



## Older Adult Sunday Worship Resources

### Theme: Journey to Life

The Presbyterian Church (USA) designates the *first Sunday of May* as the beginning of **Older Adult Week**, a time to honor older adults for their commitment to the life, witness, and ministry of the church. The timing may not work for your context...you may choose any Sunday for this celebration of Older Adults. The liturgy ideas, prayers and resources below can be used in a congregational worship or may be adapted for a retirement community or some other setting.

*Note: These particular worship resources are written around the theme of the journey of life and are one suggestion for using for Older Adult Sunday in early May.*

#### **Call to Worship**

Ecclesiastes 3: 1—8 (NRSV)

For everything, there is a season,

**and a time for every matter under heaven:**

a time to be born, and a time to die;

**a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;**

a time to kill, and a time to heal;

**a time to break down, and a time to build up;**

a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

**a time to mourn, and a time to dance;**

a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

**a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;**

a time to seek, and a time to lose;

**a time to keep, and a time to throw away;**

a time to tear, and a time to sew;

**a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;**

a time to love, and a time to hate;

**a time for war, and a time for peace.**

Let us worship our God who is Lord over all the seasons of our lives.

#### **Opening Prayer**

God of our life, you are present in all the seasons of our lives and this time we have on this earth. Our lives are a journey from you to you. As we journey, remind us of your presence, surround us with your loving care, and help us to live our lives that they may always give glory and honor to you. Amen.

#### **Call to Confession**

from *The Worship Sourcebook* (p.84)

God's word assures us: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In humility and faith, let us confess our sin to God.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Holy God, we confess that sometimes we think we know it all. That there is nothing more for us to learn in this journey of life. We are blind to the newness around us. We are deaf to the new word you long to speak to us. Our hearts are closed to the change you long to bring in us. Forgive us for thinking we have it all figured out. By the power of your Holy Spirit, open us to growth in you that our days may be filled with the joy and peace of knowing you more fully.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Based on Psalm 71:17-19

The Psalmist writes:

"O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

So even to old age and gray hairs,

O God, do not forsake me,

until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come.

Your power and your righteousness, O God, reach the high heavens.

You who have done great things, O God, who is like you?"

From youth to old age and gray hairs, you have loved us. Let our words proclaim the joy of your forgiveness and the blessing of your mercy. Know that you have been forgiven and be at peace.

### **Possible scriptures:**

Psalm 71

Psalm 139

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Ecclesiastes 11: 7-10; 12:1-8

Romans 8:18-30

Romans 8:31-39

### **Response of Faith**

from *Iona Abbey Worship Book* (p. 65)

Leader: With the whole church

**All: we affirm**

**that we are made in God's image,  
befriended by Christ,  
empowered by the Spirit.**

Leader: With people everywhere

**All: we affirm**

**God's goodness at the heart of humanity  
planted more deeply than all that is wrong.**

Leader: With all creation

**All: we celebrate**

**the miracle and wonder of life,  
the unfolding purposes of God  
forever at work in ourselves and the world.**

### **Offering**

Everything we have and everything we are belongs to God and God alone. Let us give thanks by giving to God from the gifts of our lives and labors.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

by Robert D. Young in *Let us Pray: Reformed Prayers for Christian Worship* (p. 98)

Father,  
With steadfastness and patience  
Help us  
to serve you and  
to trust you,  
to know  
that the road under us is solid,  
that your companionship  
at our side is real and  
that we need fear no evil.  
Help us to keep our balance  
and to approach each day with expectancy.  
Amen.

### ***Additional Ideas to Celebrate***

Sharing Social Have the Elementary children or youth host an intergenerational luncheon or “tea” party after worship to celebrate older adults. The young people can serve as table hosts bringing food to the table, serving drinks, and making conversation. Place table tents with basic get to know you questions on the table to share with questions like – What is a favorite book you have read as a child? What hobbies do you have? Tell about a pet. Where is somewhere you would like to travel?

Mission and Outreach Choose an organization that supports Older Adults that you can highlight and collect funds and materials which are needed. Perhaps something for a local senior center or retirement center can be brought forth at the offering.

Or highlight the volunteer hours that Older Adults donate to various programs in your church and community.

Or plan an intergenerational outing to a retirement community or a senior member’s house to do spring yard clean up, sing, or play bingo.

Resource Fair Plan a “senior expo” or resource fair for Older Adult Week that shares services and resources available to older adults in your community and from your congregation.

### ***Worship Resources***

Gilliss, Martha S., ed. *Let Us Pray: Reformed Prayers for Christian Worship*. Louisville: Geneva Press, 2002.

The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. *The Worship Sourcebook*. Grand Rapids, MI: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2004.

The Iona Community. *Iona Abbey Worship Book*. Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2017.

*Writer: Rev. Burnetta Armour, Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, GA designed this service and anything not cited directly she wrote.*

The [Office of Christian Formation](#) compiled these resources in partnership with the [Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network \(POAMN\)](#). For additional Older Adult Sunday Worship and Celebration ideas go to [www.pcusa.org/quicksheets](http://www.pcusa.org/quicksheets) under the heading Older Adult Week. October 2023



Office of Christian  
Formation

POAMN  
Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network