

WAYS TO MAKE YOUR CHURCH MORE OLDER-ADULT FRIENDLY

- Host a Senior Wellness Fair partnering with your local community mental health center or senior center, which would kickoff your 'new' older adult changes/services (see below...) Some possible senior fair topics: Women over 60 who do not get mammograms (have the Mammogram Van there), Local hospital Osteoporosis checks, seminars about mental health, spiritual health and physical health.
- Start a Caregiver support group meetings/case management for your senior parishioners that need it which could include mental health support.
- Broadcasting sermons over the radio for the home-bound patrons.
- Install headsets in pews for hard of hearing.
- Church van to transport those unable to drive to services.
- Evaluate church for accessibility. Does it need ramps, grab bars, etc. for senior safety and access?
- Large print bibles and/or hymn books. Make sure newsletters are in larger font – ideally 16 font minimum.
- Designate or hire an associate pastor to conduct home visits or consider starting a "Friendly Visitor" or "Call check" volunteer program.
- Minister to your family caregivers! This is a huge need – and ways that could certainly help is create a respite program for caregivers, where they get a few hours to go out and get a haircut or go shopping or run errands

while their loved one is being cared for by a volunteer. There are many great ideas being done by The Shepherd's Center Northland that can be replicated in a church in a variety of ways.

<http://www.shepherdscenternorth.org/content/page.asp>

- Create a senior home repair ministry or lawn mowing ministry, both huge needs for older adults trying to stay at home as long as they can.
- Create a "pet sitting" ministry for older adults who have to go into the hospital for physical or emotional reasons and are afraid to because of their pets not being cared for.
- Partner with the Sassy Ladies Club, a non profit group of older women in the KC area that facilitate senior-appropriate pet adoptions for lonely, grieving, isolated seniors. Email: janetscurran@gmail.com or contact Wayside Waifs which often collaborates with them on senior pet adoption events.