



MONTHLY PONDERINGS

From the Older Adult Ministry
Of the Kentucky Conference

PAY ATTENTION

Lord, you have been our dwelling-place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands – O prosper the work of our hands!

Selected verses from Psalm 90 NRSV

Recently I came across the book, *Wrinkles Don't Hurt: Daily Meditations on the Joy of Aging Mindfully*, by Ruth Fishel. I thought it might be helpful in my work with older adult ministry, but its message is relevant for people of all ages, wrinkled or not. After all, young or old, we are all aging. We may as well be mindful about it!

When we are mindful about something, we are paying attention. We are alert and aware. So if we are mindful about aging, we are paying attention to how we are aging. As the psalmist says, “teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart...so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days” (Psalm 90:12, 14).

Mindfulness can also mean living in the moment, being present here and now. Sometimes that is difficult to do. God created us with the capacity to remember the past and to look forward to the future. Memories and anticipation are good things. However, if we *live in* the past or *live for* the future, we run the risk of *not* living in the now. This moment is a gift from God and will not come again, so it is important to be present to today.

For many of us, our spiritual life becomes more important as we age. The first half of life is busily spent establishing ourselves, our careers, and our families. The second half of life can be a time for reflection and spiritual deepening for practicing the presence of God and recognizing that God is with us, here and now.

The more mindful we are about aging and how we live our remaining years, the richer and more rewarding our lives will be. In one of her daily devotions, author Fishel offers the following spiritual practice to increase our mindfulness about aging: *Today I am being present to each moment treasuring the moment I am in with joy.*

“This is the day God has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!” (Psalm 118:24)

Prayer

God of all generations, Open my eyes and my heart to your presence always. Help me to be fully aware of each moment and to live my life with joy. Amen

To Ponder and Discuss

1. What thoughts or concerns about the past and the future are keeping you from fully experiencing today?
2. Poet and philosopher Henri Frederic Amiel said:
“To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom, and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living.”
~ What have you learned about growing older?
~ What wisdom about aging would you share with young people?
3. What do you rejoice about? What are you glad for?