

# PASTORPEDIA™

*Cutting Edge Conversations for Pastors and Church Leaders*

<https://buildmomentum.org/momentum-pro>

Vol. 8, Issue 1

January 2021

Produced by [Momentum Ministry Partners](#)

## ***Seniors and church veterans: How do we honor?***

### **Who are these people anyway?**

Some of them are the pioneers of their church, and many did more than we can know unless we hear their story sometimes, and some give more of their income than many young adults even think about today.

Some of them pray all the time for you the pastor and the church, even though they complain about the volume of the music last Sunday.

Others are the ones who babysat for your kids when you first came.

A few have argued in the seniors class in defense of some of the outreach and program changes you made a few years ago. Maybe you did not even know about that.

But all of that is secondary to the idea that the Bible clearly calls for honor to be given to those who are older, and not just to official “elders” in the church.

We can do better in thanking and honoring them personally and as a church.  
May we suggest...

*Hoping to do better,  
Knute, with Jeff and Jim*

## ***Why is it easy to neglect or avoid them?***

### ***Jeff Bogue***

- Because they're usually not the squeaky wheel.
- Sometimes they are housebound, so they can be out of sight and out of mind.
- Often they are simply faithful, and have been faithful for a long time, and if we're not careful we can take them for granted.

### ***Jim Brown***

- I hope it never feels that way for our people at Grace Community.
- As people age the difference in age widens and unfortunately the connection point lessens.
- Often the senior adults are mature and don't bring attention to themselves.
- The hobbies, lifestyles, and interests are different and many use this retirement time to lessen their involvement in the local church.
- Often our ministries are geared toward younger people and this group gets neglected.
- Probably because we have not done a good job of utilizing their wisdom and experience!

### ***Knute Larson***

- Because the target of most churches led by pastors who are under 45 is to reach the younger generation. Some even have very specific ages as their target group. I have never seen a target of people over 40.
- Because a few of them who are old-timers or church bosses push back when pastors and church leaders introduce goals or methods they feel are important in the world in which we live.
- Same reason we often don't thank our wives enough: we take them for granted.
- Some of them are just so faithful and consistent that they are part of the woodwork. It is easy to get excited when a new person walks in the church door rather than when it is those who have been walking in the door for 50 years.
- It is an important need but not an urgent one (until one of the seniors thinks out loud about leaving the church).

## ***What are some ways to thank and honor them?***

### ***Jeff Bogue***

- Tell the stories of their faithfulness. Often churches exist because a few people have been incredibly faithful over a long time, so I like to tell that story.
- There are also faithfulness awards that can be given, and we can celebrate their milestones. For instance, "So and so has taught Sunday School for the last 30 years..." We have faithfulness awards through Momentum Ministry Partners!

- We honor them by respecting them and listening to their opinions and their horse sense.
- Being sure they are not forgotten or neglected. They have given themselves faithfully to the body of Christ, and the body of Christ needs to give themselves faithfully to them.

### ***Jim Brown***

- Publically use them as good examples in your sermon illustrations.
- Use social media posts as a way to elevate their ministry service.
- Stay connected with them in conversations and pray with them.
- Look for them between services and greet them and pray with them.
- Share their stories in video format.
- Give them leadership positions where they can lead and love others.

### ***Knute Larson***

- Upfront on a Sunday, with a 50-second interview. You hold the mic and ask them one or two really important questions and thank them immensely!
- Make up an award to give every year for faithfulness and consistency! Put it on your media and in an email that goes to everybody, and include a picture.
- Use as a sermon illustration. Sometimes the interview could happen right in the middle of the sermon.
- Many people are still honored by a visit in the home or care facility when that is possible.
- Appoint a part-time director of seniors and care if your church does not have a seniors pastor. (Give this man or woman great flexibility in their schedule and 10 weeks off a year so they still can go south if they wish. A title and a monthly stipend!)
- A thank you note that goes through snail mail. I think every pastor should write at least three thank you notes every Monday!

## ***Are there many older people in our community who need Christ?***

### ***Jeff Bogue***

- Absolutely! You're talking about the 60's generation and the 70's generation. They are some of the most lost groups of people in our country's history. They absolutely need Christ.
- They're not always difficult to find with the emergence of retirement communities. We should have a plan and an outlet to reach out to them.

### ***Jim Brown***

- Absolutely Yes! This generation are often self-made men and women and some have lived far from God.
- The retirement homes are full of lost people, and we need to reach them with the gospel.

- We must remember that there will be no seniors in heaven, and it's never too late to trust in Jesus on this side of eternity!

### ***Knute Larson***

- Is there sin in the world? Are all old people Christians? If a person comes to church will he or she for sure have Christ in his or her life today and go to heaven someday? Should we assume everyone with grey hair is wise and redeemed? Sorry for the sarcastic questions, but "going into all the world" means caring about people in the pews and close to home also. And often the church does not define the gospel enough or assumes that every attender (and their neighbors) are in with our Savior.
- It may be a good time to remind ourselves that 80% of the people who try a church come because they were invited by a friend. And that's probably even more true about older people who are in ruts about not going to church or not believing. Part of our responsibility as church leaders is to help our people care about their neighbors, including the older ones.
- One of the chores of the faithful, since New Testament times, has been to make a distinction between religion and new birth and its ensuing new life. Jesus was notable for defining the difference and inviting people to himself. It is harder for us, but should be part of our emphasis.

*Pastorpedia is a resource provided to you by Momentum Ministry Partners. Please contact us at [info@buildmomentum.org](mailto:info@buildmomentum.org) or 574.267.6622 if we may be of any help to you or your ministry!*

*Jeff Bogue, Lead Pastor of [Grace Church](#), and also, President of Momentum Ministry Partners; Jim Brown, Lead Pastor of [Grace Community Church](#) in Goshen, Indiana; and [Knute Larson](#), a coach of pastors, who previously led The Chapel in Akron for 26 years. Pastorpedia is brought to you by Momentum Ministry Partners. Visit our [website](#) for more resources and to learn more about how we aim to partner with the local church.*