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**PRESBYTERY of DES MOINES**  
**Older Adult Ministries (OAM) and Congregational Health Ministry**  
**JANUARY '09 E-Newsletter**

The following e-mail content is intended to be by, with, and for, our Des Moines Presbytery churches in their ministry for older adults and healthy congregations.

Dear Friends,

My apologies for the length of the first attempt at a monthly newsletter...

Please use the information in any way it is beneficial to your church – newsletters, posters, etc. All churches are welcome to submit articles and information to be included. Just reply or send articles – please use subject line: *Presbytery OAM Email*

I left out quite a lot of information which really emphasizes that while the children are the church of the future, our older people must be cared for and nurtured so there will be a church for their future.

In faith,

Darlene Shepherd  
Older Adult Ministries Task Force Moderator  
Presbytery of Des Moines  
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**National Health Ministries**

This is a site you might want to pull some articles from, for a newsletter. One of the topics is how to get started in Congregational Health Ministries. Others include: recognize the work of caregivers which includes starting a care ministry in your church and a guide to getting started; Influenza Information; Health Care - who gets it, who doesn't, and other articles.

Pandemic Flu preparedness for congregations is also one topic. This could pool information we hope never to use but be so very glad to have if needed. To learn more, go online to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Website:  
[www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/ministries](http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/ministries).

**Nurses**

Along this vein of thought - do you have nurses in your congregation? The Synod of Lakes and Prairies has a list of nurses in the Synod churches. The Des Moines Presbytery's Director of Communications Kim Coulter and Older Adult Ministries Task Force Moderator Darlene Shepherd are in the process of adding names from our churches' contacts. With their permission, please send names and contact information to either Kim Coulter, [pbycommunication@qwestoffice.net](mailto:pbycommunication@qwestoffice.net), or Darlene Shepherd, [dshep@mahaska.org](mailto:dshep@mahaska.org), to be added to this list.

The United Methodist Church also has an excellent source of health information. Go to [www.aging-umc.org](http://www.aging-umc.org).

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### **Experience Works**

This is a national, charitable, community-based organization that helps seniors get the training they need to find good jobs in their communities. For more than 40 years they have devoted themselves to helping people break out of poverty and reclaim their lives and dignity through work. Outstanding Older Workers, and America's Oldest Worker are honored each year. For more information, go to their Website: [www.experienceworks.org](http://www.experienceworks.org).

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### **Looking into May 2009**

During the month of May, we honor our older members. But there are several options and materials to use to honor our nurses, May 6-12, National Nurse Week. The **Blessing of the Hands** can be a celebration for this time. Service resources from the Church Health Center and National Health Ministries/PC(USA) are online: [www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/parishnursing/blessing.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/parishnursing/blessing.htm).

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### **Book of the Month**

*"The Graying of the Church: A Leader's Guide for Older-Adult Ministry in The United Methodist Church"* by Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., D. Min.

Dr. Gentzler is a renowned author of material for OAM's, and Director of the Center on Aging and Older-Adult Ministries for the General Board of Discipleship of The UMC. As I read it, I wrote down page numbers I wanted to return to, and soon realized I was jotting down about every page. There are 60 selected ministry ideas that may be valuable and helpful for ministry with older adults, 16 specific ways you can help encourage and motivate older adults, and eight suggestions for leaders in churches that have difficulty identifying their ministry.

He writes of an important question for the church: Once this generation of older adults dies off, what will happen to the church? They give substantially more money, faithfully attend services, provide leadership - what will happen when they are gone? If the church is not intentional in a new ministry with the Baby Boomer Generation, the church will miss reaching a generation of 78 million older adults. Failing this, the church will forego a sizeable wealth distribution and miss realizing the wisdom, experience, and faith of this important generation.

Our Presbyterian and Methodist faiths work with the Age Wave along the same lines. You will find many articles by Presbyterians in the Methodist newsletters and book lists.

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