



Adult Lutherans Organized for Action

An inter-Lutheran ministry by, with, and for adults age 50 and older

Embracing Aging

March 2018

by Dr. Lydia Manning, ALOA Board

As a gerontologist and educator, I have been teaching courses on aging-related issues and topics for the past 15 years. I often have students study the lyrics of the Beatles song, *When I'm 64*. It is a useful exercise and illustration that, as social creatures, we decide how to make meaning of age. In class we pore over the lyrics and deconstruct the meaning behind the song. We reflect on what Paul McCartney imagined 64 would be like when he wrote the lyrics in 1967, as a 16-year-old young man. He saw the 64 year olds in his world losing their hair, needing assistance with activities of daily living and some simply wasting away [as referenced in the song lyrics].

In 1967, the average life expectancy was 68 years. In 2015, it was 79. Contrast that to 1900, when average life expectancy was 47 years. More and more people are living longer, in greater numbers and are now dying with complications associated with aging and chronic disease rather than from acute and infectious diseases, which were prevalent earlier in the 20th century. Adding decades

to the life course has dramatically changed how we perceive and experience aging, too.

We can look around and see that in many respects 65 is the new 50. People are continuing to retire at 65 after which many reinvent themselves for their second half of life. This has become a time of contribution and productivity, through volunteering or engaging in generative acts. For some, later life is a time where people blossom and successfully tap into creative insights, deep wisdom and complete individuality. Gerontologists and other social scientists used to lump "old age" into one broad category – the 65 plus age group. More recently, they have started to use 3 distinct categories: the young-old (65 to 74), the middle-old (75 to 84) and the oldest-old (85+ with centenarians being 100+). The time after people retire until they live with inhibiting health conditions and disabilities associated with late life has become known as the **Third Age**.

Continued on page 3



ALOA's purpose:
Equipping persons in the second half of life as disciples of Jesus Christ for their service to family, church, community and world.

In This Issue

Embracing Aging..... 3
In the Words of..... 4
Program Highlights...5
Walt's Words7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I was recently asked "What are 3 good reasons a congregation should be interested in and support ALOA?" Here's how I replied to the question:

1. **ALOA proclaims the importance of senior ministry for people in the congregation.**

To me, the most important reason for ALOA is to celebrate aging and provide the focus and support for congregations to have intentional senior ministry. There may be persons 50 and over at services on Sunday, but an intentional recognition of major transitions in life requires deliberate attention. As the Church, the congregation provides for spiritual needs at this time. ALOA proclaims the necessity of this ministry.

2. **ALOA provides a variety of resources for congregations on our website.**

You'll find videos regarding life after 50, some with accompanying Bible studies, as well as the *Best Practices for Senior Ministry* manual. Our newsletter, monthly emails and Facebook page provide other resource suggestions.

3. **ALOA presents a week-long Luther-hostel in Minnesota, as well as regional single day events, cruises and congregational programs in a number of states.**

ALOA is also beginning a formal network for congregations to support each other in intentional ministry and nurture people spiritually and physically throughout the second half of life. To accomplish this ALOA needs your prayers and the active energy of persons in congregations, as well as financial and volunteer support. We give thanks to God for your support of this ministry.



Earl Alton
ALOA President

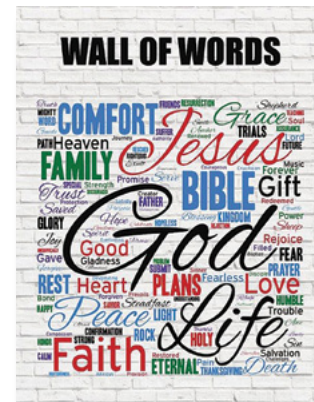
Thank You! Your Support Helped us Reach Our Goal

With your support  the \$50,000 needed to qualify for a \$25,000 challenge grant from the Thrivent Foundation. The grant award will be used to help us provide ministry throughout 2018, as well as help fund our efforts toward increasing ALOA's sustainability for the future. **Thank you!**

Best Practices: Ideas for Congregations

When senior adults at Prince of Peace Lutheran in Carrollton, Texas, were asked to submit information on their favorite bible passages and a brief word on why they had chosen that particular passage, more than 50 people participated. The result was a printed booklet called *The Wall of Words*.

A wall of pictures is often displayed in our homes. This *Wall of Words* displays a faith testimony of how God is at work in older adults. Copies were made available to family and friends and members of the congregation.



Wall of Words book cover

ALOA is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the LCMS and an affiliated Social Ministry Organization of the ELCA.



aloa4u@gmail.com

COVER STORY

...continued from page 1

The phenomenon of the Third Age is as a period of a healthy, productive, secure and engaged retirement. With a growing proportion of the U.S. population realistically anticipating the ability to retire and yet remain active for a number of years, the Third Age has taken shape as



an unprecedented opportunity to enrich the experience of aging

by providing a new and expanded model of old age to precede and, in many cases, supersede a traditional view of a period of inevitable decline.

It was once that old age, marked by the transition into retirement, was the start of a long period of decline and disengagement from society. That is no longer the case. It is now estimated that once a person retires they will experience several additional major life transitions. These transitions can include re-entry into the labor force or launching an entirely new career, moving, losing a spouse or other loved ones, new relationships or remarrying, becoming a caregiver, managing the onset of illness or learning to live on a fixed income. Part of reimagining old age is navigating these transitions and making meaning of these new life ages and stages. Old age is being conceptualized as a time that holds the possibility for

continued development, personal fulfillment and increasing levels of life satisfaction and well-being. Paul McCartney, now 73, is enjoying the many opportunities that an old age "reimagined" is affording him. As a gerontologist, I understand these changing perceptions of aging to be positive and encouraging, giving us hope for what the next 10 years have in store for how we will understand, perceive, define, experience, and make meaning of old age and later life.

Congregations Embracing Aging

Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV, is being intentional about older adult ministries and brought members and community residents together for a "Joyfully Aging" experience. They plan a similar event this year, where older adults can connect with one another, as well as learn, pray, serve and celebrate together.

At **Concordia Lutheran Church**, Cordova, CA, the aging congregation saw a need in their community, and decided to do something about it. Working with an occupational therapist, they created a Health/medical Equipment Loan Program, (H.E.L.P), to provide for persons in their community who cannot afford to purchase needed items to live comfortably and safely!

About ALOA — A nationwide, inter-Lutheran resource to the church, ALOA encourages and supports ministry for adults age 50 and up, in Lutheran congregations and through events which foster intellectual, social & spiritual growth. Contact us at: 1-800-930-2562 or by email at aloa4u@gmail.com

IN THE WORDS OF... CHARLES MUELLER

A continuing series of interviews with veteran leaders in senior adult ministry

By Mary Manz Simon, ALOA Board

Rev. Charles S. Mueller Sr., Missouri Synod pastor and former district president, is the "Charlie" of *Rich and Charlie Resources*, a free, monthly online newsletter targeted to younger and older adults, richandcharliresources.com. In addition to writing and speaking on behalf of Wheat Ridge Ministries, he staffs the adult education ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church, Roselle, Illinois.

Years ago, you were deeply involved in the launch of what became ALOA, by setting up a pan-Lutheran committee to explore possibilities for serving those who were called "seniors." How did you settle on the name?

Mueller: Someone suggested we call the organization ALOHA, as the Hawaiian word meant both "Hello" and "Goodbye." We felt that is what happens as people move into the post-60 season. As we noodled around the name, we deleted the "H" to produce an acronym for what the group felt was a good starting point: **A**ssociation of **L**utheran **O**lder (give the dog a name) **A**dults (we were not just starting a grown up "youth" group...as some senior organizations try to be).

What is the story behind the ALOA logo?

Mueller: The initial symbol was the brain-child of a professional designer: four hands that formed a cross. That was a visualization of what the group saw as its two-fold purpose: 1) Celebrate and 2) Serve.

More recently, why did you launch the Rich and Charlie Resources newsletter?

Mueller: It grew out of the friendship that Rich and I had developed over the years. R and C Resources was created to inform, support and encourage individuals, families, pastors and lay leaders at the local level.

What is the biggest problem facing senior adult ministry?

Mueller: The #1 problem facing those who want to serve the post-60 population is the denial of what being and/or becoming older is. It is at the heart of how almost all parish leaders from the pastor on up (or down—depending on your view), regional and national church bodies and most organizations that try or want to serve "seniors" (ALOA included) treat the post-60 reality.

You appear to feel strongly that age-related denial is the primary hindrance to ministry.

Mueller: The post-60 world is huge and growing by the day. As I see it age related-denial is a huge problem no matter how and in what corner of the world a person seeks to serve – as much with the serving organization as with those they serve.

Wayne Dyer, Max Planck and a lot of others agree that, "When we change the way we look at a thing the thing we look at changes." Individually and collectively we need to readjust how we view the post-60 years. Bismarck's 19th century views that if you make it to 65 you "fold up your tent" and retire is 21st century nonsense.

Thrivent Choice® Dollars Giving Deadline

ALOA received over \$3,000 in Choice® Dollars in 2017 to help provide more ministry to older adults. **It's not too late to add** to that total. If you have Choice® Dollars available for 2017, you can direct them to ALOA through March 31, 2018. Go to thrivent.com/thriventchoice/ or call 1-800-847-4836 to make ALOA your Choice®.

aloha4u@gmail.com

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS & COMING EVENTS

Coming Events

Ironwood Springs Lutherhostel

September 24-28, 2018

Our Fall Lutherhostel returns to Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch near Stewartville, Minnesota. The camp offers private hotel style rooms in their Miracle Lodge, along with many indoor and outdoor amenities.

Dr. Robert Holst will present *The Wonderful Witness of Women in the Gospel of John*. Robert served as a pastor, missionary in Papua New Guinea and college professor. He retired as president of Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. Music and devotions will be led by James Coe. He retired after serving for 40 years in Lutheran congregations in Michigan and Florida.

Cost: \$575 per person/dbl occupancy includes program, lodging and meals. Camper sites are \$525 per person and limited space is available for commuters for \$350 per person (no lodging or breakfast).



For more information or to download a brochure and registration form, go to aloaserves.org/events/luther-hostels/

SeniorFest

Lafayette, IN - Sept. 29, 2018 - The Indiana District Senior Ministry Task Force will hold a SeniorFest at St. James Lutheran Church. Dr. Reed Lessing will speak on "Why Am I Here?", based on Psalm 71:18.

Support ALOA

Your donation helps ALOA provide more support & resources for older adult ministry. Use the enclosed envelope or click the blue [Donate Now](#) button on our website to donate online.

SeniorFest

Georgetown, TX - Feb. 3, 2018 - The 13th Annual Austin & Central Texas SeniorFest featured Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick on *Being a Christian in 2018*. The 135 participants enjoyed the speaker, a variety of workshops and lunch at Christ Lutheran Church.

Plano, TX - Feb. 24, 2018 - *Caring for God's Creation* was theme of North Texas SeniorFest at Resurrection Lutheran Church. 60 participants heard Dr. Tim H. Robinson speak on equipping the saints for

healing and care of creation, and participated in a number workshops.

ALOA Fest in Florida

Venice, FL - March 2, 2018

Tampa, FL - March 3, 2018

ALOA - Florida Region held two days of ALOA Fest. Rev. Tom Hafer spoke on Faith & Fitness, sharing insights he's gained from years of work with many healthy, disability-free 100-yr olds. Participants also enjoyed a variety of workshops, worship and music.

Your faithful giving makes everything we do possible. We are grateful for the support of the following individuals for donations received November, 2017 - February, 2018:

10+ Year Supporters			
Orville & Juan Alitz	Wayne & Marilyn Dreier	Harvey &	Henry Rowold
Myrna Andersen	Peter & Faith Dunne	Dolores Kroening	Patsy Rugh
Arlene Avischious	Joseph &	Dale & Karen Kruse	Donald &
Lois Bayer	Joyce Ellwanger	Harvey & Carol Lange	Marilyn Sandmann
Eldred & Jane Belanger	Betty Epie	Vern & Joan Liermann	Herman & Gayle Schmidt
Helen Benson	Olinda Fink	Gail Lutze	Walter & Leota Schoedel
Harold &	Virginia Fisher	Kelly & Diana Lyles	Alfred Scholz
Margaret Bernthal	Richard & Marianne Hafer	Roy & Ann Maack	Arthur & Judy Schroeder
Richard & Hazel Bimler	Doris Hanson	Doreen Mayer	Virginia Sheppard
David Block	Janet Hegwood	Brian Mccaffrey	Diana Sornborger
Constance Blunck	Eimo & Pat Hinrichs	John & Barb Mueller	Lois Stangeland
Edwin & Margaret Boger	Dennis & Caron Janko	Dennis & Shirley O'Brien	Dorothy Stinchcomb
Earl & Shirley Carpenter	Leonard Connie Johnson	Dennis & Grace Pegorsch	Natalie Thiele
Arthur & Edith Constien	Donald & Laura Just	Norma Pera	Wallace & Beverly Turner
Cordelia Degner	Norman & Susan Kendt	Carl Prostka	Lydia Volz
Thomas &	Loren & Arlene Kramer	Bruce Radtke	Willard & Grace Wagner
Elizabeth Demik	Theodore &	Eugene & Gerri Rall	Natalie Wehrman
Ann Doering	Helen Krenzke	Martha Reumann	
Earl Alton	Claudia Frese	Jim & Pam Ingersoll	Dian Olsen
Frank & Maurine Anchondo	Allen Freudenburgh	Stephen &	Marty & Larry Richards
Annyce Bohls	Ernie &	Deborah Kauffman	Jeanine Roth
David & Susan Buegler	Kathy Freudenburg	Norris & Susan Krohn	Henry & Mary Manz Simon
Joyce Carroll	William & Myrthis Griffith	Susan Laeder	Robert & Freda Steinke
Jesse Crosmer	James & Kathleen Hahn	Keith & Mary Leeseberg	Richard & Dawn Stewart
David Dare	Richard & Anita Hans	Robert & Patsy List	Robert & Julie Stuenkel
Joyce Davis	James Hazelton	David & Carole Ludwig	Walter Tietjen
Terry & Cheryl Dittmer	Kenneth & Barbara Holdorf	David & Susan Maack	Donna Vierow
Douglas &	Paul Holmer	Robert & Judith Mickelson	Margo Walbolt
Shirley Dougherty	Robert & Lynne Holst	John & Connie Mittermaier	Marcia Weil
Ross & Gloria Edwards	Lyle & Betty Hoppe	Lyle & Marlene Muller	Robert & Janice Weise
Paul & Suzanne Eggold	Sue Huttig	Daniel Oetzman	Darla Wolters
Mary Flekke	Warren &	George &	
John & Eileen Frerking	Christine Jennison	Dorothy Ohlendorf	



**June 5-8, 2018 –
Presbyterian Older
Adult Ministries Network
Annual Conference**

Zephyr Point Conference Center, Zephyr Cove, Nevada
Savoring the Journey will feature speakers and workshops focused on topics such as caregiving, dementia-friendly congregations, aging ministries and spirituality & aging. For more, go to www.poamn.org

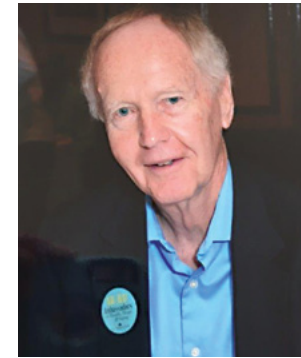
**October 25-28, 2018 –
Sage-ing International
2018 Global Conference**

Oak Ridge Hotel & Conference Center, Chaska, Minnesota
Elder Voices Transforming the World: Our Stories in Action will feature speakers, workshops, interactive sessions and more. For more, go to www.sage-ing.org

aloa4u@gmail.com

BOARD NEWS

Dr. Richard Bimler has joined the ALOA Board of Directors. We are blessed to be the beneficiaries of Rich's wisdom and insights as we continue to strive to encourage and support ministry to those in the second half of life.



Thank you to The Dankis Christian Foundation

The Dankis Christian Foundation has funded the taping of the next series of ALOA video resources and the purchase of additional equipment. A total of \$7,500 from the foundation has been utilized to purchase a camera, teleprompter and studio set equipment for Prince of Peace Lutheran School in Carrollton, Texas to use for this project.

"How affirming to receive funding for this cross-generational project!" says creator and ALOA Board member Dr. Mary Manz Simon. "We are grateful for this grant money that will directly benefit old and young."

High school students tape and produce the videos in their classroom, under the direction of instructor Nick Weiss. Each student is assigned one video, where they not only apply skills developed during the year, but are exposed to issues in senior adult ministry. Currently, 19 videos can be viewed on our website at aloaserves.org/resources/videos/

The new equipment will also be used for Faith Stories, a project that makes it easy to share one's faith journey. Produced in partnership with Prince of Peace, Faith Stories is being field-tested this spring as another ALOA intergenerational video initiative.

aloaserves.org

WALT'S WORDS

Although now retired as editor of Engaging the Aging, Pastor Walt Schoedel is graciously sharing some of his wisdom with us.

The Day When....

By Rev. Walter Schoedel

Discipling older adults should be a high priority in the life of the congregation. Picking up on Martin Luther King's speech, "I have a dream," I want to share with you my dream for the future as congregations reach out toward the aging pilgrim.

The day when more and more congregations help the 50 plus crowd live out their baptismal covenant as active participants in the Kingdom of God.

The day when more older adults see themselves as able pilgrims, on a journey, with a shrine in their hearts –Jesus Christ; service in their hands – sharing their gifts; and a destiny in their goal – heaven.

The day when congregations practice an attitude that says – older adult ministry is intentional, inclusive, adequately staffed, resourceful and builds and shares faith.

The day when congregations have a high priority for evangelism among older adults.

The day when congregations do not leave an intergenerational ministry to chance.

The day when older adults seek to answer the questions, "What should I be doing with this amazing gift of extended life? How can I make a significant difference in the lives of others by what I say and do?"

The day when congregations move from a membership mentality to one that encourages discipleship.



Adult Lutherans Organized for Action
PO Box 4367
Clearwater, FL 33758

NONPROFIT ORG
U S POSTAGE
PAID
TAMPA, FL
PERMIT NO. 1736



This newsletter
is a publication
of **Adult
Lutherans
Organized
for Action**

Shirley Carpenter

Board Chair

Earl Alton

President

Carol Murphy

Publications Editor

© 2017

Contact Us

1-800-930-ALOA (2562)

Email: aloe4u@gmail.com

Web: ALOA.serves.org

**Mail: PO Box 4367
Clearwater, FL 33758**

Special Thanks to our Dedicated Partners

ALOA depends on the generous support of our partner congregations. ***They are leaders*** in their mission for adult ministry!

Partner Congregations

Christ Our Redeemer,
Temple Terrace, FL
Grace, Clearwater, FL
Grace, Glen Ellyn, IL*
Holy Cross, Lake Mary, FL
Hope, The Villages, FL
Immanuel, Eau Claire, WI
Luther Memorial, Erie, PA
Our Savior, Nokomis, FL
Prince of Peace, Carrollton, TX
Prince of Peace, Largo, FL
Redeemer, Austin, TX
Redeemer, Westfield, NJ
Spirit of Joy, Orlando, FL
St. Andrews, St. Petersburg, FL

St. Armands Key, Sarasota, FL*

St. Paul's, Clearwater, FL*

Trinity, Walnut Creek, CA

Zion, Bethalto, IL

Zion, Dallas, TX*

**20-year Partner*

Partner Organizations

Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America (ELCA)
Lutheran Church Missouri
Synod (LCMS)
Good Samaritan, Kissimmee, FL
LaClede Groves, St. Louis, MO
Lyngblomsten, St. Paul, MN
Village On The Isle, Venice, FL