

WHEN YOU TURN GRAY

"Even to your old age, I will be the same, and I will bear you up when you turn gray. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and deliver you."

Isaiah 46:4

REFLECTION

Ours is an aging society. In 2019, 12.4% of our population made up of seniors 65 and above. In 2030, it is estimated that we will have up to 30% of Singaporeans who will be 65 and above. And in 2050 the estimated percentage of our population who will hit 65 and above is going to be 33.3%. How do we deal with an aging population and the attending issues which such an elderly population will force upon us?

In many ways we may say we shall leave it to the government to take care of these growing needs. Others will have to depend of Voluntary Welfare Organisations to close the gaps of caring for our seniors. As it is, a group like the Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) is running a number of Senior Care Centres. Later this year, MWS will manage a Senior Activities Centre at Eunos. By next year, MWS will take in residents for the new Nursing Home at Eunos. This will complement our existing two Nursing Homes at Choa Choo Kang and Yew Tee. MWS provide such services as part of our Methodist Church social outreach. But what MWS can do, and what other agencies can do is not enough to meet the growing needs of our elderly. We need volunteers to work with MWS and avail themselves to the worthy works of MWS.

What I have just done is to paint a broad picture of what a Christian group like MWS can do to share God's love with the elderly who are often lonely and many of them facing chronic illness.

How about looking after ourselves as elderly persons? Just as others may feel lonely, neglected and unloved, Isaiah assures us in this beautiful verse that as we age, we can trust that God will be there for us. We do not have to age alone.

"Even to your old age, I will be the same, and I will bear you up when you turn gray. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and deliver you."

(Isaiah 46:4)

This is a reminder that Christians who are getting older can find strength and comfort in God. It is also a verse which can challenge us who are able, even when we are old, to volunteer our service to reach out to the lonely and sometimes friendless seniors in our community.

PRAYER

Father God, as we grow older, we have to deal with issues related to old age. Sometimes we are afraid. We do feel lonely, and we are worried about our personal well-being. Teach us dear Lord to place our trust in You, knowing that You care for our well-being. And if we have abundance of material blessings, help us to use our savings and fortune, discreetly to bless other lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Thank God that in Singapore we do have a longer lifespan because of good health care, food and clean environment. Pray that as we grow older, our medical and social needs will be provided by the government with the assistance of Christians, VWOs and caring individuals.
- Commit the elderly in our society to God for His care. Pray that they will grow old graciously, trusting God to guide them through the last lap of their lives, with confidence, calm assurance, faith and hope.
- Ask God to place in the hearts of the young people a love for the elderly. Pray that as much as they may be tempted to do so, they will not treat their aging parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts with contempt or as disposable things to be discarded.
- Call upon our churches to give more thoughts and commitment to ministry to the elderly in our community. Pray that Christians will serve as God's channel of blessings to bring joy and love to the seniors with different healthcare needs who are sometimes struggling alone.

"What have I to dread, what have I to fear;

Leaning on the everlasting arms?

I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,

Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Elisha Hoffman

If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly contact the pastoral care team via:

Email: wecare@brmc.org.sg

Contact: 6592 4011