

- Words of Hope-Scripture Union (2010)
- Words of Peace-Scripture Union (2010)
- Words of Faith--Scripture Union (2010)
- Sue Pickering, *Creative ideas for Ministry with the Aged* - Canterbury Press (2014)
- Louise Morse, *Worshipping with Dementia*-Monarch Books (2010)
- Caroline George, *Living Liturgies- The Bible Reading Fellowship* (2015)
- Margaret Goodall, *Worship and people with Dementia*-MHA
- Siobhán O’Keeffe *Petals of Prayer* Kevin Mayhew Limited (2011)

Further reading

A fuller list of reading is available to download from the diocesan website. The following are helpful for churches and individuals beginning to explore this area of ministry.

Joanna Collicutt, *Thinking of You* BRF (2017). This is an excellent place to start.

Louise Morse, *Dementia: Pathways to Hope* Monarch Books (2015). An approach based on CBT, explored biblically as well as practically.

Eileen Shamy, *A Guide to the Spiritual Dimension of Caring for People with Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementia*-Jessica Kingsley Publishers (2003). A practical approach, with insight into the breadth of different kinds of dementia.

John Swinton, *Dementia: living in the memory of God*- SCM Press (2012). For those wanting to explore this ministry theologically.

Susan Varley *Lovely Old Lion* Anderson Press. A book for children.



Ministering to those living with dementia



Introduction

This leaflet is intended as a starting point for churches who want to think about how best to ensure that people with dementia feel fully part of their church community. It can’t say everything but begins the conversation and makes suggestions about further reading and resources, both online and in book form, for those who are exploring this area of ministry.

This is becoming an increasing priority within ministry against the background of the ageing of our society. Faith often has an important place in the lives of people living with dementia and their families.

Biblical reflections

We know that this is an area of concern for society in general, but it is good to reflect also on what our Christian faith teaches us. While there is little said in particular about dementia, there are some general principles found in the bible that apply. The starting place is the fact that Jesus treated everyone he met with respect and dignity. The following also offer insight:

- Romans 8.38-39: Nothing can separate us from the love of God, remembering that no-one is beyond God’s reach.
- Psalm 139: We are known by God.

- John 13.34: A new commandment to love one another as we are loved by God.
- Luke 24.31: The disciples' eyes opened to Jesus' presence as they broke bread together in the Emmaus road story; re-remembering within the community of faith,
- Genesis 2.26-31: All are made in the image of God.
- 1 Corinthians 12: Partnership with people who are very different from us, with different gifts to offer, is a good way to be as church.

Dementia friendly churches

A guide to dementia friendly churches is available to download from the diocesan website.

This resource, in an easy to read format, starts with some background information to enable the reader to understand dementia better. It then goes on to outline practical ways in which churches may become more welcoming towards people with dementia.

Often churches want to be welcoming but are unsure about what specifics would aid that welcome. This guide gives practical tips, with tried and tested means of including those living with dementia.

Getting started

The following are the kinds of questions a church will need to think about if it wants to become dementia friendly:

- How can we encourage supportive relationships?
- How can we help people to communicate across the barriers that we feel when people are different from us?
- How can we ensure that the physical space doesn't cause

problems for people?

- How can we ensure that we stay positive, and open to the gifts that people with dementia can bring to us?
- How do we, as Christian community, hold the personal stories which maintain the connection with those in the church family who have a diagnosis?

A lot of these things are general good practice, with positive implications for overall welcome. Dementia friendly churches find themselves also becoming inclusive in other ways, for example for adults and children with disabilities, or for parents with young children, or a variety of different socio-economic backgrounds.



Training opportunities

- Dementia awareness training is available through NHS 2gether Trust or Forest of Dean District Council.
- Dementia Friends training through Alzheimer's society.
- Videos on this website are an excellent way of learning about this ministry: <http://gloriousopportunity.org>
- The Gift of Years newsletter from BRF.
- Anna Chaplaincy.
- Dementia champions connected to Dementia Action alliance

Liturgy and worship resources

Sample liturgies are available on the diocesan website for Holy Communion and Communion by extension.

More helpful resources are listed over the page.