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## Book Review: Senior Adult Ministry in the 21st Century by David Gallagher

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## Senior Adult Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Reviewed by Charles Arn

Gallagher, David, *Senior Adult Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Colorado Springs, Group Publishing, 2002, 150 pages, \$17.99.

“The seniors are coming! The seniors are coming!”

Just as the advance of the British changed the course of our country...the advance of the aging is changing it again. While much of the attention in the church community follows youth and the latest techniques to attract Gen Xers, the fact is that older adults are growing faster than any other generational cohort. Today there are more Americans 65 years and older than 18 years and younger.

However, the church does appear to be waking up to this reality. There are growing numbers of books authored, conferences conducted, and curriculum written for and about older adults. *Senior Adult Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* is one of the latest and one of the best.

One of the most practical and useable books I have read, on any topic, Gallagher includes a creative variety of content, checklists, idea starters, duplication masters, activity ideas, and reproducible forms and for starting/growing an effective older adult ministry. The author is the leader of a growing senior adult ministry in Phoenix, and build on his “real-world experience” to provide this practical resource. The five chapters of *Senior Adult Ministry...* are: 1) Getting to Know Senior Adults, 2) Getting Started in Senior Adult Ministry, 3) Involving Senior Adults in Ministry, 4) Reaching Out to Senior Adults, 5) The Serious Side of Senior Adult Ministry.

Chapter Four, in particular, caught my attention. Very few churches or para-church organizations focus on reaching older adults. Yet there are numerous reasons why churches would do

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well to focus more specific evangelistic outreach on this "people group." Senior adults are closer to eternity. Senior adults are receptive when approached correctly. Senior adults make good church members because: a) they care about others, b) they have more time for volunteer activities, c) they are loyal to their church, are more geographically stable, and they typically give more money to the church.<sup>1</sup>

No church leader can possess this book and claim paucity of ideas for growing their senior adult ministry. It's practical, usable, comprehensive; a reference book that will be well-used by leaders dedicated to reaching this rapidly growing segment of our population.

Reviewer

Arn, Charles. Title: Executive Director. Dr. Charles (Chip) Arn is Executive Director of Church Growth, Inc. He is well known as a speaker, author, leaders in American Church Growth. He has been actively involved in studying the "age wave," and helping churches re-tool their ministry to reach "the new seniors" of the 21st century.

1. From *White Unto Harvest: Evangelizing Today's Senior Adults* by Charles Arn (Monrovia, CA: Institute for American Church Growth), 2003, p. 76.