



### Characteristics of Best Practices in Age 50+ Adult Ministry\*

1. **The ministry is led by an Adult Ministry Team.\*\*** Teams provide a continuity of oversight, planning and assistance to existing adult groups while enabling congregations to research, identify and develop new ministry opportunities.
2. **The ministry is in alignment with the congregation's mission statement.** Contact persons function as a conduit between the team, the church board, adult ministries of networked congregations and ALOA.
3. **The needs and talents of middle and senior church members are known and affirmed.** As well, community needs and existing services for adults are explored.
4. **Over time, a shared vision for adult ministry is developed.** A realistic goal is one high visibility event each year, namely, a church-sponsored activity that nonmembers feel comfortable attending and to which members feel comfortable inviting friends.
5. **Leadership for each individual adult ministry initiative of the congregation is identified.** Job descriptions are developed. Training and support are provided for leaders and teams\*\*\*
6. **Adult ministry ventures are embraced and supported both prayerfully and financially by the congregation.**
7. **The ministry is affirmed and shared by the whole congregation.** Adult Ministry Teams will encourage intergenerational ministry opportunities, with older folks and young people learning and serving side by side.
8. **Innovative adult ministries embrace the opportunity to network with partner congregations.** Sharing experiences and programs with each other, with ALOA, and with connected regional and national church bodies helps to determine "best practices"\*\*\*\* in adult ministry and aims to strengthen such ministry throughout the church.
9. **Evaluation is regular and ongoing.** Assessing what was attempted as well as possible ministry outcomes is useful information for both local and other adult ministry planners.

\* This brief listing of characteristics is an attempt to "step back" from the details of a new initiative to see the big picture. It casts a vision for adult ministry and provides direction for partners to move forward over time.

\*\* By whatever name the congregation chooses to label the team or task group.

\*\*\* The responsibilities of the Adult Ministry Team are "oversight, planning and assistance" for the development of a stronger adult ministry program. Each component of the program should have its own leaders and planning process.

\*\*\*\* A "best practice" in any field is a method, technique, or program that through research and practical experience has been shown to produce superior results, and thus can be used as a benchmark for effective practice.