

hightime

Many agencies working in the UK and around the world are crying out for experienced people to work with them. Isn't it *hightime* something was done to help such people get together. *Hightime* is a service offered by Christian Vocations to make this happen.

Hightime exists to provide opportunities for those over fifty who have a desire to use their life experience and skills to serve God. This is a perfect way to explore the options and link with agencies offering opportunities. For example, Brian used his financial experience to help a Christian ministry sort out its accounts over a few months, while Moira spent several weeks helping in a Christian conference centre. John used his carpentry skills on a housing project in Kenya, while Margaret and Alan spent a month helping missionary families with home education.

So how does it work?

Step 1

prayerfully consider what God is asking you to do

Step 2

register with hightime, outlining your availability, abilities, interests and expertise

Step 3

when relevant opportunities arise, CV will contact you with more details

Step 4

contact will be made with the ministry concerned to explore the practicalities and possibilities

goals in extra time conferences

From time to time these day conferences are held in various parts of the UK. Christian Vocations partners with mission agencies to explore issues relating to service in later life and to present the breadth of service opportunities available.

For more information contact: goals@christianvocations.org

Further copies of Guideline leaflets can be obtained from Christian Vocations online and at the address below.

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goals in extra time

opportunities for the over 50s

Many employers tend to think of those over fifty as being suitable for redundancy or early retirement. The Bible encourages us to think somewhat differently! Many outstanding men and women of faith began their most important and enduring service at an older age.

Churches and mission organisations are increasingly open to recruit from the 50+ age group. Indeed, some organisations have found that older recruits often have more to offer because of their breadth of work experience, maturity, and spiritual insight gained through life's disappointments, successes, and challenges.

releasing God's people into God's work

at home

Here are some of the ways in which you can be active:

1. An increased prayer ministry.

You may not have thought of it as work, but retirement often gives the opportunity for more prayer. Prayer is time-consuming, but now you have time to enter into a meaningful partnership with a missionary or Christian worker in this country. This can be the most important ministry of a person's life, and God can use you to accomplish great things as you pray.

2. Church work.

Most churches cannot pay for all the workers that they would like to have. Roles like secretary, administrator, church visitor, assistant pastor, or maintenance worker frequently go un-filled. Talk to your minister or church elders to see how your strengths and skills might be put to good use in your local church.

3. Involvement in mission organisations.

Help is often needed in such areas as administration, finance, maintenance, printing, secretarial, or medical work. Other possibilities include prison visiting, being a mission rep, or working in evangelism. While such opportunities are seldom advertised, a letter of enquiry to a mission - particularly one with which you have an existing connection - often produces results.

4. Work within the local community.

While not specifically Christian, voluntary service groups provide a way for Christians to be involved in active service and to witness of the love of Christ to people who may remain untouched by normal church activities. Your local library will probably have details of openings in your area.

Passage to Ponder - Psalm 92:14

"The righteous ... will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green."

abroad

While the emphasis of missionary recruitment has been toward younger people, there are definitely opportunities for the 50+ age group, particularly in short-term projects. Recruiting from this group makes good sense because of greater experience and maturity. Short-term opportunities may include a construction project where skills and knowledge gained over the years are invaluable. Or relief may be needed while a full-time mission worker takes a hard-earned break. Perhaps someone with experience in administration and bookkeeping can release a mission worker from the grip of necessary but time-consuming paperwork in order to concentrate on their primary ministry.

There are also many long-term openings for which professional qualifications are necessary. And there are opportunities for experienced workers with a whole range of skills from plumbers to printers, electricians to computer programmers.

in practice

Paul rejoiced that he was not a financial burden to the young churches, and those who have taken early retirement, been made redundant, or crossed the 60/65 threshold may identify with him. As one 60+ mission worker put it:

"The DSS is not exactly a sending mission, but it supports me fully."

However, this is not to say that mission organisations, churches, or other agencies expect older recruits to be entirely self-financing. Before embarking on a new field of service, pray it through personally and discuss it with your church leadership. At the very least, you will want to be sure that you have the support and prayers of your church. Usually, the mission organisation concerned will give full support and guidance.

Passage to Ponder - Philippians 3:12-14

"... I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do; forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus."

