

Mission Connect Article for December 2019 Herald

Glorifying God into old age

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Part of my visitation is with a special group of people, who for a long time now, have been on my heart. Not only are they on my heart, but there is a question on my mind that I feel the need to explore - how can we as a church help these dear folks continue, now they are well into old age, to "glorify God and enjoy him forever"?

If my mind isn't as sharp as it once was, if I forget things, if my memory is fading, my health failing, if I have dementia, does this mean I cannot still glorify God and enjoy him, worship him or even come to faith in him for the first time?

Much thinking around dementia is very positive, suggesting that familiar Scripture, hymns and prayer can trigger memories and thoughts of God, bringing feelings of God's peace, security and wellbeing. "Just as the Holy Spirit can unlock the hearts of lifeless sinners in the same way he can unlock the confused minds of elderly people." (Louise Morse, *Worshipping with dementia*.)

In Jeremiah 12:7-8 we read "*Blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach down deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit.*"

Surely our faith can stay fresh as our physical health fails and memory fades?

At the beginning of December we hope to hold a 'Fresh Faith' service for those who are unable to get out to church on Sunday. We intend to have a service each season beginning with Christmas. It will involve a brief worship service in the church building with familiar hymns and Scripture, followed by a light lunch in the hall.

Another aspect of ministry is 'Shining Stars' – a monthly afternoon Sunday club which commenced in October. This was organised by Sandra, one of our Sunday school teachers, who has brought together a committee of those interested in teaching primary school children with additional needs about Jesus.

Please pray:

- Pray that both Fresh Faith and Shining Stars would encourage and help many families to experience the blessing of coming together as God's people and part of his family. Pray that all who come will feel loved, valued and special, special to us as a congregation of God's people and special to God.

- Pray for Wednesday Friends - as we meet each week, may the women be encouraged and challenged in their faith.
- Pray that God will bless the girls in the Girls' Brigade and help them to trust him.
- As we study 'Essentials' in small groups, may we be mature in Christ as a congregation.