

# POAMN Network News

## Resource Guide for Older Adult Ministries

ISSUE 15

Winter 2011

### Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries



A Publication of the  
Presbyterian Older Adult  
Ministries Network  
(POAMN)

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Good Morning from Oregon,

The 2010 POAMN Conference in Orlando Florida is still fresh in my mind (I just finished writing part 2 of the article, *THIS WAS, THE WEEK, THAT WAS: 2010 POAMN CONFERENCE*). For each of us, the fellowship shared during this conference was a deeply touching experience.

Each issue of PNN gets sent out to more than 2,000 addresses with an attendant overall cost of about \$3,000. As part of our overall effort to streamline POAMN, we will be switching PNN over to electronic delivery beginning this summer. IF you have an e-mail address, THEN please send it to Ginny Nyhuis at gnyhuis@frontier.com. However, PNN will still be available via US mail to anyone who requests it – IF you don't do e-mail, THEN phone Ginny at (615) 426-1545 to arrange for that. Thank you.

In this issue of PNN you will find a rather lengthy article entitled *WHY OLDER ADULTS MAKE BETTER LOVERS: And How to Become One!* This is based on a Presbytery of the Cascades' older adult workshop led by Dr. Charles Arn of Church Growth, Inc. of Monrovia, California. Dr. Arn is a leading authority on church growth. His daylong workshop combines the Great Commandment with the Great Commission. It can serve as an antidote to the number one frustration of pastors today - the lack of lay people willing to get involved in the ministry and work of the church.

Already, planning is well along for the ARMSS/POAMN joint Convention & Conference in San Antonio, Texas this coming October. For a preview of just what is in store, see the article entitled *ARMSS/POAMN JOINT 2011 CONVENTION & CONFERENCE* by Michele Shultz Hendricks.

PNN is your newsletter. In order for it to be most effective, we need you to send us short notes about things you have done, and ideas that you have tried and found to work. There are many older adults in our Congregations. By the power of God, plus our faithfulness, and our warmth, we *can* reach out. Thanks be to God!

Quentin Holmes / Marcola, OR

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When the power of love  
Becomes stronger than the love of power,  
Then peace will come to the Earth.

- (Author Unknown)



## POAMN PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*In God our hearts rejoice.*  
(Psalm 33:21)

As we enter the year 2011 we have a lot to be thankful for and to rejoice about. Plans for the conference in San Antonio are nearly complete and we have a tremendous lineup of speakers and seminars. The final segment of our Certification Program is nearly complete and we are looking forward to our first group of graduates. The 2011 Planning Guide has just been completed and is available at our website: [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org). Click on the home tab for an on-line copy or contact Ginny to receive hard copies. This planning guide will help your congregation in preparing for Older Adult Week - the first Sunday, and week, in May.

As we enter this New Year, I would remind you to renew your membership to POAMN. At the last annual meeting we revised our dues structure. The individual membership remains the same at \$30 a year. Where the change comes into play is with the organizational members. For only \$100 your church can become a partner in the mission of serving older adults within our churches.

POAMN does not receive any monies from the General Assembly Mission Council; therefore we rely completely on the dues and gifts given to POAMN to continue our ministry. Please consider renewing your membership today, and ask your session and/or mission committee to support our mission and ministry by becoming an Organizational Member.

In June we are going electronic with our newsletters. We send out more than 2,000 copies of our newsletters 4 times each year. This costs the organization more than \$12,000 annually. If we are able to reduce these costs, those funds could be used for developing more resources to support your ministry within your church and community. If you wish to receive this newsletter electronically email Ginny at: [gnyhuis@frontier.com](mailto:gnyhuis@frontier.com). We will send to you the newsletter and other POAMN resources electronically. I assure you that your e-

mail address will be used solely by POAMN and will not be given to any other organization or individual. It is our plan to limit our use of printed newsletters by the end of this summer.

I am excited about the ministry of POAMN. I have the privilege of hearing from people all around the country about their ministry with older adults and I am thrilled about what is happening in churches and communities all around the country. Keep up the great work and I hope to see you in October in San Antonio!

*Doug Kurtz*

Doug Kurtz, POAMN President: [dkurtz@uam.org](mailto:dkurtz@uam.org)

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## THIS WAS, THE WEEK, THAT WAS: 2010 POAMN CONFERENCE

by Quentin A. Holmes, Editor  
POAMN Network News

Last October, folks came from throughout the USA to take part in the 2010 POAMN Conference in Orlando, Florida. This article is the second in a two-part series. My intent is to share some of the helpful information presented during the conference.

On Wednesday afternoon (10/13), I sat in on the workshop entitled, *Just Add Water* led by Rev. Tom Tickner. I deeply treasure the insights experienced chaplains willingly share with one another. Don Carlin, a chaplain with a non-profit Hospice in downtown Philadelphia, is in his 50's and has been a hospice chaplain for more than 5 years. His is an urban "congregation" about 75% African American at any one time, about 70% of them female. Most would classify themselves as "Christian", but he also has had Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and even atheists. Typically, Don serves long-time church members long forgotten or neglected by their own congregations and ministers. He also has other church members who are prayed over by their pastors, deacons, and evangelists – prayed over until the patients call out "no more!" "No more!" because all the prayers are for miraculous healing, and his patients know they need a hospice chaplain to talk about dying and to offer prayers to prepare

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them for their dying. A chaplain's hardest job is often helping loved ones to "let go" of the dying person, giving the dying person permission to take care of unfinished business and die in peace. Although Don does not have a trained singing voice, he has come to understand the power of music, and is oft referred to as the "Singing Chaplain." He has collected a repertoire of hymns that tap into African American spirituality and have a crossover appeal to White Protestants and Roman Catholics. Don's Top 10 hymns include: *Jesus Loves me*, *Amazing Grace*, *Precious Lord Take My Hand*, *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*, *Guide My Feet*, *God Will Take Care of You*, *It is Well With My Soul*, *Blessed Assurance*, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, and *Kum Ba Ya*. Don sees his role as that of a priest – an advocate to God on behalf of ALL of his patients. He prays to God to grant his patients peace in body and spirit and for God to grant them a sense of God's loving presence in their lives. There is a mystery in the process that God uses to answer those prayers – a mystery that Don can live with. Certainly, some times are much tougher than others. Like when he loses 3 patients in one day, or almost 25 patients in a single month, or the brief period in which his own mother and her sister (Don's favorite aunt) died only 4 days apart. Don doesn't feel the need for a lot of details about heaven or the end-of-the-age timetables. Three theological statements that Don frequently shares with his patients are:

- "My future is in God's hands." (from Psalm 16)
- "In life and in death, we belong to God." (from Presbyterian Brief Statement of Faith)
- "Nothing can separate us from the love of God." (from Romans 8).

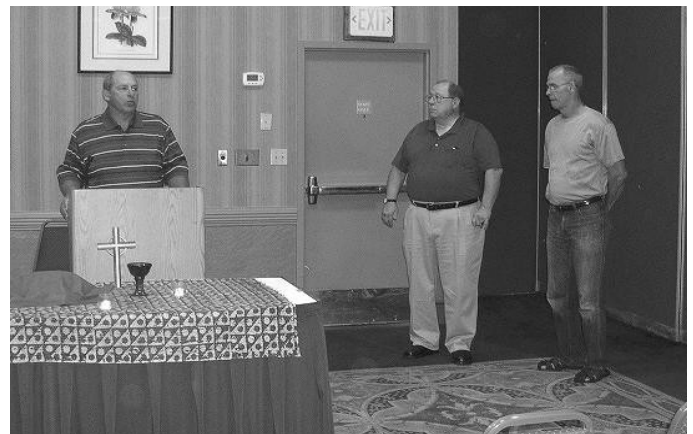
In visiting his patients Don comes as a chaplain representing Christ – bringing comfort, presence, words of hope, touch, forgiveness, and maybe even a sip of cold water. But something else is going on – Don finds that he comes in search of Christ in his patients. "When you give a cup of cold water to the least of these, you give it to me," Jesus said. Don Carlin told our group, "God has given me open doors of opportunity to serve God and God's people in this unique, amazing, exhausting urban ministry. I need God every hour. And I am truly grateful."

For nearly a third of the attendees, this was their very first POAMN Conference. That's great! Often times, people assume that to be effective in older adult ministry you must be at least middle-aged. Not true! Julie Jensen and Ellen Sanders from First Presbyterian Church of Cartersville, Georgia do a marvelous job.



ELLEN SANDERS AND JULIE JENSEN  
From the First Presbyterian Church of Cartersville, GA

On the final morning of the conference we installed incoming POAMN leadership. These are Vice-President, Tom Tickner who is a chaplain at Grace Presbyterian Village in DeSoto, Texas and Chairman of Funds Development, Rev. Mike Fonfara (retired) of Beverly Hills, Florida.



PRESIDENT KURZ INSTALLING MIKE FONFARA & TOM TICKNER

## WHY OLDER ADULTS MAKE BETTER LOVERS: And How to Become One!

*[This article, which brings together the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, is based on a daylong series of workshops led by Dr. Charles Arn of Church Growth, Inc. at Nestucca Valley Presbyterian Church in Oregon.<sup>[1]</sup> The first part focuses on the individual Christian and church member. The second part provides practical insights and help for churches to learn about love, and to effectively share God's love.]*

To love and be loved – what a great challenge! While we were each born with the ability to love, it seems that the older we get, the more we are able to realize that potential. Research shows a strong correlation between our age and our ability to understand agape love. This special seminar was designed to help participants take a giant step forward by considering the biblical concept of “love” from the perspective of age.

Session One was **Important Trends in Our Aging Society**. Church Growth, Inc. conducted a scientific survey wherein 17 questions were formulated and sent to churches of a variety of denominations, sizes, geographical locations, and growth patterns. A total of 168 churches from 39 denominations responded. In all, this survey encompassed a total of more than 8,600 people. Data obtained from this survey were organized and related to under-gird this presentation.<sup>[2]</sup>

On an individual basis, there are three pre-requisites for love:

- The right attitude for love is unconditional;
- The right foundation for love is commitment;
- The right approach to people is acceptance.

Here, we learned demographic facts such as:

- 13 % of the American population is 65 years or older;
- 5% of people 65+ years old live in convalescent hospitals or nursing homes;
- 38 % of senior adults in the U.S.A. live alone;
- 45% of women over 65 years old are widows;
- While only 28% of the U.S. population attends weekly religious services, 42% of senior adults do so.

Older adult life issues are: family, health, relationships, finances, meaning, leisure, personal growth, and leaving a legacy. Current research shows that aging brains are far more vigorous and resilient than previously thought (Harvard Medical school). And that giving and receiving love helps seniors live healthier and longer lives (Cornell University). A key question was “Does your church intentionally reach out to the older adults in your community?”

Session Two was **An Introduction to Love**. Here, we took a fresh look at 1 Corinthians Chapter 13. “But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love. Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it – because it does ...” (I Cor. 13) [“The Message”]

Why study about love?

- Love is the key to a fulfilled life;
- Love can be learned;
- Christ wants us to love;
- The source of love is God.

Interestingly, the older we get the more inclined we are to love. An action-oriented definition of love is: “Intentionally doing something caring or helpful for another person, in Jesus’ name, regardless of the cost or consequences to oneself.”

Session Three was **Why We Fail – or Succeed – At Love**. Here, each of us was asked to list three barriers that sometimes inhibit our own expression of love. Many of our answers were the same! Attendees were asked to think of two people in their social network – one a Christian, and the other a non-Christian - and fill out a chart of how THEY would rate us “most of the time” in terms of:

◇ Patient	-->	Impatient
◇ Kind	-->	Unkindness
◇ Trusting	-->	Jealousy
◇ Humble	-->	Arrogant
◇ Generous	-->	Selfishness
◇ Slow to Anger	-->	Irritable or Touchy
◇ Forgiving	-->	Resentful
◇ Hate Evil	-->	Loves Evil
◇ Consistent	-->	Inconsistency

The point being, how do other people see us?

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Session Four was **Eight Steps To Becoming A More Loving Person**. Here, the focus was on becoming a more effective channel for God's love.

STEP ONE – Make a Covenant with God to make love a priority in our life.

STEP TWO – Identify two (2) people that you feel God may want to love through you.

STEP THREE – Act First! Often we wait for the other person to make the first move. When it comes to intentional love, you should be willing to always act first. And not just once, but again and again ... whatever is necessary to make the relationship come alive!

STEP FOUR – Communicate. Research indicates people feel that the most important ingredient for loving relationships is communication. Communication can take place on different levels:

- ◇ Exchange of clichés;
- ◇ Exchange of data and information;
- ◇ Exchange of opinions and attitudes;
- ◇ Exchange of feelings, emotions, joys and fears.

Your communication skills will be improved by: becoming a good listener; remembering what people say; and realizing that honesty and tact are both a part of loving communications.

STEP FIVE – Empathize. In a sense, you will be seeing the world through their eyes, experiencing what they experience...feeling the way they feel.

STEP SIX – Identify a love opportunity. Is there a need or an opportunity where our love can help? This may be a physical need, an emotional need, a relational need, or a spiritual need. Everyone has needs. As you spend time with a person you will discover opportunities for loving actions.

STEP SEVEN – Respond with a caring gift. An appropriate gift is a unique expression of love. Gifts are not always a thing that you purchase. They might be the gift of forgiveness to a person who is in need of it; the gift of appreciation to a person who feels neglected; a gift of support to a person who feels alone and uncertain. Whatever the need, yours may be the gift that is needed most!

STEP EIGHT – Share yourself. Sharing yourself is hard to do, because it is all you have...it is you. It helps us move on to this ultimate step of sharing if we remember that we are really just channels of God's love to others. Jesus spoke of this ultimate goal as to "love your neighbor as yourself." Through our love, others begin to experience the person and power of Jesus' perfect love.

Session Five was **Growing a Loving Church ... and Senior Adult Group**. Switching to an institutional level, the number one frustration of pastors today is the lack of lay people willing to get involved in the ministry and work of the church. Some of the reasons why a church may want to attract older adults include: Older Adults' available time, monetary giving, institutional loyalty, and spiritual depth.

Here, we learned that just as individuals can learn to be more loving, so also, can congregations and groups within our congregations. Research indicates that churches that are growing are effective at creating an environment for love and often have the following characteristics:

- Small Groups – Your church should have approximately 7 groups for every 100 members;
- New Groups – One of every 5 groups in your church should have been started in the last 2 years;
- Older Members – 75% of those who have been involved in your church should have a meaningful task in the church;
- Newer Members – 90% of those who have been members for less than 2 years should have a meaningful role or task in the church;
- Friendship Ratio – Every members should have at least 7 friends in the church;
- Member Contact – Every member should be contacted every 30 days to inquire about any special needs or prayer requests they have;
- Prayer Ratio – Each member should know that they are prayed for at least once every 30 days.

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In order to be more effective, a local congregation should try asking senior adults to use their spiritual gifts on short-term tasks rather than asking them to serve in long-term roles. Commonly-held myths about older adults include:

- Age 65 is old
- Leisure is more fulfilling than work
- They are no longer needed in Christian service
- God doesn't use older adults

Six steps that will help older adults find their spiritual gifts were described in detail: Pray; Explore; Experiment; Reflect; Evaluate; and Feedback.

All who participated in this Older Adult Ministry seminar felt informed, uplifted, and better equipped to minister *with, to, and for* the Older Adults in their congregation and community!

<sup>[1]</sup> Charles Arn / Church Growth, Inc., Seminar at Nestucca Valley Presbyterian Church, Pacific City, Oregon (November 22nd, 2008).

<sup>[2]</sup> "Who Cares About Love?" Dr. Charles Arn, Church Growth Inc., Monrovia, California (1986).

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## 2011 JOINT ARMSS/POAMN CONVENTION & CONFERENCE

October 11-14, 2011 in San Antonio, Texas  
by Michele Shultz Hendricks, Conference Chair

San Antonio, the country's seventh-largest city, features a trio of popular attractions: the River Walk (a meandering canal lined with restaurants and shops), Market Square (said to be the largest Mexican-style market outside of Mexico) and the Alamo (no explanation necessary). But get beyond the obvious tourist stops, and this old city offers excellent Chicano art, 19th-century-style shopping, church music that goes way beyond hymns, and plenty of that famous Texas hospitality.

It could be said that if you haven't been to San Antonio then you haven't been to Texas! San Antonio embodies the cross section of cultures and history that make up the Texas heritage, as well as the hallowed ground where the valor and courage of a few brave men has become the battle cry heard around the world.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the 2011 Joint ARMSS/POAMN Convention & Conference in San Antonio, Texas October 11-14, 2011. We are pleased to announce our exciting leadership team!

Our 2011 featured Keynote Speaker is Rev. Dr. Cynthia Rigby - Austin Seminary Professor Cynthia Rigby joined the faculty of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1995. In an article in the Dallas Morning News, on March 28, 2006, Rigby was cited as one of the greatest theologians of our time.

You will not want to miss a minute of the 2011 Joint ARMSS/POAMN Convention & Conference in San Antonio, Texas October 11-14, 2011! Come early or stay over! (See center insert for more details and registration form or to register online go to [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org))

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## 2011 POAMN DUES ARE DUE!

by Mike Fonfara  
Beverly Hills, Florida

The benefits of POAMN membership are many. But, to continue being effective we need your membership. This IS 2011, please pay your membership dues for this year. Individual dues are \$30. This can be sent to the POAMN treasurer:

Bill Cooley  
52 Lake Hunter Dr.  
Lakeland, FL 33803  
Bill's E-Mail is: [revbjcooley@earthlink.net](mailto:revbjcooley@earthlink.net)

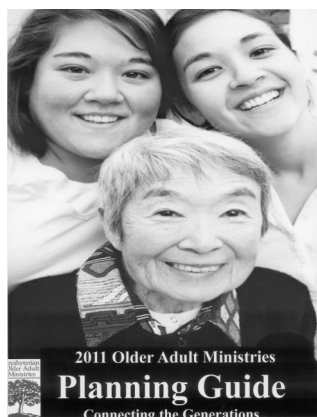
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POAMN MEMBERSHIP MATTERS - it makes a difference in your life and other lives. It is the connection and sharing of ideas rippled out across our nation's churches. It is the support of everyone of any age in the body of Christ. It is the joy of working together. \$30 - what a bargain for you and your church! Click on [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org).

## 2011 PLANNING GUIDE FOR OLDER ADULT SUNDAY/WEEK

by Quentin A. Holmes, Editor  
POAMN Network News

The Presbyterian Church (USA) sets aside the first Sunday in May to acknowledge older adults as one of the gifts with which God has blessed us. Older adults represent the gifts of wisdom gained through living a life in faith, with hope through hard times lived with perseverance. Older adults are known for their generosity in loving and in stewardship.



The 2011 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide, edited by Ginny Nyhuis/Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN), is an excellent resource. It will help you identify a number of practical ways your congregation can address life issues that are important to older adults, utilize their wisdom and talents, and involve them in the life of your church. The 2011 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide is easy to read, and very practical. Yet it is broad and deep enough to be of lasting value for getting started in ministering with, to, and for the older adults in your congregation.

Articles include:

- Celebrate Older Adult Sunday May 1, 2011
- Developing and Planning an Ongoing 50+ and Senior Adult Ministry in Your Congregation (by Michele Shultz Hendricks)
- Intergenerational Program Ideas (by Rev. Désirée Youngblood)
- Connecting the Generations by Faith: Older Adult Ministries Week Model Worship Service (by Rev. Désirée Youngblood)
- I Will Proclaim Your Faithfulness to All Generations (by Jan McGilliard)

The 2011 Older Adult Ministries Planning Guide is available from several sources:

- As a free, printable Adobe Acrobat pdf file. (go online to [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org))

- As a hardcopy booklet (price \$2) from Presbyterian Distribution Service at 800-524-2612, PDS# 23304-11-001

- or by contacting Ginny Nyhuis, POAMN Administrator, at: [gnyhuis@frontier.com](mailto:gnyhuis@frontier.com) or by calling: 615-426-1545.

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## EXCERPT FROM REV. EILEEN LINDNER'S KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE 2010 POAMN CONFERENCE IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA

by Darlene Shepherd  
OAM Moderator, First Presbyterian Church,  
Oskaloosa, Iowa

How does one write about a very moving portion of a keynote speech? I'm sure this will miss the mark of being there, but - read the following:

Dr. Eileen Lindner, Keynote Speaker, related an experience in a Far-East orphanage, with former First Lady, Rosalyn Carter.

As she and Rosalyn Carter approached the entrance of the building, a young woman was hurrying away. As they walked through the doorway, the first thing Eileen and Rosalyn saw was a small basket, covered with a pillowcase.

Rosalyn gently pulled back the pillowcase and saw a tiny infant who was an odd color and barely breathing. As she bent to pick the babe up, a staff member stepped up and said, "The mother had others to care for and could not stay. The babe is very weak. We will watch over her."

The women walked on to complete the tasks for which they had gone to the orphanage, and in time, returned to the entrance where the small wicker basket remained.

Once again Rosalyn pulled back the pillowcase. Eileen said to her - "Rosalyn, the child can't live...it is too weak...there is nothing to do for this tiny babe."

Rosalyn picked up the babe and held her close, spoke softly and rocked gently.

Again, Rosalyn was told - "The babe is too weak  
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to live.” Rosalyn’s answer was – “I know, but her mama can’t be here, and I’m praying her into heaven.”

We have high tech in about all areas. Do we have “high touch” also? There are more refugees now than at any time since WW II - and more Muslims and Followers of Islam around the world – especially in Africa.

Can you connect the above with the fact that 2.5 million grandparents are responsible for 4.5 million children who often live with them, the influence of these grandparents in health, learning, etc., and that they are the number one pre-school providers? POAMN can help across the nation with the needs of this group.

Possibly it doesn’t connect – unless you were at the conference and heard the entire speeches and went to the workshops. The next POAMN conference is in San Antonio, Texas this coming October. If you cannot attend - can you help make it possible for someone else?

## POAMN LEGACY AWARD NOMINATIONS

by Tom Tickner, POAMN Vice President

Each year, POAMN honors an individual for their exemplary work on behalf of older adults. Legacy Awards can also go to organizations. Last year’s individual Legacy Award went to Helen Morrison of Grosse Ile, Michigan. Helen has spent a professional lifetime enabling and encouraging older adult ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA). If you know of someone, or some organization, that you feel deserves special recognition please get in touch with me:



Helen Morrison accepts the  
2010 Legacy Award  
presented by Jan McGilliard

Rev. Tom Tickner

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De Soto, Texas 75115

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## PROPOSED CHANGES TO POAMN BY LAWS

The POAMN Executive Committee proposes the following changes (additions in bold italics) to the By Laws. These changes will be voted on during the annual business meeting at the conference in October.

Past Executive Committee members serving in the positions of President, Treasurer, and Member-at-Large for Conference Planning agree that there is a need to learn these positions before serving in them. A one-year period of transition for these positions will help future committee members move smoothly into them.

Also, we are adding the word “membership” to the title of the communications committee to clarify the work of the committee.

Proposed changes:

### Article Six. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the four elected officers, plus three MEMBERS elected at large. All Members-At-Large shall be elected for a term of three years. No Member-At-Large shall serve more than two consecutive terms or partial terms.

The Executive Committee shall: (1) conduct the business of the Network between annual meetings, (2) plan the Annual Conference of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network, (3) maintain communication between the Network and the General Assembly of the PCUSA, (4) report its actions to the next Annual Meeting of the Network, and (5) create subcommittees from the general membership to assist in the work of the Network, as required. In order to conduct a meeting a quorum of  $\frac{1}{2} + 1$  must be in attendance.

Five committees be established, each to be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee, the chair to be determined by the Executive Committee:

- a. Conference Planning Committee
- b. Long Range Planning Committee
- c. Financial Planning Committee
- d. **Membership/**Communications Committee
- e. Certification Committee

The Editor of POAMN Network News: a Resource for Older Adult Ministries, the Certification Coordi-

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nator, and the Chair of the Nominating Committee serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee, with voice, but no vote. ***The persons elected to the Executive Committee positions of President, Treasurer, and Member-at-Large for Conference Planning will serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee, with voice, but no vote during the year preceding the beginning of their terms.*** Expenses will be covered by POAMN.

## HAVING SOMEONE TO LISTEN

by Rev. Désirée Youngblood - Austin, Texas

*[Editor's NOTE: Rev. Désirée Youngblood serves as POAMN's Nominating Committee Chair. She and her husband, Mark, reside in Austin, Texas. The following helpful ideas are based on her experiences working with older adults.]*

**Mentoring** - The vast knowledge of the older adults in our congregations is amazing. Not only can the older adults mentor the youth, but they also would be good mentors for people of all ages. The older adults could help the deacons mentor new members of the congregation and those new to Christianity or even to Presbyterianism. They could mentor those wishing to grow in their faith and those interested in entering the same careers. Needs Met: someone to listen, intergenerational relationships, feeling of worth, visitation  
Biblical References: Lev. 19:32, Deut 32:7, 34:7, Prov 20:29, 16:31, Job 12:12, 32:7, 2 Sam 20:14-22, Eccl 3:1-16, 1 Tim 5:1-3, Titus 2:2-4, Psalm 71:18

**Adopt a Grandchild or Grandparent** - Many members of our churches live far away from their families. Our older adults miss having grandchildren nearby to spoil and to guide, while our children and youth miss out on having close relationships with the elderly. Encouraging our older adults to act as grandparents to younger members would benefit both groups.

Needs Met: someone to listen, intergenerational relationships, feeling of worth, companionship, visitation  
Biblical References: Lev. 19:32, Deut 32:7, Prov 20:29, 16:31, Job 12:12, 32:7, Eccl 3:1-16, 1 Tim 5:1-3, Titus 2:2-4, Psalm 71:18

**Life Stories** - In our churches we have some absolutely amazing older adults, who have absolutely fascinating life stories. A wonderful gift for both their families and the congregation would be to record their life stories for future generations. The recordings could be done in writing or with sound or video equipment. Their stories could then be shared with the whole congregation.

Needs Met: someone to listen, feeling of worth  
Biblical References: Deut 32:7, 34:7, Lev. 19:32, Prov 20:29, 16:31, Job 12:12, 32:7, Eccl 3:1-16, Psalm 71:18

**Send Notes** - In today's world of computers, nothing feels better than hearing your computer say, "You've got mail." Most of the older adults in our congregations do not get to hear these words because computers are not part of their lifestyle. Yet, getting mail still provides that wonderful boost of euphoria. A huge gift is receiving a handwritten note in the mail simply saying that they are being thought of. Feeling lonely is hard when you are surrounded by messages of love.

Needs Met: reminder that people care  
Biblical References: 1 Tim 5:1-3, Psalm 71: 9

**Ethical Wills (legacy of values)** - Ethical Wills are an idea that came from the Jewish religion. Older adults write out a will of ethics to share with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. This idea can also be used for our older adults to share their ethics with their church family.

Needs Met: someone to listen, feeling of worth  
Biblical References: Deut 32:7, Lev. 19:32, Prov 20:29, 16:31, Job 12:12, 32:7, Eccl 3:1-16, Titus 2:2-4, Psalm 71:18

**Neighborhood Groups** - Neighborhood groups work especially well in a large church. The congregation is divided into groups by neighborhood or section of town with about fifteen people and one leader in each group. Each group gets together on a regular basis, and its leader visits the homes of its members. The group leaders inform the pastors or deacons when situations arise that need more attention.

Needs Met: someone to listen, companionship, reminder that people care, visitation  
Biblical References: Deut 32:7, 1 Tim 5:1-3

*(Continued on page 10)*

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**“Let the Holidays Begin” (older adults helping older adults)** - “Let the Holidays Begin” is a program that was thought up by Idilia Johnston, an elder at Southlake Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Southlake, Texas. She was tired of going to holiday functions at church where they would seat her as the honored guest and then ignore her for the rest of the night. Instead, she thought that having a group of older adults go away to a retreat center for the holidays would be great. They would have group activities, such as baking holiday cookies, making Christmas crafts, and trimming a Christmas tree. They would also play Christmas games and sing carols. On Christmas they would visit a local nursing home and share their baked goods and crafts with older adults who could not get away for the holidays.

Needs Met: someone to listen, feeling of worth, companionship

Biblical References: Deut 34:7, Eccl 3:1-16

**Take a Shut-In to a Shut-In** - Many of the homebound members of our churches have been friends for a long time. Because they are unable to travel alone, they are unable to visit old friends. Bringing one homebound person to see another one would allow them to enjoy each other's company. Also, those who did not previously know one another can benefit from this program. They could make new friends, which is hard to do when homebound. In between visits, they could keep in touch by telephone (if possible), but nothing is better than seeing friends in person.

Needs Met: someone to listen, companionship, reminder that people care, visitation

Biblical References: Psalm 71:9

**Homebound Sunday School Class** - A homebound Sunday school class is an innovative way to use conference calls or a computer chat room. A Sunday school teacher would use a conference call or chat room to connect homebound class members, allowing a Sunday school class to be held. All the materials for the class would be provided to the class members in advance of each class.

## OLDER ADULT MINISTRIES CERTIFICATION

by Jan McGilliard  
Blacksburg, Virginia

*[Editor's NOTE: Jan McGilliard serves as POAMN's Certification Coordinator. Course Four of POAMN's Certification Program was held immediately following last October's POAMN Conference in Orlando, Florida. Jan is an excellent Tri-Athlete who has competed abroad as well as within the USA.]*

Why certify? Why pursue Older Adult Ministries Certification, you ask? Because it is an opportunity to become proficient in the language of the “Third Age,” of those who have traveled further on the journey of life. OAM Certification is designed to educate individuals to be in effective ministry with a growing, blooming segment of the population. It is in the life of the church that we promise to nurture and love each other as the people of God from cradle to grave and beyond.

Later life presents many opportunities and challenges unique to mature adults, with a common theme of change. The Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network (POAMN) of the PC(USA) offers an excellent training program that prepares individuals to engage in ministry with older adults in the context of their faith background as applied to physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs of older adults. Participants may begin with any of the core course as they are offered. Certification may be achieved in two years.

- **Course One – Spiritual Formation for Older Adult Ministries** Spiritual dimensions of aging go beyond typical activities of church-going, prayers, rituals, devotions and fellowship. The spiritual is the ultimate ground for all our questions, hopes, fears and loves. Through reading, study, contemplation, and discussion, participants will learn the key elements of spiritual formation that may be applied to ministries with older adults.
- **Course Two – Teaching for Transformation in Older Adult Ministries** Course objectives include: understanding of ways that older adults

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

learn (learning styles, brain changes, social implications); at least three methods of Bible study and teaching methodology; at least three approaches to biblical interpretation; and ways to evaluate curriculum (professional and student written).

- **Course Three – Reformed Theology Answers to Questions of Middle/Older Adults** Through study of scripture, Reformed creeds, and theological reflection, theological topics are explored with a focus on how these relate to middle-and older-adulthood such as: heaven; resurrection; realm of God's rule; guilt and forgiveness; bereavement, aging as God's plan for human life; and the church as a caring and supporting community.
- **Course Four – Physical and Mental Changes in Aging** Looks at the physical and mental changes of normal aging as opposed to disease and as opposed to the myths of aging. Looks at each body system and its changes. Emphasizes the uniqueness of individuals, covers the stereotypes of ageism, lessened reserve capacity, and develops several ways to enhance the quality of life as we age.
- **Elective Subject** Objectives include: providing an opportunity for the participant to explore, research, and experience an aging-related topic of special interest to them; building the participant's knowledge and confidence in this subject; giving the participant experience in presenting materials to others.
- **Application of OAM Courses** Participant will create a scenario/vignette related to each of the courses. Each vignette would describe a situation that would encourage the participant to develop a plan for how to resource a congregation (or other group). Participants will develop and describe the steps necessary to respond in a practical way and obtain needed resources.

To inquire about POAMN's Older Adult Ministries Certification Program, contact Jan McGilliard, Coordinator, at [janmcgilli@gmail.com](mailto:janmcgilli@gmail.com), or by phone at (540) 953-1366. You can also visit the POAMN website at [www.poamn.org](http://www.poamn.org)

## THANKS TO ALL OF YOU THAT HAVE JOINED POAMN FOR 2011

(listed below)

Your membership fees support the continuation of the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network.

It is time to renew your membership or become a new member for 2011.

See page 12 for a membership application.

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## POAMN Membership Application

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

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

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Organization): \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type:

☐ \$30 Full      ☐ \$20 Affiliate      ☐ \$100 Institutional, Church & Judicatory Membership

To continue POAMN's ministry to older adults and those engaged in ministries for older adults, I would like to make an extra gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to POAMN.

**Make checks payable to:**

**POAMN**  
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