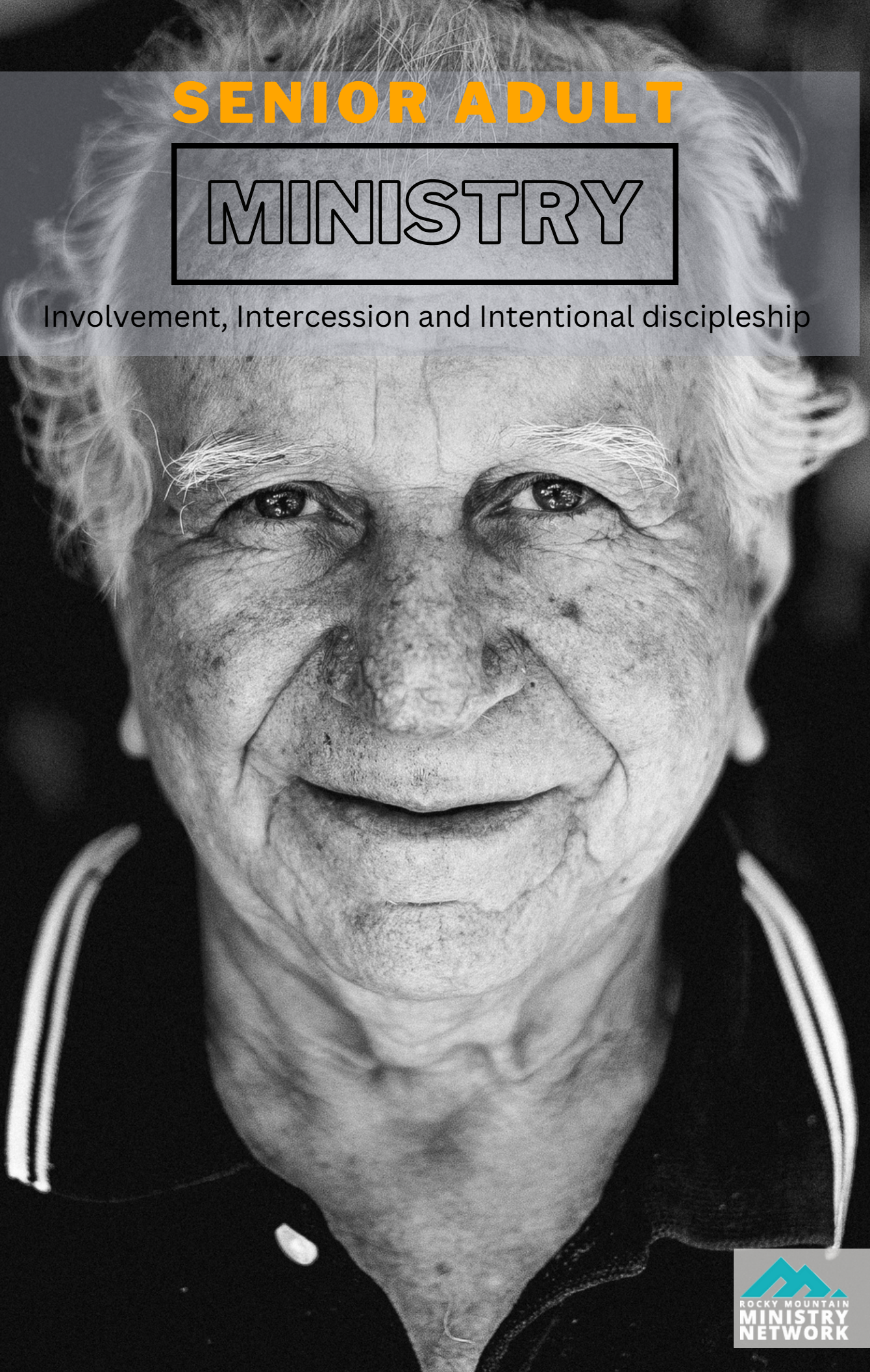


SENIOR ADULT

MINISTRY

Involvement, Intercession and Intentional discipleship



SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH
Bob and Sherilyn Cook – National AG Senior Adult leaders
Springfield, MO

Considering the fact that the senior adult population in the U.S. is growing faster than most other age groups, we believe it is crucial for local Assemblies of God congregations to strongly consider emphasizing ministry to adults that are 55 and older. Without a doubt, ministry to children, students, and young adults is also very important, but hopefully the local church will not make senior adults the “forgotten” part of the church.

Verses from God’s Word that are especially appropriate for senior adults are:

*“And now, in my old age, don’t set me aside. Don’t abandon me when my strength is failing.”
(Ps. 71:9 NLT)*

“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.” (Ps. 92:13-14 NKJV)

Most senior adults have the time, talents, and treasures to bless the church of today and tomorrow. From our experience, for most AG churches, a majority of the average church budget comes from those 55 and older. They want to give – to the church needs but also to missions! In addition, those who are physically able want to help out in some way around the church; they want to stay active! Plus most of them have “been around the block,” they have wisdom and experience that can help the generations coming after them.

The national Senior Adult office of the Assemblies of God stands ready to assist local churches with equipping SA leaders. We provide resources that will equip both the newly-appointed and veteran SA leaders. We also host a national Senior Adult Conference every 2 years that provides quality instruction, anointed preaching, inspirational music, and wonderful fellowship for senior adults from across the U.S. (the next Conference is scheduled for Sept. 4-6, 2024 at the Hilton Hotel Convention Center in Branson, MO)

In addition, we encourage local churches to contact their district/network offices as some of our regional offices have Senior Adult leaders designated to help local churches. Some districts/networks host SA Camps or Retreats, special music nights, or even SA cruises!

For every senior adult, our encouragement will always be centered around these 3 attitudes that will help us stay vibrant and healthy:

- Involvement in the local church – find a place to serve!
- Intercession for family and friends – be that Prayer Warrior that every church needs!
- Intentional discipleship – passing our faith to the generations coming after us!

Editorial for *Primeline* – Fall 2023 issue
Bob Cook

Senior adults continue to be a significant growing segment in our AG fellowship and in most of our local churches. In his book, "*Second Half Ministries*," Dr. Ray James, an ordained AG minister, states that according to the 2020 U.S. Census, approximately **35%** of the population are **age 50 and over**. That's 1 in 3! Plus – **10,000** people are celebrating their 65th birthday every day!

In response to these statistics, I suggest to all senior adults in this growing segment of the church's population the following 3 attitudes or assignments that will help us stay vibrant and healthy:

1. **Involvement** – stay as active as you possibly can in the life of your church. It's true - many of us got a bit lazy during the pandemic; it was too easy to just watch services online. Be careful, seniors – isolation can negatively impact our walk with God! We need each other!
 - a. In addition to attending church services and senior events, find a place to serve! I heard recently of a married couple in their 80s who still volunteer in Kids' Ministry in their church – bravo! One church utilizes seniors in "On Call Helpers" ministry – they stand ready to assist with tasks like tripped breakers, flat tires, broken sprinklers, or household chores that widows may not know how to do! I love that creativity. There IS a place for you to serve!
2. **Intercession** – be the Prayer Warriors of your family and church! Call out the names of your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to God every day, plus all the special needs of the church! The "*effectual fervent prayer of righteous people avails much.*" (James 5:16) I love the story of one senior who tries each week to introduce herself to a young person in her church, saying, "*Would you mind if I prayed for you this week? Is there any special need you have that I can pray for this week?*" They follow up with that young person the next Sunday. Our children and teenagers NEED to know that others are praying for them. Let's be those dependable, stand-in-the-gap pray-ers! Why not US?
3. **Intentional discipleship** – the psalmist writes, "*We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done.*" (Ps. 78:4)
 - Do your children and grandchildren know about your journey of faith? Do they know your testimony? Do they know God's story in your life?
 - Take the time to write it down, or perhaps make a video of "God stories" in your journey. Be creative – find a way to intentionally disciple the next generation!

I believe God's will for each of us senior adults is expressed in Psalm 92:14, which says, "*They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.*"

Seniors – let's stay **involved**, let's **intercede** with fervency, and let's **intentionally disciple** the next generations coming after us! God will help us!

(James, Dr. Ray, *Second Half Ministries*, pp. 1-2, 2022)

Senior Adult Ministry Resources
(Compiled by the national SA offices of the Assemblies of God)

Finishing Life Strong – John Heide

- John Heide and his wife, Judy, serve as the SA leaders of the Southern Missouri AG Network
- This book is 95 pages long and speaks to vital issues for those in the “second half of life.”
- Available on Amazon (\$9.99); also available from John at: johnheide2002@yahoo.com or on his website: www.50alive.com

Half Two: The Quest for a God-Honoring Encore – Wes Wick

- Wes Wick, and his wife, Judy, lead a SA ministry called YES – Young Enough to Serve
- This 295-page book is filled with practical advice for seniors and is filled with great illustrations and anecdotes
- Available on Amazon (\$12); also available from Wes/Judy at: info@yestoserve.org or on their website: www.yestoserve.org/contact

How to Start a 50+ Group in your Church – Lisa C. Deutsch

- Lisa has written numerous publications regarding SA ministry; this is especially for those just beginning in SA ministry.
- This publication is a manual filled with ideas about monthly meetings, plus loads of ideas for fun stuff with seniors!
- Available from the Southern Missouri AG Network for \$12 (plus shipping); call Nancy Cook at 417-833-1316 or email: ncook@somoag.org

Second Half Devotions (for those 50 and better!) - John Heide

- John Heide and his wife, Judy, are the SA leaders of the Southern Missouri AG Network
- This 384-page book contains an excellent devotional thought and song lyrics for each day.
- Available from Amazon (\$7.39); also available from John at: johnheide2002@yahoo.com or on his website: www.50alive.com

Senior Adult Ministries – Dr. Ray James

- Dr. Ray James has written several SA publications and has led SA ministries in the Potomac District of the AG.
- This 71-page manual is excellent for those leaders just beginning in SA ministry; gives the rationale behind SA ministry, plus many practical tips
- Available on Amazon (\$4.99)