

ELDERLY IDEAS

'But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.'

1 Timothy 5:8

While many of the ideas in this resource can be made applicable across the whole age range of those in the community these ideas concentrate on ways to reach out to and bless elderly people.

ELDERLY IDEAS

1 SINGING AT RESIDENTIAL HOMES



PURPOSE: To visit and encourage the residents and staff at local residential homes for the elderly.

IDEA: To take a team of 10-20 people to sing songs for residents in some of your local residential homes. This could happen at Christmas time with carols but it would also be a great witness for this to happen at other points in the year such as Easter, harvest and Ascension. Groups could sing 3-4 songs and then meet and greet residents there with a small gift such as a display verse for a bedside table. A box of chocolates could be left for nursing staff.

2 RESIDENTIAL HOME CHURCH SERVICES



PURPOSE: To bring a church service to those that are unable to attend their local church.

IDEA: To work in partnership with local churches to run a short mid-week service in a local residential home. This could be a short ecumenical service to enable it to be run by differing denominations on a rota basis and would also serve as a contact point with staff in the residential home.

3 SENIOR CITIZENS EVENTS



PURPOSE: To gather seniors together for fellowship and promote their relationship with other church members.

IDEA: To organise a weekly gathering of senior citizens for a short midweek service followed by tea and coffee or a light lunch.

- Organise special meals at certain times of the year to celebrate Christmas, harvest, Easter and so on.
- Organise trips away for seniors to parks, historical homes, festivals, mystery tours and so on.
- Book readings that can be read out to seniors from classic books.

4 TRANSPORT ROTAS FOR THE HOUSEBOUND



PURPOSE: To ensure that the elderly and housebound have the opportunity to attend church.

IDEA: To do a once-a-year review of the access that housebound people have to church and organise a transport rota accordingly. Many elderly people may already have transport arranged for them each week through friends and family but many may simply drop out of attendance (because they can no longer walk for instance) without telling anyone. Placing a person or team of people in charge of a rota for collecting and leaving back the house bound will help to keep pastoral contact with church members.



5 COMPUTER SKILLS WORKSHOP



PURPOSE: To help local elderly people with basic computer literacy.

IDEA: To run a workshop for elderly people in the community to explain some of the benefits and drawbacks of communications technology. This would be a practical workshop and so should include lots of volunteers who can give time to individuals or two's and threes to guide them through helpful technology. It is also a great way to connect young people and elderly people in the community. Laptops, tablets, cameras and so on could be made available to show people how to use new technology to do things such as e-mail, video calls, surf the internet, download movies, upload photos and book appointments or travel. Participants could also be encouraged to bring any portable computers with them, tablets or phones to be able to ask questions about how best to use them. It will also be useful to set up a Wi-Fi hotspot in the church hall for this.

6 HARVEST LUNCH



PURPOSE: To host a dinner at harvest time for local elderly people.

IDEA: Many churches distribute food and flowers just after the harvest service to local senior citizens. However it may also be worthwhile using this time to invite local elderly people to a harvest lunch on the Monday or Tuesday after Harvest Sunday. Alternatively it could take place at dinnertime and involve young people to help serve and then sit alongside the seniors. Volunteers would be needed not only for food preparation but also for transport to and from homes. The meal could also involve a short harvest service.

7 COMMUNITY GARDENING



PURPOSE: To reach out to those in the community less able to tend their gardens.

IDEA: Once a fortnight over the spring and summer a team of volunteers could help to tend the gardens of senior citizens and other less able parishioners. They could plant flowers or set up window boxes. This is also a good pastoral opportunity and helps to keep the church updated on the more housebound and elderly people it is connected with.