Rev. Carolyn Grey
St. John's Baptist Church
Summer Senior Sessions
Spirituality & Aging

"Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." — Isaiah 46:4

Opening Reflection

Before we begin, take 2 minutes to consider this question and jot your thoughts:

"What has growing older taught you about God?"

My answer:

PART ONE — Understanding Aging Through God's Eyes

What Is Aging?

Aging is a process of growing physically, mentally, and emotionally toward maturity. The word maturity comes from the Greek word teleios — meaning 'complete' or 'growth in mental and moral character.'

> "Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature." — James 1:4

God's purpose in the process of aging is to bring you to spiritual maturity through deepening your faith and developing your awareness of and dependence on the abiding presence of Christ within you.

> "Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." — Ephesians 4:13

The Four Seasons of Life

Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Ages 20–40	Ages 40–65	Ages 65–80	Ages 80+
Key Virtue: Trust	**Key Virtue: Selflessness**	**Key Virtue: Acceptance**	**Key Virtue: Wisdom**

The Gifts of Winter

Wherever you are on this journey, God has not finished with you. The later years carry gifts that the younger years have not yet learned:

- A storehouse of wisdom — greater understanding of life's real values
- Deeper roots — love on a deeper level; more meaningful relationships
- True freedom — greater acceptance of yourself and others
- You are an example — a living testimony of God's faithfulness
- No fear of death — resting in the promise of eternal life in Christ
- A loosened grip — less attached to the things of this world

> "The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old." — Proverbs 20:29
> "They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." — Psalm 92:14

PART TWO — Navigating the Challenges with Grace

The Losses We Face

Aging involves many forms of loss. God does not ask us to pretend these losses do not hurt. He meets us in them.

Loss of health	Loss of home	Loss of loved ones	Loss of independence
Loss of income	Loss of dreams	Loss of control	Loss of hope

> "At least there is hope for a tree: if it is cut down, it will sprout again." — Job 14:7

Wrong Belief & Right Belief

Wrong Belief: "There is no meaning left in life. I am useless, unloved and a burden to others."

Right Belief: "Meaning and purpose come from the indwelling presence of Christ, who is daily renewing my strength and growing His character in me."

> "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day." — 2 Corinthians 4:16

Heart Check — What Has Taken Root?

Ask God to search your heart. Is any of this present?

- Fear — difficulty trusting God or others with your honest self
- Bitterness — resentment that has hardened over time
- Pride — believing you must manage life without God's help
- Grief unspoken — losses you have not brought to God in prayer

> "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble." — Hebrews 12:15

God's Prescription for Thriving

- Spend quality time alone with God — listen as much as you speak
- Reflect on how He has been faithful throughout the whole of your life
- Meditate on the goodness and greatness of God — the Psalms are a gift for this
- Loosen your grip on what you cannot control — rest in what He holds
- Stay in community — we were not made to age alone
- Continue to bear fruit — your story, your prayers, your presence matter greatly

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." — 2 Peter 3:18

PART THREE — Still Bearing Fruit: Purpose & Legacy

You Are Still Bearing Fruit

God has not retired you. You may have retired from your job — but God still has work for you that only YOU can do.

- Intercessory Prayer — your years with God have made you a prayer warrior this church needs
- Wisdom & Mentoring — younger generations are hungry to see authentic faith modeled over decades
- Your Testimony — one generation commending God's works to another (Psalm 145:4)
- Presence & Love — a card, a meal, a hand held — small things done with great love change the world

"They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." — Psalm 92:14

Facing the Future Without Fear

"Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." — Philippians 3:20

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" — 1 Corinthians 15:55

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." — John 10:27–28

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Choose one to reflect on quietly — or share with someone nearby:

- What season of life are you in right now — and what virtue is God growing in you?
- Where have you seen God turn a loss into something unexpectedly new?
- What is one way you are — or could be — still bearing fruit in this season?
- What does 'citizenship in heaven' mean to you today, right now?

My reflection:

Key Scriptures to Carry With You

Isaiah 46:4	Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He who will sustain you.
Psalm 92:14	They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green.
2 Corinthians 4:16	Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.
Jeremiah 29:11	I know the plans I have for you — plans to give you hope and a future.
Philippians 4:11	I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.
Proverbs 20:29	Gray hair is the splendor of the old.
Romans 8:1	There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
John 10:27–28	I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Thank You for every season You have brought me through. Thank You that You do not abandon me as my hair turns silver and my strength diminishes. Your Word promises that even to my old age, You will sustain me, carry me, and rescue me. Help me to age with grace — to hold loosely the things of this world and to press ever more tightly to You. May I still bear fruit in whatever season I am in. May I be a blessing to those who come after me. And when the time comes, let me not fear the crossing — for You are on both shores. In Jesus' name, Amen.

"He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age." — Ruth 4:15