The Pilgrims MAGAZINE

HOW TO... Connect your church to a care home

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

The National Care Forum's VIC RAYNER

What can we do about social care?

BACK TO SCHOOL

dementia resources

From silly scrapes to sloppy semolina Our family members tell all



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.

Got a great story?

Email our editor Helen on helen.mckayferguson@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

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Pilgrims' Friend Society 175 Tower Bridge Road London SF1 2AL

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk **C** 0300 303 1403 info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

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Emmaus House in Cumbria joins the Pilgrims' Friend Society family

meeting

other

room, and

facilities.

We are delighted to announce that on 23rd October 2023 a new care home will officially become part of Pilgrims' Friend Society. Emmaus House is situated in Moresby Parks, a village on the outskirts of Whitehaven, Cumbria.

The 26-bed care home was set up by the Cumbria Emmaus Trust (CET) with the aim of providing a home for elderly Christians living in Cumbria. The home was funded by donations from the Christian Brethren Assemblies in Cumbria and opened in 1992, originally with 24 bedrooms. In 2008 an extension was built which added two further bedrooms, a manager's

office, a hairdressing 'And it came to salon, a pass as they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them?

Luke 24:15

The care home is much-valued by the local community, providing a warm and loving environment where older people can be cared for in line with Christian values. Luke 24:15 has been the cornerstone, vision and ethos of CET over the last 36 years since the trust was formed.

Gillian Davidson has been Registered Manager at the home since 2014. She says, "In our local area, we are the only overtly Christian care home. For many people, our Christian values are the reason they have come to live with us. We are pleased to be joining with Pilgrims' Friend Society which shares our Christian ethos and which, as a larger organisation, can provide us with expertise and guidance as we serve older people in what is today a very regulated sector."

Trustees from the home approached Pilgrims' Friend Society with regard to a potential takeover after recognising that there was need for greater support at a strategic level.



Neal Shelton-Green, our Assistant Director of Operations, has been working closely with the team at Emmaus House over the past few months. He says, "Emmaus House aligns with our values and feels like an excellent fit for our family, especially as this will be mean we now have a care home in the north west of England."

Stephen Hammersley, our Chief Executive Officer, says, "I am delighted that after prayerfully working together the trustees of both charities have agreed that Emmaus House will be passed over to Pilgrims' Friend Society. Please pray for us as we continue to build relationships and as the care home becomes established within the Pilgrims' Friend Society fold."



This Spring we launched The Pilgrimage, inviting participants to step out on an active challenge and help us step up support for dementia through the provision of our Hummingbirds (see p.12). One individual to answer our call was Indy Modare, our Business Manager at Evington Home in Leicester. Indy challenged himself to run 10km, raising £650. Thank you Indy!

Meanwhile, Sid Martin, our Business Manager at Milward House in Tunbridge Wells, took on a bike ride of over 60 miles, cycling all the way to Shottermill House, our home in Haslemere. Sid has raised over £1,000. He says, "It was a good incentive to get back on my bike and it was lovely riding through some beautiful countryside. Our Hummingbirds do such an amazing job it was wonderful to be able to support them in this way."



In other **news**

Nathan Page joins us at Koinonia Christian Care Home in Worthing as Business Manager. Jane Sprittles and Yolande Dorgu join Dorothea Court, Bedford as Housing Scheme Manager and Assistant Manager respectively. Elaine McKenzie Smith is our new Assistant Manager at Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie. In our Support Office, Anica Kerr joins us as Property Service Manager.

For more great stories, follow us on social media:



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NEWS



Interview with **Vic Rayner,** the National Care Forum

Vic Rayner is the Chief Executive of the National Care Forum (NCF), the membership organisation for not-for-profit organisations in the care and support sector. As a member of NCF, we invited Vic to look round our state-of-the-art care home Middlefields House in Chippenham, which opened in 2021. As well as giving her the grand tour, we took the opportunity to ask her about all things social care, including the unique possibilities Christians have to care for the oldest in society

What was your first impression of Middlefields House?

The front entrance where you come straight into the café [The Harvest Coffee Shop] really feels connected to the community. When I first arrived it was fairly quiet but by the time I left it was absolutely alive with people, including those who lived at the home going off to lunch with relatives or friends. It was interesting to hear that the café is being used by people who live locally because there isn't that facility in the immediate area. The care home is actually creating a resource over and above what's available in the wider community.

At Middlefields House we have a household model, with 48 'family members' living in four households of 12. What struck you about this?

I think the household model at Middlefields House has real meaning to it. Sometimes care home providers say 'we're running household models' and the doors are different and the wallpaper's different and nothing else. This felt like it was people's home. They had an identity as being part of that particular household.

It was very clear that care was very personcentred rather than task-oriented. I didn't see a single person writing notes, I didn't see people under pressure rushing around. There were a lot of people and every one had a smile on their face.



To see the more public and communal spaces in use was positive. Very often you'll see spaces like these that aren't really being used. But what you've done is created some smaller spaces that are a bit more intimate. If people just want to meet with two or three people they can do that and it's quiet and there are no other distractions.

What stood out to you as being different from other settings you've visited?

The focus on faith is very strong. I haven't seen that in the same way in many organisations. I've been to quite a number of Jewish services where there is a very strong focus on faith. And other settings where there is a strong Christian ethos but much of that is geared around the chaplaincy. I think the idea that there is a continuity of faith amongst staff and family members is really interesting, and that's an important part of generating an "assets-focused" culture that everybody's contributing to.

I also loved the Hummingbird role (for more details on our Hummingbird role, see p.12). For me it's a very affirming role and could be a great introduction for people who aren't experienced in care. As a Hummingbird, you're not linked with one person all the time, but become very familiar with lots of people. I like that.

6 ...often faith-based organisations are very good at creating an environment volunteers can be part of..."



How do you think a Christian or faithbased approach can be beneficial to those needing care?

I think a lot of it is about identity. Being part of something that reflects bits of your identity is really important for a lot of people. I also think with faith there's an unwritten expectation around service or giving that actually makes it more possible to ask for help when you need it. If you've been of a faith much of your life maybe you know what it's like to help others, and actually that it's a two-way experience and it's okay that it's your turn to receive help now.

There are elements of familiarity that come with faith that's helpful. If you've left your home, or your family and friends, or lost a partner, you are then offered an environment that maintains elements of that structure.

I think there is a huge role for volunteers in the care sector, and often faith-based organisations are very good at creating an environment that volunteers can be part of, including building intergenerational links with local people.

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Personally, what inspired you to become a champion for older people?

My mother is an occupational therapist and she was a big influence on me. She worked in a large psychiatric hospital in Cane Hill in Surrey, and I would spend time there during the summer. I saw what institutional living was like and definitely had a sense of 'there must be a better way to do things'. This was around the time when people in those kinds of settings were suddenly getting a voice. There was very influential work going on in the disability movement. The phrase that was hit upon was 'does he take sugar?' That was used to demonstrate just how ignored disabled communities were; someone is capable of giving their own preference, but everybody looks to the carer.

I am a classic voluntary, charity advocate. I'm not of faith – my faith is in humanity and people and I think I've got a contribution to give to communities. I'm very much driven by a sense of social justice. I think people should be able to have the best and most fulfilling life that they can. Where we can do something about it, I want to get involved.



Staffing is one of the most pressing issues in the social care sector. How do you think we can address this?

Sadly, there are people who have an absolutely rubbish experience of working in care. What you need to show them is 'There is working in care and there is working for Pilgrims' Friend Society and they are different things.' Rali [our Registered Manager at Middlefields House] and her colleagues are clear advocates of what they offer. I also think it's about thinking more flexibly, giving potential staff the opportunity to try out the role before they commit. When it comes to younger staff, we may need to accept that care is something they do for three or four years and then they go on to do something else, and we shouldn't be disappointed by that, but rather build a training programme that caters for it.

At NCF you've recently launched the Faith and Spirituality Network. Can you tell us more about that?

It came out of our bringing together faithbased organisations to work with the Archbishop of Canterbury's Reimagining Care Commission. We thought, 'we've got a lot of faith-based organisations amongst our membership. Why not bring them together?' People told us that it was hugely important, and that they'd never been connected in this way before. The group included people who had a very strong faith themselves but found that wasn't necessarily reflected in their organisation who wanted to talk about faith in their caring role. The network is very new, we're very interested to have people come in and be part of shaping it.



With people living longer, how is the care sector going to meet everyone's needs?

According to the UN's report on World Population Ageing, there were 703 million people aged 65 years or over in the world in 2019. The number of older people is projected to double to 1.5 billion in 2050. With the best will in the world, we cannot double our care provision. Instead, we need a rethink.

You may or may not like this analogy... In the UK, our care system is built on a welfare state. The government used to treat us like cows. You're out in the field and the sun's shining, and when the weather gets bad you bring everyone in and you look after them. Instead, what we need to do is prepare to be squirrels. We need to spend time putting little pockets of provision around and about and so when people need them they can access them.

We spend an awful lot of time thinking about what we should do about care, and what we really need to do is think about what we need to do to make it manageable for people to live independently in communities for as long as possible. It's about thinking about transport systems, forms of housing, employment opportunities. It's that whole agenda around ageing better.

Japan is a country to look at for how they are managing their ageing population. So is the US where President Biden has put a much bigger focus on home care, investing billions of dollars. As a result, there's been a massive mushrooming explosion of informal, unregulated care at home, utilising technology to pull it together. One interesting platform to have sprung up is Papa.com. It's an online network of people who are prepared to come and do your shopping and that kind of thing. Please pray: That ordinary Christians would play a part in improving the lives of

Ultimately, what we need to do is focus much more on prevention, about how we manage our own health – both physically and mentally – so that people remain fitter for longer.

How do you think the church can support people in doing this?

The idea that older people can be part of a community that looks out for them, welcomes them, feeds them physically and mentally, is hugely significant. People feel stronger because they are part of something. Many of the things you do on a daily basis help, whether you call it prayer or meditation. We know that singing is good for the brain.

The church is a place where people can connect and relationships can deepen. There's a fantastic organisation that started down in Brighton called Gig Buddies that works with people with learning disabilities. The founder took the time to discover what kind of music people liked, and then if the band was gigging locally, they'd go together. I don't know what the equivalent for the church could be, Faith Buddies maybe? Something that brings people with a shared interest together. Reaching out with empathy, showing compassion. These are things that are great for well-being.

For the Spring edition of this magazine, Dr Anna Dixon MBE, chair of the Reimagining Care Commission, wrote a piece explaining the Church of England's recommendations for care. Read it here: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/news-views/reimagining-care-falls-to-all-of-us

Playing your cards right

OFFICIAL BULLS

CANASTA

At Pilgrim Gardens, our independent living housing scheme in Leicester, a group of ladies meets regularly to play the card game canasta. Our Communications Manager Helen McKay-Ferguson joined them for a whistle-stop introduction

On a low coffee table in the corner of the lounge everything is laid out ready for this afternoon's canasta game - two decks of cards, a booklet containing the official rules, a notebook and pen for keeping score and a handy

card-shuffling machine which, at the touch of a button, will shuffle your cards in a trice. Outside, snow twirls down (I visited back in March); inside, everything is warm and cosy.

The group today is made up of Jill, Marjorie (owner of the trusty card-shuffling machine) and Stella. Canasta is usually played in partners so today the group are playing separately in a three-handed version of the game.

The ladies at Pilgrim Gardens started playing canasta in mid-2020 when the lockdown rules were slightly relaxed and meeting indoors in

small groups was permitted. "We'd all been sitting in our rooms on our own for so long," says Jill. "That was a bad time if you liked company. Even after the lockdown rules were relaxed there wasn't really anywhere to go. Playing games was something to do inside."

Canasta provided a good level of challenge to keep the brain engaged and break up the boredom of lockdown.

As card games go, canasta is a relative newcomer, developed in 1939 in Montevideo, Uruguay by two bridge-playing friends, lawyer Segundo Santos and architect Alberto Serrato, who wanted to create a game less timeconsuming than bridge and less dependent on chance than rummy. The pair often held their test games at a restaurant, borrowing a little basket - canastillo in Spanish - from the waiter to store their cards. Canastillo then became canasta, the standard word in Spanish for basket, and easier to say.

There's certainly a lot to get your head around. After the cards are shuffled (I'm given the honour of pressing the button on the special



machine), each player is dealt 13 cards. The aim of the game is to get to 5,000 points over several rounds, and points are scored by making melds, made up of cards of the same suit or rank, supplemented by wild cards. Different cards are afforded different values, and your first meld must be worth at least 50 points before you can place it down.

Today, I watch over Stella's shoulder. Stella moved to Pilgrim Gardens part-way through lockdown when the card-playing group was already in swing. Stella says, "I wasn't really a card player before I came here, I was more into board games. But I saw this little group playing and thought, 'that looks fun.' I like a challenge."

For the first three or four weeks. Stella just watched what everyone else did. "I took away the rule book and studied it in my flat between sessions," she says, "Then I felt ready to join in."

Stella sorts through her cards. When it's our turn she picks up two from the deck and we make our first meld, made up of three jacks worth 10 points each and a two, which in this



One reason Stella moved to Pilgrim Gardens was to be part of a community. She shared her experiences as part of our Getting Real about Getting Older campaign. Head to our GRGO hub to watch her video:

game is a wild card worth 20 points. A couple of turns later we strike it lucky when Stella picks up a red three, known as a red trey, and worth 100 points.

At the end of the round, when the points are totted up, Jill is in the lead. The cards are reshuffled and play begins all over again.

Lockdown is, thankfully, a thing of the past. But members of this little card-playing group continue to meet most afternoons. "What's lovely is that it's become a bit of a magnet for other people," says Stella, "People know we're likely to be here and so they'll drop in for a chat."



What's lovely is that it's become a bit of a magnet for other people..."

Do things ever get competitive? "We all like to win and there's quite a bit of strategy involved, but a lot of it comes down to luck. Sometimes I'll have a little moan about my hand and joke that I'd better go off to do something else. But it's just light-hearted fun."

The Way WE CARE

At Pilgrims' Friend Society, we have developed a bespoke Christian approach to care which we call The Way We Care. Our Operations Manager Friederike Hamilton heads up this area of our work. Here, she explains what makes this approach to care so special, including the vital role of The Way We Care Leads in each of our homes

What is The Way We Care? It's caring for older people as individuals in a way that recognises each person has been uniquely created by God. As we age, physical needs increase and we may need support with the tasks of daily life. But emotional and spiritual needs remain too. We have our different likes and dislikes. Spiritual growth continues even as other abilities may decrease. At the heart of dignified, respectful care is the ability to see the whole person and respond to them where they are, giving them opportunities to contribute to life within a community.

A biblical basis

Every part of what The Way We Care looks like in the daily lives of our care homes is rooted in how the Bible tells us to treat and support others around us. We take the time to get to know each person really well, finding out



about their life history, their interests and preferences, and their spiritual journey. We'll ask our 'family members', as we call those who live with us, if they have any particular Bible verses and hymns they like. Devotional times are part of life in our homes, with regular opportunities for family members to meet for times of collective worship, including hymns, prayer and a talk from the Bible. There are opportunities for family members to take an active role in the spiritual life of the home. At Shottermill House in Haslemere, for example, there's a Bible study group that meets led by family members.

Our The Way We Care Leads

Each of our homes has a The Way We Care Lead who works closely with family members, observing what is happening and seeking to address needs as they arise in partnership with care staff and family members. Our The Way We Care Lead also has a vital role to play in training other staff, ensuring they understand our vision for care and have the tools they need to support those in our homes to flourish. Life in a care home can be busy. Our The Way We Care Leads work closely with our managers and gather feedback from staff to build a bigger picture, ensuring the needs of individuals are picked up and responded to.

Caring for those with dementia

Many of those in our homes are living with dementia. They may no longer find it possible to articulate their own needs. That's why it is so important that the staff in our homes go the extra mile, tuning in to them and making sure they have everything they need to feel contented.

Our approach to caring for those with dementia has been developed with reference to leading figures in the field, notably Professor Tom Kitwood. While working at the University of Bradford in the late 1980s, Kitwood made the case for a person-centred approach to care, where each person is cared for in response to their needs, as opposed to staff sticking rigidly to routines and practices dictated by the setting. Central to this approach is recognising that the challenging

Day-to-day life in our homes is transformed by **The Way We Care**. Here, four of our The Way We Care Leads share some of the ways they've seen this happening...

Jenny at Evington Home, Leicester

As part of The Way We Care, we work closely with people's families. We have one lady, Anne, whose family asked if I could help support her interactions with staff as she would often respond to questions by saying, "I don't know". I've made a conversation book for Anne that she can look at with carers and our Hummingbirds. It has things in it like details of her life history, her likes and dislikes and some poems about Winnie-the-Pooh as I know she really loves reading those. Now everyone has some ideas for ways to connect with her.

or unusual behaviour a person may exhibit may signal an unmet need they are trying to communicate.

We also include the 'feelings matter most' approach championed by David Sheard which recognises how a person's feelings remain, even as cognitive function may diminish.

Across our homes, we use the GEMS framework developed by Teepa Snow, a dementia care specialist and occupational therapist. Under this framework, each person is seen as a precious jewel who may exhibit different behaviours and require different kinds of responses depending on where they are on their dementia journey.

We also employ Hummingbirds who play a vital role in supporting individuals living with dementia. The name Hummingbird is inspired by how a hummingbird flits from flower to flower. Our Hummingbirds move from person to person, providing short, meaningful connections. They are trained to recognise the various stages of dementia, understanding the best ways to approach individuals, respecting their current reality and connecting with them accordingly. This dedicated approach means that no one goes long without an interaction.

Lux at Shottermill House, Haslemere

Once a week I'll sit down with Deborah, our Activities & Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitator, and we'll talk about our family members' needs and how we can better support them. One of our family members needed extra support with her sensory needs due to her dementia we found some materials which helped her with this and she has been a lot happier and more settled since.



Sonya at Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze

Recently, we've been focusing on our dining room etiquette. One lady told me she felt like she was being rushed. Now, if anyone is still eating on a table, staff know to wait before clearing plates. We've worked on creating a calming atmosphere in the dining room, which is adjacent to the lounge. Now at mealtimes the television goes off and we put on some soothing music. Before the meal, we all pause and one of our family members says grace – we ask a different person each day. I've made some little cards with grace written on in case anyone needs that as a support. It's a quiet moment of reflection and a lovely way to include connection with the Lord during the day.

Mark at Emmaus House, Harrogate

Stopping to ask questions is so important. We have a gentleman living with us, Barry, who wasn't eating anything at breakfast time. There was cereal, there was toast. It turned out that what he actually likes is a hot breakfast. So now that's what he has.

It's also important not to assume things. One evening I was on the evening shift. I asked one lady what she would like to drink and she said, "Coffee." Another lady, Maggie, was sitting close by. She said, "I'd love a coffee." I was so surprised. Maggie always drinks tea. At least, I thought she did. It's incidents like this that help us reflect on the importance of not getting stuck in patterns and taking the time to ask.



To find out more about The Way We Care, visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk /thewaywecare

Please pray:

• That God would be close to all our The Way We Care Leads, guiding them each day to see the needs of our family members

• For Friederike as she oversees this important part of our work



Welcome to the **AUTUMN 2023 DAILY PRAYER GUIDE**

Welcome to the Pilgrims' Friend Society Autumn Prayer Guide. Thank you so much for taking the time to pray for and with us for the work of our charity. We are so blessed by the uniting of the saints and commitment to prayer.

Here's how you can be praying to support our work each day.

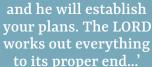
We've listed our homes and housing schemes and their managers, as well as the other teams and projects that make up the work of Pilgrims' Friend Society.





Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth

Emmaus House, Harrogate - Chrissie Medway-Steel **Carey Gardens, Kirby Muxloe** – Andy Harrison



Proverbs 16:3-4

9

'Commit

to the LORD

whatever you do,



Those living in our homes and schemes

Praise God for all those who live with us. Ask Him to keep them in His presence each day.



Thank God for our wonderful, hard-working and resilient care team. Pray that they would know God's grace and joy as they work looking after our family members.



Evington Home, Leicester – Jeanette Davis and Indy Modare

Dorothea Court, Bedford – Jane Sprittles and Yolande Dorgu



Our catering, maintenance, and administration teams

Give thanks for the brilliant work that our support teams do across our homes and schemes. Ask God to provide all the practical help and wisdom that they need, and for insight to know how to manage any challenges they face.



Pray that more people become aware of our resources and make use of them. Praise God that the resources are helping many people manage the challenges of later life.

Wednesdays



Royd Court, Mirfield – Vicki Miller Finborough Court Housing, Great Finborough





Give thanks for our incredible Operations Managers who support our home and scheme managers. Pray for strength and resilience as they oversee the work, and for good health and safety as they travel around the country.



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



Finborough Court, Great Finborough – Rachel Fishburne and Karen Bleay Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester – Andy Harrison





Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators

Thank God that our ACE Programme is flourishing and that so much is being done in our homes. Thank God for all the activities which take place in our homes and for our community connections. Pray many more connections would be made.

Growth and Renewal Programme

Thank God for the vision to provide great Christian care for the future. Pray that He would provide the right place for our next home and all the insight, wisdom, and resources that we need to move the Programme forward.

Thursdays

Framland, Wantage – PumDim Skinner Koinonia Christian Care Home, Worthing – John Manea and Nathan Page





Our Property, Finance, HR and Communications teams

Praise God 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.



Thank God for the support of local churches over the years, and for growing connections with schools and other community groups. Pray that more connections would be made, enabling more older people to be reached through the local church.





Middlefields House, Chippenham – Rali Ivanova, Chris Boyes and Nathan Barnes Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie - Tina Luther



Volunteers

Praise God for those who give their time and talents freely to support our communities. Ask God to prompt more people to come and be a part of our work for a few hours a week, and for our ACE Facilitators as they oversee the volunteering work.



Thank God for His faithfulness to the charity for more than 200 years. Thank Him 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.





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





and trustees

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

Families and relatives

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



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

You can also get our monthly Family News email which contains prayer updates, plus details of happenings from across the organisation. Visit: **www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/keepintouch**

Resources

Autumn 2023 RESOURCES 19

These resources have been specially created to support those living with dementia and those supporting them

Dementia resources – bundle

Are you and a loved one facing dementia? Or are you part of a church seeking to support those living with dementia? This bundle brings together three resources created by Louise Morse, cognitive behavioural therapist and author and speaker for Pilgrims' Friend Society, each written from a Christian perspective.

Putting the Pieces Together is our dementia information pack and contains leaflets on different aspects of dementia, including diagnosis, managing challenging behaviour, and caring for the caregiver. Having separate inserts means you can pull out specific information when needed, without leafing through an entire book.

Full

price £29

SPECIAL

PRICE

£24.99

The book Could it be Dementia? explores the different kinds of dementia and how people may be affected. It is designed to help you understand what those living with dementia

are experiencing and how to interact with them, pointing towards the hope of salvation we have in Christ.

Worshipping with Dementia is a devotional resource, with simple daily devotions which could be used one-to-one or in small group settings. Each devotion includes a Bible verse or verses, a meditation, a prayer and a hymn. There is also a foreword where Louise explores why Christians are called to care spiritually for people who may not be able to show their response.

Brain and

Brain and Soul Boosting, £20 by Louise Morse

Our updated and refreshed small-group resource is designed to deliver cognitive and spiritual stimulation for older people, including those with dementia. Devised by Louise Morse and Janet Jacob, psychogeriatric nurse and former care home manager, Brain and Soul Boosting is a series of sessions which support older people to build relationships and retain healthy cognition. Themes include everything from celebrations to gardens, birds and holidays. Each session follows a carefully planned sequence that works well, leading participants into discussions and ending with a story from the Bible that illustrates the theme.

For our full list of resources and to order online, visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources Alternatively, 📞 0300 303 1403



Words: Sarah Slater

Sarah Slater is the Training Lead across the Church of England Diocese of Guildford. She explains how a talk by Louise Morse, speaker and author for Pilgrims' Friend Society, helped to equip pastoral teams for ministry with older people

Earlier this year I was hosting a training event for pastoral visitors and pastoral assistants from churches across our diocese. This was the first time the group had met altogether since before the pandemic, a total of about 300 volunteers from around 160 varied parishes. We were in much need of reconnection and encouragement. Louise had been warmly recommended to me by Pippa Cramer, the pastoral care and seniors minister at Holy Trinity Church Claygate (which I also attend), known for co-founding the Daily Hope phoneline and creating the Hymns We Love evangelistic resource for seniors with husband Steve.

> Louise understood from the outset what I was trying to achieve. In fact, in preparation for the day she took the time to have three video calls with me, of around one hour each, to gain a deep understanding of what we needed. She really listened.

> > At the event, which took place at St John's Church,



Egham, the talk Louise gave was so uplifting. Those who serve older people can sometimes feel over-looked and insignificant. Louise affirmed and encouraged everyone in their roles. She helped everyone to see how valuable ministry with older people is.

C Those who serve older people can sometimes feel over-looked and insignificant. "

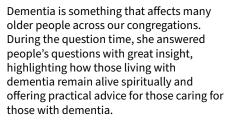
She did this by pointing people back to God's view of older people as revealed in the Bible. She spoke of how older people have so much to give and should be honoured. There's a risk they can become the forgotten generation. Louise helped us focus on how older people are created in God's image, and how they have real wisdom that should be valued and shared.



Louise spoke with so much passion and so much heart. You can't fail to be inspired in her presence. People were drawn in by her incredible storytelling. She spoke about individuals like David, well into his 90s and the 'spiritual father' of the care home where he lives. And Douglas, who wrote a book at the age of 100.

She quoted Billy Graham who said, "I had been taught all of my life how to die, but no one had ever taught me how to grow old." She helped us reflect on how there is important work to be done in changing our own attitudes to ageing, and to those around us who are further along the path.

Louise also helped people see just how deep an impact befriending ministries can have. What may start with a cup of tea and a chat can lead to opportunities for prayer and reading the Bible, with older people returning to and reconsidering truths they may have heard many years before in Sunday School. She pointed to people the Brain and Soul Boosting resource (see p.19) she has created specially to equip church members for ministry.



Everyone came away feeling inspired and encouraged. There were those who have been ministering to older people for 20 years or more who received a muchneeded boost to carry on, and those who are new to this area of ministry who came away with an enlarged view of its scope and potential.

What Louise brings is truly unique. You can't bottle it. She will speak into your individual context and those who hear her will come away truly blessed. I'd encourage any church seeking to honour its older members to invite Louise to come and speak.



For more information about Louise and her work, including her latest Zoom meetings and resources, visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources/louise-morse



Back to SCHOOL

As the Autumn term rolls around again those living in our homes share memories of their own school days

Shottermill House, Haslemere

Pamela

My earliest memory of school was walking with my mum to Beacon Hill School, it was a beautiful walk along the Golden Valley in the countryside. The teacher was very kind and there was a very large class of children, which was the way then. In fact, I later became a teacher and my first posting was at the primary school I started my school life at!

My secondary school education was at Farnham Girls Grammar. We wore a school uniform with a felt hat and had a leather satchel to carry. My secondary education was in part during the Second World War. Our school was joined by a school from London – that would have taken some organising! The children were billeted in homes close to the school, though we didn't have any room to home anyone, however we made good friends with them.



School lunches during the war were great, as during a time of rationing the school took great care in ensuring that the children had one really good meal a day. I had a long bus journey to school, Hindhead to Farnham, which was about 40 minutes. It was a difficult journey especially in the winter, as the windows were blacked out and the lights were dipped. We told the bus driver as we got on where we needed to go. This was important as all street signs had had the names removed. The buses were always overcrowded, and we had been taught to give our seats to older people. Unfortunately, if we gave our seats to older people coming onto the bus there were then too many people wanting to travel on the bus and we were turned off... sometimes meaning that we were two hours late for school. The headmistress then advised that we stayed seated until

My lasting memory was of the excellent teachers. My favourite subjects were music, maths and history. I enjoyed education so much that I became a teacher, and even taught part-time at Shottermill Junior School. It was quite a surprise to me when I came to live at Shottermill House to discover we have a connection to the school through a games afternoon!

the bus got going again so that we wouldn't

be turned off and we took her advice.

Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth

Pat

Ursula

I remember my first day at school very well. There were 50 children in my class, all little tots barely five years old. The babies, as we

were called, were kept separate and protected from the rough and tumble of the rest of the school. We had our own playground and climbing frame. In the afternoon we would have to lie down on raffia mats in the hall for an afternoon nap, whether you wanted to or not. Most did accept this and went to sleep as it was quite a long day – we would be dropped off at 9am and picked up at 4.15pm.

To write we used chalk on slates that had a wooden frame. The teachers kept control even though they had 50 children. By the time we went up to the next class at age six, we had a general knowledge of how to learn but we were afraid of the teacher. At breaktime the boys and girls were separated and had their own playgrounds.

Beryl

I really enjoyed playing netball and we had a hoop in the playground to practise with. Once a fortnight my class had the treat of having our lunch at

treat of having our lunch at what was called a 'British' restaurant. So many children had joined the school from the city during the war that the canteen couldn't cope.

One week my domestic science teacher allowed my friend and I to make some raspberry buns unsupervised. We felt quite smug about this until after the buns were in the oven and we realised we hadn't added the jam because we'd been so busy talking.

Once I was almost caught by my headteacher climbing in through a classroom window when I was a prefect. But my friends inside saved me by crowding around to cover up the fact that half of me was still in the playground.

At the end of an exam I made the mistake of practising a whistle but whistled so loud it disrupted the exam hall so I lost all my marks as a punishment.

My earliest school days were pretty awful as I went to a very old-fashioned school where the toilets were just a plank with holes in and no lights so quite scary. My junior school teacher would also slap you on the hand if you got anything wrong.

At a different school I had one brilliantly organised teacher who would teach half of her class of 44 pupils then leave them work to do and go and teach the other half. She was very imaginative, encouraging us to be creative in our writing and giving us visual aids to help us. I would take a packed lunch and would have a drink from the fountain. One treat was an ice cream man who came with a horse and cart and would stop just outside the school gates. So, we were allowed to go to him and buy ice lollies for a penny or ice cream for a halfpenny.



Middlefields House, Chippenham

Joan

I started school at the age of six. My mum kept me home an extra year because she wanted me to start school at the same time as my sister, so that we could go together as we were close and still are.

We lived in a Devonshire village called Drewsteignton for 11 years on a farm of both cows and horses (my grandfather made his fortune by buying and selling horses in the First World War).

I enjoyed school and had a good relationship with the headmaster and did well at school. Later in years when I was married and moved into a butcher's shop, I found the headmaster and his wife were our next-door neighbours. They had no family of their own and I remember that they taught me how to garden. They were our neighbours until they died.

Before school, I would help to deliver milk on a pony, which was named Boudicea. There was a trap driven by a milk maid named Maudy. One day it overturned and I still clearly remember my sister shouting 'Maudy is dead' but she wasn't, she was unconscious from being hit as it overturned.

I went to a private secondary school for girls, paid for by my grandmother and I remember that it was a difficult time for and it took me a while to settle down. I took a keen interest in current affairs and politics and still do today.

I still remember the semolina and rice puddings – 'no thanks!' to eating them again. Our staple diet was sausages and mash and stew. I took sandwiches to school which were filled with spreads that came from jars. Bread came from local bakers and I still remember the sound the van made when he had switched off his engine to coast down the hills, which they used to do to save on fuel as it was so scarce in the war.

I left school at 16, which was unusual as generally most left at 14 years. I then went to work at library headquarters.

Finborough Court, Great Finborough

Jane



When I was about 14 or 15 we went on a school trip to London to visit the Festival of Britain on the South Bank. The aim of the festival was to make people feel good about Britain after the war and it was 100 years after the Great Exhibition. We visited lots of exhibitions in the Discovery Dome. I can remember that one of these was about how babies

develop in the womb. We slept in a bunker under the ground where the soldiers had slept during the war. The beds were quite hard and we could hear trains rattling past above the ground, so we hardly slept the first night. We walked to a nearby school for breakfast. We stayed for three days and went to the cinema one night and watched 'A Tale of Two Cities'.

Milward House, Tunbridge Wells

Esther

I was in a private school in Tonbridge called Fosse Bank even though my father couldn't afford it – my auntie paid for us to go. We played tennis in the school and I won the cup twice in a row. We had to walk to get to school.

My brother called me mischief. When we had homework, we had to take our books home and do our homework. I then took up my maths book up to the teacher and she looked at it and said, "I will not mark such untidy work." So I took the book back and wrote in it "so don't then". I forgot that I had written this and later, when I had to bring it up to the teacher again, she saw my writing and I lost a conduct mark. In those days, you had to stand up in assembly (it was done to shame the pupil).



Connie

When I was in Whitley Bay Grammar School, I played hockey as right wing. I made some good friends there and kept the friendships. We had lots of fun.

Ann

I was born in 1928. There were five of us, four girls and one boy and we lived in Redhill in Surrey. I first went to a private school. Then we moved to Dulwich and I went to the Sydenham High School when it was all rather formal. My dad was a civil servant in the Admiralty and we moved to Bath in 1940. My parents lived in a hotel and we went to a boarding school because my mother wasn't very well. I think I went to four different schools. In those days education wasn't as standardised as it is now. It was good to have a variety of teaching methods and subjects. It helped to get on with different types of people.



chool for girls, nd I remember nd it took me a

How to connect your church to a care home

At Pilgrims' Friend Society we see the enormous impact volunteers have for our family members. We'd encourage you and your congregation to build links to a care home near you, sharing Christian love and the gospel message with older people in your community

We've created a useful step-by-step guide on how to get in touch with a care home near you and how you can support them.

5

6

7

- 1 Find your local care home you can look in your local parish, visit online directory carehome.co.uk or try a simple Google search.
- 2 Reach out to their activities person or care manager. Ask what the opportunities or needs might be at the home.
- **3** Find out what different members of your congregation could bring in terms of skills and time e.g. pastoral, music, art, baking or simply their time.
- Don't underestimate the power of individuals going in to chat or pray with people, sit alongside them as they do an activity etc. Start small, it can grow from there (homes are keen for people to build relationships and to make a commitment).

Volunteering your time, prayer life, musical or artistic abilities that the Lord has blessed you with is a great way to help a care home. Chris volunteers at Milward House:

"Volunteering at Milward House is a great way of keeping the home up to date with news from St Paul's Church. It's a wonderful opportunity to share times of worship together."

Offer for a group to lead a service at the home.

Ask yourself 'what can I offer?' Maybe your car to drive residents to visit a church or to special events.

Make the most of special occasions (Christmas, Easter etc). Even if you can't visit, could people from your church send gifts or cards. Send something for the staff too.

8 Pray for the care home. Volunteers could share names of individuals within prayer groups etc to pray for, or you could include the care home as part of the prayer rota so that it gets prayed for from the front.



The power of older Christians praying for you:

Our family members are prayer warriors. We meet regularly to have devotions and pray together. It's a great opportunity for them to pray for specifics taking place in the local community." Susan

Our Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators work alongside churches to develop relationships and build upon or ministry to serve older people. Susan Schibli is our ACE Facilitator at Milward House, Tunbridge Wells. She shares her useful insights to help inspire you and your church as you reach out to your local home.

The impact and blessing your church volunteers can have:

"We had a group from one of our family member's previous church come and lead a Sunday service which was really encouraging. It makes the connection warm and engaging if the person visiting has been a part of the church one of our family members previously attended – it brings back a familiarity, especially if the person has dementia."

Intergenerational blessings: "There are intergenerational benefits and opportunities. By coming into a care home, younger people gain knowledge from their elders and can enjoy being a blessing to others. When children from the Sunday school come to sing songs and say 'hello' to the family members it is just a great joy to see."

GET INVOLVED | 27

Please pray:

Lord, please guide me to a care home where I can serve you. May I be able to share my passions and interests with others and bless them with my time and company.

To find the nearest care home to you visit **www.carehome.co.uk** then enter your location to find a list of care homes near you.



If you live locally to one of our care homes and would like to volunteer, visit

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/volunteer and complete the form for the home closest to you, which will send you information straight to one of our ACE Facilitators.

For some resources to support your ministry to your local care home, see: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/churchresources-for-older-people

Or if you work at your church and would like to know how Pilgrims' Friend Society can support your church, please get in touch with Kaela our Supporter Relations Officer: kaela.dutton@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



28 **HOMES** The Pilgrims' Magazine



My Story DIANA

Words: Helen McKay-Ferguson

Diana, 92, lives at Finborough Court in Great Finborough. Her lifelong passion for poetry and song has led her to create a very special anthology, following the cycle of a year and weaving together her life experiences with favourite passages and quotations. We took a peek inside...

"Here is the book," says Diana, reaching for a smart but unassuming hardbacked notebook on her bedside table and handing it over to me. "I began working on it in retirement. David, my husband, would cook the tea and I needed something to do in the evenings, too. Creating this account just seemed right."

I turn to the opening page on which is glued a well-known passage from Ecclesiastes 3 under the title 'A time for everything'. After a short introduction, the book is then divided into the months of the year, beginning not, as you might expect with January, but April.

"April has always been a time of new beginnings, for me," says Diana. "It's not just the month that I was born but also the month when, in 1945, I gave my life to Christ. My husband David committed himself to Christ at a Billy Graham crusade in April 1954, and he and I were married on 4th April 1964. Easter also often falls in the month of April, heralding new beginnings."

Leafing through the pages of the book, I find they are brimming with lyrical references. There are citations from Vaughan Williams. Charles Dickens and Kenneth Grahame, to name but a few, chosen for their resonance with the happenings of life. Next to 'The Duck's Ditty' by Grahame, which features in June,

Diana has written '...loved by my husband and children, and guoted often especially in Henham where there were three duck ponds.'

Diana credits her parents for cultivating this appreciation of the world around her. "They taught me how to live," she says.

As a child, she attended elocution lessons. "I learned to really savour words. I was fortunate." Her mother, a stalwart companion, would frequently quote the Bible to her. "One of her favourite verses was Philippians 4:8, '... whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.' She used to stress that last part, I can hear her voice saying it now."

Her father, a gifted artist, taught her how to observe. "I remember once we were standing by the sea in East Anglia, watching the rollers come in, and he pointed out how the sea is



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Brings tutips,

Fills the chuckens hands with posies Halcyon Days

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And Summer Activier

not one colour, but a myriad of colours, even on a dull day."

Born in South Woodford. Diana attended the Girl Crusaders' class at a local church. During the war, she and her mother spent time at a cottage in Chearsley, Buckinghamshire, becoming immersed in village life. Her mother played the piano and Diana's own musical talents were evident. "I was known for having a big voice and always encouraged to take part in choirs and things."

Later, her mother encouraged her to apply to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Diana enjoyed her time there tremendously, not just singing but also doing mime. She studied part-time while working as a secretary for Dr Barnardo's.

Her and David's paths first crossed at the garden party of some friends. As a young man, David worked as a solicitor for the AA while Diana spent time caring for her father, who had been injured during World War One. Diana and David had a baby who sadly died after only three days. Adoption seemed like a good idea and they adopted two children, Liz and Jamie. "I'm sure our decision to adopt was shaped by the time I spent at Dr Barnado's. Those babies brought such joy into our lives."

After leaving the AA, David took on a role with London Embankment Mission. He also spent some time working for the Conservative party as an agent. He then joined the Bible Medical Missionary Fellowship (now Interserve), supporting missionaries abroad. On one memorable trip, Diana accompanied David to Nepal. "We saw some people living in extreme poverty and struggling to get out of it. School was seen as so important. The children arrived each day in the most spotless shirts."

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appling free ?

HOMES

On retirement, they came to live in the housing scheme at Finborough Court. When David developed dementia, he moved into the care home, passing away in 2022. Diana has recently moved across.

Her anthology is a great source of comfort. And singing remains a joy. "Not long ago I was in the waiting room at the hospital," Diana recalls. "I thought I was on my own and found myself singing alleluias. Then the ladies in the office said 'thank you.' They'd been listening all the while. There is always a way to find joy in life."

THE difference YOUR DONATION MAKES!

Imagine if you couldn't feel the wonder of God's work; the sun on your face, or the wind in your hair.

Imagine if you never again encountered the simple pleasures in life, pleasures like a picnic with friends and family members.

Well thanks to your ongoing love and support, our family members, like those at Evington Home in Leicester, continue to experience all of those simply magnificent very ordinary (or perhaps extraordinary) delights.

If you are reading this story about the amazing things that can happen when people like you give, it is probably because you have



supported Pilgrims' Friend Society previously, with a prayer, a donation, or perhaps even vour time.

But before you read on, please think about this simple question... Would you consider giving again? Giving to support the people who make up our extended family groups including family members, staff members like Jeanette and Indy at Evington, and Gary, our wonderful volunteer.

Jeanette, Evington's registered care manager, is a registered nurse, a committed Christian and has been in the caring profession for over 35 years...! She leads a team of over 50 staff at this beautiful home which can be found on the eastern side of Leicester, a short distance from Evington Park. The park offers over 44 acres of public parkland and is where a dedicated team of volunteers and relatives recently supported 19 family members to enjoy a picnic lunch in the fresh air and spring sunshine - a great example of how we work hard to ensure "Fulfilled Living in Later Life".

Family members enjoying a picnic at **Evington Park**



Indy, joined the team in early 2023 and has significant experience in financial services and property maintenance. Since joining Evington. Indy has taken on The Pilgrimage, our spring/summer

fundraiser which

Indy's Facebook Fundraiser encourages our superb

£650

supporters to "step out on The Pilgrimage and step up support for dementia". Indy has raised an incredible £650 by running 10k! So, if you fancy following in his footsteps, sign up to take part in The Pilgrimage now.

Gary has been volunteering since February 2020 and explains a little bit more about why he loves it!



"Volunteering at the home is the greatest thing *I've ever done (aside from getting married and* having children!). Before I started, I had the idea that older people don't have that much to offer. I couldn't have been more wrong. The family members are so pleased that someone has come to visit them.



"I used to think. 'What use will I be? I don't have anything to offer.' I've realised that just going in to chat with someone is of immense value.

"If you are interested in volunteering but feeling unsure, I'd say give it a try. You've got nothing to lose. It might take you out of your comfort zone, but it will give you the chance to grow and blossom in your faith. You'll meet some incredible people and truly make a difference."

The picnic at Evington reminds us of Psalm 96: 11-12: 'Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it. Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.'

Pilgrims' Friend Society already does amazing work. It already offers "Fulfilled Living in Later Life" With your support we can do even more.



P.S. Remember... please take action in one of the following ways and make a difference to someone's life today

- Sign up to Prayer News
- www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/pray
- Donate www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give
- Volunteer
- www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/volunteer Get involved with The Pilgrimage www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/pilgrimage



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My details

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Rev'd/Dr

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Gift Aid and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Pilgrims' Friend Society.

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 pay the difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p in every £1 that I give.

Signed Date/...../..... For us to claim Gift Aid, it is essential that you complete the address section above. Please notify the charity if you change address or no longer pay sufficient tax on income and/or capital gains.

I would like to receive Pilgrims' Friend Society's monthly Family News email, containing updates about the charity's work and ways to pray.

Please return this form to Pilgrims' Friend Society in the pre-paid envelope supplied





You can <u>also make a donation via</u> our website. Please visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give

PMSEP23

Could you help us provide more fun activities for older people?

Your donations help us keep our homes open to everyone who needs Christian care and support.

Yes! I would like to give a gift

🕀 Give online

Can you give online, helping us to save on administration costs? Visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give

Alternatively, you can fill in the forms below:

A regular gift

would like to make a REGULAR **DONATION by Standing Order**

To: (Name of bank/building society) Address of bank			
Account No///			
Please pay LLOYDS BANK PLC, Law Courts (Sort Code: 30-00-04) for the credit of PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY (Account Number: 00117804) the sum of			
£ Amount in words:			
Commencing from (date)// and thereafter every month/quarter/ year (<i>delete as appropriate</i>) until further notice.			
Signed Date//			

One-off gift

I would like to make a ONE-OFF **DONATION of:**

..... Amount in words: • •

Contact details

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



Dorothea Court, BEDFORD 0300 303 1490

> Middlefields House, **CHIPPENHAM**



dorothea@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



0300 303 8470 middlefieldshouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Finborough Court, **GREAT FINBOROUGH** 0300 303 1450

finborough@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Emmaus House, HARROGATE 0300 303 8450



Shottermill House, HASLEMERE 0300 303 1475 shottermill@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk





LEICESTER 0300 303 1455 evington@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



S

LEICESTER 0300 303 8455 pilgrim.gardens@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

Pilgrim Gardens,



Royd Court, MIRFIELD 0300 303 1480 roydcourt@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

PILGRIMS'

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Bethany Christian Home, PLYMOUTH 0300 303 8440 bethanyhome@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Strathclyde House, SKELMORLIE 0300 303 8465

strathclyde@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Milward House, **TUNBRIDGE WELLS** 0300 303 1460 milward@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Luff House, WALTON-ON-THE-NAZE 0300 303 1495

luffhouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Framland, WANTAGE 0300 303 1470 wantage@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



Koinonia Christian Care Home, WORTHING 0300 303 8480 koinonia@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

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CONTINUES OVERLEAF...

Carey Gardens, KIRBY MUXLOE 0300 303 8455 carey.gardens@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

Evington Home,



emmaushouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk