

Top Tips



Faith in
Later Life

Worship and Community

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Rooted in Scripture: What does the Bible say?

The Bible gives the Church a clear mandate to value older people.

God "wants everyone (all ages) to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Churches must therefore keep sharing the good news of Jesus (2 Tim 4:2), including with older people who are already in church out of tradition or habit. We are also told to nurture believers toward maturity (Philippians 1:6) and honour the gifts and witness of older saints. Scripture expects older men and women to teach, encourage, and model godliness to others (Titus 2:2-5; Psalm 92:12-15).

Churches need to consider how to facilitate worship and community that helps people to know faith in later life.

- ✓ Reaching older people with the good news of Jesus
- ✓ Discipling older Christians to become like Jesus
- ✓ Mobilising them to be disciple-makers

Fostering Fruitfulness: What difference can this make?

When churches shape worship and community that sees faith flourish in later life, God is glorified, and everyone benefits. Older people hear and respond to the good news of Jesus, sometimes coming to saving faith near the end of their lives, with the peace of forgiveness and the hope of heaven. Older believers are strengthened to keep walking closely with Jesus, instead of feeling forgotten or spiritually apathetic. This can further diminish loneliness, fear, and despair, and foster belonging, dignity, and purpose. The church family is enriched by their steadiness, prayer, wisdom, and lived testimony. And God's kingdom is advanced as older saints continue to witness to young and old the goodness of God in their lives.

Tips at a glance

Dedicated
Seniors
Leaders

Representation
& Visibility

Midweek Events
& Groups

Care home and
home-based
Ministry

Mobilising Older
People for
Mission

Faith in Later Life's Top Tips

1

Dedicated Seniors Workers are people called by God to lead ministry among older people. If your church funds age-specific pastors, consider appointing a seniors pastor to champion this vital mission in your church and community. If employing someone isn't possible, identify and equip a gifted volunteer and help them build a dynamic team. Don't forget that older people themselves often make outstanding seniors leaders and team members.

2

Representation and visibility of older people in church communities fosters a sense of value of later life that inspires and encourages people of all ages. Ensure that older people are included, heard and seen: on your social media platforms and website; on trustee and elder teams; across the whole life of the church; in the teachings; and in your testimonies.

Further Inspiration

For more on this subject, please head over to our Resources on our website at faithinlaterlife.org

If you lead a ministry among older people in your church or Christian community, we'd love you to join our network – it's free and you can find out more on our website.

3

Midweek Events and Groups can provide refuge from loneliness and opportunities to explore faith. Consider coffee mornings, lunch clubs, care home services, and midweek gatherings where seniors can have fun, ask questions, explore doubts, and meet Jesus eg. Alpha and Hymns We Love. Facilitate discipleship among older believers by hosting daytime Bible studies and lifegroups. And invite older people to host and lead these events and groups.

4

Care Home and Home-based Ministry is essential for older people who can't come to the church building. Offer regular visits, phone friendship, and short "lounge" services where they can explore faith, hear scripture, sing familiar hymns, pray, receive communion, and still serve. Train a small, caring team and equip them with key Bible passages, simple prayers, large print blessing cards, and seasonal goody bags.

5

Mobilising Older People for Mission means seeing beyond what someone can no longer do, and at what they can do – and how God is calling them to join His disciple-making mission in this season of life. Everyone can pray, but most older people can and want to do far more. Start the conversation, create meaningful opportunities, and actively encourage, pray for, and support them.

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, 'The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.' Psalm 92: 12-15

