

Lifelong Missions

Live It August 2007



Questions for Each Individual

1. What is your mission, your purpose, and the organizing principle that gives your life meaning?
2. How can you adapt your mission to accommodate changes in your physical status or living environment?
3. What do you most want to do for God?
4. How can you share your life experiences or mentor others? (Thibault)

Scripture

Mark 16:15

And then he told them, “Go into the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere.”

Acts 1:8

But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere – in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Case Study: Elizabeth Shriner, A Lifelong Missionary

Contributed by The Women on Mission, Warsaw Baptist Church

Elizabeth is 93 years old and has been a member of our church since May 15, 1955. She has held many important offices. She and her husband, Virmadel, were treasurers of our church for 35 years, and she continued for a few years after his death. She sang in the choir, served on many committees, helped promote all of our church activities, and has been secretary of our Women on Mission for 40 plus years. She was also secretary of the WMU/RBA for seven years. She is now living in an apartment at a local assisted living center, The Orchard. She still drives her car to church and to other places.

She is very active at the Orchard. She belongs to Faye's Knitting Group. Faye is a volunteer who engages five women in knitting and crochet activities every other week as a means of stimulating the mind as well as the hands. At Christmas, the group knitted 50 caps for children of incarcerated parents. The group knits anything purple for the Haven, a local shelter for battered women and children. Mrs. Shriner has done numerous purple neck scarves. The group also does hats for infants and children in the pediatric unit at the local hospital.

Mrs. Shriner readily says, "I don't go out here and sit and hear the same old stories over and over. I excuse myself and go back to my room to knit and read. You will never hear me say that I don't have anything to do. It is important to keep busy. I try to make meaningful use of my time helping others." In addition to helping others, Mrs. Shriner clicks away at projects for her 16 grandchildren, ranging in age from 2 to 22. She has done scarves, ponchos, and hats. "I want them to be able to say that they have something from Meme. That's what they call me," she said.

Mrs. Shriner radiates excitement, enthusiasm, a positive attitude, and a sense of humor. At the conclusion of her interview for the Orchard, she was asked if she had any questions. "I have one," responded Mrs. Shriner. "How late can I stay out at night?" Seeing the shocked or bewildered look on the admitting officer's face, Mrs. Shriner hastened to explain that she was active in the Eastern Star and attended activities of chapters near and far, sometimes returning as late as midnight or thereafter. They indicated that this was no problem and explained the procedure she should follow.

Twenty-five years ago, our church organized the Joy Club, a program designed for seniors in our community. Mrs. Shriner enjoys the fellowship and programs related to pertinent up-to-date topics. "And you know they sponsor the nicest trips. The Orchard has trips, too. Between the two, I just can't keep up with all the trips," she explained. She is an avid sports fan, which keeps her young. Her only regret is the The Orchard does not

have ESPN so she can get the Atlanta Braves. As a member of the resident's advisory group, she continues to advocate for expanded TV coverage and makes input into menu planning. "I don't always like everything they serve but I eat it because I know it's good for me." She continued, "I tell them what I think if I have to. "

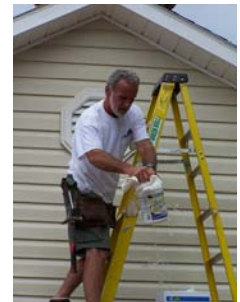
Mrs. Shriner is a dedicated Christian lady and a true inspiration! With her loyalty, efficiency, joyful, and loving performance of duties, she serves as a role model for all. She is truly a testament to "Aging with Significance."

Theological Study

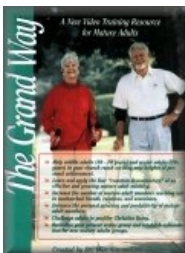


As Christians, we are called to remain in active ministry at all stages of our lives. God's call is not age specific. Throughout the Bible, we see continuing recognition and affirmation of the distinction of age. (Koenig) We are called to witness and be on mission where God has placed us .(Sorrill) Every person of every age in every circumstance has a unique talent, ability, or gift. The discovery of this gift and its use in serving God by serving others will make life meaningful and purposeful. The church should provide meaningful service opportunities for its mature adults through mission action, mission support, and prayer support opportunities.

"Loving Creator, medical science has indeed extended our years and we are grateful. Yet we wonder what this means. We know that being seventy or eighty is nothing strange in these days, but just another stage of life with its opportunities and possibilities. We need to approach these bonus years with endless gratitude for this gift of more time to live. Grant us grace to use these years with courage and hope. It is in your name we pray." (Richard Morgan)

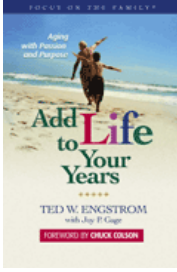


Resources



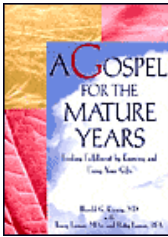
The Grand Way

Video Study Kit - "Helps older adults focus on the keys to an effective second half of life in the areas of service, outreach, discipleship, and love." Order through www.ChurchGrowth.net



Adding Life To Your Years: Aging With Passion and Purpose by Ted W. Engstrom

"The call to serve the Lord echoes throughout all of life--including later years. Older adults can still pursue personal growth, challenge themselves to achieve goals, and live in the light of God's amazing grace. Ted Engstrom encourages seniors to finish strong by discovering new talents and using their God-given gifts." ISBN: 0-8423-5749-1 Tyndale House Publishing, 2002



A Gospel for the Maturing Years...Finding Fulfillment By Knowing and Using Your Gifts by Harold Koenig, Tracy Lamar, Betty Lamar

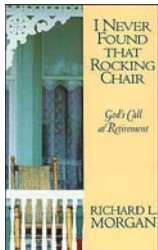
ISBN: 0789001705, Haworth Press, 1997
"A Gospel For The Mature Years shows how to achieve joy and fulfillment by developing a deep, personal, intimate relationship with God, recognizing God-given gifts, and using abilities in service to others."



It Ain't Over Till It's Over: A User's Guide for the Second Half of Life by William E. Diehl and Judith Diehl

ISBN: 0806644486, Augsburg Fortress Press, 2003
"This vision of retirement makes Christian values central and promotes active engagement rather than withdrawal."

I'm Not Here to Be Dusted: Fifty of So Ideas to Help Physically Challenged Senior Adults Find Ways to Still Be of Service to Their God and Their Church By Bobby Shows.



I Never Found That Rocking Chair by Richard Morgan

"This insightful and spiritually enriching book views retirement as a time set aside for rewarding involvement and deepening spirituality."
ISBN: 0835806634
Upper Room, 1993