

I Will Dwell in the  
House of the

*Lord* FOREVER

*Psalm 23*



**2017**

**OLDER ADULT**

**RECOGNITION SUNDAY**

Virginia Conference UMC  
Older Adult Council

Older Adult Recognition Sunday is May 7, 2017. The lectionary readings for this fourth Sunday of Easter include Psalm 23. The words we want to focus upon for this year's worship resources are from verse 6: *"and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long"* (NSRV). There are no age restrictions. There are no limitations on how far our discipleship and faith can grow.

The stories of the faith learned and experienced by our older adults need to be honored and celebrated. One way to do this is through an Older Adult Recognition Sunday. United Methodist congregations worldwide are invited to celebrate Older Adult Recognition Day during the month of May. The Virginia Annual Conference has designated the first Sunday in May of each year as Older Adult Recognition Sunday. Use this day to show appreciation and support for the older adults who continue to enrich and strengthen our faith communities. It is also a call to action to be advocates in addressing the needs of older adults in the congregation and community.

We encourage your church to celebrate Older Adult Recognition Sunday. Your congregation can choose the first Sunday in May or another date that best fits your need. Use the day to recognize what older adults bring to our congregations and to identify ways to help them continue filling vital roles in mission and ministry. Invite one of your senior members to share their story with the congregation, to let everyone know how they came to know Christ.

For additional resource help, visit the website for the Discipleship Ministries. Select "Leadership Resources," then "Older Adults. ([www.umdiscipleship.org](http://www.umdiscipleship.org))

## Psalm 23

New Revised Standard Version

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

<sup>3</sup>he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

# Worship Service Suggestions

The following worship service suggestions are offered by members of the Virginia Conference Older Adult Council. Tailor the suggestions to your congregation.

## Suggested Hymns

### *The United Methodist Hymnal*

- #87 "What Gift Can We Bring"
- #92 "For The Beauty Of The Earth"
- #103 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"
- #130 "God Will Take Care Of You"
- #383 "This Is A Day Of New Beginning"
- #445 "Happy The Home Where God Is There"
- #557 "Blest Be The Tie That Binds"
- #600 "Wonderful Words Of Life"
- #707 "Hymn Of Promise"

### *The Faith We Sing*

- #2008 "Let All Things Now Living"
- #2046 "Womb Of Life"
- #2051 "I Was There To Hear Your Boring Cry"
- #2076 "O Blessed Spring"
- #2158 "Just A Closer Walk With Thee"
- #2162 "Grace Alone"
- #2170 "God Made From One Blood"
- #2271 "Come ! Come ! Everybody Worship"

### *Worship and Song*

- #3011 "All My Days"
- #3015 "How Great You Are"
- #3030 "Eternal God Transcending Time"



Shared by Rev. Barbara Parker, Eastern Shore District  
Member, Older Adult Council

## Liturgy

Older Adult Sunday is a good Sunday to include liturgies that many older church members grew up using in worship. While modern services sometimes omit some of these traditional elements in worship, Older Adult Sunday is a good time to expose all generations to some of these meaningful expressions of worship.

### Suggestions from *The United Methodist Hymnal*

Psalter: Psalm 23, #754

An Affirmation of Faith: #880—The Nicene Creed or  
#881—The Apostle's Creed (traditional)

A Prayer of Confession: #890 or #891

Doxology: #70 "Glory Be to the Father"

*Shared by Jenny Lucas, Staunton District  
Member, Older Adult Council*



## Children's Message

Welcome the children to come forward, and invite all to join in singing "Jesus Loves Me" as the children move to the front.

After the children are seated, ask them to begin with all placing their hands like: "Here is the Church, Here is the Steeple, Open the Door, and See All the People. (It may be helpful to ask some youth to join the group of children to help children.)

When they have made their church, ask them if they know the song: "We Are the Church" (#558 in *The United Methodist Hymnal*)? Then ask the congregation to join the children in singing the first two verses of the hymn together while the children continue to make the church again.

I am the church! You are the church!

We are the church together!

All who follow Jesus,  
all around the world!

Yes, we're the church together!

1. The church is not a building;  
the church is not a steeple;  
the church is not a resting place;  
the church is a people.

(Refrain)

## Children's Message — Continued

2. We're many kinds of people,  
with many kinds of faces,  
all colours and all ages, too  
from all times and places.

(Refrain)

Giving the children time to answer after each question, begin to ask the children: "Who else is in the church with them?" "Do you see any babies?" How about any grandparents?" "What about teenagers?" Can you pretend to see some of these people in our church hand? "Do you see Jesus in a stained glass window?" "Do you see little children or a lamb with Jesus?" "Do you feel like God loves you?" "Do you know someone who loves you?" We know there are many who love you, like our pastor, your Sunday School teachers.

Then ask the children that when our church members share God's love with others, how does that make them feel?"

Remind the children of the Bible verse from Psalm 23, "...and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long." "Do you think you need to live at the church to feel God's love?" Do any of you have somewhere special that you feel like we are all a family where we live with Jesus in God's Kingdom?" Jesus tells us that wherever we are, we live with and dwell with God and Jesus who is that Good Shepherd shown in that stained glass window. We can remember that God and Jesus aren't just at church, but are also at home, at school, outside, inside, everywhere we all go and every place we are. (If they are shy, give them your special place where you know you will always feel Jesus present.)

Ask the children to hold hands and while we always need to remember to pray for the children, for the teens, for our parents and for our grandparents as they light the way, now ask the children to pray after me: "Dear God, Thank you, for the love, you share, in our church, and in our homes. Amen

*If the church budget allows, please give each child a "Glow-In-the-Dark" cross. If not, a sheet to color of Jesus with a child or an animal can be given to each child. Let the children know that this item is for them to keep in their bedroom to help them remember that God is with them always and that Jesus loves them.*



*Shared by Janie Nuttall, Richmond District Member, Older Adult Council, with assistance from Rev. Carol Bookwalter, York River District; Suzanne Spencer, Winchester District; and Martha Stokes, Virginia United Methodist Homes, Inc.*

## Sermon Starters

Scripture: Psalm 23  
Emphasis: Ministry to, for, by and with older adults  
Overall concept: What does it mean to dwell in the house of the Lord?

### Themes:

1. Dwelling in God's love all the time and forever, abiding in Jesus and welcoming him into our hearts, minds, souls and spirits
2. Spiritual life in the present and in eternity
3. Spiritual legacy - how has following Jesus changed the lives of the older adults and how have they shared the Good News as they have seen it in their own lives (Consider asking 1 or 2 older members to give a brief testimony to how they have experienced the Triune God at various times in their lives.)
4. Experiencing God's presence everywhere and applying Jesus' teachings in our lives every day and to all aspects of our lives
5. Living in the midst of God's family, including all God's children, those who know him and those who don't
6. Recognizing discipleship is a life long process and interactions between generations is critical to the health of God's human family
7. God's house does not have walls

*Offered by Suzanne Spencer, Winchester District  
Chair, Older Adult Council*

## Additional Information and Support

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For more information about the Older Adult Council and resources for your Older Adult Ministries, contact:  
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