

HOW TO DISCOURAGE OLDER ADULTS FROM BEING PART OF YOUR CONGREGATION!!!

Most churches want to welcome people into their congregations. However, without realizing it they may be pulling up the welcome mat and shutting the door to older adults. Below are ways congregations might discourage older adult participation:

- Have poor acoustics and speak softly
- Have pews with no cushions
- Use only small-print hymnals and songbooks
- Have uneven carpet and pavement
- Don't encourage older adults to serve as liturgists or lay readers
- Print bulletins and newsletters in small, fine print
- Discourage older adults from serving on committees, teams, and boards
- Use only small-print Bibles and Sunday school materials
- Don't announce older adult events
- Install high, dim lighting
- Don't use a public address system
- Play music too loudly
- Announce activities as "family-oriented"
- Have an altar rail that can be reached only by climbing many steps
- Don't install hearing aid devices
- Avoid using old, familiar, favorite hymns
- Have only younger adults organizing older adult ministries
- Seat older people by themselves
- Classify people as old or too old
- Have a ministry aimed only at children, youth, or young families
- Don't clear walks of ice and snow
- Avoid installing wide doors, wheelchair lifts, accessible restrooms, handrails, and handicap parking space
- Don't sweep rice from walks after weddings.