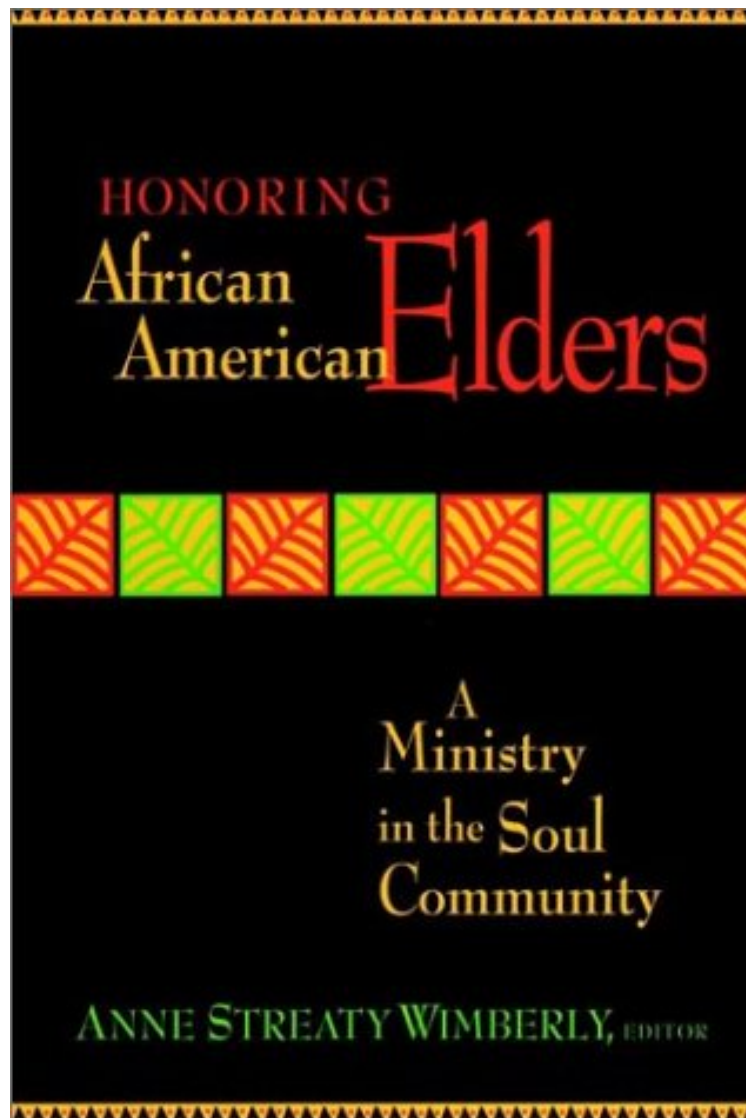


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## Honoring African American Elders: A Ministry in the Soul Community (Jossey-Bass Religion-In-Practice Series)

*Anne Streaty Wimberly*

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**Anne Streaty Wimberly : Honoring African American Elders: A Ministry in the Soul Community (Jossey-Bass Religion-In-Practice Series)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Honoring African American Elders: A Ministry in the Soul Community (Jossey-Bass Religion-In-Practice

Series):

This book examines the church's vital role in the lives of African American elders and the critical need to prepare church leaders to respond effectively. The authors propose concrete ways for churches to make this type of ministry a reality for the benefit of the elders and the vitality of the whole community.

"A people's moral barometer is gauged by treatment of their children and the elderly. This book challenges urban and rural communities to honor their elderly through ministries governed by biblical, historical, spiritual, psychological, physical, pastoral, and socio-economic sensitivities. It advocates for the elderly to share their gifts and is a 20th century book which prepares communities to respond morally toward the elderly now and in the 21st century."

(Presiding Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt, Jr., Fourth Episcopal District of Louisiana and Mississippi, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church) "This is a fresh, illuminating book. Its authors thoroughly and creatively deal with the 'Who' should minister to a growing African American senior community and why the senior citizens should be the focused concern of the Black Christian community. It also deals with the equally important concern: How can honored elderly of the darker hue 'call forth the MORE within themselves as a creative catalyst in the 'HOOD.' A very stimulating book!"

(William T. Perkins, Dean, Morehouse School of Religion, Atlanta, Georgia) "I welcome this book as a reminder of the rich heritage of strength that must be recovered and as a challenge to the church to be in the forefront of conserving such priceless national treasures. Of particular value is the way the book provides linkage to our African heritage. This book challenges the African American church to be proactive in addressing the broad spectrum of needs of African American elders. Practical models for ministry are offered that would enable most local churches to move into effective ministry with elders."

(Barbara Ricks Thompson, General Secretary, General Commission on Religion and Race, United Methodist Church, Washington, D.C.) "Honoring African American Elders fills a critical need for a practical guide to developing and evaluating ministries for African American elders. This book is a 'must read' for ministers who have significant numbers of elderly members in their churches. It provides a model of ministry focused on the needs of elders and concrete approaches churches can use to implement the model." (Mary Williams, Director, The Georgia Multidisciplinary Center for Gerontology at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia) "Honoring African American Elders: A Ministry in the Soul Community is a gift of God's grace that could help the church reclaim its heritage of respecting and honoring the elderly and thereby strengthen generational ties in the family. We sorely need this book." (Rev. Dr. Rita Dixon, Associate, Black

Congregational Enhancement Division of National Ministries Presbyterian Church (USA)) From the Inside Flap Older adults are the fastest-growing segment of the African American churchgoing population. Honoring African American Elders is the first book to examine the church's vital role in the lives of these elders and the critical need to prepare church leaders to respond effectively to their increasing numbers in congregations. Focused specifically on today's unprecedented challenges to minister to African American seniors, it provides much-needed help and guidance for church leaders. The authors offer a new paradigm for ministry, faithful to both biblical and African American heritage, which restores elders to their proper place in the congregation as well as attends to their needs. They explore the historical roots of reverence toward elders in the African American culture and propose practical, concrete ways for churches to make this ministry a reality for the benefit of these persons and the vitality of the whole community. The model for this ministry is based on two interrelated values -- "honor" and "soul community." To "honor" African American elders means to acknowledge the significance of their years and to treat them as persons of worth. Elders are honored as repositories of wisdom and resourceful contributors to the community as well as recipients of care. In contrast to Western individualism, a "soul community" is an African American community that operates from a sense of "peoplehood" and an appreciation of shared history, shared culture, and shared challenges. Elders must be valued as important bearers of this history and culture, as meaningful participants in the community, and as receivers of care. A soul community cultivates cross-generational relations as the context for this to happen, reclaiming a communal ethic wherein all generations are seen as connected parts of a kinship circle. Filled with evocative stories, numerous examples, concrete suggestions, and questions for reflection, Honoring African American Elders challenges church From the Back Cover Honoring African American Elders offers a new paradigm for ministry to older adults. Faithful to both biblical and African American heritage, it honors elders as repositories of wisdom and restores them to their proper place in the congregation, as well as attends to their needs.