



EncourAGING and Equipping Congregations for Older Adult Ministry

Intentional ministry by, with, and for adults in the second half of life

June 2023

Becoming Dementia Friendly at Church

May is Dementia Awareness Month and June has been declared Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. According to the World Health Organization, more than 55 million people worldwide are living with some form of dementia and it is one of the major causes of disability and dependency among older people. People with dementia can take steps to maintain their quality of life and promote their well-being by:

- being physically active
- taking part in activities and social interactions that stimulate the brain and maintain daily function.

With the significant numbers of older individuals in our congregations, and churches often being a primary place for social interaction for many, it may be time for your congregation to seek training in becoming Dementia Friendly. Redeemer Lutheran Church in Sun City Center, Florida is the fifty-third church that has been certified Dementia Friendly by Debbie Selsavage of Coping with Dementia LLC.



Certified Dementia Practitioner Debbie Selsavage presents Dementia Friendly Congregation certification to Pastor David Allman and members of the Parish Nurse Team of Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Dementia Friendly Certification

To be certified as Dementia Friendly requires that a significant number of the congregation, (usually 30 or more, depending on the size of the church) attend an *ABC of Dementia* workshop. Debbie's organization, Coping with Dementia, provides the two-hour workshop free of charge to non-profit organizations.

What spurred Redeemer Lutheran Church to seek the training? Being

Continued on next page

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.

Dementia Friendly... from page 1

located in an older retirement community, they naturally have many members over the age of 80. Several members have a family member with dementia or know of someone in the congregation with dementia. Pastor Allman and the church's Parish Nurse team heard Debbie talk about becoming a Dementia Friendly Congregation as part of an ALOA webinar last spring and sought the training as a follow up.

There are many forms of Dementia, with Alzheimer's being the most common.

Pastor Allman states that Debbie's workshop at the church was comprehensive and interactive. Particularly useful was being able to learn about associated behaviors and how to best approach and interact with those suffering from dementia.

The congregation's hope is that the training will translate into better interaction with members afflicted with dementia and better support for their caregivers. Information booklets distributed at the workshop were very useful and were shared with other members of the congregation who couldn't attend. A copy is also being added to the church library. In addition, we were provided with a direct link to an online support group that can be utilized by church members, should they find it helpful.

Additional Resources for Congregations

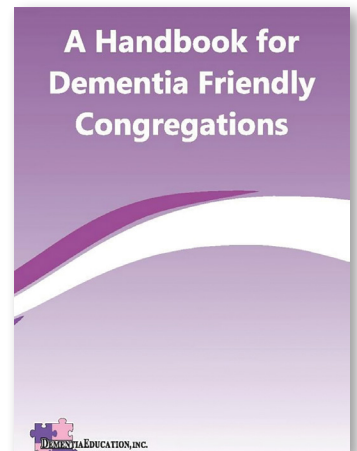
ALOA's Dementia 101 for Congregations webinar gives an overview of how congregations can become dementia friendly. Debbie Selsavage shares her expertise and

gives tips to help better understand, interact, and respond to a person living with dementia. You'll find a recording of the webinar, along with the workshop slides and additional resources at aloaserves.org/webinars/archive-dementia-101-for-congregations/

Dementia Friendly America works to help communities support people living with dementia and their caregivers. Their sector guide for faith organizations has a step-by-step guide as well as practical suggestions for making congregations more welcoming, compassionate places for those with dementia. You can find it at dfamerica.org/sector-guides.

A Handbook for Dementia Friendly Congregations

helps congregation members and leadership learn how to recognize those living with dementia, how to serve families who are living with dementia and how to create programs and structures that will make the congregation more dementia friendly. Find it at Amazon: amzn.to/3lxhsb5



Want to receive inspiration in your inbox and keep up on ALOA news?

Send us your email address or sign up at aloaserves.org.



aloa4u@gmail.com



Carolyn Ross
ALOA Board President

Much is happening at ALOA!

The ALOA Board of Directors continues its work to grow ALOA to be an even more vital resource for congregations around the country, and great progress has been made on the Congregational Centers for Vital and

Resilient Aging program. This program provides support and resources for congregations engaging in intentional ministry by and for the older adults in their communities.

I want to take this opportunity to thank ALOA Executive Director Hans Springer for his years of dedicated service to ALOA. In January, Hans retired from his position with ALOA. We are grateful to him for guiding us through challenging times and we wish him much happiness in this next chapter.

The ALOA board engaged in a search for a new Executive Director to guide us in furthering our mission of encouraging and equipping persons in the second half of life as disciples of Jesus Christ for their service to family, church, community, and world.

I am thrilled to announce that Daniel Reichard has been hired as our Executive Director. Dan brings years of experience, energy and many talents to the role.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for your partnership and support. I know that God's hand is on our work, and am excited to see where He leads us!

Diversity Within the Demographic

By Dr. Mary Manz Simon, ALOA Board

How does your congregation acknowledge retirement of a long-term church volunteer?

A recent news item and photo in the Faith, Appleton, WI church newsletter highlighted the years-long dedication of an older adult volunteer.

A deaconess is often involved in ministry support, so ALOA Board member Penny Cedel surveyed members of the Lutheran Deaconess Conference of North America. Here are their suggestions:

- Give recognition in front of the congregation. The new volunteers can go back if needed for consultation and help if needed.
- Give an official release from service in that capacity so that the new person has the actual authorization to make decisions.
- We don't have a formal process- now I wish we did!
- Share a picture of the person while working at the congregation in the position they filled.

ALOA Board members also suggest these ways to honor the retirement of older adult volunteers:

Our church does monthly lunches at a restaurant, "The lunch bunch" where volunteers are recognized with a word of thanks.

--Dr. David Maack

Diversity Within the Demographic, continued

So much of how a congregation would honor her/him, depends on the person's style. One approach I've seen is to honor the person in a worship service and give her/him a plaque to place in the home or church, with a monetary gift going to the church in recognition of her/his services to be used for older adult ministries.

--Rich Bimler

Establish a tradition of one or more "Senior Sundays" each year. Begin these services singing two verses of familiar longstanding powerful traditional hymns. Feature seniors as lay leadership in the service. Utilize senior faith story interviews in the sermon. Before the prayers of the church honor the retiring older adult volunteer and recognize volunteering.

Give thanks for their service during the prayers. Invite them to be guest of honor at coffee hours.-

--Dr. Rollie Martinson

Recognition for volunteering at Trinity comes immediately with acknowledgement of the help provided for the events people volunteer for. I think that this sends the cor-

rect message. We as part of God's family should never officially retire. What we do may change but the idea is that God

always has a role for us. We occasionally have a recognition Sunday where we thank those who have volunteered during the year, but we always hope people will continue to give of themselves. That being said I do agree that people need to be thanked and acknowledged for the work they do in God's kingdom.

--Tom Perry



At St. Andrew's we do not offer a huge formal exit celebration for our senior adults, but we do thank them at a church service. Their picture is on the screen, but it is done for those who have served for many years.

Individual ministry areas do their own "thank you" within

their ministry areas as they choose. Our church does monthly lunches at a restaurant, "The lunch bunch" where volunteers are recognized with a word of thanks.

--Sue Lennartson

"We as part of God's family should never officially retire. What we do may change but the idea is that God always has a role for us. "

**Support
ALOA**

Your support is essential!! It helps us reach more individuals and congregations to encourage more older adult ministry. Use the enclosed envelope or donate online using the blue **Donate Now** button on our website.

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JOIN US FOR AN INSPIRING WEEK AT OUR

Ironwood Springs Lutherhostel

October 2-6, 2023

Stewartville, Minnesota

Join ALOA and our dynamic presenters for a time of learning, reflecting and connecting. You'll experience inspiring spiritual study, music, devotions and outdoor activities at Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch and Conference Center.

The Stones Cry Out: Archaeology and Spirituality in the Holy Land will be our study with Drs. Mark & Rhoda Schuler. Hear their insights, as they will have just returned from spending three months in Israel. The Schulers recently retired from full-time teaching at Concordia, St. Paul, where Dr. Mark taught theology and shared his first-hand archeological research of Biblical times at Hippos of the Decapolis in Israel. Dr. Rhoda was the lead professor on service



to the world and on "hearing the voices of the marginalized"

Pastor Frank and Deaconess Jan Janzow will inspire us with devotions and music. Through ***Faith Stories***, they'll explore God's transforming grace rescuing real people through stories, song and prayer. For 50 years Frank and Jan Janzow have served the church as pastor and deaconess, 37 of which they served at

Ascension Lutheran Church, Waukesha, WI. In recent years, they've focused on retirement ministries, Frank has authored several books and together they've publishing liturgies and songbooks.

In addition to each day's sessions, activities include presentations on topics of local interest, service projects and

Our faithful supporters makes everything we do possible!

We are grateful for every donor, many of whom are long-time supporters of ALOA. In this issue we recognize those who made donations January thru May 15, 2023.

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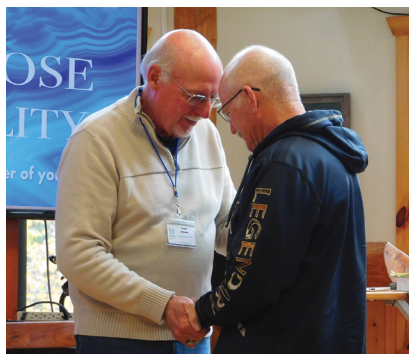
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FALL LUTHERHOSTEL IN MINNESOTA



optional outdoor activities. Try the zip line or the cornhole tournament, hiking and more!

hotel-style sleeping rooms that are uniquely decorated and equipped with microwave, small refrigerator and private bathroom.

The retreat begins in the afternoon of Monday, October 2 and ends by Noon on Friday, October 6.

Cost: including program, lodging and meals (unless noted)

\$660 per person – Double occupancy

\$710 per person – Single occupancy (limited availability)

\$400 per person – Commuter (no lodging or breakfast)



Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch is located on 200 acres in southern Minnesota along the Root River. It is less than 30 minutes south of Rochester, and a less than 15 minutes from Rochester International Airport. Activities will take place in the camp's Miracle Lodge Retreat and Conference Center. Participants stay in spacious, accessible



For more information, download a brochure from our website. You can also see a recap video of our 2022 Lutherhostel or register online. It's all at:

aloaserves.org/events/ironwood-springs-lutherhostel/

Questions? Contact our Lutherhostel Directors, Ernie and Kathy Freudenburg at 507-282-4162 or ekfreud@gmail.com.

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This news-
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ALOA depends on the generous support of our partners.
Join these leaders in the mission for meaningful ministry by,
with and for older adults by making a donation today!

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ALOA is a Recognized Service Organization
(RSO) of the LCMS and an affiliated Social
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God's work. Our hands.