



ACT III

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Mission: To provide collaborative faith-based services that meet the health and wellness needs of the whole person.

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Grandparenting Today

Grandparents just aren't what they used to be. You're not likely to find them sitting on rockers or living next door. Today, they're younger, busier and still working full-or part-time. If they're retired, they are leading active, independent lifestyles - often in communities far from their children and grandchildren. You'll notice they don't look the same either. Many families are non-traditional, consisting of a step-parent, step-grandparents or grandparents raising grandchildren.

"Grandparenting Today" is an informative three-part series that discusses how lifestyle, economic factors and technological advances are changing the way grandparents relate to their children and grandchildren. The series is intended to help new grandparents understand their roles, learn the rules of successful grandparenting and discover ways to connect with and forge lasting and loving bonds with their grandchildren.

Congratulations! - You've just become grandparents!

"Hi, mom and dad - it's a boy!" Finding out you've just become a grandparent is exciting news - especially the first time around. You feel like you're on cloud nine and can't wait to meet your new grandchild. At the same time, you may be a little anxious about your new responsibilities and worried about how you'll handle your role as a grandparent.

Being a grandparent these days is a far different ball-game from our grandparents' era. It has become a phenomenon of middle rather than old age. If you want proof, just take a look at photos of grandparents back in the '50's. Most likely, you'll see pictures of grey-haired women cooking or knitting and bald-headed men rocking on a porch.

Bring out photos today and you're much more likely to see snapshots of grandparents in their 40's and 50's, golfing, bicycling, hiking and traveling around the world. Many are still working full or part-time.

The era when our grandparents lived next door has changed too. Lifestyle changes such as divorce, loss of a job or re-location, and retirement have separated grandparents from their children and grandchildren. Issues such as broken families and long-distance relationships can make grandparenting more difficult but one thing that hasn't changed is the opportunity grandparents still have to play a very special role in their grandchildren's lives.

Figuring out your role as a grandparent is a challenge and often puzzling for first-time grandparents. Many want to be helpful but simply don't know the rules and aren't entirely sure about how grandparents are supposed to function within the family.

If you're a new grandparent, here are some helpful pointers for transitioning into your new role in the lives of your children and grandchildren.

The Role of Grandparents

First and foremost, recognize that your children have the final responsibility for what happens with your grandchildren. Unless you have day-in and day-out care for your grandchildren in the absence of a parent, your children have the final say on how their children should be reared. Talk things over with your children and find out what they need most from you. Second, never undermine your children's authority when it comes to disciplining your grandchildren. You may feel that your kids should be more lenient but

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you need to support your children's decisions. The same holds true for upholding household rules. And, speaking of household rules, be sure to establish house rules for your own home. Your grandchildren and children need to know the rules in your home and you need to be responsible for enforcing the rules if your children don't.

A key rule of successful grandparenting is keeping your advice to yourself unless your children ask for it. It's hard to see your children heading down the wrong path but you need to respect their decisions and give them the freedom to make their own mistakes. If you stop and think back, you'll probably recall that you didn't always listen to your own parents. So be supportive and step back unless invited to step in.

Equally important, much as you adore your grandchildren, don't come between them and their parents or favor one child over another. Competing for your grandchildren's loyalty, disparaging their parents, or playing favorites can only lead to heartache.

Be willing to share your grandchildren with other family members. People are living longer today. As a result, there may be several sets of grandparents, great-grandparents, step-grandparents and in-laws, all of whom want to be involved in your grandchildren's lives. Cooperation and

communication can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy good times together.

Spend the time you have with your grandchildren wisely. Set boundaries about how frequently you will babysit, where, and when. If you're not comfortable babysitting, say so. There are dozens of ways to show your love other than as a baby-sitter.

Live your own life. It's unwise and unhealthy to center your life around your grandchildren to the point that you exclude your friends and other interests. You can be a devoted grandparent and still lead an active separate life.

What's so "grand" about grandparenting? It's an exciting, thrilling chance for you to "fall in love again" with a child and to experience the magic of an evolving personality and developing mind.

It's also an opportunity to do things differently from when you were a parent. With age comes patience, knowledge, experience, and freedom from the responsibilities of work and supporting a family. Savor the time you have with your grandchildren. Share things you are passionate about and you'll see a whole new world through their eyes.

*--Ed Pittock,
President, Society of Certified Senior Advisors*

Wellness 66: Roads to Good Mental Health

On May 8, 2008, the second complimentary educational opportunity focusing on healthy living for the whole person (spiritual, physical, intellectual, social and emotional health) will be offered in the Harpeth Hills Church of Christ Community Room. The event will be hosted by the Resource Center on Aging at Harpeth Hills Church of Christ, Parthenon Pavilion Hospital and the Center for Healthy Living at Centennial Medical Center.

You are invited to travel along on this journey as participants explore a senior's map to healthy living. Experts in various fields will present information useful to senior adults, their caregivers, social workers and healthcare professionals regarding the road to good mental health. Dr. Cathey Stallworth, Dr. William Petrie, Holli Potts, Dr. Karla Miller, Dr. Katie Liveoak and Rhonda Lowry are among the presenters for the day. This unique seminar series brings together seniors, their caregivers and healthcare professionals in a learning environment that takes a holistic approach to wellness as we age.

This FREE program will run from 8:45 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Lunch is included with registration, but seating is limited, so please make your reservation early. For additional information or to register for this complimentary educational activity, please contact Medline at 342-1919 or 800-242-5662.

IRS Posts Q&A on Stimulus Checks

The Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 will result in tax rebate checks for 130 million American households. In response to an avalanche of questions about the rebate checks, the IRS has posted a question and answer section on www.irs.gov.

A summary of key questions and answers includes the following:

Q. Do I need to file a 2007 tax return to receive a check?

A. Yes. Even if you have low income and pay no tax, it will be necessary to file a return. There will be special IRS filing instructions for low-income workers, Social Security recipients, railroad retirees and disabled veterans. These individuals may file a simplified tax return in order to receive a rebate check.

Q. How do I qualify for a check?

A. Most taxpayers will qualify by paying income tax. However, if you have \$3,000 of qualified income, you will also receive a check. In addition, qualifying children under age 17 will enable you to receive an additional \$300 per child.

Q. How is my rebate payment calculated?

A. There is generally a five part process.

1. Net tax liability over \$600 (single) or \$1,200 (married) -- a full \$600 or \$1,200 check.
2. No income tax but \$3,000 of qualifying income or government benefits -- \$300 check.
3. Income tax between \$300 and \$600 -- check for tax amount.
4. Qualifying child under age 17 -- add \$300 per child.
5. Income over \$75,000 (single) or \$150,000 (joint) - - reduce check by 5% of excess.

Q. Could you give one or two specific tax rebate examples?

A. Mary Jones is a single person with income of \$80,000. She pays more than \$600 in tax and, therefore, starts with a \$600 amount. This is reduced by 5% of the \$5,000 excess over \$75,000 or \$250. Her rebate check is \$350.

A. Al and Jane Lee have children ages ten and eight and \$160,000 in adjusted gross income (AGI). Their payout amount starts with the

basic \$1,200 rebate amount plus \$600 for the two children for a total of \$1,800. However, they are subject to the phase-out for the \$10,000 in excess of \$150,000 AGI. The \$10,000 excess times 5% is \$500. The net check will be \$1,300.

Q. I file using an individual tax payer identification number (ITIN). Will I get a rebate?

A. No. You must file using a Social Security number. In addition, a qualifying child must also have a Social Security number for you to receive the extra \$300 rebate.

Q. May I have the rebate check direct deposited to my bank?

A. If you selected the direct deposit option with your 2007 tax return, the rebate check will be sent by direct deposit. If you did not request direct deposit on your return, you will receive a paper check.

Q. When should I plan to receive my rebate check?

A. The rebate checks will start in May. It may take six to eight weeks for the IRS to process all 130 million checks.

--Crescendo Interactive, Inc.,
Lipscomb University, Gift Legacy
e-newsletter

Patterns of the Heart: Gentle Thoughts on Aging

By Becci Bookner

Too often the negatives of aging seem to grab the forefront of public attention, and concern for one's loss of personal stamina or mental acuteness becomes the focus of everyday life for many individuals. Becci Bookner addresses many of these misconceptions one by one, offering an alternative viewpoint through her observations of nature while pursuing everyday activities - the flight of wild geese across the heavens; wildflowers thriving alongside a rocky, exhaust laden highway; bare tree branches outlined against the winter sky.

Tucked away in the middle of this personal treatise on the whole process of aging, the author pens these words: "The solution to the challenge of age lies in our commitment to a personal change of attitude and expectation for happiness." Using memories to refresh us, the knowledge gained from a lifetime to guide us, and strong personal relationships to sustain us, the journey from youth to middle age to old age can be rewarding and satisfying.

Review by Marie Byers

This book is available in the Harpeth Hills library.

March Wellness: The Impact of Nutrition on Mental Health

Everything we ingest has an impact on our bodies – food, water, nutritional supplements, vitamins and minerals greatly affect the way you feel, as well as, the way you react emotionally and how you age. Recent reports indicate a link between diet and specific mental illnesses including Depression, Schizophrenia and Alzheimer's disease.

Everyone wants a healthy body and mind, but it is often difficult to make the right decisions regarding our eating and physical activity to get us there. Following a healthy diet, exercising and remembering to take your medications and vitamins everyday can be overwhelming!

Please join us for a 2-hour educational workshop designed to increase awareness of the importance of making informed food choices to develop healthy eating habits and the role of physical activity to improve your physical and mental health. Topics addressed by professionals include: Nutrition & Diet, Vitamins & Supplements and Exercise.

**March 13, 2008 • 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
HCA Corporate Office • Nashville, TN**

For additional information or to register for this complimentary educational activity, please contact Medline at 342-1919 or 800-242-5662.

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Contact Info:

Resource Center on Aging
Harpeth Hills
Church of Christ
1949 Old Hickory Blvd.
Brentwood, TN 37027
373-0601 ext. 112
www.resourcecenteronaging.org