



# Sample Dementia Friendly Carol Service

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016  
3.30p.m. – 4.30.m.  
St. Paul's, Stonehouse  
Plymouth

A sample pack for 'A Dementia Friendly Carol Service'  
shared with others in Exeter Diocese, with thanks to:

**TRANSFORMING  
PLYMOUTH  
TOGETHER<sup>td</sup>**  
CUJ WITH THE DIOCESE OF EXETER & PLYMOUTH CHURCHES

## **Christmas can be a difficult and lonely time for people living with dementia**

Typically thought of as a wonderful time of the year, Christmas is supposed to be a joyous occasion for all. But it can be a stressful and lonely time of year for people living with dementia, with many feeling isolated and unable to join in with the festivities.

A new study, among people affected by dementia, was carried out by Alzheimer's Society and reveals that:

- Half (49 per cent) of those caring for somebody with dementia believe Christmas is an isolating time for people with the condition
- Nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of people with dementia have found that Christmas invitations have dried up since their diagnosis
- 47 per cent feel that people don't have time to include those living with dementia at Christmas
- 71 per cent of carers think that a lack of understanding is causing people with dementia to be excluded at Christmas
- Almost half (47 per cent) of people with dementia admit that their biggest worry is how family and friends will react to unusual behaviour.

### **General tips from 'Dementia Friends' for including people with dementia at Christmas in the home and in the community:**

- Get everyone involved: There are many ways to involve people living with dementia at Christmas time – from something as simple as hanging a bauble on the tree to doing a spot of Christmas shopping. The important thing is to remember to make sure they are included.
- Slowly does it: Introduce the Christmas environment slowly. Think about putting up decorations gradually over a few days so it doesn't come as a big change to the person's usual setting.
- Bring back old memories: Whether it's an old song they used to enjoy or a classic Christmas film, find something fun you can take part in. Making a family photo album or memory box could be a nice way to spend time together.
- Don't over do it: Someone with dementia may feel overwhelmed by lots of noise and unfamiliar people around, so try and keep visitors to a few at a time. Schedule periods of rest throughout the day or have a quiet room they can retreat to in case things become too much.

- Christmas shopping: With a bit of planning, Christmas shopping doesn't have to be too stressful. Shop in the morning when it's quieter and you can take your time. A number of major retailers now have employees who are Dementia Friends in stores, including Argos, Barclays, Homebase, Lloyds Bank and M&S. So look for the Dementia Friends badge and don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Musical events: Try to include people with dementia when attending carol services, as singing carols is a great joint activity and can bring back lovely memories.
- Accommodate: If you're organising a party or event, have a quiet room set aside and make sure facilities are clearly labelled. Knowing where to go will really help someone with dementia feel more confident.
- Be patient: It's easy to get caught up in all the hustle and bustle of Christmas, but if someone seems confused or is taking a bit longer to do something, take a breath and be patient.

[https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/downloads/file/2463/tips\\_for\\_supporting\\_people\\_with\\_dementia\\_this\\_christmas](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/downloads/file/2463/tips_for_supporting_people_with_dementia_this_christmas)

[www.dementiafriends.org.uk/](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/)

## Preparation for Dementia Friendly Carol Service

- Planning began August/September
- Chris Forster of Transforming Plymouth Together met with the Alzheimer's Society Peer Group, Plymouth Dementia Champion, Joanna Bound local care home Chaplain and Plymouth Dementia Action Alliance to plan the service together.
- A date was chosen in mid-December not too close to Christmas.
- The time – tea time - was chosen to give people time to get there – an afternoon is probably better than the morning – but before it got too dark.
- A venue was looked for that's accessible and with good PA and projector system but also looked like a traditional church since visual clues are important to people living with dementia. Good lighting and accessibility is important too since some may have mobility difficulties. Organisers also looked for a space for refreshments afterwards and somewhere quiet that someone could withdraw to during the service if necessary. The priest and people of St Paul's Stonehouse were asked if they would be prepared to host this service for Plymouth and they welcomed the opportunity.
- Transport and parking was considered too – the church is on local bus routes and the local council was approached and granted free parking locally for the afternoon. The local Navy Cadets was asked to help with stewarding.
- The local primary school was asked just after half term to take part and prepare some carols and music, and they were keen to help. The local Singing for the Brain group were also invited to take part but they needed longer to prepare (ideally about 4 months).
- The church hosted the refreshments and organized serving tea and coffee. Biscuits and cakes were donated by the local Co-op Store and Marks and Spencers. (Later it was suggested that some savouries and fruit would have been helpful as alternatives.)
- Invitations went out to local memory cafes, residential homes, churches, through the Dementia Action Alliance and on Radio Devon. Everyone in the Plymouth area was welcome, not just people living with dementia and their carers.

- Representatives of various groups took part in the readings, including someone with dementia, and other elements of the service.
- The order of service was produced clearly and simply in large print, and all hymns and activities also appeared on the screen as well. A simple Christmas theme was followed throughout the service. The pace was slightly slower and time given for people to keep up with what's happening. The hymns included only 3 verses each.
- Everyone was given a small candle to light and take home at the end of the service.
- Organisers had no idea how many would come but 110 adults and 25 children attended and feedback at the end was very positive and it is intended to repeat it this year.
- Chris met with others after the event to reflect on how it went and overall people were pleased that people felt included, welcomed and glad to join in something again at church at Christmas. Many appreciated the opportunity to sing favourite carols again and join in something in the community. The school children were particularly welcome in helping to break the ice and contribute to the warm atmosphere. However, more and clearer signage outside and inside the church would be helpful next time.
- The order of service and slides for Bishop Nick's short talk follow.

Further information from  
 Chris Forster, Development Worker, Transforming Plymouth Together  
 M 07710096210  
 E [chris@transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk](mailto:chris@transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk)  
 Twitter [@Plymtogether](https://twitter.com/Plymtogether)  
 Facebook [www.facebook.com/TransformingPlymouthTogether](https://www.facebook.com/TransformingPlymouthTogether)

Sally Farrant, Church and Society, Exeter Diocese,  
 Sally.farrant@exeter.anglican.org

## Order of Service

### Welcome and Introduction

Chris Forster, Transforming Plymouth Together

### Reading: Isaiah 9 Verses 6-7

Ian Sheriff, Plymouth Dementia Alliance

**Song:** 'Away in a Manger'  
from St. George's School

**Carol:** O Come all ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;

#### *Refrain*

*O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord.*

2. True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,  
Lo, He shuns not the Virgin's womb;  
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

#### *Refrain*

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;  
*Refrain*

**Reading:** Luke Chapter 2 verses 1-7  
Joanna Bound - CTiP Care Home Chaplain

**Carol:** Once in Royal David's City

1. Once in royal David's city  
Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her Baby  
In a manger for His bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.

2. He came down to earth from heaven,  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
And His cradle was a stall;  
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,  
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.



3. And our eyes at last shall see Him,  
Through His own redeeming love;  
For that Child so dear and gentle  
Is our Lord in heaven above,  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.

4. Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by,  
We shall see Him; but in heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high;  
Where like stars His children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.



**Reading:** Luke Chapter 2 verses 8-18  
Member of the Alzheimer's Leadership Group

**Carol:** While Shepherds watch their flocks by night

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around  
And glory shone around.  
"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled minds;  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind
2. To you, in David's town, this day,  
Is born of David's line  
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
And this shall be the sign  
And this shall be the sign.  
The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in swaddling-clothes  
And in a manger laid

3. Thus spake the seraph and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels, praising God, and thus  
Addressed their joyful song:  
"All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;  
Good will henceforth from Heaven to men  
Begin and never cease

**Prayers** Including the Lord's Prayer  
Ian Chandler, Archdeacon of Plymouth



**Short talk "It's all in a name; Emmanuel"**  
Nick McKinnel, Bishop of Plymouth

**Carol:** Hark the Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King,  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconcile.  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim,  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem'  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King.

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail, the incarnate deity,  
Pleased as Man with Man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King.
  
3. Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King

**Blessing and invitation to refreshments** (Bishop of Plymouth)



*Supporters include:*

*Diocese of Exeter, Alzheimer's Society, Plymouth City Council, Marks & Spencer Plymouth, Co-op Plymouth branches, Dementia Alliance Plymouth and the Royal Navy*

Powerpoint slides for Bishop Nick's short talk at the Dementia Friendly Carol Service in Plymouth

1

"It's all in a name"

A short talk for Christmas  
from Bishop Nick

3

Emmanuel

= God is with us

2

Elizabeth

Wayne

Polly

Charles

Mary

James

Harry

Daisy

Monty

George

Edward

Ashley

Jill

4

JESUS

= Saviour

Further ideas for services at Christmas and other times of the year can be found in:

**50 Services of Christian Worship for use in various settings especially Care Homes**

By Buddy Reeve, available from PARCHE, a Church-based Ministry of Christian Teams bringing fellowship, comfort, Bible teaching, Communion and friendship to the Elderly living in Care Homes.

PARCHE Office: St Elisabeth's Church Centre, 268 Victoria Drive, Eastbourne BN20 8QX, Tel: 01323 438527, [PARCHEenquiries@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:PARCHEenquiries@hotmail.co.uk)

<http://www.parche.org.uk/Index.html>