

The Pilgrims' MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2021



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Facing the pandemic as a care home manager

THANK THE LORD!

Incredible answers to prayer

HOW SWEET THE SOUND

Sharing the gospel
through song

**PILGRIMS'
FRIEND
SOCIETY**

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY

Pilgrims' Friend Society exists to provide excellent care and support for older people, inspiring and encouraging them to live fulfilled lives in their later years. 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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Looking to contact our homes and schemes?

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Middlefields HOUSE is now open!

Middlefields House, our brand-new purpose-built care home in Chippenham, opened its doors on 16th August. The opening of the home marks a significant step in our Renewal Programme (see pp.6-7).

Maureen Sim, our Director of Operations, said, "This is an exciting project and involves a lot of firsts for us as a charity. It is the first care home we have built in the household model, designed in such a way that residents live together in smaller communities within the home, with access to a wide range of communal areas and facilities. It is also the first of our care homes to have a coffee shop and children's playground open to the wider community. Where it is often difficult for residents to get out and about, we are bringing the community in."

The home has space for 48 residents – 'family members' as we call those who live with us – living in four households of 12.

The care we offer is characterised by a personalised approach, founded on biblical principles (see our feature on pp. 12-14). The built environment of Middlefields House has been designed to support this approach, with

the smaller households and large bedrooms enabling family members to make their space personal to them.

Middlefields House has also been designed to benefit those who are living with dementia. The large secure gardens have a dementia-friendly design, with easy access from the ground floor rooms in each house.

The new home will be led by Emma Hughes as Registered Care Manager, Chris Boyes as General Manager, and Nathan Barnes as Hospitality Manager.

Chris Boyes said, "This is my first role working in a care home following 30 years in various posts in social housing. I'm really excited to be a part of it, particularly the opportunities we will have to encourage fellowship and mutual growth between churches and care homes."

We are also welcoming on board Beatrice Whiddett (Trixie) as Activities and Community Engagement (ACE) Facilitator. In this role, Trixie will lead the programme of activities for our family members, including managing volunteers.



You're invited!

Join us for a special event on 2nd October to mark the official opening of Middlefields House. The event will begin at 2pm with a gathering at Ladyfield Church (Hungerdown Lane, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 0BA) to celebrate God's goodness and provision together. Tours will then be held at Middlefields House in two time slots – 3pm and 3.40pm. Participants will be allocated a tour in groups of 25 and invited to travel from the church to the home at the appropriate time.

To book your place please visit www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/events or call 0300 303 8470 by Friday 17th September.



 To find out more about Middlefields House, visit www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/middlefields-house. As well as all the details, there's the opportunity to sign-up for the Middlefields House newsletter.



Goodbye Leonora

Our very first family members at Middlefields House came across from Leonora Home in Chippenham, which has now closed. Founded in 1974, our Leonora Home has been a huge blessing to many older people over the years. In July, a special afternoon tea was held to give thanks for the home. Our Chief Executive Stephen Hammersley joined the Leonora family for the occasion, paying tribute to the hard work of the staff and all that has been achieved. It is on this strong foundation that a legacy of excellent Christian care in Chippenham will live on.

In other news...

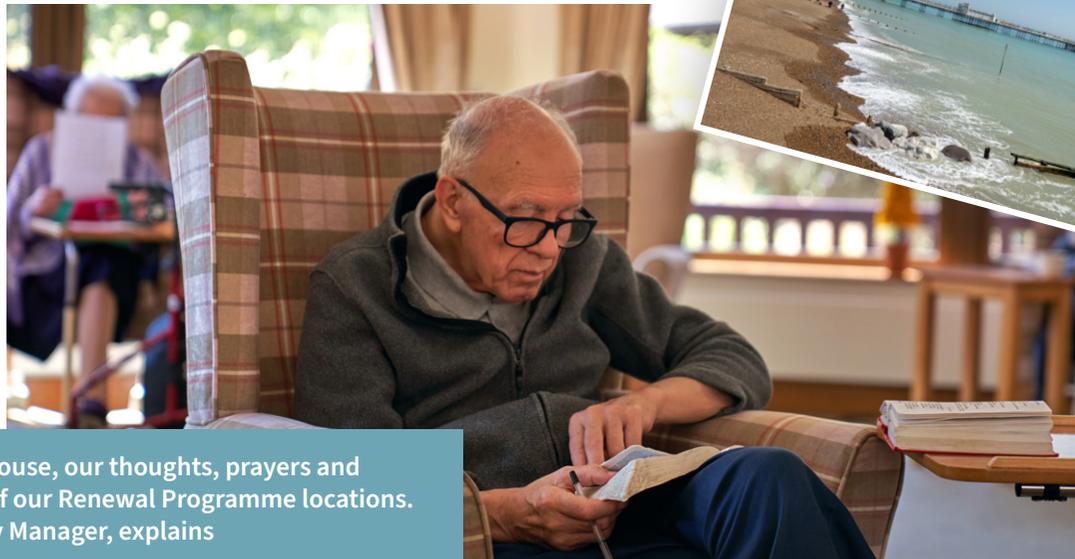
At our Head Office, Andrew Williams joins as Finance Operations Manager, Nancy Batonda joins as Sales Ledger Assistant and Camilla Fitsum joins as Recruitment & HR Administrator.

For more great stories, follow us on social media:

 @PilgrimsFS
 @PilgrimsFS
 @pilgrimsfriend

What's next for our Renewal Programme...

Following the opening of Middlefields House, our thoughts, prayers and planning turn to Worthing, the second of our Renewal Programme locations. **Matt Kisler**, our Homes Review Property Manager, explains



Where are we now?

We are searching for a suitable site in or around Worthing. Our earlier interest in a site in Findon ended when it became clear that we would not get planning permission to build the size of home that we need.

As well as allowing us to build a facility that offers excellent Christian care in a modern, purpose-built environment, the site that we are seeking needs to be in a location that is accessible for staff, visitors, and volunteers, and have enough space for parking and gardens.

Please join us in praying

- for the right site to become available and for favour with the relevant decision-makers
- for the finances needed to fund the scheme
- for the teams planning and directing the project as they take the lessons they've learnt from Middlefields House on to this next project

Our Renewal Programme will see six new care homes built and some of our current homes upgraded by 2030.

We are now looking for a site in the Worthing area to build a new care home which will be a replacement for the Pilgrims' Friend Society home in Brighton that closed at the end of 2019, and as a replacement for the current Koinonia home in Worthing.

Koinonia is a well-established and in-demand home that has provided Christian care to older people in Worthing in a group of converted Victorian houses for the past 44

years. We announced that we are working together in February 2021 and staff and trustees from both charities have been meeting together regularly to pray and plan.

What will the new home be like?

We are using the research and planning that informed the design of Middlefields House for the new home in Worthing. By now you may be familiar with the household model that we're using in our Renewal Programme homes which sees 48-bed buildings split into four households. Each household will have 12 residents who have their own room and en-suite and a communal lounge and dining space. We're also exploring ways that the home can be connected to its local community; at Middlefields House this is through a café, hair salon, and children's playground, and we will look to provide something similar at the new home in Worthing.

This way of setting up the home also allows for individual care in a homely atmosphere

and allows those who live there to build friendships within a smaller group, easing the settling-in process for newcomers and allowing staff to really get to know those whom they are caring for.

We've also seen from this last year that infection control is essential in care homes. While all our homes have excellent measures in place, the smaller households reduce even further the likelihood of transmission across the whole home.

To give you a flavour of our vision for the care of older people and what the new building in Worthing might look like, please visit www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/middlefieldshouse

Although we have been thinking about, praying, and preparing for this new home, it is still early days. A project like this is complex and so with the process of purchasing a site, getting planning permission, and then building the home, we expect it won't be open for another three to four years from now.



We will bring you updates of the project as things develop. You can also keep up to date with all things Pilgrims' Friend Society by signing up to our monthly email, Family News – www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/keepintouch

Thanking God

As we mark Prayer Week this September, those living at our housing schemes look back on prayers they have seen answered

"I prayed for 40 years for a good and godly husband, resting on the promise of Isaiah 30:18 'The Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you... Blessed are all they that wait for Him.' So the Lord was waiting for me, and I was waiting for Him. The godly husband (a widower) came along in due time, and although we only had 12 years of married life, it was all of the Lord."

Margaret, Pilgrim Gardens

Tim, Pilgrim Gardens



"In December 2014 I developed severe jaundice and in early January 2015 I was admitted to Hereford County Hospital where I was told one morning that my liver was on the edge of complete failure. (This was found to have been caused by an over-prescription of an antibiotic). Family members and Christian friends

were praying for me and Psalm 112:7 and Isaiah 41:10 were verses that meant a lot at that time. In the evening, my wife and son came and we had a prayer time together. Later that evening as I was reading in the Psalms the words 'Fear not, I'm in charge' came quite unbidden into my mind. Blood samples were taken later that night and again very early the next morning. Another doctor then came and told me that my liver had come back to life and that he proposed to discharge me! I went home that evening and made a steady recovery over the next few months. To God be the glory!"

"I was quite young when I first knew that God had answered my prayer. My mother had told me about God in heaven and told me stories of Jesus. She taught me to say my prayers at bedtime.

I was often ill when I was little – I had bronchitis every winter, and this wasn't helped by having a coal fire and a father who smoked. I was often ill at home from school.

Once I was at home, poorly, but not in bed. We lived quite close to some shops, a grocer's and a chemist's. Just a little further was the Co-op with various departments, and also a newsagent's. We must have needed some supplies, because my mother popped out to these shops.

She seemed to be away for ages, and I began to worry about what might be happening to her. I was always told to be careful when crossing the road as I might get knocked down. I wondered if she had

been knocked down – injured, so that she would be rushed to hospital, with no-one knowing that I was home alone waiting for her. I began to cry, feeling so lonely and worried. I called out to God to hear my cry, to Jesus too. I called out to Mary and Joseph to help me because they were parents and they would know how a little child would feel. As I cried out my prayer, the door opened and my mother came in. I knew that God had answered my prayer. She had probably bumped into a neighbour and been chatting a little, but it had seemed ages to me. Now everything was all right. God had answered my prayer and sent my mother back to me."



Anne, Royd Court

Beryl, Royd Court

"On 8th November 2016, I tripped and fell into my kitchen at Royd Court. Helpless I pulled the cord and Vicki and Georgina (then Care Manager) came and rescued me with our 'Elk' (the lifting cushion).

A doctor came and said I was bruised and recommended paracetamol. The pain in my back subsequently got worse and worse. Desperate I sat on the edge of my bed praying 'Please, please help me Lord, I don't know what to do'. Almost immediately the phone rang. It was my much-loved friend Phyl from one of the

neighbouring flats (since gone to glory). Her advice was that I must ring for a doctor. Dr Jogi came and took one look at me and said 'an x-ray is needed'.

Georgina took me and the result was a fractured spinal vertebra. For four months I was in a wheelchair and visiting Leeds General Hospital. During this time I was looked after wonderfully by the Pilgrim Care staff at Royd Court.

God was certainly with me and with Phyl on that day, and as always, has been on many other occasions."

Pulling together



Operations Manager and Coronavirus Lead Vic Stone shares how our care home managers have stepped up to the challenges of the pandemic

When I think of all that our care home managers have accomplished over the past year, I'm astonished. Even in normal circumstances, the role of a care home manager entails huge responsibilities. But the pandemic has pushed our managers further than they would have ever thought possible.

Facing uncertainty

I joined Pilgrims' Friend Society in February 2020 as an operations manager. As an organisation, we have four operations managers who support care home managers in their roles, ensuring they have everything they need to do their job. Shortly after I joined, we all found ourselves dealing with the unknowable force that is COVID.

In the early days, and in the face of national shortages, our managers were anxious about PPE. Overnight, prices went through the roof – a box of 100

disposable masks was being sold for £70. Fortunately, I was forwarded an email from a stationery supply company who had switched to supplying PPE instead. It was then that I became PPE Lead and was tasked with making sure all our homes had the PPE supplies that they needed.

As we rallied round to get PPE in place, the tide of uncertainty kept growing. Managers were deluged with information. At the same time, they had to address a multitude of questions from worried relatives and staff, all the while ensuring that those living with us were being looked after and kept safe.

Supporting each other

One way our managers supported each other was through a weekly team meeting, held over video call. The Operations Team would digest the latest Government guidance with the support of the National Care Forum, the Care Quality Commission and the Care Provider Alliance. In the meeting, we would relay this guidance.

Of course, for managers the meeting was another thing that had to be fitted into an already long and busy day. Many of our managers had never used Zoom before. Yet they all made it a priority to get to grips with the technology and be there for each other. Together, we shared best practice, chatted things through and affirmed one another in the decisions we were making as we faced the challenges together.

Constant change

Over the weeks and months our managers have had to stay abreast of everything from the donning and doffing of PPE, to the roll-out of COVID tests, to the introduction of vaccines. Crucially, they need to pass this information on to their teams. To do this, each manager has introduced a Daily Briefing at their home. It's been an important time for both sharing practical information and ensuring every member of the staff team has felt listened to and supported.

One of the hardest things has been when the Government has published guidance late on a Friday evening and expected it be implemented on the following Monday. This has meant our homes have had no time to prepare. In the case of guidance around visiting, this has been especially difficult. Our managers have had to support residents and their relatives with expectations of what is and isn't possible. They have done a wonderful job of being patient and very understanding!



The power of prayer

Throughout the pandemic, our managers, who are all Christian, have leaned on prayer. I've prayed with them individually and as an organisation we have a morning prayer meeting on Zoom. It's been great to share specific issues and pray them through together. For example, when there was an outbreak in November at Leonora Home in Chippenham and a CQC inspector arrived, I suddenly had a flurry of messages telling me that people were praying. It made such a difference – we could feel the Holy Spirit there with us.

For our care home managers, keeping everyone as positive as possible has been vital. Obviously, this has been difficult. But by supporting each other, praying and looking to God, they have been able to have some really lovely moments with our residents, or 'family members' as we call them. Despite all that the pandemic has thrown at us, life in our homes goes on.

'He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart'

Psalm 91:4



What does the Bible say about *The Way We Care?*

Alexandra Davis, Director of Marketing and Communications, takes a look at the biblical principles which underpin Pilgrims' Friend Society's bespoke approach to looking after older people, The Way We Care

Everything we do at Pilgrims' Friend Society is rooted in our Christian faith. Charles Spurgeon, the famous Baptist preacher and an early supporter of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, gave a sermon in September 1856 in which he preached on the importance of remembering the poor. He based his lesson on Galatians 2:10, 'All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along' – Spurgeon then took the opportunity to promote the Society to the listener saying, "Well, now, I beg leave to commend to your attention and notice to-night, the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, as being an especially excellent institution, because it will enable you to remember the poor."

Today we continue to look to the Bible to guide us in how we care for older people. The Way We Care is the Pilgrims' Friend Society approach to ensuring that older people have all that they need to flourish in their later years, especially as their physical needs

increase. It is an approach which is committed to seeing and valuing the whole person – the history, the experiences, the joys, and the sorrows of life, and to knowing who the important people are who make up the bundle of each person's living.

The Way We Care is based on eight principles, all of which we find in the Bible. Starting in Genesis, we ground our care in the



understanding that *every person is a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual being*, knowing that we are all made in God's image (Genesis 1:27). We place a special emphasis on helping older people to grow spiritually, and the story of their faith is a vital part of understanding the whole person.

We also believe that we're all *made to be in community with one another*. In Psalm 68:6 we read that 'God sets the lonely in families...' which means that we live as communities in our homes, and that all those who live in the home are part of a special kind of family. We make sure that we share time together, and that we're committed to supporting one another whether someone is having a good day or a bad day. And we love to celebrate a milestone together – whether that's a birthday, an anniversary, or a staff member getting married or having a baby!

The Way We Care is committed to supporting the *unique role that each of us has to play in life*. The Bible tells us that 'We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do' (Ephesians 2:10) and places no time limit on this. This approach to care also makes space for all the *different skills and abilities*

that each person brings to the home. Like the picture of the Body of Christ that we see in 1 Corinthians 12, our approach to care makes sure we discover all the different things each person has to offer. For some this is playing the piano for devotions, or creating decorative artwork, and for others it is laying the table at mealtimes, but each is a contribution to life in the home, continuing to grow and flourish in themselves, and inspiring and encouraging others to do the same.

We also believe that *building and growing relationships are an important part of life*. In Hebrews 10:24-25, we are called to '...consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...' and The Way We Care approach helps us continue to build and grow relationships even as we grow older. We support and encourage all those who live and work with us to make friends, build relationships, and grow in spurring one another on each day.

“ The Way We Care approach helps us continue to build and grow relationships even as we grow older ”



The Way We Care affirms the value of every person's voice and is grounded in the principle that *every person's opinion about what happens to them is valid*. Drawing inspiration from Psalm 71:9 which says, 'Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone' we work with all those who come and live with us to listen to their needs, hear their voice and care for them as they wish to be cared for. We care in collaboration with each person, supporting them to make good choices which will benefit them every day.

The Bible also reminds us that, 'They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green...' (Psalm 92:14). For us this means that,



even in our oldest days, *we have the opportunity to flourish regardless of our capability*. We know that every day is an opportunity for each person to flourish; their voice and presence is an essential part of life in our home, and we'll make moments each day for them to share with us about their life, loves, passions, and faith.

The Way We Care for people living with dementia

Flourishing in later life can be particularly challenging when it comes to those living with dementia, but the focus of The Way We Care on the putting the whole person at the centre of the care is really helpful for caring for those living with dementia. We train and equip our staff to understand the unique dementia journeys and to find small but significant ways of drawing each person out. Part of this is through our Hummingbirds whose job it is to spend short amounts of time with those living with dementia, chatting, or singing with them, and using objects from their past to draw the person out for a moment.

Above all, we look to Psalm 139:14 for that famous and wonderful affirmation that we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made!' Every person who lives in our homes is *lovingly and uniquely created by God*. Older people are of intrinsic value and are precious, and we are committed to seeing the unique and precious person every day.



Coming soon! We've made a short film about The Way We Care which you'll be able to see on our website at the end of September. Set a reminder to take a look - www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/thewaywecare

DAILY PRAYER Guide

PULL OUT AND KEEP

'And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people'

Ephesians 6:18

Autumn 2021

How you can pray for our work

PILGRIMS' FRIEND SOCIETY



Welcome

to another edition of the Pilgrims' Friend Society Prayer Guide. Thank you for your continuing support of our work through prayer.

Everything we do is rooted in our faith and founded on prayer. Whether that's cooking lunch for our residents, organising devotions in our housing schemes, or processing financial transactions at Head Office, we look to the Lord to guide us each day. It is of great encouragement to us that you are joining with us as we give the work of Pilgrims' Friend Society into His hands.

As we pray together, let's reflect on these wonderful words:

**'The LORD is near to all who call on Him,
to all who call on Him in truth.'**

Psalm 145:18



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.

Sundays



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



Those living in our homes and schemes
Praise God for the lives of those who live with us. Ask Him to keep them in His presence each day.



Care teams
Thank God for our wonderful, hard-working, and resilient care teams. Pray for grace and joy to be part of every day.

Mondays



Evington Home, Leicester – Jeanette Davis and Richard Cowlshaw

Dorothea Court, Bedford – Evelyn Bissell

Finborough Court Housing, Great Finborough – Sylvia Humm



Our catering, maintenance, and administration teams

Thank God for the teams who provide services to our homes and schemes. Pray that they would continue to be diligent in their work.



Our resources (see more on pp.24-25)

Pray that many would be helped by our resources. Pray that they would be a comfort and support to those ministering to older people



Tuesdays



Finborough Court, Great Finborough – Rachel Fishburne and Jonathan Dorrington

Pilgrim Gardens, Leicester – Mandy Smith



Activities and Community Engagement Facilitators

Thank God for our wonderful team who are working hard to support those in our homes, and share our ministry with others in the wider community.



Renewal Programme (see more on pp.6-7)

Thank God that Middlefields House is now open and offering people a new home. Pray for the next phase of the Programme as it extends to the South Coast.

Wednesdays



Florence House, Peterborough – Georgina Lansdell (interim)

Royd Court, Mirfield – Vicki Miller



The Operations Team overseeing our homes and schemes

Praise God for our Operations Team and for the support they offer our care and housing teams. Pray for ongoing blessing on their work.



Church and community engagement

Thank God for the faithfulness of many churches to our work. Pray many more would take up the opportunity to minister to older people.

Thursdays



Framland, Wantage – Beth Kneale

Pilgrim Care at Royd Court, Mirfield – Abi Jessop



Our Finance, HR, and Communications teams

Praise God for our central support teams. Pray that they would be able to serve their colleagues and residents well through their work.



Our IT project

Thank God for progress in our technology project. Pray that ongoing training and usage of new programmes would be well established in our work.

Fridays



Middlefields House, Chippenham – Emma Hughes, Chris Boyes, Nathan Barnes

Strathclyde House, Skelmorlie – Jenny Long



Volunteers

Thank God for all our volunteers. Pray that the ongoing return to serving in-person would go well and that they would find joy in their service.



Giving

Praise God for His faithfulness over two centuries. Pray that more people would catch the vision and be inspired to give towards ministry to older people.

Saturdays



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

Milward House, Tunbridge Wells – Annabelle Purdie

Shottermill House, Haslemere – Babi Dixon and Mike Beere



Directors and trustees

Thank God for the directors and trustees, and pray that they would be guided by Him in the big and small decisions.



Families and relatives

Pray for those whose loved ones live with us. Pray that they would find peace in knowing their loved one is treasured in our homes and schemes.

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



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 “How can I pray with an older person?”

A For many years, an elderly relative and I would set aside an hour each week to pray together. She liked to make a list of what we were to bring to God, I would agree it, and then she would spend the next 20 minutes praying through the whole list. When I suggested that we allowed ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit she said it sounded ‘holier than thou’, so I learnt to say a robust ‘amen’ to her prayer, and then thank Him for the prayers that He’d so graciously answered. She’s with the Lord now and I miss those prayer times.

In considering this question, I think also of a friend in her fifties who had longed for years to pray with her father-in-law. He had made it clear more than once, in his gentle, academic way, that he did not want to hear about Christianity. Now in his late nineties he was not expected to live much longer. Before visiting him in hospital my friend and her husband prayed passionately that God would open his heart. A few minutes into the visit she felt a nudge ‘now’ from the Holy Spirit, so she asked him if she could talk to him about Jesus. He said yes, and they had the joy of

praying with him – and he asked Christ to be his Saviour. He lived a couple of weeks longer and each time they visited, they prayed.

Point number one then, is to be led by the Holy Spirit. Point number two is to be led by the older person him/herself. Some may consider it to be an intrusion, as they are ‘very private’ in their faith, though some may be happy to pray with you for a cause. Others will welcome prayer, though it’s always best to ask what he or she would like prayer for! One’s priorities at, say, 80, are not the same as someone in their thirties. Older people often want to pray for others more than themselves.

Don’t be put off if the person has dementia. Carla (name changed) has always been ‘difficult’ and has alienated most of her family: having dementia seemed to exacerbate it. Then a friend asked if he could pray with her, and to his amazement she said yes. She committed her life to the Lord and to everyone’s astonishment has become mellow and agreeable.

Above all, be encouraged. God will make a way and prayer changes things!



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



Life stories: Dr Eunice, Finborough Court Housing

Dr Eunice Burton, 91, lives at our housing scheme in Great Finborough, Suffolk. Pursuing a career in medicine when few women did, she specialised in obstetrics and gynaecology and surgery. At every stage, she's been conscious of the Lord's guiding hand

Born in 1930 and brought up in Hastings by Christian parents, as a child Eunice attended an Independent Calvinistic Chapel. An incident during the Second World War, when she was 11, proved a defining moment for her faith. "The house of some friends of ours was bombed. Thankfully they were out. I remember looking up and seeing half the house hanging outside. The solemnity of 'life and death' convicted me of my need for personal salvation. I prayed from Acts 16, 'What must I do to be saved?' and the answer came, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.'"

From an early age, she appreciated the importance of helping others. Her grandmother was a Lady Visitor with our organisation, then known as the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. "I remember accompanying her to see an elderly gentleman, 'Poor Willie', in his tumbledown cottage," says Eunice. "She gave him his pension – something the organisation did back then – along with a few goodies."

Her father had been a stretcher-bearer during the First World War and was awarded a Meritorious Service Medal. "I once overheard him talking to another old soldier of how he'd gone into No Man's Land to rescue someone. They had disturbed a duck and it flew up and gave the game away to the German snipers. My father received a bullet wound in the arm and was invalided home. That bullet probably saved his life – the rest of his regiment went forward and most of them were killed."

Eunice's education was intermittent as due to the war schools had either been evacuated or closed. Her parents bought her Arthur Mee's Children's Encyclopaedia (10 large volumes) which she read with great pleasure. After the war, a small private school opened and it was here that a kind form mistress took a special interest in her future career. "She asked me what I'd like to do after school and I said, 'Oh probably nursing.' She said, 'I think you've got the ability to pursue a university education' and I said, 'All right, I'll do medicine then.'"

The path, however, was not easy. In attempting the MB External, she failed Physics prompting her to leave home to study at Norwood Technical College. "Here I had superb tuition so that I understood the principles of Physics and at my second attempt passed at A-level and won the Governor's Prize," says Eunice.

Throughout this time, she was applying to the 10 medical schools at London hospitals that were now accepting women. But one by one, she was rejected. "I was attending Westminster Chapel and benefitted from Dr Lloyd Jones' ministry. I learned a new hymn 'Give to the winds thy fears' which was a great encouragement. For a young Christian, feeling that God was guiding and yet having repeated disappointments, it was quite difficult to learn a lesson of faith. Was God saying, 'wait'? Or was God saying 'no' after all?"

Eunice got a job working at the Hammersmith Hospital Pathological Laboratories. Now aged 22, she felt she had nothing to lose and decided to try for a science scholarship at the Middlesex Hospital. For the exam, she felt empowered to write an essay on the 'Advancement of Science', citing examples from her lab experience. The judges were impressed – Eunice won the scholarship, covering all her fees. Not only that, she was also eligible for a state scholarship to cover maintenance. "When God answers prayer, He answers abundantly," she says.

From that moment, Eunice knew medicine was not just a career but a vocation – God had opened the way so that she could use her gifts for Him. She chose to specialise in obstetrics and gynaecology, thinking that she might join the mission field in a country where a female gynaecologist was required. After a successful interview at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, Hammersmith, Eunice found she was expected to get a post-graduate degree in general surgery.

Eunice embraced the opportunities that came her way, including jobs in orthopaedics and plastic surgery. "The orthopaedic training helped improve my diagnostic abilities," she says. "The training in plastics also proved very useful. Patients are not always very concerned about the inside, but if you leave an unsightly scar they are not very pleased!"

Eunice found that she had a natural aptitude for surgery. "I like preciseness of it, and also the challenge of the unexpected. You make a provisional diagnosis, you operate with that in mind, and sometimes you find something quite different. You need a lot of courage, and to make sure you aren't deflected from the job in hand."



At this time, Eunice began attending All Souls', Langham Place where John Stott was the Rector and she was eventually confirmed as an Anglican.

While female surgeons were rare at the time, Eunice found in general that junior jobs went by merit. When it came to the consultant level, it was a different matter. "It was felt, particularly by male appointment committees, that a woman's place was in the home. Surgery carries a heavy commitment, you were doing alternate nights on, weekends on. When the phone went, you downed everything. And if you had children that would have been really difficult."

Eunice was eventually appointed as a consultant at Harold Wood Hospital in Romford. While working there, she was invited to Iraq to help set up a medical school in Basra. The visit gave Eunice fascinating insights into the lives of the Marsh Arabs, whose way of life revolves around the river. A particular highlight was connecting with the local Christian community. She later returned, this time to northern Iraq, to deliver a lecture tour. During these trips, she enjoyed visiting sites of biblical interest, such as the site of Ancient Babylon, Nineveh (Mosul), and the area believed to be the Garden of Eden.

Through this connection with Iraq, Eunice found God was using her in new ways. On one occasion she received a phone call from a Christian Iraqi lady who had arrived at Heathrow Airport with her address. The lady had had an operation

several years before by an English surgeon visiting Iraq. She now needed a further complex operation and no-one in Iraq was willing to help.

"I believed that day that God had given me a special power," says Eunice. "A Jordanian lady was working with me. She commented, 'English people say that a gardener has green fingers. What do you say about surgeons?' She realised that I was operating with a skill not my own. I think that this is what a miraculous healing so often is – a surgeon has been given a special ability by God."

After a long career, during which she saw many advancements, such as the development of keyhole surgery, Eunice retired in 1995. Retirement gave her fresh opportunities to pursue her love of travel and she enjoyed cruises around the Mediterranean and repeat visits to the Middle East.

Back in the UK, she volunteered as a guide at the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in London and in the library at the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity.

In 2017 she moved to Finborough Court Housing where she enjoys fellowship with other retired Christians. "When I was visiting those poor pensioners all those years ago with my grandmother I little thought that many years later I would be a beneficiary myself!"



Blooming marvellous



Those living at homes have been enjoying the natural world, be it getting green-fingered or exercising their creative talents



Luff House, Walton-on-the-Naze, took a sensory approach, exploring a range of natural materials as part of The Wildlife Trusts' 30 days of Wild.



At Bethany Christian Home, Plymouth, family members enjoyed worship, coffee and poetry.



Family members at Milward House, Tunbridge Wells, made some lovely leafy floral arrangements for everyone in the home to enjoy. The home's resident gardeners also made sure their plants didn't go thirsty over the warmer summer months.



Roll up, roll up! Sunflowers and tomato plants planted by family members were on sale to staff at Finborough Court, Great Finborough.



This family member at Framland, Wantage, is a dab hand in the garden and knows everything about growing fruit and veg from scratch. Here she is caning up the tomatoes with Nicole.



At Leonora Home, Chippenham, family members used pretty pressed flowers to decorate beautiful Bible verse postcards for family and friends.



Passionate about prayer

At Pilgrims' Friend Society, we believe in the power of prayer. As well as providing a prayer guide in this magazine, and our monthly email prayer updates, each year we run a special Prayer Week with more ways to encourage people to pray.

“Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always”
1 Chronicles 16:11

Prayer Week runs from **Sunday 12th September to Saturday 18th September**. Each day we're praying for a different issue, from the spiritual life of older people to the challenges of isolation and the role the church can play in serving older people.

This year, our Prayer Week resource is coming to you in partnership with Faith in Later Life – our sister charity, which is working hard to support local churches in their ministry to older people. You should find your copy of the resource with this magazine.



Of course, there's no time limit to prayer! If you're reading this after Prayer Week has passed, you can still use the resource to help you in your prayers every week of the year.

Want more copies?

If you know others who would love to pray for older people you can download copies to print yourself on our website – www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/prayerweek

You can also email or ring the office and ask for more hard copies to be sent in the post – reach us at info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk or **0300 303 1403**.

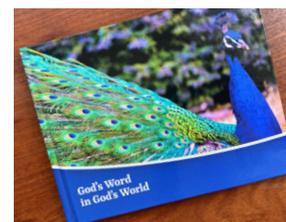
Share a prayer!

Our website has space for you to post your own prayers and find inspiration from others (link as above).



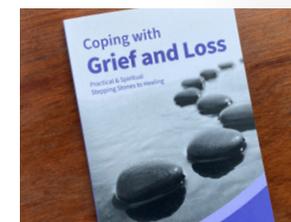
Resources

Our resources are organised around three areas: Dementia, Growing Older Together, Discipleship and Evangelism. This issue we're recommending:



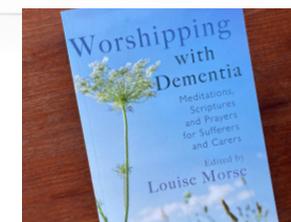
GROWING OLDER TOGETHER
God's Word in God's World
£8.99

Presented in an A5 format, this hardback glossy photobook brings together Bible verses and photos from nature. Designed with older people in mind, it reminds the reader of the world they have experienced and of God's creativity and faithfulness, supporting them as they continue in their journey of faith. Large print, thick pages and a landscape format make it easy to read and handle.



DISCIPLESHIP & EVANGELISM
Coping with Grief and Loss
Louise Morse, £3

Written within a Christian context, this booklet looks at the impact of grief and loss and explores key stepping stones to help the reader navigate the tricky waters of bereavement. They aim of the booklet is to give an understanding of what grief is, how it affects us, and how we can live through it.



DEMENTIA
Worshipping with Dementia
Louise Morse, £8.50

Being adrift in a world without memory is a challenging reality for many in our community. Dementia hides the person from us, but never from God. This resource includes many practical suggestions for offering spiritual support to those with dementia. "We have accounts of people with dementia coming to faith on hearing the gospel," says Louise. "God never gives up, and neither should we. Visiting and supporting, ministering and caring is not about what it does for us, but what it means to the person with dementia." This is true hope for weary caregivers and good news for sufferers.

For our full list of resources and to order online, visit:
www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources

Alternatively, ☎ **0300 303 1403**





A day in the life of...

Celal Berker, Finance Reporting Manager

WORDS: Kaela Dutton

Celal is part of the Pilgrims' Friend Society Head Office team – he is the Finance Reporting Manager. Celal's job is to bring together the charity's accounting records, including invoices, fees and donations, ensuring all transactions are recorded correctly.



He joined in January 2019 and has over 20 years' experience working in charity finance. He's worked for charities such as Samaritan's Purse, Oak Hill College, Urban Saints and Greenbelt.

7.15am

Celal lives in Enfield, North London, with his wife, Fatma. He starts his day early by making tea to sip as they enjoy a quiet time with the Lord, reading a Bible passage of the day, sharing thoughts then praying together.

8.45am

After breakfast and a reflective time, Celal heads to his study in his home to start his

working day. Surrounded by books, his study is a quiet place, perfect for focusing on the tasks ahead.

9am

In the morning he checks in with his finance colleagues. Celal works closely with Debbie, the Director of Finance, Andrew, the Finance Operations Manager, and fellow head office finance team members.

10am

After meeting with his team Celal plans his day, first working through his emails and answering financial queries. He then liaises with the purchase ledger and sales ledger teams and focuses in on the financial reports he will be working on.

11am

The majority of Celal's time is spent making sure that Pilgrims' Friend Society costs are covered, working with each home and scheme manager, administrators and the charity's directors and operations team to make sure all costs are reconciled, and that the Pilgrims' Friend Society is a good steward of its funds.

12 noon

Head Office staff meet via Zoom for midday prayers. They take this time to pray for the



Proudest achievement:

His three lovely children - God has been faithful and good, he is so proud of his family.

Celal's Favourite Bible verses:

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and He will make your paths straight.' Proverbs 3:5-6

'Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.' Proverbs 16:3

homes, schemes and one another. Celal finds it exciting being part of a Christian organisation, and a joy to not only be able to meet with fellow Christians at church but also in a work environment. He loves the opportunity and challenge to bring the fruits of the Spirit to his work and loves that what he does helps support older people.

Lunch

After a busy morning catching up with his team and planning reports to run and create, it's time for lunch. Most days Celal enjoys a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a refreshing green apple, then heads to his local parks for fresh air.

2pm

Celal's afternoon is spent meeting with the homes and schemes managers or administrators, working on SAGE (the accounting system), checking balances, general

accounting tasks and making sure everything is complete and consistent in time for month-end.

3pm

A major part of Celal's job is reporting income and expense, head office costs and year-end, specifically working with auditors.

What Celal particularly likes about being Finance Reporting Manager is the satisfaction of everything totalling correctly at the end of a month, after hard work, and bringing improvement to the processes.

5pm

By the end of a very busy day, Celal checks in with his team to see how their processes and projects have been and then prepares for another busy day of financial reporting.

After work

In his spare time Celal has been taking an online Biblical Hebrew Language course. He also enjoys reading especially classic sci-fi novels, and taking time off to go on adventures and holidays with his wife.



Hymns We Love

Faith in Later Life Ambassador Pippa Cramer tells how a hymn-based ministry to older people at her church helped to inspire the Daily Hope, the free phone line which has offered spiritual comfort to many during the pandemic

Pippa has long had a heart for older people. As an Occupational Therapist, she specialised in Neurorehabilitation and Care of the Elderly within the NHS. She is now the Pastoral Care and Seniors Minister at Holy Trinity Claygate, Surrey, and has been running Connections, one of the largest church-based groups for seniors in the UK, for the last 10 years.

Pippa longed to take older people on in their faith and considered how hymns could provide a way in to sharing the gospel. "This is a generation that has grown up singing hymns – the words and tunes are almost a part of



their DNA," she says. "I thought hymns could provide a lovely, gentle, accessible way in."

And so, after much prayer, Hymns We Love was born, a series of talks focusing on a different well-loved hymns. At the start of session, the hymn is played and sung. Then follows a short talk written by Pippa's husband Steve Cramer exploring the history of the hymn and its writer, and the meaning behind the words. The hymn is then sung again, there is a prayer and then the opportunity to take part in a small group discussion.

By 2019, an average of 60 older people were attending the talk at Connections each week.

"It was wonderful to see how God was at work at Claygate," says Pippa. "At the same time, I felt overwhelmed by a burden for all the lonely, older people across the UK who weren't being reached."

In January 2020, she spent a few days away by herself, fasting and praying. "I found myself just crying for all those older people who are completely isolated who don't yet know the Lord. I asked God to show me a way to reach them," she says.

And then the pandemic hit. All face-to-face gatherings came to an abrupt end. Like many churches, the Connections team found

themselves looking after older people in new ways, developing a 'Cascade of Care' to support those in their community.

In the midst of the crisis, an opportunity to reach older people more widely presented itself. "I was conscious that many older people are not online, but everyone has a telephone," says Pippa. "So, how about a phone line that older people could call for spiritual support?"

After discussions with the Evangelism and Witness Team at Lambeth Palace, the Daily Hope, a free phone line, was set up, supported by the Church of England and Faith in Later Life (the sister charity of Pilgrims' Friend Society). Available 24-hours a day, the Daily Hope offers a selection of hymns, reflections and prayers, as well as Church of England services. The first option takes you to a recording from Hymns We Love.

The response has been overwhelming – to date the Daily Hope has received approaching 500,000 calls. "So many people have said that the Daily Hope has been a lifeline to them," says Pippa. "We are delighted to say that we have received funding so that the Daily Hope can continue to support all those who are older or unable to attend church."

In recognition of her work during the pandemic, Pippa was awarded the Alphege Award for Evangelism and Witness from the Church of England. In his citation, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby expressed the desire for Connections and Hymns We Love to be replicated in all churches in the UK. Pippa longs for this to be a reality. "The pandemic has definitely opened people's eyes to the many lonely, isolated older people around us," she says.

If you are eager to share the gospel with older people, Pippa advises starting small, praying about it with one or two like-minded people.

A first step could then be running a Hymns We Love series. The texts from the first five talks are available online (see below). You could provide live music with an organ or a piano, but singing along to a recording can work just as well.

"This generation who have grown up singing and knowing these wonderful hymns won't be here forever," says Pippa. "Right now, we have a unique opportunity. So, please join me in praying – this is the key of course!"

For links to the first 5 talk from the Hymns We Love series and recordings, visit:

 [www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/
resources/faith-in-later-life](http://www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/resources/faith-in-later-life)

Daily Hope: 0800 804 8044

Residents' stories: SHEILA

Sheila, 89, lives at Shottermill House in Haslemere. Her daughter Susan told us about her mother's journey of faith



Sheila was born in 1931, and was a child aged eight when the Second World War broke out in 1939. She has shared memories with her daughter Susan of going down into the air-raid shelter with her siblings. "It was very frightening hearing the bombs," says Susan, "and they knew that when the noise stopped one was coming down." The faith of the family around Sheila held her as a child through those terrifying times and the same faith holds her today.

Sheila's grandparents were devoted Christians, and her mother came to faith as she grew up surrounded by family believers. Some of her cousins are missionaries in New Zealand, and her uncle was a preacher. The families lived fairly near each other, in semi-rural Bearsted, in Kent.

"They were a huge family, with a lot of aunts," says Susan, "Going to church on Sunday, dressed in their Sunday best, was a family occasion. Mum had one best dress, worn on a Sunday, and she had to look after it. She told me how she was especially forbidden to step into a little stream on the way."

Sheila married Ray at the age of 20. When they met, Sheila and Ray had separate jobs, and they decided they would open a pub/restaurant so they could work together. "They worked like trojans," said Susan. "They used to cater for weddings and special

Find out more about our unique approach to care, The Way We Care: www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/thewaywecare



occasions, and it was so successful they were able to retire in their early fifties. Mum immersed herself again into her church life. Dad was never a religious man, although he went to church at Christmas time, but he never held Mum back."

Susan remembers her mother always prayed at night, making sure she and her sister Alison also said their prayers. With so many of her relatives now in Heaven, Susan says with great confidence, "I know I'm never frightened of dying; that my faith will get me through."

Sheila and Ray were married for 48 happy years until Ray died aged 72, 22 years ago. "When my father had lung cancer and died, my mum's faith got her through all of that," says Susan. "It was the same when her mum and dad died, and her faith now is stronger than ever."

Sheila came into Shottermill House in November five years ago after having a few falls. One happened during the night and broke her hip, and she was taken into hospital for treatment. With increasing frailty, it was clear that she needed residential care, so while she was in hospital Susan and other family members searched for the best care home for her, looking

around a number of them until they came to Shottermill House.

"We knew the minute we walked in that this was the right place," says Susan. "It was the warmth, the and the way staff talked to. Also the space – it was light, airy, there were flowers and I felt that the staff were Christian. They had a faith, and it came across. My Auntie Pat said, 'If I have to go and live anywhere, please make sure I go there.'"

In November Sheila will have been at Shottermill House for five years. Despite living with dementia she is happy and loves being with like-minded people. Susan says, "She loves everybody in the home. She joins in everything and loves the services. She has made some close friends, like Gwenda and Norman, and a lady called Alice. She loves the staff, and they love her, too.

"As a family we are incredibly blessed. She still recognises us and talks about our dad and her parents. Their faith has come down through the family. It carried her through the loss of her parents, and her husband. She has dementia but she is so contented."

Gift FORM ...CONTINUED



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

Full Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone Email

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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.

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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



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PMSEP21



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www.pilgrimsfriend.org.uk/give

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



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

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 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.....

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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 / /

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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. /

Contact details

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Emmaus House, HARROGATE
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Shottermill House, HASLEMERE
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Royd Court, MIRFIELD
0300 303 1480

roydcourt@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



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

pilgrim.care@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk



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