

The Pilgrims' MAGAZINE

SPRING 2022



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FRIENDSHIP IS AGELESS

Getting connected

A CAREER IN CARE

We meet a The Way We Care Lead

HOLD THE LINE

Tony's life as a telephone engineer

**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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“Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.”

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Looking to contact our homes and schemes?



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Stories from across our homes and housing schemes

Changes to our care home family

It is planned that Koinonia Christian Care, a care home situated in Worthing, will formally become part of Pilgrims' Friend Society from 1st April 2022. We have been working in partnership with Koinonia for several months to help the home meet the opportunities and challenges of care.

Our immediate priority is to sustain the excellent care and

work of Koinonia, but we share the long-term vision of the Koinonia trustees for a new home in the South Coast area and we will be working towards that end through our Renewal Programme. Please pray for this.

Our Chief Executive Stephen Hammersley said, "We are delighted that Koinonia has now become part of Pilgrims' Friend Society and are looking

forward to further developing our work in this area of the UK to better serve the needs of older people."

In early February, we said 'goodbye' to Florence House in Peterborough. Florence House has been taken over by mother and daughter team Touran and Yasamine Watts, who have undertaken that life at the home will still be underpinned by Christian values, with Christian volunteer support, links to local churches maintained, and a chaplain recruited.

We wish the team at Florence House all the best as the home enters a new chapter of life and we have promised them our prayers.



Welcoming in volunteers

In recent weeks, we've been able to hold several volunteer welcome events across our homes and schemes. The events have been an opportunity for those in the local community to find out a bit more about volunteering opportunities with us.

Volunteers enrich the life of homes in a variety of ways, from leading devotions to helping out with activities or simply being around to have a chat. In our care homes, volunteers are overseen by our Activities & Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators.

Luc has just started as a volunteer at Shottermill House, Haslemere. Here he is introducing the table-top game bagatelle to family members in the home.

To find out more about volunteering opportunities with us, visit: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/volunteer



In other news

In line with the latest Government guidance, we have continued opening up our homes to visitors. There is now no limit on the number of visitors those living with us can receive. In order to facilitate visits for as many people as possible, we are asking that visitors continue to make arrangements for their visits in advance. Vic Stone, Operations Manager and Coronavirus Lead, said, "We're so pleased that those living with us can now see a wide range of family and friends." Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests still need to be taken before a visit can take place.

To our staff team we welcome Vanessa Nicholls as Business Manager at Milward House, Tunbridge Wells and Araminta Creasey as Registered Care Manager at Framland, Wantage. David Byers joins as Deputy Care Manager at Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth. Friederike Hamilton has joined the Operations Team as Projector Manager. Sarolta (Sassi) Stuckey-Beeeri joins the Marketing & Communications Team at our London Office as Supporter Relations Officer (Maternity Cover).



For more great stories, follow us on social media:

-  @PilgrimsFS
-  @PilgrimsFS
-  @pilgrimsfriend

Our new Chairman

From 1st April, Michael Abbott will become Chairman of our Board of Trustees. We caught up with Michael to find out why he is excited to be taking on the role



Favourite Bible verse:
 “The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build”
 - Nehemiah 2:20

How did you first get involved with Pilgrims’ Friend Society?

I have a long involvement with Dorothea Court (our housing scheme in Bedford), which was originally run by the Dorothea Trust. I started going there in 1996 to take the Sunday morning services and I loved it. In 2004, I was delighted to become a trustee but it became clear to me that the organisation was in urgent need of support. After much prayer, I was certain that handing over the Trust to Pilgrims’ Friend Society was the right thing to do and this took place in 2008. I then served as a trustee of Pilgrims’ Friend Society from 2008-2013, and again from 2019 until the present day.



What draws you to serving older people in this way?

For older people, our care homes and housing schemes present a real opportunity for fellowship and spiritual encouragement, especially if they are frail and can’t get to church. I have been very blessed through the older Christians I have met. For example, at Dorothea Court the main part had to close for refurbishment in 2004. Those who lived there had to find new homes, including one lady who was very nearly 100. You might have expected her to be sad to leave but her attitude was that God was sending her out into the world to witness to others. I was very encouraged by this. There was also a gentleman who moved to Dorothea Court having lost his wife to dementia. When I met him, he was very depressed. But through the fellowship he found living at Dorothea Court, his faith blossomed. The transformation was remarkable, you couldn’t have met a more joyful Christian, even when he was diagnosed with terminal cancer.



How do you view your role as Chairman?

I very much see myself as taking a supporting role for the organisation. Through the morning prayer times with staff, which have taken place online throughout the pandemic, I’ve gotten to know many of our organisation’s managers. It is clear to me that our homes and schemes are led by very godly Christians and I see myself and fellow trustees as having oversight of a very professional team. I am very grateful that Alan Copeman, the outgoing Chairman of the Board, has agreed to stay on as Vice Chairman. As an organisation, we owe him a great debt of thanks. He has always provided a very calm and clear leadership, central to which is prayer. I will very much value the support and guidance he will continue to provide. I will also be working closely with and drawing on the expertise of Chief Executive Stephen Hammersley.

In recent years, you’ve experienced testing times personally. How has your faith grown through these?

In 2015 I was involved in a serious car accident which shattered my femur and broke my wrist. I spent some months in a wheelchair and have ongoing discomfort. Then in early 2020, as part of a routine appointment, it was discovered that I had a blocked artery in my neck. There was a high chance this could lead to a stroke and two weeks later I had the surgery that most probably saved my life. In God’s providence,

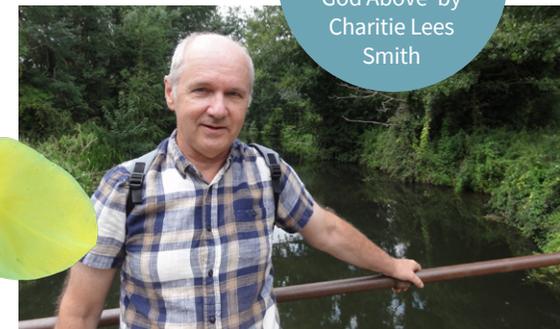


this was discovered just before the pandemic. Through these experiences, my dependence on the Lord and my ability to empathise with others facing suffering has deepened. I never asked, “Why is this happening to me?” I rather ask the question, “Lord, what purpose do you still have for me?”

Tell us a little bit about your life...

I am married to Vicky and we have two children and four grandchildren. Professionally, I was a Chartered Town Planner, with a responsibility for mineral extraction and waste management. In Bedfordshire, I was involved in what was then the largest landfill site in Europe, which has now been restored and is covered with trees and grass. For many years I have been a visiting preacher at local chapels and I also preach in the open air. I spend a lot of time in my garden, where I have a vegetable patch. Among my favourite flowers are tigridias, whose pretty blooms last only one day – very useful for sermon illustrations (Psalm 103:15-16)! I also enjoy photography, writing poetry and collecting stamps.

Favourite hymn: ‘Before The Throne Of God Above’ by Charitie Lees Smith



A rewarding role in care



Nicole Rusher has been our The Way We Care Lead at Framland in Wantage since May 2021. She told us all about the opportunities that have led her there and why it's a role she loves

I first started working at Framland when I was 16 as a kitchen assistant and also as a cleaner. I saw the carers doing their work and I decided to try it too. I've always been a caring person and at school I was studying for a BTEC in Health & Social Care. I love to make a difference and help someone through their life. Honestly, deciding to work in care is the best thing I've ever done.

I was trained in The Way We Care by Lynn Hall, Operations Manager and Dementia Specialist with Pilgrims' Friend Society, who developed the approach. A group of us at Framland took part in the training over several weeks. Getting to know our 'family members', as we call those who live in our home, is central to The Way We Care. When someone comes to

live with us, we take a life history to help us connect with them. As part of the training, we focused on the importance of knowing each person as an individual and appreciating that feelings matter the most.

We also learnt about caring for those living with dementia using the GEMS model, developed by dementia specialist Teepa Snow. Each person is cherished as a precious gem and supported wherever they are on the dementia journey. We learnt different techniques, like 'hand-under-hand', which can be used to help support a person in making their own choices and retaining independence.

This training led me to take on the position of Hummingbird. As a Hummingbird, you are freed up from the more



"Deciding to work in care is the best thing I've ever done."

task-based side of caring to simply be a friend to those living with dementia. Small things like smiling warmly and complimenting someone on their clothing can make a big difference, helping them to stay connected.

All the training and opportunities I've had has helped me to care for the family at Framland even better, which is what I love. When the role of The Way We Care Lead was created I was keen to apply and was delighted when I got the job.

Being The Way We Care Lead means I have a hand in shaping the life of the home. For example, one thing I introduced was a breakfast bar. When people come to live here, they can tell us what they like for breakfast. But that doesn't mean they want the same thing every day. With the breakfast bar, they are free to make a choice. I have also made some laminated pictures so those who need extra support in making their choice can point to what they want.

In my role, I help other team members to follow The Way We Care. Often, it's about learning to identify the underlying need or

"All the training I've had has helped me to care even better."

feeling behind a behaviour. For example, a person might say that they want to go home. This can be their way of saying there's something they need that they would easily have been able to find at home. Through saying something like, "It's a long way home. Shall I show you where the toilet is before you go?" you can work out if that's what it is. Or maybe they need a drink. Maybe they just want the reassurance of someone sitting with them for a while. Through gentle exploration, you can often work it out.

I'll often observe what's happening in the home and then suggest things that carers can try. I'll make sure I have regular catch-ups with members of our team, either one-to-one or as part of group discussions. Things are always changing and communication is key. Although I'm the Lead, I welcome suggestions from everyone. I don't have all the answers. We're a team working together.

One of the things I love most about my role is hearing our family members talk about their lives. They have done so many wonderful things – I could listen to them all day. What's lovely is that they are all interested in my life too. When I got married, they were so happy for me and loved seeing my wedding photos.



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

We're always looking for brilliant staff to come and join us. For all our latest roles, scan here:





Friendship Is Ageless

At the start of 2022, we launched our campaign Friendship Is Ageless to encourage connections across the generations. Alexandra Davis, our Director of Marketing & Communications, explains how you can get involved

Last summer we did a survey with Savanta ComRes, a research company, which showed us that while 68% of UK adults are more aware of the loneliness older people may experience than they were before the pandemic, not many of us were aware of the value that we bring to others across the ages.

We found that only around three in ten of 18-34 year-olds are aware of the value their friendship (32%) and help doing practical tasks (28%) could bring to older people. Yet the research shows that close to two-thirds of people across the age spectrum agreed that the younger generation (16-30 year-olds) bring value to those over 70 through their energy, outlook, and enthusiasm.

We launched our Friendship is Ageless campaign earlier this year to encourage people of any age to connect with others, especially those from a different generation. This isn't just about what younger people can do for older people – over half of younger people believe that older people bring value



to them through their life experience, wisdom, and perspective.

There's so much support that we can offer one another, regardless of our age. The kind of help that older people are able to offer is undeniable – the phone call just to ask after the family, see how school is going, or offer a few words of wisdom, prayer and spiritual guidance in managing a challenging relationship or work situation. Support from younger people is equally valuable – the obvious things are helping with shopping or getting someone set up on a new piece of tech, but there's also the listening ear or sharing perspectives or views on what's happening in the wider world.

Lots of us don't know our neighbours very well, or only a few on our street. Friendship is

Ageless is about taking steps to reach out to our community but sometimes the thing that holds us back from reaching out to others is not really knowing where to start. That's why we're starting simple: our first top tip is to simply **Look Up**. It's an encouragement to take a moment on your routine of walks, work or running errands, picking the kids up from school or taking the dog for a walk. Look up, connect with others around you, and say a quick hello.

Our second tip is **Post a Note**. A friend recently bumped into a younger neighbour at the local shops. As they exchanged pleasantries my friend realised that the neighbour and their family were going through a really

tough time, and later decided to drop off a note with her number on it and an invitation to get in touch. There followed a few texts and at Christmas my friend got a card thanking her for her support. It's really the little things that can help us build bridges across the generations, nurture friendships and offer support to one another.

Our third tip is **Dive In**. If you've got a little more time on your hands, could you dive in and explore opportunities in your local community? If you're older, perhaps a local school could do with some extra adults to listen to the children read, or if you're younger, perhaps there's a local care home which could do with a couple of hours a week of extra help? You could suggest setting up groups at church that focus on hobbies and interests to help attract people across the age spectrum.

Or maybe you're ready for our fourth top tip and want to go ahead and **Share Life** with others. Could you take the plunge and start a book or jigsaw exchange with others on your street? Could you offer to help set someone up with their technology or get them registered for something online?

Our final tip is to **Share Your Story** of building friendship across the generations. If you're on social media you might want to use the hashtag **#FriendshipsAgeless** to share with us how you're connecting with others, or you might want to write to us or email us with your story. You can get in touch in all the usual ways.



If you're thinking about ways your church can be part of our campaign, read some great ideas from Mandy Smith on p.20-21.



Social Care FUNDING Q&A

The issue of adult social care funding is complex. In part one of our series, our Chief Executive Stephen Hammersley explores what the issues are and how they are being addressed

Why is there an acute need for more funding for adult social care?

The population of the UK is ageing. It is projected that by 2043 24 per cent of the population (that's 17.4 million people) will be made up of those aged over 65 and 13 per cent will be aged over 75. The fact that people are living longer is a cause for celebration. It also means that we need to ensure that any needs, which are likely to increase with age, are properly met. Funding, which is provided at local authority level, has not kept pace with these increasing needs. In 2021, The King's

Fund reported that local authorities spent only a little more in real terms in 2019/20 than in 2010/11 despite increased demand.

What is being done to address this?

In Autumn 2021 the government announced plans for a new tax, the Health and Social Care Levy. Part of this levy will be used to provide £5.4 billion for adult social care reform in England over the next three years (2022 to 2025) and the rest will go towards health care. From 2025 onwards the share of the extra tax going to social care should increase.

What will the Health and Social Care Levy be used for?

The levy should be used to help local authorities move towards paying care homes a fair and sustainable rate for the care they provide. Currently local authorities pay less than the full cost of care for those reliant on Government funding. This means that care providers like us must make up the shortfall.

Our sector is also facing huge staff shortages – in August 2021, Skills for Care (the UK's care workforce development agency) reported a shortage of 105,000 workers. The levy should be used to attract people into working in care and encourage them to stay.

A recent BBC Panorama programme examined care homes owned by international investors and asked how much money is being taken out of the system. What is different about the way Pilgrims' Friend Society is funded?

We are a charity. We don't take any cash out of our organisation to pay to shareholders or investors – everything is reinvested in care.

“...the projected costs of caring for our older population will probably far exceed what this new funding can provide.”

Are the planned funding reforms going to be enough?

Probably not but it's a step in the right direction. After delays by successive governments the fact these social care reforms are planned is encouraging. However, the reality is the projected costs of caring for our older population will probably far exceed what

this new funding can provide. The National Care Forum estimates addressing the shortfall in social care funding will require a figure close to £7 billion a year. It is planned that after 2025 a higher proportion of the Health and Social Care Levy will be used to fund adult social care, but this would mean diverting it away from the NHS. Given the pressures the NHS is under including the impact the pandemic has had on healthcare provision, there is a question mark over whether this will happen.

Could this have a serious impact on the growing numbers of older people who find themselves in need?

Indeed. Already it's been estimated (by Age Concern) that there are 1.4 million older people in the UK whose needs are not being met. Sadly, unless action is taken that number will only increase and more older people will suffer. As well as health needs, there are many social and spiritual needs that are also going unmet. Loneliness is a huge problem for older people and causal links have been found between a lack of social stimulation and the progression of illness, for example, dementia.



This sounds very bleak...

It does, but as Christians we know we have a God who listens and can change things. May I encourage you to spend some time praying this issue through?

I would also like to share some words of hope. In the face of many challenges, Pilgrims' Friend Society remains committed to investing in high quality care for the older people who choose to make a home with us. We cannot single-handedly solve the funding pressures in the social care sector, but we can be part of a growing tide of those championing the needs of older people and highlighting the positive contributions that they make to society. As well as supporting those who live with us, I'm also excited about the opportunities we have, in partnership with local Christians, to reach out to and address the needs of older people in the communities around us.

“ ... we can be part of a growing tide of those championing the needs of older people and highlighting the positive contributions that they make...”

How does Pilgrims' Friend Society hope to reach these older people?

Across our homes, we've been appointing Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitators who will each recruit and lead a team of volunteers who will enrich the quality of life in our homes and will take what they have learned about being with older people back out to their churches and the surrounding communities.

My prayer is that by developing this programme our homes and schemes will become part of a network of volunteers and churches that create opportunities for fellowship and friendship for many people so that we significantly reduce the burden of loneliness and so that many people come to know Jesus as their Saviour and hope towards the end of their lives.

I don't live near one of your homes, but I'd like to reach older people in my area. What can I do?

Our sister organisation Faith in Later Life (FiLL) is committed to empowering Christians to reach older people. For more details, see our interview with Jamie Hill, the new CEO of FiLL on p.28. And on p.10 you can read about a campaign that we can all participate in, [#FriendshipsAgeless](#), to reduce loneliness and encourage friendships across the generations.



DAILY PRAYER Guide

PULL OUT AND KEEP

‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!’

2 Corinthians 5:17

Spring 2022
How you can pray for our work

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY



Welcome

to this edition of the Pilgrims' Friend Society Prayer Guide and thank you for your commitment in prayer for our work. We hope that this Spring Prayer Guide will help you as you continue to lift us to the Lord in prayer.

As we begin to see the first signs of the new season, let's remember that God is making all things new. We do not need to despair at the trials and challenges of this life as we look to an eternal future with God.

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.

As we pray together, let's remember this picture of what is to come:
He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"
Revelation 21:5



Sundays



Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth – Tracey Ikerd
Emmaus House, Harrogate – Christina Medway-Steel
Carey Gardens, Kirby Muxloe – Mandy Smith



Those living in our homes and schemes
Thank God for those who we have the privilege to care for and support. Ask God to walk with them each day.



Care teams
Pray for our wonderful care teams as they support our family members and ask for His sustenance as they face challenges that come with such important work.

Mondays



Evington Home, Leicester – Jeanette Davis and Richard Cowlshaw
Dorothea Court, Bedford – Evelyn Bissell



Our catering, maintenance, and administration teams
Thank God for the women and men who do so many important tasks around our homes and schemes.



Our resources (see more on pp.24-25)
Pray that our books, jigsaws and workbooks would help many who are navigating some of the challenges that come with older age.



Tuesdays



Finborough Court, Great Finborough – Rachel Fishburne and Karen Bleay

Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester – Georgina Lansdell then Mandy Smith



Activities and Community Engagement Facilitators
Thank God for the activities which take place in our homes and for our community connections. Pray many more connections would be made.



Renewal Programme
Pray for the search for the right land for a new home on the South Coast would soon be successful and that plans for the new home would be able to progress.

Wednesdays



Royd Court, Mirfield – Vicki Miller

Finborough Court Housing, Great Finborough – Sylvia Humm



The Operations Team overseeing our homes and schemes
Thank God for the work of our operations managers and pray for them as they support the home and scheme managers.



Church and community engagement
Thank God for those churches which are connected to our work. Pray for more relationships to be built so that more older people can be supported.

Thursdays



Framland, Wantage –
Aramintta Creasey

Pilgrim Care at Royd Court, Mirfield – Abi Jessop



Our Finance, HR and Communications teams

Praise God for the work of our support teams. Pray for them as they continue to find the best ways to help the homes and schemes.



Our IT project

Pray for the next phase of our ongoing technology project, that it would be rolled out well and that teams would adapt quickly to new processes.



Fridays



Middlefields House, Chippenham – Rali Ivanova and Chris Boyes
Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie – Jenny Long



Volunteers

Thank God for all those who give their time to be a part of our homes and schemes. Pray that more would now be able to join them as the pandemic eases.



Giving

Thank God for all those who have been able to give to our cause and pray that more people would choose to give to our work.

Saturdays



Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze – Timothy Agbenike and Sharon Rowley
Milward House, Tunbridge Wells – Annabelle Purdie and Vanessa Nicholls
Shottermill House, Haslemere – Babi Dixon and Mike Beere



Directors and trustees

Thank God for our Executive Team and trustees and pray that they would continue to lead the charity well. Pray for the new Chair of Trustees, Michael Abbott.



Families and relatives

Pray for those whose loved ones live with us. Pray that they would have peace of mind as they allow others to provide essential care and support to their loved one.



Louise ANSWERS

Louise Morse is a writer 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 issue

Q “My father has dementia and I can no longer care for him. I feel very guilty about putting him in a care home. How can I manage these feelings of guilt?”

A All over the country there are family caregivers coping with the same dilemma. It's something Duncan had to face when his wife Lynne fell backwards down the stairs, even though he was guiding her. Friends at church pointed out that he was not a professional carer and that she would be safer in a care home – in this case our local home, Framland, in Wantage.

Safety is often the tipping point in caring for a loved one with dementia, either the person with dementia or the caregiver's. Duncan wasn't racked with guilt when Lynne went into the care home, because he knew that she would be safe and would receive expert, loving care. But for many people, even knowing that their loved one is well cared for doesn't dissipate the guilt.

Beneath it is the thought that you've failed to look after your father and that he will be worse off in the home. It comes from not fully understanding the nature of the disease, particularly the end stage, or the value of residential care. If your father had cancer that had advanced to the point where he needed to go somewhere for specialist treatment you wouldn't feel guilty, because you know that you're not capable of providing that treatment. It's the same with

dementia. Dementia is caused by physical (chemical) damage to the brain, and there comes a stage where the patient needs expert care from a team of trained carers. The care they give is the treatment.

There is also the importance of being with others. Studies show that our neuronal circuitry responds to other people more than anything else. We are made in God's image, designed for relationship, and this is enabled in our care homes. We also have specially trained 'Hummingbirds', carers who interact with those living with dementia to keep them engaged and stimulated.

Relieved of the intensity of caring day and night, caregivers' health improves, and they are better able to cope with life. And remember, nothing can separate us from the love of God, including dementia.

Romans 8:38-39, “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”



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



MORE WAYS TO PRAY: Our monthly Family News email contains all our latest prayer updates, plus details of happenings from across the organisation. Sign up online at: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/keepintouch

Sharing life... as a Christian community

As part of our Friendship Is Ageless campaign, we're encouraging people of all ages to share life. **Mandy Smith**, our ACE Facilitator Manager and the wife of the Minister at Quorn Baptist Church in Leicestershire, tells us what this looks like for her community

Many years ago, I was introduced to Sarah, a widow without siblings or children. As a family of six, we welcomed Sarah into our home; she ate, watched television, went shopping, came to church with us and came to family parties. I realise that not everyone has this much time for older people, but here are a few things that everyone could have a go at, to connect with the older people around them.

1. Buddy up a younger person with an older person.

Encourage the young person to catch up with their buddy after the service every Sunday.



"I wanted to see John as I hadn't seen him for ages. It was lovely, we just chatted for a long time." - Catherine, 10

2. Help at home.

Things going wrong or needing doing at home can be overwhelming. As a church you could have a list of reputable tradespeople and/or people at church who can help with certain things.



"It's great to have Ruth, who has the energy and ability to do the jobs that I can't." - Mary

"I like visiting Norah because she always has biscuits. I like playing games with her because she falls asleep, and I win!" - Hannah, 6



3. Share time and activity together.

For many activities, age is no barrier. Who doesn't love a piece of cake with friends? Or playing a good game?



"Mummy, when can I go back again?" - Louie, 4

4. Find some smart people.

Smart technology is so important for older people to connect with the outside world, so identifying some smart people from your congregation who are willing to help those who are struggling with their television, phone or tablet would be of great help.

"It would be of great help if a teenager offered their knowledge and patience to help me with my phone." - David



5. Value the contributions of older people.

Although they may no longer run the parent and toddler group or help with the youth group (although some might!) there is still so much that older people can contribute to the life of the church. Ask them for their advice or prayer or enjoy their home-made goodies.

"The gifts made by our craft and chat group are so meaningful. One Easter we received a beautifully stitched 'cross for our pocket.'" - Mandy



Sarah's house was littered with photos, children's crafts, and cards from us. Those who saw them told us how much she must value our friendship, but we as family were able say that we valued her friendship too. Connecting with the older people in your church is not a one-way thing but of mutual benefit.



Family members at Finborough Court, Great Finborough took part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch and spotted blackbirds, pigeons, magpies, robins and a great tit!



In January, those living at Bethany Christian Home in Plymouth set off on a round the world trip. The first stop was Scotland where they made highland cows as souvenirs.



The family at Milward House in Tunbridge Wells have been enjoying old-fashioned sweets from the trolley, served up in paper bags.

From *humbugs* to highland cows...

Our homes are communities where we enjoy doing things together and have fun



At Shottermill House in Haslemere, Charlie, 98 made jam tarts for the first time, proving you're never too old to learn new things.



Olive lives at Emmaus House, Harrogate. She loves her real dog Bertie but during the time he couldn't visit she enjoyed holding the home's therapy dog.



Marian, who lives at Middlefields House in Chippenham, led a devotions session and taught everyone a new rhyme 'Said The Robin to the Sparrow' set to the tune of 'What a Friend we have in Jesus.'

Leave a legacy of Christian communities for older people

By leaving a legacy in your Will you can help us create communities in which older people can flourish for years to come.

Your gift will help us to plan ahead so that we know we can keep providing these wonderful homes. We can keep making sure that our **buildings are kept in tip top shape**, that our **staff are trained to the highest standards**, and that we can continue providing all the little extras that make life fun like **crafts, music, and celebrations**.

All you need to leave a legacy is our address and charity number: Pilgrims' Friend Society, 175 Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1 2AL; charity number: 1045920.

You can request a legacy brochure by calling **0300 303 1403** or emailing info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk, or you can download a copy at pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/legacy



Sharing and helping each other via Zoom

Find encouragement and support with issues facing older people by joining one of Louise Morse's regular Zoom meetings or booking a bespoke talk with her

More than anything, the pandemic showed how much we need each other. We need to talk and listen, to empathise and encourage. We need to seek information, and to share what we have, especially when we are caring for someone at home or supporting those who do. So when the pandemic closed so many natural meeting places, a handful of people and I began meeting once a month via Zoom to discuss important topics. Other specialists have been happy to come on board including spiritual old age specialist Revd Roger Hitchings, former GP living with dementia Dr Jennifer Bute, psychogeriatric nurse and former care home manager Janet Jacob, and 'Brain and Soul Boosting' practitioners and pastoral leaders Sally Dunn and Jo Twigg.

It has worked very well. A participant echoed many when she said that the discussions have inspired and helped her. She helps care for her father-in-law with dementia and runs dementia and Brain and Soul Boosting activities in church. "Your groups have made me feel braver!" she said. Another made me

smile when she said she felt so comfortable during the meetings she didn't feel bad for being late joining in one time because she just had to have a cup of tea!

These meetings are continuing this year. To find out about the latest planned talks and to book your place, please visit:

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/louise-morse

I am also happy to work with you and your church or faith organisation to develop a talk that will suit your needs. Examples of the kinds of talks include:

Dementia roundup

We examine the promise and the danger of the new Alzheimer's plaque dissolving drugs, as well as the positive results of small, non-pharma funded studies. Also looking at how we can reduce dementia risk – plus the power of spiritual support in dementia care.

Engaging and commissioning older people

Many older people are missing the great plan God has for them in building His Kingdom (see Psalms 78 and 145 and more). They need teaching and commissioning from the pulpit.

Supporting care-givers

The things that caregivers say really help them, whether they are managing care or delivering it personally for a loved one.

Enabling good mental health in older people

This could include recognising and dealing with depression, addressing feelings of loneliness, helping older people with health and social anxiety.

Preparing for a great old age

Looking at the two great impediments to developing a great old age and the two most important things you can do to ensure it, for yourself and for others in your world.

To book Louise for a Zoom talk, get in touch via louise.morse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk

Resources

A selection of the resources we offer to help those living with dementia

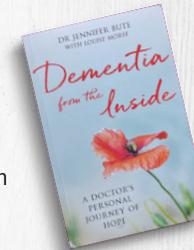
Dementia Information Pack, £12 by Louise Morse

A series of leaflets on different aspects of dementia, including diagnosis, caring and managing challenging behaviour, and caring for the caregiver.



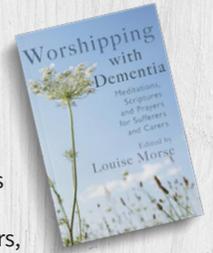
Dementia from the Inside, £9 Dr Jennifer Bute, with Louise Morse

As a doctor and a Christian diagnosed with dementia, Jennifer uses her story and others to give practical and spiritual direction.



Worshipping with Dementia, £8.50 by Louise Morse

For people with dementia, simplicity is paramount. These simple daily devotions are designed for use by caregivers, dementia sufferers, families, church groups, and medical professionals.



2 for £20



God's Word in God's World jigsaws, 2 for £20 or £12.99 each

Our large piece jigsaws with a biblical theme are specially designed for older people. Take advantage of the offer and get two for £20.



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

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources

Alternatively, ☎ 0300 303 1403



Meet our team, Payroll Assistant Nasim Khakbaznejad, London Office

Nasim has been part of our HR team since 2018. She comes from an Iranian background and tells us how she came to meet Jesus and to work with us

I was born in Iran in 1972 in a strict Muslim area to Muslim parents. I have been deaf since birth so I went to a school for deaf children and learnt Farsi Sign Language. I really enjoyed school and had lots of friends.

Growing up I played a lot of table tennis. My dad played and so I watched him and joined in too. I used to take part in table tennis competitions. I was part of a deaf table tennis club but we would play against hearing teams in matches both at home and away.

I got married and in 2001 my then husband and I decided to come to the UK. We lived in Croydon. I had lots of Iranian friends who were here already and I also connected with the table tennis community. I found it easy to settle in.

Through friends who were deaf, I learnt British Sign Language. It is very different from Farsi Sign Language. In British Sign Language it's all about your hands whereas in Farsi it is about your face, hands and chest.

My daughter Setayesh was born in 2003. Like me, she was born deaf.

One day a friend asked me to go to church and I said "no". I thought, "I'm happy being a Muslim." But inside I felt unrest. When she asked me again later I decided to go. I really didn't like what they said. They were telling me that there is God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I had learnt that God is just one and I felt anger burning inside me like a fire.

I asked God, "What is the truth? Should I be a Christian or a Muslim?" I didn't feel that God gave me any answer. A deaf man from church asked if I had asked for forgiveness for my sins. I said I hadn't as I didn't have any sins. He said I should take time to contemplate privately. I found that when I looked inside I did have sins that I wished to ask forgiveness for. I did this in solitude. God answered me and inside I felt a sense of peace.



Nasim's Favourite Hymn:
"I Have Left All The World To Follow Jesus" – there is a sign language version of this.

However, I was still unsure if I had been saved. The evidence came a week later when my husband asked if I had become a Christian and I said, "Yes, maybe." He was very angry. Normally I would have retaliated but because I had this peace inside me I didn't feel like I had to.

My sister said our father would kill me if I told him I had become a Christian.

Matthew 10:28 helped me. It says, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell." I thought, even if someone kills my body they cannot kill my soul. My husband and I got divorced due to him not being able to accept my Christian faith.

I began looking for work but as a deaf person it was extremely hard. I'd almost given up and I asked God for help. Three days later, Phil (who works in our HR team) offered me a job – I couldn't believe it!

To support me, I have an interpreter who is funded by the Government's Access to Work scheme.

I wish more employers were open to employing deaf people. My daughter is studying and has applied for part-time jobs. Once people find out she is deaf they don't even interview her.

From March 2020 to August 2021 I was on furlough. It was a beautiful time. We did lots of ministry on Zoom for deaf people and those in Iran could join in. So many people in Iran heard the gospel and were saved. If it wasn't for the pandemic, this would never have happened.

When I'm not at work, I do lots of translation into Farsi Sign Language. This could be translating a church service or a prayer time. I don't have time for table tennis any more – I would rather use my time to tell people about Jesus.



Looking into our blindspots



Jamie Hill, the new Chief Executive of our sister charity Faith in Later Life, shares why building the church calls for a greater awareness of and appreciation for its oldest members

I remember Betty. Betty would teach me in Sunday school every week for at least nine years and she never missed a Sunday. I was taller than Betty by the time I was eight. She was a loving, patient, passionate lover of Jesus. I still remember her and her service for the children in my church and whenever she heard of some of the things that I was doing, she was always so happy, she owned the fruit that God was using me for and rightly so.

This has always had a big impact on me and been something that I think is a sign of a healthy, growing church, an inter-generational, cross-cultural, cross-background reflection of the full body of Christ.

Since graduating in Law in 1999, I have always been involved in doing all I can to tell as many people as possible about Jesus. I've been a youth pastor and a worship pastor, I've toured with bands, I've worked for incredible mission agencies like the Bible Society, The Message Trust and Kingsway CLC Trust, all of which have at their heart this desire to see people

saved, disciplined and fully living in the life of the local church.

My new role with Faith in Later Life is no different, it's just working to help the church reach, disciple and integrate older people fully into the life of the church. I have a new context to learn but the same powerful gospel and the same church to serve.

As I have started to understand Faith in Later Life, I have been impressed as to how much has been achieved by such a young charity. The work of my predecessor Carl Knightly and that of the trustees, the ambassadors and the wider team has been incredible. I am thrilled to take it through to the next stage of all that God has for it. For me the next stage feels like growing the charity through to young adulthood. Part of that journey means being really clear on who we want to grow up to be, becoming self-sustaining and building the strategic focuses needed to see that happen. There's so much to do and I'm excited to find more people to partner with and create more

opportunities for some real Kingdom work in reaching this growing demographic in our churches and communities.

I think my starting point in 2022 is to ask a simple question – do we have a blindspot around older people in the church? We certainly have in our communities. These older people are becoming the least heard voices and the invisible. Jesus calls us to be a voice for the voiceless and champion the cause of the vulnerable. He calls us to see. You have to look before you can see.

“Old men and old women will come back to Jerusalem, sit on benches on the streets and spin tales, move around safely with their canes – a good city to grow old in. And boys and girls will fill the public parks, laughing and playing – a good city to grow up in.”

Zechariah 8:4-5, The Message

“Blindspots aren't intentional areas we don't care about, they are just areas that we're missing because our eyes are fixed in one direction.”

My mum is one of the most wonderful humans I know. She's prayed for me every day and been there when I've succeeded and when I've crashed. She's worked in the church in her time and served in many ministry areas. For many years now we have argued as she has resigned herself to not having much to offer, aside from praying and giving. I think that's a similar story in many churches. It's not intentional, or motivated by any active intention to sideline older people. It is the outcome of a blindspot. This means more and more that our older people feel slowly out of the loop and that there is not much left for them to do or grow in. I pray I can equip the church to see.

This picture of Jerusalem recently challenged me of how it is a picture we are to pursue in the church; a great place to grow old in as well as a great place to grow up in. I hope and pray that through my work with Faith in Later Life we can help churches see their blindspots and start to reach out to them so that they can live life in all its fullness in the full family of God.



Find out more about Faith in Later Life at www.faithinlaterlife.org

Residents' stories: TONY

As a BT telephone engineer based in Leeds for 42 years, Antony, known as Tony, was used to thinking on his feet. He told us all about his life and career, and how he's been encouraged by living at Emmaus House in Harrogate

The role of telephone engineer carried a big responsibility. If a local exchange went down, 700 or 800 people could find themselves cut off. Tony was the man to get things working again. "They could call me up at 3am and I'd have no idea what I'd find until I got there. I enjoyed the excitement," he says.

On one memorable occasion, Tony received a call in the middle of the night to say that there was a problem at the Castleford Exchange in Pontefract. "I arrived to find water pouring onto the electrical equipment," he recalls. "They'd been bleeding the radiators the day before and hadn't tightened the valves properly."

The switch from a two- to a three-digit area code in 1964 also required some astute problem-solving. "The South Milford Exchange got cut off. We were called in at 2pm one afternoon and were working until 4pm the next day - 26 hours on the job. It turned out that the instructions given for the switch-over were wrong."

Born in Sheffield in 1940, Tony moved around in his early childhood, first to Bradford and then to Leicester in 1948 on account of his father's job as an engineer on army retention. The family attended a local church where his parents had married and where Tony and his two younger siblings were baptised. "I was very involved with the church, through Sunday School and the Scouts and the church choir."



The Leeds Telephones. Tony is bottom left



In 1956 the family moved again to Leeds where as a young man Tony began his career with BT and met his first wife with whom he had two sons, Richard and Martin. When he wasn't hard at work fixing the phones, Tony enjoyed playing rugby for the company team - the Leeds Telephones. "They found I had played rugby at school and made me captain. When I took over, we won 39 games on the trot."

After his marriage fell apart, Tony reconnected with the local church in Garforth, greatly valuing the support of his pastor.

In 1991 he met his second wife, Anna, who also had two children from her first marriage. They met at an American football Leeds Cougars Junior football game as both had sons attending the game.

A keen runner, Tony has completed several marathons and half-marathons. In 1994 he completed the Leeds Marathon and was second fastest in the over-50s age group. He stayed fit and active in his retirement, running every day, even on holidays. The sun would go down in Cyprus and off Tony would go.

In December 2020 Tony suffered a stroke and spent several months in hospital. "It has been a very difficult time," he says. "Now, I need to use a wheelchair and my mind feels jumbled."

One thing to make a huge difference to Tony has been coming to Emmaus House. "They

welcomed me with open arms," he says. In particular, he has formed a bond with one of the carers, Wayne, who affectionately calls him Big T. "I think we get on so well because he has an even sillier sense of humour than me," says Tony.

Through joining in with activities and games, he's got to know others at the home. "We play one game where you throw a beanbag onto a letter and then go round naming things beginning with that letter in a certain category. Everyone glares at you if you throw it on the 'X'!"

Tony enjoys the regular devotions times, recalling words long familiar from his time in the church choir. He also values being able to sit quietly and read a Bible passage with a member of staff one-to-one. "You don't always want to discuss everything with everyone," he says. "Having the stroke has made me think a lot. It's good to have someone to talk things over with."

Tony is determined to walk again and is soon to start rehabilitation. "I've got a mind to take on another half marathon," he says.

"We absolutely love having Tony here with us," says Chrissie, the Registered Care Manager at the home. "He's such a large personality. He puts a smile on everyone's face. And with his professional background, Tony likes to attend our staff training and offer practical tips."



Find out more about how we care for people who live with us:
www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/thewaywecare



Gift FORM ...CONTINUED



My details

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

Full Name

Address.....

..... Postcode

Telephone Email

Gift Aid

I want to GIFT AID my donation of £ 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

We will keep your data secure, complying with Data Protection legislation. For full details of our Privacy Notice and General Data Protection Policy, please visit:
www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/privacy

PMMAR22



Don't forget

You can also make a donation via our website. Please visit:

www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give

Could you help us support older people like *Tony?*

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

Yes! I would like to give a gift

 You can make a donation via our website www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give or fill in the forms below:

A regular gift

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

To: (Name of bank/building society).....

Address of bank.....

..... Postcode

Account No. Sort Code / /

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 (delete as appropriate) until further notice.

Signed Date / /

One-off gift

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

£..... Amount in words:.....

I enclose a cheque payable to 'Pilgrims' Friend Society'

Please charge my debit/credit card as follows: Visa Mastercard

Card Number ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ Exp. /

CONTINUES OVERLEAF...

Contact details

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

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



**Dorothea Court,
BEDFORD**
0300 303 1490

dorothea@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



**Middlefields House,
CHIPPENHAM**
0300 303 8470

middlefieldshouse@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



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

finborough@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



**Emmaus House,
HARROGATE**
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**Shottermill House,
HASLEMERE**
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**Carey Gardens,
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**Evington Home,
LEICESTER**
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**Pilgrim Gardens,
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**Royd Court,
MIRFIELD**
0300 303 1480

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**Pilgrim Care (Home care
services at Royd Court)**
0300 303 1485

pilgrim.care@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



**Bethany Christian Home,
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