

A photograph of three senior adults smiling. In the center is a Black man with grey hair wearing a maroon polo shirt. To his left is a white woman with short white hair and glasses, wearing a light blue shirt. To his right is a white man with glasses and a hat, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt. The background is a soft-focus green.

CHURCH GROWTH TOPICS

- The Problem with Brother Donnie – The incredible power of ministry through your Senior Adult Sunday School. Explores the Biblical rationale, the examples given by Christ and specific practical methods for making the Sunday School an effective ministering organization.
- Sunday School Done Right - How to Have a F.U.L.L. Sunday School – We get what we measure, and for years in Sunday School we've been measuring the same things and getting the same results. This conference challenges us to begin measuring some VERY different things in order to get different results. It also reminds us that what gets rewarded gets repeated. If we truly want to see a growing Sunday School, we must change our focus and start creating new friends, starting new units, developing new leaders, and using new learning methodologies. You'll set challenging goals in four key areas that can transform your Sunday School.
- Teflon or Velcro – It's All About RELATIONSHIPS! - Addresses the premise that the way we treat our guests on Sunday morning determines whether or not they'll return and become our next new members. The relationships we build with our guests become the Velcro that helps them stick around. The more relationships, the better they stick. Gives multiple practical and workable methods for creating "sticky" relationships with our guests.
- Why was Moses Moping? – How to organize your Boomer or Senior Adult Sunday School for Maximum Effectiveness. Based on the advice of Moses' father-in-law Jethro, this session affirms your organizational plans for the Sunday School, as well as offering some creative options. Gives job descriptions, tools for enlistment, encouragement, and lots of FUN ways to be sure we are correctly organized to accomplish the REAL work of the Sunday School.
- The Ghost & Mr. Chicken – Engage your Sunday School MEMBERS in Outreach & Evangelism. Most of us have experienced the dreaded EVANGELISM JITTERS prior to that visit or phone call. This wonderfully fun and engaging session looks at the VERY common fears and barriers experienced by everyone and provides extremely practical and usable solutions to assist you in getting past the barriers into functioning, effective, and exciting outreach and evangelism plans that involve even the most evanga-phobic members! A tremendously fun and encouraging course that has participants going back to their Sunday School anxious to put into place these "WE CAN DO THAT!" elements of a workable outreach ministry.
- Discover Discovery Learning - Teaching for Transformation with Mature Adults - Discover a wide variety of techniques to engage the members in your Boomer or Senior Adult Class in discovering the truths in God's Word for themselves! You'll be challenged to move away from the primarily verbal methods upon which we have leaned so heavily in the past, toward the learning styles most valued and appreciated by your members. You will discover the value of discovery learning, and how to prepare a lesson utilizing methodologies that will engage their hearts in such a way as to be transformed.

CURRENT TRENDS RELATED TO OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON OUR MINISTRIES

1. The 60-plus population is growing more rapidly than any other major population group
2. In Texas, this growth continues to parallel the national trend
3. Texas has the fourth largest population of older adults
 - a. California 4.7 million
 - b. Florida 3.5 million
 - c. New York 3.2 million
 - d. Texas 2.7 million (and growing – projected to be 8.1 million by 2040) 23% of the total projected population of Texas at that time.
4. Older Texans are relatively young
 - a. An estimated 66% of the older population is younger than 75.
5. Older Texans are predominately Anglo (72%), followed by Hispanics (18%), and Blacks (9%)
6. Texas has the second largest older Hispanic population in the nation (488,925), second only to California (677,321)
7. Texas has the third largest older Black population (239,441), following New York (352,558) and California (253,122)
8. The poverty rate among older Texans continues to exceed the national average
9. Approximately 50% of the 60-plus population reside in three major areas of the state
 - a. San Antonio area, Houston-Galveston region, and the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex
10. Demographers continue to stress a dramatic population change in the coming decades as the 60-plus population rapidly continues to grow. Many factors fuel the increase in the 60-plus population:
 - a. Medical advances
 - b. Improved public health
 - c. Better nutrition
 - d. Wellness-oriented lifestyles
 - e. Large number of Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) entering old age
11. The 60-plus population will itself grow older. By 2040, the 85-plus population is projected to increase by 249.4% (831,000)
12. Minority populations are growing rapidly; by 2040, they will constitute almost half of all older Texans
13. Hispanics will comprise 31% + of all older Texans. Hispanic elders will continue to outnumber other race/ethnicities along the Texas-Mexico Border region.

FINDINGS

1. We can no longer push these older adults to the side and ignore them. They will constitute one of the fastest growing demographics in our Sunday Schools AND in our communities. We'll need to assist churches in seeing this trend and help them plan for starting new units, training workers, planning ministries to these groups.
2. Especially where the "boomer" adults are concerned, traditional "Sr. Adult" ministries won't work. Churches must be creative in developing ministries for these active adults, many of whom will be working well into their 70's.
3. Churches need to be educated on long-term care options and be able to provide assistance to their members in these critical areas. We need to be able to provide lists of providers, resources, tools to help churches find the resources they need to minister effectively to this growing population group.
4. Our churches MUST be aware of these trends among older adults in Texas, and how it will impact their plans in the years to come.