



Forming An (Older) Adult Ministry Steering Team

A functioning and energetic Adult Ministry Steering Team is the key to creating and supporting and effective adult ministry in many congregations. While many churches have established adult groups, the Steering Team helps to support them, enlist volunteers to lead and maintain them and provide new opportunities that serve both the congregation and its immediate community. Here are nine tips to forming a Steering Team in any congregation.

- 1. Consult** with the pastor, leadership team, and related existing groups.
- 2. Establish a steering team** of five to ten persons with active adult ministry groups in the congregation represented.
- 3. Conduct a survey** of adults in life's second half and/or focus groups. Listen carefully as participants describe their interests and needs.
- 4. Conduct a demographic and a service analysis** of your local community. Know the needs of middle and older adults in your area and what services are available for them.
- 5. Develop a purpose statement**, which includes an intentional focus on the key areas of fellowship, Christian faith formation, outreach, and service by and to older adults.
- 6. Begin to shape a program.** Use this information to help create a shared vision for adult ministry. One size does not fit all. Paths and programs are planned to respond to the unique needs and interests of members and potential members.
- 7. Plan some inclusive events** for which nonmembers feel comfortable attending and members feel comfortable inviting their friends (e.g. seminars on aspects of retirement planning).
- 8. Survey the people who attend** and learn about their interests and needs. Then plan a year's activities based on those needs and congruent with the stated mission of your congregation.
- 9. Communicate!** Regularly report activities and progress to the congregation and community. Strengthen connections with neighboring churches.

This list is adapted from one originally prepared by Richard H. Gentzler, Jr., Director, Center on Aging & Adult Ministries of the United Methodist Church.