The Pilgrims' MAGAZINE

Benentia Inchesive Church

WINTER 2023

Unwrapping CHRISTMAS PAST

Precious memories from our family members

A WARM WELCOME

Praising God for overseas workers

10 top tips

TO HELP YOU...

Brighten up the bleak mid-winter for older church family

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

Pilgrims' Friend Society exists to provide excellent care and support for older people, inspiring and encouraging them to live fulfilled lives. Rooted in the Christian faith, **Pilgrims' Friend Society is** committed to creating Christian communities in residential care homes and independent living housing schemes in England and Scotland.



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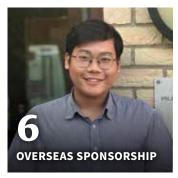
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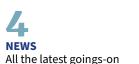
Why we're welcoming brilliant staff from abroad



Ways to support older church family this winter



Our family members share their memories



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Looking to contact our homes and schemes?

See back cover for details





News round-up

Faith in Later Life's new Lead Officer, Remembrance Day and more

Alexandra Drew joins Faith in Later Life



Our sister charity Faith in Later Life has a new Lead Officer, Alexandra (Alex) Drew. In her previous role, Alex was Operations Manager at Webnet - the West of England Baptist Network.

Alex says, "Through my work and ministry, I've had the privilege of connecting with churches and seeing the life-giving work that goes on throughout the Baptist family, and how in almost all cases older people are at the heart of it. Not only are they the recipients of God's love and care through His people, but they are often the channels He uses to share that love and grace with others."

The mission of Faith in Later Life is 'to inspire and equip Christians to reach, serve and empower older people in every community' and this winter. Alex is excited to be launching the charity's Love My Neighbour campaign. The campaign highlights how many older people feel lonely during the winter months as the days get shorter and

colder and they forego their usual

Alex says, "God loves older people, He has wonderful plans for them and calls us to honour those in later life. It's time to celebrate them again, and to love them through the challenging season they may face."

The charity is encouraging people to pray for and connect with their older neighbours, with ideas and resources available on the Love My Neighbour hub. For details see:

www.faithinlaterlife.org/love-my-neighbour

Plus, turn to p.12 where Alex shares some insights as part of our feature 'It's a winter-ful life'.

opportunities to connect with others.

During the Autumn it became clear that we were no longer going to be able to run Bethany Christian Home in Plymouth. Initially it was expected that the home would close but we are delighted that a local operator came forward to take on

Thanksgiving service at

Koinonia Christian Care Home

John Manea, Registered Care Manager at Koinonia, said,

courts with shouts of joy and thankfulness (Psalm 100).

On Saturday 4th November a Thanksgiving Service was held at

West Worthing Evangelical Church. Ownership of Koinonia officially passed to Pilgrims' Friend Society in April 2022. The service was an

opportunity to thank the exiting trustees and to pray for the future.

"The service was a celebration of the goodness of God and all the

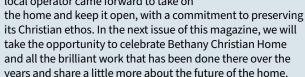
blessings we have received - an encouragement to enter His

"We thanked God for our family members and for answering

our prayers on occupancy. We prayed that, when the time is

right, He will provide us with land on which to build the new

To read more about our Growth and Renewal Plan, see p.23.



New ownership for Bethany Christian Home



South Coast home."







In other news

As part of our Getting Real about Getting Older campaign, Eric and Alan discuss a subject that many of us will face in later life the loss of a spouse. In a video available on our website, they talk candidly about bereavement, grief and how to support others. Watch the video here: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/ getreal

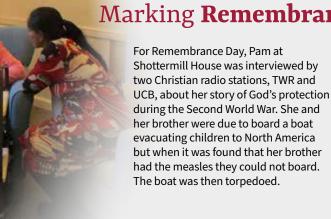
Stuart Bull joins our **Operations Team as Housing Operations** Manager and Simon Welham is our new **Activities & Community** Engagement (ACE) Facilitator at Finborough Court, Great Finborough. Lydia Dibble also joins us as The Way We Care Lead at Koinonia Christian Care Home in Worthing.

For more great stories, follow us on social media:

- @PilgrimsFS
- @PilgrimsFS
- @pilgrimsfriend
- @pilgrimsfriendsociety

Marking Remembrance Day

Across our homes and schemes, those living with us marked the occasion with services and by making crafts.



Overseas sponsorship

Words: Helen McKav-Ferguson

How sponsoring care workers from overseas is helping us to address staff shortages and enrich life in our homes

In February 2022 the Government added 'care workers' and 'home carers' to its shortage occupation list for skilled workers. This has meant that social care providers like Pilgrims' Friend Society can sponsor care workers from abroad. This has helped us fill our vacancies, ensuring our family members are supported in the best way possible.

Recruiting permanent members to our teams helps us to reduce our reliance on agency staff, which is very costly. In the past year, our vacancy rate has dropped from 10% to

every person we recruit, we pay £2,000 to the Government for a Certificate of Sponsorship. But we know that our staff are our greatest asset, worth investing in, and when a staff member stays long-term the investment pays off. Our aim is that every overseas worker we recruit will stay for at least five years.

Given the need for commitment, we put a lot of care into the selection stage, ensuring the role is the right fit. We may hear about potential applicants by word-of-mouth from our existing staff network. We are also open to speculative applications and take a caseby-case approach.

The first step is for a candidate to complete their application form online. We then invite a shortlist for an interview with our overseas recruitment panel via video call, made up of managers and our HR team. At interview

> stage, we don't always know which home the person will end up working in, but where we do we'll invite the manager of that home to be there.

The interview process gives us a sense of whether the candidate has the necessary skills to work with us and is a good fit for the vision and values of our organisation. Once we have made an offer, we ensure that all the background checks are done and start applying for their Certificate of Sponsorship, a process which can be lengthy.

So far, we've had 19 overseas workers join our staff teams, and (at time of writing) a further 10 or 11 are waiting to be sponsored. We've found this to be a positive experience. Many of those who have joined us come from cultures where older people are respected. They understand the value and importance of care.

The story of Timothy and Sami at Luff House in Walton-on-the-Naze shows how well overseas sponsorship can work:

Timothy Agbenike, Registered Care Manager at Luff House

Before we took on workers from overseas we were very short of staff. We have some wonderful carers on our team but we're situated in an area with a high older population and few people of working age. Many of our carers have young families and would find it difficult to cover night shifts. Luff House is most easily reached by car, which of course not everyone has, so recruitment can be a challenge. Due to staff shortages, we were spending a lot of money on agency staff fees. Not only is this expensive, it also doesn't allow for the same continuity of care that is so important for our family members.

I'll admit, when I first heard about overseas sponsorship I had some reservations. I wondered if there would be issues around language and I was aware whoever came would have to learn a new system of care. However, if you don't try something then you can't know whether it will work so I was willing to give it a go.

The video interview was very helpful. I could get a sense of a candidate's suitability for the role. I not only got a feel for their language skills but also gained an understanding of their motivation. We ended up recruiting three overseas workers through this interview round. What came across strongly was the respect and concern they had for older people, something which is embedded in their culture – they just got it.

Another thing that helped is that these candidates had been recommended to us by PumDim Skinner, the Registered Care Manager of our home in Framland, Wantage. Two are siblings and one is a friend. Before they started with us, they stayed with PumDim and had an induction at Framland. This meant they arrived with a sense of how things are done. They also completed their The Way We Care training early on.

One thing I've been very struck by is the willingness of these new staff members to learn and grow. To help them settle in, I looked carefully at my existing staff team to see who would be best to support them through a buddy system. I also made sure we didn't rush and checked in with them frequently in their first days.

Having these new staff has helped us enormously. This time a year ago we were giving 400 hours to agency staff every week. Now that's much reduced. Our agency spend has halved. This means we can use our budget for other things and as a home we feel much more settled. We have the continuity and consistency that supports the well-being of the family members. It has been a big success.



Sami, 18, **Care Assistant from Myanmar**

I have been made to feel very welcome at Luff House – it's like a family. As a team, we help each other out.

The family members always tell me how much they appreciate my help. They say, 'you are so kind.' Or they might just smile - their smile is their truth in their heart.

There is one lady, Peggy, who I have got to know well. She always asks me about my family and is interested in my life. She likes to tell me about her grandchildren.

It helps that I am living with two friends from Myanmar who are also working at Luff House. We can talk about work together and share ideas on how we can best support the family members.

One of the main challenges I have had is with language. I don't always get things straight away. The team are very patient. Looking at body language can help a lot. Every weekend I do English classes on Zoom to help me improve.



The weather is also something I'm getting used to. In my country, it is usually around 39 or 40 degrees Celsius. Here, when I wake up at 5am to do my shift it is very cold. I leave the house wearing a heavy coat.

I am lucky as my home is only a 10-minute walk from the beach. I love the sea and when I need to relax I go for a walk along the beach.

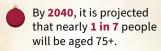
Birthdays are important here. The cook at Luff House is very good and always makes a cake for the family member whose birthday it is. My birthday is coming up soon and I plan to bring in a cake and some candy so that I can celebrate with the home.

I'm interested to learn about how care is done here. In Myanmar, I volunteered in a care home. In the long term, I'd like to study at university, possibly business management.



Is age just a number?

The state of ageing in the UK is a complex and multifaceted topic that affects various aspects of society and individual lives. Below are some interesting facts that will inevitably impact the work of Pilgrims' Friend Society in the years ahead







The number of people in mid/ later life who live alone has been increasing steadily, with 1.3 million men aged 65+ living alone.

More than 2 million pensioners live in poverty. that's 1 in 5 people over 65.

These and other factors have major implications for:

- People's financial security
- The quality of their homes as they age
- · Health and social care
- Housing

Source: Centre for Ageing Better, The State of Ageing 2022, March 2022.



It is against this backdrop that the demand for local authority residential care funded places for older people will inevitably increase over coming years, a situation which may prove challenging given the current funding position which sees the true cost of care often not fully met by statutory partners.

That is why today we are asking you to **make** a donation to our Christmas Appeal and help make Christmas special for our family members, over half of whom have **complex** needs and require specialised care.

Your gift will enable us to provide even better facilities at our 11 care homes across England. We will be able to purchase new equipment, engage in exciting activities, and support staff learning and development.

Turn to p.32 to find out how you can support us this Christmas.



VISION The Pilgrims' Magazine

Lead Coordinator of Christians in Care

Launched by Pilgrims' Friend Society, Christians in Care is a new network designed to support Christians working across the whole care sector. Lucy Honeysett, Lead Coordinator of Christians in Care, shares why she's passionate about leading this initiative

I'm a palliative care nurse and have worked for most of my career in hospice care. But working life for me began as a carer and this was an amazing experience. My first care role when I was 17 was at Leonora Home, Pilgrims' Friend Society's former home in Chippenham [this home has now been closed and replaced by Middlefields House].

I will never forget the people I cared for and worked alongside. God showed me that caring for vulnerable people was precious and important work. I watched Christian carers do their work with such compassion and kindness. They treated people with deep respect and I learnt so much from them. How they cared for people pointed me to Jesus and was an example of how He treated people

> who were, perhaps otherwise, forgotten by society.

> > The manager of the home was a lady called Brenda Kyte. She was a very godly lady

who cared deeply for those she was looking after. There were times when she stayed up all night to sit with someone who was dying, and read the Bible to them. She consistently showed compassion, kindness and respect to those she cared for, no matter how tired she may have felt!

My role as a carer inspired me to go into nursing. I worked at the care home all through my nursing training until I was 21. Those years shaped me and inspired me, personally and professionally. When I started at Leonora there were three lovely ladies called Florence, known variously as Florence, Flo and Florrie. They made such an impression that we named our first daughter Florence, Florrie for short.

As I have cared for many dying people over the years, I've worked with many carers and have always valued and known the importance of their work. Yet I know we need to do much more to encourage those providing care who may not always feel the full recognition they deserve.

I therefore want to do all I can to connect and encourage Christians working across all care sectors.

We have a Christians in Care frontline staff WhatsApp group where we share encouraging Bible verses, prayer needs and testimonies. We meet virtually to chat, provide resources, encourage one another from God's word and pray together. We also have a WhatsApp group for Christian care home leaders and trustees, and we meet on Zoom to pray for and support one another.

If you're a Christian working in the social care sector and would like to be a part of this network, please get in touch via the form on our website:



And if you don't work in social care yourself but know someone who does, please do share the link with them.



Connecting Christians in the care sector

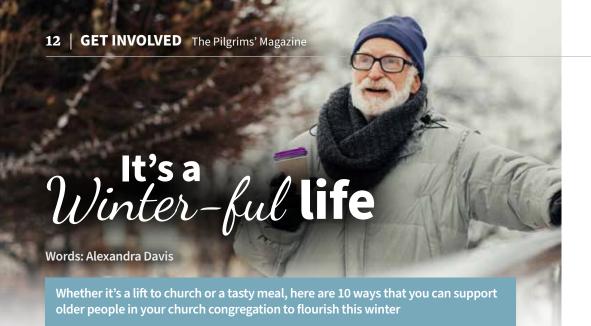
Encouragement for carers:

- What carers do is precious and noticed by God. In Matthew 25:34-40 Jesus says that if anyone feeds someone, provides a drink, clothes them and cares for them, they are doing this for Him. So, before you think you need to do more, remember you are placed where you are by God and are bringing Him glory.
- O How you care can convey God's love. The tone of your voice, the words you use, the way you use your hands, can all express the value of someone made in God's image. We can be instruments of God's love and uphold dignity and respect for each person.
- We know it isn't always easy. Working as a carer can be emotionally and physically testing. We're here to share and acknowledge the highs and lows, the impact this can have on our faith, and the opportunities we have. We're here to pray for one another and learn together.

Alma is a live-in carer whose demanding schedule requires her to spend four weeks working in the client's home in one stint.

Alma says, "The pressure of live-in care can be intense. You are a guest in someone's home, and I give all my energy to the job at hand. Sometimes it can be difficult to give your best without your church and Christian fellowship available to you.

To be connected with Christians in Care is so important for me because I have people who can pray for me, listen to me and remind me of who I am in Christ, I feel connected to a Christian community that cares for me."



1) Keep older people in mind

Often, particularly with the busy Christmas season, older people who are less present in the life of church can end up a little in the background. Perhaps this is something they're comfortable with - all the hustle and bustle of activity is harder to manage as they get older - but it's best to get in touch rather than assume they are content without much company. Could you commit to checking in on one older person in your community each week? Can you encourage others in your community to do the same? Is there an older person who'd enjoy an hour every few weeks sharing a hobby with you? Can older people feature on your weekly prayers at church?

2) Watch out for the bad weather

With the winter months colder and darker it can be harder for older people to get out



and about. Alexandra Drew, the new Lead Officer at Faith in Later Life, reminds us that it doesn't take much for loneliness to set in. She says, "We only need two cold and rainy Sundays in a row for an older person to find themselves falling out of the rhythm of church life. Make a mental note of older people who aren't at church and get in touch with them, both to check in on their well-being but also just to make sure they've had some conversation and built some relationship each week."

3) Encourage one another in the faith

For someone who does miss a couple of Sundays or other opportunities for Christian fellowship, the sense of spiritual isolation can come quickly. If you do pop in to see someone after church or in the week, make

the most of that time by sharing the faith together. Do also pray together with them, joining together before the Lord.

Winter can be tricky for a lot of people when it comes to emotional and mental health."

4) Get beneath the surface

The dark and cold can often have a negative impact on how we're coping with the world around us and if isolation and loneliness are setting in, this can all deepen for an older person. If you can, take some time to try and understand if an older person isn't just having to manage the challenges of age but is struggling with low mood or depression.

Our own Louise Morse says, "A helpful question is, 'When was the last time you felt like this?' You can be sure that no-one reaches old age without experiencing all manner of setbacks, and the person usually remembers very well. The most helpful question after that is, 'And what helped you then? What did you do that helped, and what did others do?' That helps the person lean on their resilience, which they often don't recognise that they have."



5) Get them online

While the pandemic was a season none of us wants to re-visit, it did help a generation of older people connect online in a way that many of us would never have predicted. But it can still be tricky for some, especially if it's just something they do occasionally now. Could you host a Tech Refresher session for older people to come and get back online so that they can still connect with friends and family during the winter months?

6) Support cost of living challenges

We know that the cost of basics like heating and eating are still higher than any of us would like and some older people really struggle to afford all that they need. Can you help them navigate any of the support that they're entitled to, or help them make changes to keep their homes warmer? Perhaps they are living in a larger house and need some help working out how to keep heating costs down by turning down radiators in unused rooms, or just need to be reminded of the basics of drawing the curtains and tucking them behind the radiators!

7) Cook up a feast

Tasty hot meals can also help both where costs are prohibitive for some older people, but also where depression and low mood are keeping them back from making good healthy food. Bev, our Catering Manager at Middlefields House, has some top tips for great ways to make sure that older people are eating well during the winter months.

"Try to include some protein, carbohydrates, dairy, fruit, and vegetables if possible - variety is the key to getting much-needed vitamins.

Presentation is also important, especially when encouraging someone to eat well. When we say, 'Oh, that looks nice!', it really motivates us to eat and enjoy the meal. Setting the table nicely can also help and eating meals with others is enjoyable and can encourage appetite. Having tins of custard, evaporated milk and rice pudding in the cupboard is a delicious way to boost muchneeded calories."

8) Share the knowledge

Often we miss out on things simply because we don't know what's available. Is there a way that you can find out all the things that are going on in your local area and make sure that people who would benefit from them will hear about them? Perhaps you could coordinate something to go in your church bulletin (and other local church notices as well), or if you're a member of any online communities or forums could you share what you know with them?

9) Think daytime

Sally Bates, Associate Minister at Frinton Free Church, oversees a weekly Meals Matter which happens from 4-6pm every Wednesday from November to February and provides a free meal to anyone who comes. They've done this during the late afternoon as it means that those who are struggling with heating costs don't need to turn the heating on as early in the day. This can also be important for those who don't want to travel once it gets dark (and colder).

Colin Slatter, who is 94, thoroughly enjoyed his meal and said

It was brilliant! There was real camaraderie. We sat round tables, had a lovely tea and everyone talked to each other. I can't believe the church would do such a thing, but they did, and it was brilliant."



10) Make time for the caregiver

Do you have older people in your congregation who are the main caregiver for another older person, whether that's a spouse, a friend, or a family member? Maybe you could go and sit with someone while their caregiver gets a trip to the shops or just some personal time in the home. Or perhaps just committing to phoning the caregiver once a week to keep in touch and find out how they're doing will be all they need or feel able to accept.



Resources for supporting older people in winter:

- Age UK have guides for understanding care, health and wellbeing, as well as financial and legal matters - ageuk.org.uk
- Faith in Later Life is a hub for Christian resources and ways to minister to older people - faithinlaterlife.org
- Our Brain and Soul Boosting at Christmas Time resource is useful for engaging older people - find out more on p.29



Sundays



Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth - Sarah Bayliss

Emmaus House, Harrogate

- Chrissie Medway-Steel

Carey Gardens, Kirby **Muxloe** – Andy Harrison



and schemes

Praise Jesus for everybody who lives with us. Ask Him to keep them in His presence each day. May He continue to build our communities, and for them to thrive.



Care teams

Give thanks to God for our hard-working, fantastic and resilient care team. Ask God that they would know His grace, peace, and joy as they work caring for our family members.



Mondays



Evington Home, Leicester – Jeanette Davis and

Indy Modare

Dorothea Court, Bedford – Jane Sprittles and Yolande Dorgu **Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester** – Andy Harrison



Our catering, maintenance, and administration teams

Pray for the great work that our support teams do across our homes and schemes. Praise God for all that they do and ask God to grant them insight to know how to manage any challenges.



Our resources

(see more on p.28 & 29)



Thank the Lord that the resources are helping many people manage the challenges of later life. Pray that more people would become aware of them and make use of them.

Wednesdays



Royd Court, Mirfield – Vicki Miller

Finborough Court Housing, Great Finborough – Keziah Vince





The Operations Team overseeing our homes and schemes

Pray for our wonderful operations managers who support our home and scheme managers. Pray that the Lord gives them strength and resilience as they oversee our work, and pray for good health and safety as they travel around the country.



Recruitment

Take time to pray to God for all those who work with us and ask for more people to join us. Pray that the right people apply to our vacancies and would come and contribute to our work. Pray for our recruitment team, that their work would be directed by God.

Tuesdays



Finborough Court, Great Finborough – Rachel
Fishburne and Karen Bleay

Emmaus House, Whitehaven

- Gill Davidson





Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators

Praise the Lord for our ACE Facilitators. Thank the Lord that the programme is flourishing and that community connections are developing well. Pray for the activities which take place in our homes and the ACE team as they prepare for Christmas events.



Growth and Renewal Programme

Please join us in praying for the ongoing work of the Growth and Renewal Programme. Thank God for the opportunity to incorporate Emmaus House, Whitehaven in our network, and for the flourishing community at Middlefields House, Chippenham. Please do pray for a breakthrough in our search for suitable land on the South Coast for a new home and for creative solutions to the challenges of financing such major projects.

Thursdays



Framland, Wantage
- PumDim Skinner

Koinonia Christian Care Home, Worthing – John Manea and Nathan Page





Our Support Team – Finance, HR, Communications and Property teams

Pray for the work of our central support teams and the ways that they help our home and scheme teams. Pray for favour for their work, for continuing diligence and care in the details, and for capacity and resource to get all their work done.



Church and community engagement

Praise God for the support of local churches, and for connections with schools and other community groups. Pray that more connections would be made in order to be able to reach more older people through the local church.

Fridays



Middlefields House, **Chippenham** – Rali Ivanova, Chris Boyes and Nathan Barnes Strathclyde House,

Skelmorlie - Tina McKeown





Thank God for those who give their time and talents freely to support our communities. Pray that more people come and be a part of our work, and for our ACE Facilitators as they oversee the volunteering work.



Giving

Thank God for every gift. Ask that He would continue to provide financially and that more people would be encouraged to give what they can to the work. Praise God for His faithfulness to Pilgrims' Friend Society for more than 200 years.

Saturdays



Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze - Timothy Agbenike and **Sharon Rowley**

Milward House, Tunbridge Wells - Sid Martin

Shottermill House, Haslemere - Anne Pegler and Mike Beere





Directors and trustees

Pray for the team of trustees and directors who lead our work. Thank God for new members of the Board and ask that He would continue to guide all decision-making and planning.



Families and relatives

Pray to Jesus for all those who have entrusted the care of their loved ones to us. Pray that they would be confident in the communities that we provide and that they would know His peace and comfort.



MORE WAYS TO PRAY: Sign up to our new Prayer News email which goes out regularly with news and updates to guide your prayers: Sign up here: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/pray



Our monthly Family News email contains all our latest prayer updates, plus details of happenings from across the organisation. Visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/keepintouch



Louise ANSWERS

Louise Morse is an author and speaker for Pilgrims' Friend Society. She is also a Christian counsellor and cognitive behavioural therapist. Each issue, she offers advice on how to approach a challenging situation

"Since my mother died last year, my father has been diagnosed with dementia and I've moved back home to look after him. Christmas time is always a big family reunion, and I'm wondering, how can I make it special for him?"

The wonderful thing about Christmas is that half the work of making it special for your dad has already been done, bound up in its meaning. It's one of the most evocative times of the year. The Christmas music, the scents and smells, the decorations, the greetings cards and more will release memories and happy feelings from Christmases past, even going back to childhood. Our churches celebrate Christmas well, and if your dad is too frail to attend one of the services he'll be blessed by those broadcasts on TV and radio.

It's great that your family is coming for the traditional reunion. Some may be living nearby, and will be familiar with your dad's condition, but others may be coming from a distance and won't have seen him recently. It will help if you bring them up to date by email or telephone, and describe the best way of interacting with him. Suggest that they behave warmly towards him, as though seeing him is the best thing that has happened that day!

Our booklet 'Visiting a Person with Dementia' gives more practical tips (see p.29). It's important to explain to children that Granddad's brain isn't working as

normally as it should. In a previous edition of 'Louise Answers', we described how to help children understand this. See www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/childrenand-dementia

Some helpful tips are – first, make sure that your dad is physically comfortable, and sitting in a position where he can choose to observe and stay quiet, or become involved in the conversation. Then, keep an eye on him; with a larger gathering than he is used to he may experience a sensory overload, so be prepared to take him to his room to rest for a while. If it's a sit-down Christmas dinner. make sure the tablecloth is colourful to give contrast with the white plates. Perhaps discreetly cut up the meal if this helps him.

Now is a good time for reminiscence! Compile a range of family photographs and have a family member go through them with him, but without asking, 'do you remember?'.

A good, Christmassy activity for the whole family would be to go through Brain and Soul Boosting at Christmas Time together (see p.29). Take the lead (as you are the closest to your dad), and off you go! It's fun, it will bless him, and it helps strengthen faith and relationships. Happy Christmas!



Find out more about Louise's publications and her latest talks on our website: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/louise-morse

Christmas

Our family members share fond memories

A Christmas keepsake for Milward House, Tunbridge Wells

Kriszti, our The Way We Care Lead at Milward House, has been gathering Christmas memories from our family members to make into a special booklet that will be given as a gift to everyone living in the home. Kriszti says:

"Christmas is a special time for many of the older Christians living with us, evoking powerful associations with family and faith. Through gathering these memories we've come to know our family members better, a

key part of our The Way We Care approach. Some of our family members really opened up. I've found that some of the stories shared resonate with memories my grandparents shared with me of celebrating Christmas in Hungary (where I'm from) during and after the war when life was hard and people didn't have much. We hope the booklet will be a lovely way to preserve these memories, and that it will be shared with and enjoyed by relatives of our family members too as their discover stories from their parents and grandparents."

Here are some of the memories that will be featured...



Brenda

"We used to make things for each other, knitting or sewing by hand, from a pattern book. We were five children and our parents didn't do a stocking but a pillowcase. We had a lot of relatives who used to send presents – one of our relatives from Folkestone would bring them all to us from all the relatives there – and we put them all in the pillowcase. We had to wait until after breakfast then open the pillowcase full of presents. My mum and dad used to laugh about it afterwards because there was paper everywhere from five children's pillowcases! They used the paper for the fire. We then had a later lunch and we had to sit at the table for the whole meal, not like today when children get up and down all the time. Then we listened to the Queen's Speech."



Shirley

"As a child I believed in Father Christmas. I used to stand at the window and was convinced I could see Santa with his sleigh. I was about eight or nine when I woke up one year and saw my parents filling the stocking with presents and then I was so disappointed. They put the stocking on the end of the bed. We only had an orange, chocolate and maybe one little toy because mum and dad were not so well off.

were not so well off. Christmas was quite quiet as there was no TV. We made our own entertainment."

Grace

"I was one of five girls – I was the middle one. We were working class people. My dad always had a job. We grew up in East London. My mum and dad always made

Christmas special, they let us know about Father Christmas. They always put presents for the morning and there would be a stocking, too. I loved opening my stocking and finding things like

books (I liked a good read), as well as pencils, an exercise book, nuts, an orange and little blowers that whistled. We didn't often have jigsaw puzzles as they were too big for the stocking.

"The poverty in East London was dire. On Christmas Day we all had to stay in one room together because of the heating - we had an open fire. Mum would be busy with the cooking and Christmas lunch was a real treat to eat. After lunch Dad ordered a chocolate log which was sliced and we all had a piece of that. and we all had Christmas pudding, By the end of the day we were all full up with chocolates.

"Christmas was very special to us. I knew the Lord and my parents told me that Jesus loves me."

Maureen, Evington Home, Leicester

"When I was a young girl, we didn't have a Christmas tree or stockings. My mum used to make a lucky dip box with colourful wool strands hanging out with numbers on. Each person selected a number and then pulled out the gift with the corresponding number. On Christmas Day, we didn't play games but went for a walk after Christmas dinner. My parents weren't believers so

faith and church were not important. Christmas was about celebrating with family and friends.

"When I was older, married and now a believer, I did go to church. My husband was a director in mission areas in the South Pacific and I was a nanny. We were often in different countries so it was not the same as in the UK. I remember going carol singing and singing about snow and ice in the hot weather armed with insect spray not gloves and a scarf! When we were in Australia they put up a sort of bauble decoration representing snow and ice, which I found amusing."



"We would always have a family Christmas with all the extended family coming to the farm on Christmas Eve and staying over to Christmas Day. My husband had five brothers and one year we had 21 people arrive! On Christmas Eve we would all sit around and have sausage and mash, after which everyone would help get all the vegetables and puddings prepared for the Christmas Day meal, which included a huge turkey able to feed everyone.



"We would all join in playing silly games. My daughter would play the guitar and we all sang Christmas carols together. When it came to presents each of the children would get their own stocking with presents in, including chocolate coins and an orange. For the adults there was one large Christmas stocking which had everyone's present in. And so we sat around as each person received their gift.

"There were those of our family who would pop off to the local church to celebrate Christmas, while everyone else might go for a walk.

> "We weren't keen on glittery decorations, preferring the green of holly and ivy. To spread the cost of Christmas I would save all year round. Also, throughout the year when I saw something that I thought a family member or friend would like, I would buy it. I often looked around charity shops for little gifts - it's wonderful what you can find.

Please pray:

That God would be very close to our family members this Christmas as they reflect on the sure and certain hope we have in Jesus.

"We did have hard times, but we were always careful and never ran into debt. I find it is better to cut down on things and only buy what matters. At the end of the day, it is family and friends that matter at Christmas, not things."

Growth and Renewal: our ongoing commitment to the future of Christian care

In the face of increasing costs, we are forging ahead to deliver our vision of more older people being welcomed into Christian communities

For a number of years now Pilgrims' Friend Society has been focused on providing more Christian communities for older people in the long-term. What was originally called the Renewal Programme has now developed into the Growth and Renewal Programme – an extended vision to grow our network of care homes and housing schemes through taking on existing operations and to renew our provision where facilities will not be fit for purpose in the future.

As part of our vision of growth, we were pleased to welcome Emmaus House in Whitehaven, Cumbria into the Pilgrims' Friend Society family this October. The home, which was opened in 1992, is a 26-bed care home with a strong Christian heritage which we know will be a blessing to the wider Pilgrims' Friend Society network.

A significant challenge to our vision of renewal has been the considerably increased costs of building new homes since we launched the original Renewal Programme in 2019. At that time, we expected that the cost of a new home would be roughly £8 million but estimates now put this cost at closer to £12 million,





particularly when factoring in the cost of land. This has been one of the major obstacles in our search for land on which to build in the South Coast where we hope to renew our provision by replacing Koinonia Christian Care Home in Worthing.

Matt Kisler, Home Project Review Manager, says, "Our commitment to making sure that as many older people as possible can come and live in Christian care and housing communities is as firm as ever. We're immensely grateful for the persistent prayerful support of so many."

Wonderfully, our first "renewal home" in Chippenham, Middlefields House, is proving that our model of care is just what is needed with the home recently reaching 100% occupancy for the first time - a year ahead of schedule! We are more convinced than ever that the household model (which sees family members live in communities of 12 within the larger 48bed home) is right for the future of care, particularly as it enables our bespoke approach to care. The Way We Care, to be

delivered really well (see p.24-25).

Please pray: See our Prayer Guide

(p.15-18) for ways to pray for our Growth and Renewal Programme.



You can find out more about the Growth and Renewal Programme

on our website here: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/renewal

HOMES The Pilgrims' Magazine Family life

Our The Way We Care approach to care has individuals at its heart. We're committed to creating warm and sharing communities where everyone has opportunities to contribute to family life

Middlefields House

Middlefields House in Chippenham is divided into four households of 12. Here are two stories that show how family members are helping to bring their whole community together.

Peter's Scrabble Club



"I used to play Scrabble in the evenings with my wife Elizabeth before she passed away we felt it kept our brains ticking over!

"I thought it would be a good idea to start something similar in our household at Middlefields House. I asked around to see if anyone else would be interested and they

> were. Therefore, I decided to start a Scrabble Club with the help of one of our volunteers, John, who is also a keen Scrabble player.

> > "One of the lovely things is that it enables other households to join us. It's always on a Thursday

> > > afternoon

and is popular. I get to meet other people who normally I would never have met and it gives us something to do.

"One member of our household has regular hospital visits which fall on the same day, so I thought it would be a good idea to hold an additional date in the evening so that she could attend. She is delighted and we play regularly on Monday evenings."

Shirley's bag for Betty

Julia, our Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitator at Middlefields House, explains how family member Shirley came up with a thoughtful gift that has been a blessing to a friend and an inspiration to the whole community:

"Shirley had seen Betty struggling to carry her mobile phone, handkerchief etc. in her pockets as she needed both hands for her walker, particularly when travelling to other parts of the household. Shirley came up with a design for a bag with pockets that would fit to Betty's walker and made it for Betty on her sewing machine.

"Betty is so pleased with it and is able to carry all her bits and pieces. Other ladies have seen it and demand has grown! A few of the



relatives of family members have caught on with the idea and made bags in different colours and materials for their loved ones.

"A brilliant idea that started with a very creative lady who wanted to help her fellow Middlefields friends – Betty is in a different household from Shirley."

Framland, Wantage

PumDim is our Registered Care Manager at Framland in Wantage. She shares how the team have been finding ways for family members to contribute to the wider life of the home by doing the things they love.

"We always listen to our family members. There is one lady who kept asking, 'What can I do to help?'. She clearly wanted to be busy with household activities, as she has been all her life. Our staff thought about what they could do to make this happen. They decided that they would regularly bring her towels to fold in the lounge. She also sometimes goes to help with sorting the washing in the laundry room. We've noticed that she's been more mentally alert as a result.

"We have another family member, Barbara, who wanted to go out. When our Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitator, Dave, went to the shops to buy things for the

home, she came along too. She was so cheerful when she came back she got a lot out of being in a different environment and seeing other people.

"Many of our family members are into baking. They'll make biscuits, cakes or pastries and have them for their 3pm snack. Recently our home celebrated National Pizza Day. Our family members made pizza that was enjoyed at teatime.

"Gardening is also popular. We have a small gardening corner where we grow tomato plants and flowers. When we had our summer fête, our family members planted seedlings that could be sold to help raise funds for the home."







Please pray:

Thank the Lord for how The Way We Care approach is transforming life for family members in our homes.

Find out more about The Way We Care:





An update on The PILGRIMAGE

In the Spring edition of our magazine, we launched our fundraiser to "step out on The Pilgrimage and step up support for dementia". This fantastic fundraising opportunity was focussed directly on supporting the work of our team of **Hummingbirds** who are an integral part of **The Way We Care**, in particular how we look after people living with dementia. Hummingbirds are employed with the sole purpose of spending time and connecting with people affected by dementia, providing a range of emotional, spiritual, and practical support.

You may be wondering why we chose The Pilgrimage to raise funds for our Hummingbird team; the answer is simple... of all the lifestyle changes that have been studied, taking regular physical exercise appears to be one of the best things we can do to reduce our risk of getting dementia.

GET INVOLVED

The annual cost of delivering Hummingbird support to our family members is a massive £290,000.

Our target was to raise £10,000 towards this cost and I am delighted to confirm that to date we have achieved a stunning £7,960.38 and are still counting the donations as they roll in.

We are delighted to share just some of our supporter adventures with you.

Sid's "Cycling Challenge"

In late July, Sid cycled 63 miles through the Surrey Hills, an area of outstanding natural beauty. Starting off at Milward House in Tunbridge Wells, where he is Business Manager, Sid arrived at Shottermill House in Surrey

some six hours later...!



Stephen and Susan's "Pushbike Pilgrimage"

One Friday morning in May saw the end of the first leg of a cycling Pilgrimage between Shottermill House in Haselmere and Koinonia Christian Care Home in Worthing by Chief Executive of Pilgrims' Friend Society Stephen and his wife Susan. They carried Christian greetings, messages and songs from one home to another, with a short devotional time in each home.

Indy's "Initial 10K Run"

The first person to take part in The Pilgrimage was Indy, a self-professed non-runner, who clocked up an amazing 10k before you could blink – little does he know we have already signed him up for next year...!



Alexandra's "Adventure"

Alexandra went on a very long walk between some locations significant to our charity. The image on the far left shows her outside the original Pilgrims' Friend Society alms houses which were built in 1834 at Sedgmoor Place, Camberwell, London. Established in 1807, back then, the organisation was known as the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society.

The last picture shows Alexandra wishing maps gave you an idea of the gradient you're about to walk up!

Cynthia's "75km

Cynthia completed her challenge

of walking 75km (47 miles)

over 10 consecutive days on

Sunday 3rd September, She

(9.3miles) on a Bank Holiday.

So what next I hear you ask...?

said it was hard going,

especially walking 15km

Strava Walk"

Jane's "Channel Swim"

Jane has opted to swim the Channel for her Pilgrimage. With 64 lengths being the equivalent to one mile, Jane swam a stunning 1,312 lengths of her local pool. After



an accident last year during which time Jane couldn't swim for six months, she is overjoyed to be swimming once again and for such a great cause, the Hummingbirds. Jane says she loves to swim...it's her piece of heaven!

Calling ALL Pilgrims...

We're asking you, our wonderful supporters, to once again put on your walking boots, running shoes, swimming flippers, cycle shoes and step out to raise money for our Hummingbirds.

Whatever your route, your distance, or your destination, join us in The Pilgrimage in 2024 and help support the wonderful work of our Hummingbird team.

The Pilgrimage will be open again on Saturday 30th March through until 31 October 2024 so please join us in taking part.

To sign up and receive your pack, please email us at info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk and add 'The Pilgrimage 2024' to the title of your email.

Barbara's "Beautiful Heritage Trail"

This might sound like a short stroll through the woods, but Barbara and a friend walked the 28-mile

Mary Jones Trail in one day, a walk that takes most people three days to complete.

To find out more about the Mary Jones Trail - visit https://www.gobala.org/en/ walking-trails/the-mary-jones-walk



Resources

Dementia Inclusive Church

This updated booklet describes six key steps that enable a church to be truly relevant for people with dementia and their families. Louise Morse, who authored the booklet, explains

What is meant by the term 'dementia inclusive church'?

Dementia is largely a disease of old age, and as our population ages so the number of people living with it has increased. This is reflected in most church fellowships, prompting many to learn about the condition and how to help people living with it and their families. As well as visiting with encouragement and practical help, many have formed day clubs and groups for people with dementia and their caregivers, both in their churches and in the local community. These churches have become more than dementia friendly: they are intentionally 'dementia inclusive.' An example is the ministry of Jesus Christ. He was called 'a friend of sinners' (Matthew 19:17), but He offered more than friendship: He made a way for them (and for us) to be included in His Kingdom.

Why is this book such an important resource for churches?

A Christian's sense of self is anchored in his or her relationship with Jesus, and in turn is strengthened by relationships with others, and the routine of attendance and church tradition. As dementia progresses and the sense of identity becomes less certain, churches help by 'holding' them in their faith. Believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). The symbolism in Ezekiel's Temple of the priests' chambers alongside the living flame in the Holy Place speaks of the church ministering to the spirit of the person, helping to keep the whole temple alight.

How have you seen/ heard of a 'dementia inclusive' approach to church transforming life for Christians living with dementia and their loved ones?

A church Elder told me of the elderly aunt whose nephew brought her to church meetings, even though he was not a believer. He did it, he said, because it made such a difference to her. The Elder told me that the nephew eventually came to faith himself and ioined the church.

We also see this happening in our care homes when, during worship or a Bible reading in the home's daily service 'family members' (as we call those who live with us) have been 'caught up' with the Holy Spirit and His peace. It helped a former pastor, now living with dementia, accept his loss, knowing he said, that the Lord was holding his hand. There are so many more stories I could tell.

Why did you personally feel compelled to create this resource?

For the same reason I wrote my books; for people to have the knowledge they need in order to give effective help and support to people with dementia and their families. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 tells us to build one another up and church helpers are blessed when they see their efforts working well. A frequent comment after I've given a talk at an event or in a church is, "I wish I'd known that earlier!"



Visiting a Person With Dementia, £3

With contributions from Dr Jennifer Bute, psychogeriatric nurse Janet Jacob, and author and cognitive behavioural therapist Louise Morse, Visiting A Person With Dementia is designed to help friends and family spend happy and positive time with their loved ones. Relatives and friends often shy away from visiting people with dementia because the normal ground rules don't apply, and they don't know how to communicate effectively. This booklet was written to help you know how to prepare to visit and how to bless people with dementia.



Brain and Soul Boosting at Christmas Time

> This Christmas, why not bring everyone together with this special edition of our Brain and Soul Boosting (BSB) resource?

Louise says, "Brain and Soul Boosting at Christmas Time is an activity that exercises our brains, warms our hearts and brings us into the Spirit of Christmas. Questions prompt thoughts and discussions about Christmas, and there are activities that everyone will enjoy. Although BSB was developed for older people, younger people are enjoying it too, which makes it ideal for Christmas and family get-togethers. It can even be done over Zoom!"

> This version follows the arc of the Christmas story, from the Old Testament to the New. It is brought out in three separate sessions, each drawing out a different aspect of Christmas and what it means in our lives. The first session looks at how Jesus' birth was planned and prophesied, the second the angel's announcement to Mary and the journey to Bethlehem, and the third the birth of Jesus that we celebrate on Christmas Day.



FREE DOWNLOAD!

Brain and



For our full list of resources and to order online, visit:

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources

Download your FREE Brain and Soul **Boosting at Christmas Time session here:** www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/bsb-christmas Bill and Pauline, both 88, are living at Koinonia Christian Care Home in Worthing. In his later years, Bill began writing a series of Bible study materials that have been a blessing to others

are sitting side by side by the window in Bill's bedroom at Koinonia. The term 'koinonia' is Greek for 'partnership' or 'fellowship'. "We've been married 65 years," says Bill. "I can't imagine it any other way." Having shared so many years of married life, these stalwart partners now have rooms next to each other.

When I meet Bill and Pauline they

"I first met Pauline in Eastbourne North High Street," Bill explains. "We were in Youth for Christ and there were meetings every quarter. Pauline was in the choir and was part of a gang of girls walking down the High Street, arms linked, taking up the pavement, singing

> and laughing. I was the only male, coming in the other direction. I looked along the line and there was Pauline and I thought 'She's a good one. She's one of the best."

> > Bill and Pauline married in 1957. Bill had a job working as a graphic designer,



commuting from Eastbourne to studios in Knightsbridge, Westminster and Tottenham Court Road. "It was an exciting

experience," he says. "We used to design materials for big clients like British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), Dunlop Tyres and Dulux."

Their first son, Andrew, was born in 1961. "It was getting a bit much commuting back and forth every day so we decided to move to London and lived in Hackney," says Bill. The move was short-lived, however. "Big city living wasn't really for us and so we came back to West Sussex."

Their second son, Darren, soon followed. Bill went on to set up his own graphic design studio in Warwick Street, Worthing. Faith was always at the heart of their relationship and they were part of Southwick Baptist Church.

When retirement came, Bill felt compelled to study the Bible more closely. "I remember it was in 2009. I was sitting in front of the television and I decided that I could better use my time getting to know the word of God more."

Bill drew on many books and materials passed down to him from his own father, who was a pastor. He found the 19th century Bible commentary written by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown especially

What began as a personal endeavour developed into a series of materials that can be used by others. With the help of his son. Bill has set up a website wordlightmypath.com. On it can be found over 60 studies for books of the Bible including Job, Ezekiel, 1 Corinthians and Revelation, plus topical resources.

"I feel my being able to write these has been a work of the Spirit," he says. "The line of a worship song by Andrae Crouch comes to mind, '...if I gain any praise, Let it go to Calvary"."

Knowing God has helped Bill and Pauline to get through difficulties. "I had to go to Worthing Hospital due to a problem with my foot," savs Bill. "The nurses and doctors treated me wonderfully but I was in a lot of pain. I found myself praying, 'God, help me to overcome.' The pain wasn't taken away but God gave me the strength to get through it."

Where to go after hospital presented a problem, "Pauline is much more mobile than I am but doing all the fetching and carrying was getting too much for her, especially as she has dementia," says Bill.

It was around this time that Bill and Pauline's son Andrew bumped into John, our Registered Care Manager at Koinonia. They



"Pauline was very resistant at first," says Bill. "But we prayed about it as a family. All of a sudden Pauline came round to this way of thinking. It was a leading of the Lord. My step-mum Nora was in Koinonia some years ago, so we had that link too."

Since moving in in summer 2023, Bill and Pauline feel like a burden has been removed. "The staff are so wonderful and kind. everything is done for you," says Bill. "It was a big change but before long Pauline was very thankful that we lived here."

Bill is as especially grateful to one carer who comes from Nepal.

He thinks of everything, even before I do. Caring is such a vocation and he clearly has a gift. Nothing is too much trouble.

For Bill and Pauline, it's important to show their gratitude. "It is our prayer that the staff would see the love of Jesus shining out of us," says Bill. "We thank them and say 'you be blessed."

...CONTINUED

Gift Aid

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I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the
amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to
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our website. Please visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/

Christmas23

PMDEC23

Do something really useful this Christmas - support our appeal and help older people thrive

£37

The average cost of an unwanted Christmas gift in the UK last year

£300

The amount the average person in the UK spent on gifts in 2022

The amount the average person in the UK spent on the festive season in 2022

Source: www.wealthify.com/blog/how-much-should-i-spend-on-christmas-presents

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One-off gift I would like to make a ONE-OFF DONATION of:

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Could you or a loved one come to live with us? Our homes and housing schemes would love to hear from you

Support Office: 0300 303 1403 info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



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CONTINUES OVERLEAF...