

Preparation and Participation

We hope that people will sign up for the full programme, however, if you are unable to attend all the sessions, that is not a problem. Please feel free to come to as many as you are able.

Whilst there are benefits from sharing and discussing in small groups, these are entirely optional.

Please bring a notebook and pen to jot down things that come to mind or that you might want to think about further.

Each week we will provide handouts with information, resources and ideas for further reflection.

For weeks 2, 3 and 4, please bring a packed lunch which will be eaten midway through the session.

The idea for the course came from the book "The Gift of Years" by Joan Chittister.



THE GIFT OF YEARS

Sundays: 12 noon

May 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th

The 10AM Service on May 4th will be a Service of Celebration followed by lunch & then the course. Subsequent weeks, please bring a packed lunch.

The Gift of Years is a four week course exploring how we might grow old with grace and positivity, and how ageing impacts on our faith journey.

What can we learn from those who age well?
What are our hopes and fears for the latter part of life?



Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church or email Susan Collier and Linda Sykes on info@stedsdringhouses.org. Please note: You are welcome to as many sessions as you can make!

FORMAT



Week 1 will be slightly different in that we will be starting later at 1pm and will not have a break in the middle for lunch.

Weeks 2, 3 & 4 we will start at 12 noon and will have a break for lunch after about 45 minutes.

Each week will begin with an outline of what we hope to cover and an introduction.

- Led meditation
- Space to reflect
- Small group discussion (optional)
- Plenary
- Lunch
- Further topic for reflection and/or discussion
- Responsive prayers to close

THE PROGRAMME

Sunday May 4th Memories & Gratitude

During this session we will be looking back and asking questions such as:

- What have been and continue to be the blessings in my life?
- For what and whom do I want to give thanks?
- What has brought me to where I am and where have I seen God in my life?

We will look at what the Bible says about giving thanks and the growing evidence of the physical, emotional and psychological benefits of gratitude.

Sunday May 11th Regrets, Disappointments and Forgiveness

Many of us carry regrets and disappointments from the past, some more damaging than others.

In this session we hope to explore how God can bring healing and transformation into our past experiences.

Sunday May 18th Limitations and Fears

Someone once said "Old age is not for wimps" which expresses the challenges of ageing.

In this session we will identify our present challenges and explore our hopes and fears for the future.

Sunday May 25th Moving Forward, Ending well

Building on the premise that God wants us to continue to grow and flourish, what do we need from God to enable this?

How do we keep ourselves open to the opportunities and invitations from God day by day?
