

Litany for Esteemed Elders

Leader: We give thanks for the gift of the 80 and 90 year olds among us. We thank you for keeping alive the memories, stories and traditions you pass on to us in this congregation. We learn from the wealth of your experience. We encounter Christ in each of your faces. Hear these verses of scripture:

Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh; their days shall be [limited].

(Gen. 6:3)

People: Dear Lord, help us to hold these elders in our hearts and memories until they end of their days, whatever lies ahead.

Leader: Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. *(Ex. 20:12)*

People: We pray that the long years will be good years.

Leader: The glory of youth is their strength, but the beauty of the aged is their gray hair. *(Prov. 20:29)*

People: Give us strength and experience.

Leader: Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father [and mother], and they will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you. *(Deut. 32:7)*

People: Remind us to ask, and teach us to listen.

Leader: Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life. *(Prov. 16:31)*

People: Day by day, Oh Lord, may we strive to be more holy.

Leader: Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. *(Prov.23:22)*

People: We are grateful for parents and elders who teach and nurture us in love.

Leader: So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to all the generations to come. *(Psalm 71:18)*

People: We love to tell the story of Jesus and his love.

Leader: In old age they still produce fruit; they are always green and full of sap. *(Psalm 92:14)*

People: God may we look past the wrinkles and see their souls.

Leader: May God, our Creator, surround you and hold you in peace all your days.

People: May you know that we hold you and pray for you, we grieve with you in your sorrows and celebrate with you in times of joy.

Leader: Trust in the Lord with all your heart. *(Prov. 3)*

God of wisdom, your love is ageless and you remain faithful through every breath of life. Give us grace to shine with your goodness and hope. May we all look to you God for guidance. God of the ages,

People: Hear us, we pray. Amen.