L. Morgan, Encore Offerings (2013)

## No Bake Energy Bites!

- 1 cup old fashioned oats
- 2/3 cup unsweetened coconut flakes (optional)
- 1/2 cup all natural peanut butter (or any nut butter)
- 1/2 cup ground flax seed
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 Tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Mix all ingredients together in one big bowl. Refrigerate for at least a half-hour to set. Roll into 1 inch-ish size balls. That’s it! Store in an airtight container in the fridge.





## MEMBERSHIP FOR 2021

Membership fees for 2021 are now being accepted.

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Thank you to those that have  
joined POAMN for 2021!

Special thanks to those that  
have made an extra donation  
to support POAMN!

**2021 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
**Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN)**  
**A 501(c)3 organization**  
**(please print all information)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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\*\*\* I would like to receive future *PNN* issues by:  email  hard copy

Membership Type:

- \$50 Individual  \$75 Couple  
 \$35 Affiliate (non-voting)  \$125 Institutional, Church & Judicatory Membership

To continue POAMN's ministry to older adults and those engaged in ministries for older adults, additional gifts are welcome including those in honor or memory of someone. All extra gifts are tax deductible. Gifts can also be given through the PC(USA) Extra Commitment Opportunity (ECO), to account E048101.

Extra gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to POAMN a 501(c)3 organization

Extra gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed to the Miriam Dunson Legacy Fund

Gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed in honor / memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

(include address if you would like family notified of gift): \_\_\_\_\_

Gift to support membership of another person or church: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (include all contact information of that person/church) \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to:**  
**POAMN**  
**c/o Lynne Trout, Treasurer**  
**410 Richard Avenue**  
**Delanco, NJ 08075**

**POAMN Network News**  
**P.O. Box 700311**  
**Oostburg, WI 53070**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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## **UPCOMING POAMN EVENTS**

by Lillian Rhudy & Adrienne Knight, Conference Co-Chairs

### **“CELEBRATING LONGEVITY AROUND THE WORLD”**

POAMN’s Conference Planning Committee is organizing a series of Webinars between April 19-May19, 2021. These will be offered on three different days and at different times in order to accommodate more folks. The theme for these will be, “*CELEBRATING LONGEVITY AROUND THE WORLD.*” As an organization which focuses on serving our older adult population, we need to look at other cultures and learn more about changes we could adopt in the ways we honor, respect and value older adults. We already have one webinar speaker who will focus on Asian Cultures. The cost of these will make it affordable to more people and not require traveling. We plan to design the webinars to attract lay members, pastors, church leaders, and health professionals. PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE, **POAMN.ORG**, FOR DETAILS AS THEY UNFOLD. We hope you will sign up for one or all of these virtual informative webinars.

Does your church have a plan for honoring your older adults on **Older Adult Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**? Our 2021 Planning Guides will be available to help give you new ideas. The Planning Guide will include worship service suggestions from various cultures around the world. For latest details see the POAMN website.

One question we would like for you to think about and share with us during these webinars is: *How does your family celebrate and value your OLDER ADULTS? Do you have some “wise words” you remember from your grandparents?* (We welcome new ideas for future webinars and workshops.)