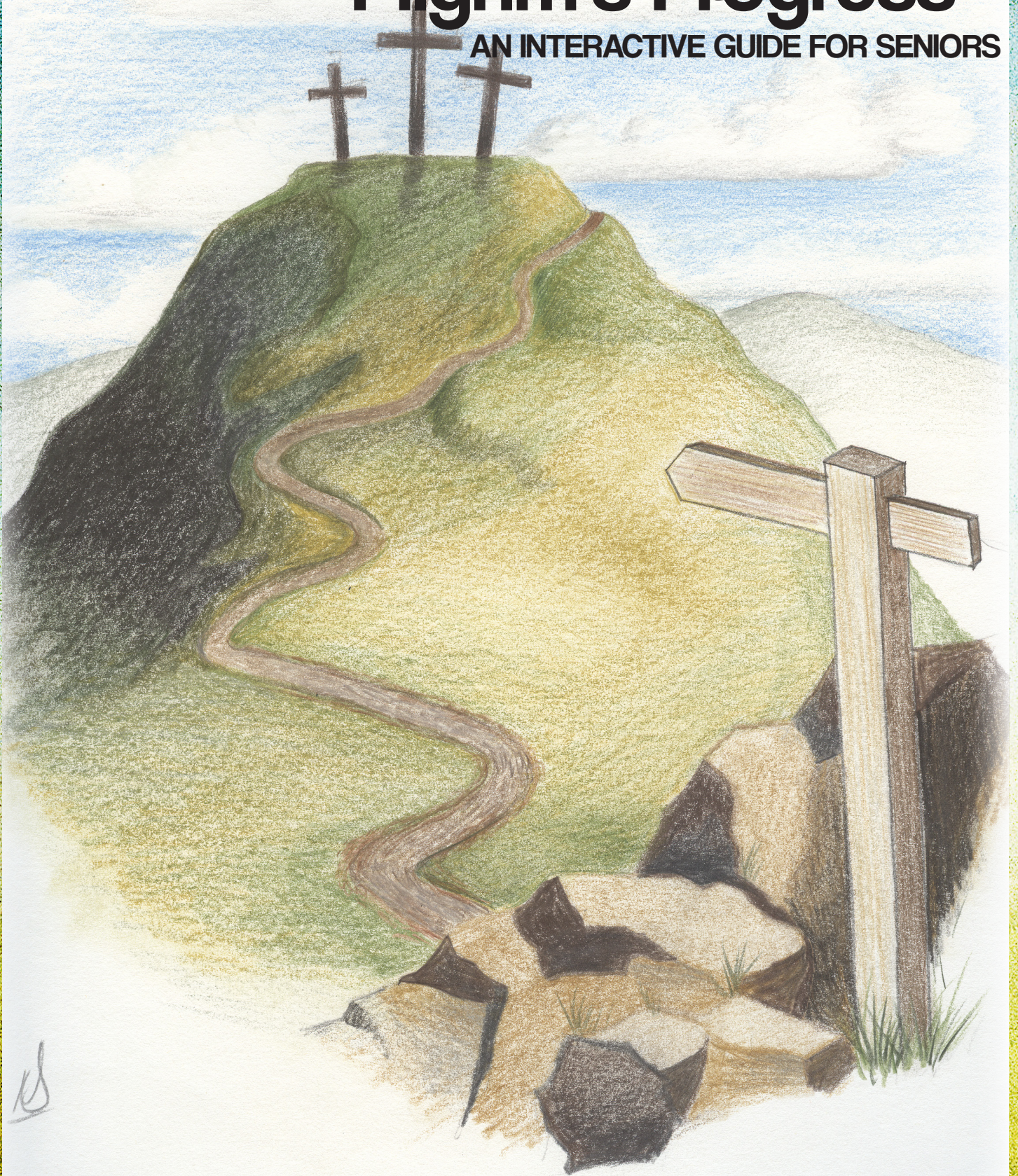


# *John Bunyan's* **Pilgrim's Progress**

AN INTERACTIVE GUIDE FOR SENIORS



Written by Elizabeth Stacey  
Illustrated by Ronald Sweetenham



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*My very sincere thanks to all those who have helped in the production of this Interactive Study Guide for Pilgrim's Progress*

*To Ron Sweetenham for all your marvellous artwork*

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*And a final thank you to Revd Ewen Huffman for his encouragement and support and to Judy Marshall for her help*

*A special thank you to God for His inspiration and ideas*

## FOREWORD

Having worked with Seniors for a number of years, finding appropriate study material always seemed something of a challenge. On one occasion Liz Stacey, the author of this guide, suggested, with an air of excitement and conviction, that she thought John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* would be an interesting book to use.

Her idea was adopted and the weekly sessions were planned around this text. It would be true to say that none of those helping support this Seniors Study Group could have envisaged the impact the studies would have on the participants. As helpers and Seniors travelled together over nine sessions we found ourselves on individual faith journeys and a deepening journey with Christ.

Many in the group of eighty and ninety year olds had read *The Pilgrim's Progress* as children and were themselves excited to have these early memories stirred. As we studied and shared together so we journeyed deeper into the heart of God and into an understanding of the Christian faith. There were many moments of fun and laughter, but there were also more intimate moments of sharing, of quiet reflection and, for some of the group, inner healing.

We found over the weeks that the Christian faith journey is a mix of challenges and blessings, but with Christ, is one we cannot and need not do alone. As we opened ourselves more to God's love through the message of John Bunyan and the pilgrims' journey, so our individual faith journeys took on new life. There were treasured moments when the presence of God seemed so tangible.

As you use this resource I believe you will encounter God in a vital way and be encouraged to reflect again on your own, ongoing faith journey.

There is enough freedom in the text to shape the studies to suit your personal circumstances. I am thankful to have been part of the original 'trials'. I am so glad that the seed sown in Liz's mind has born such fruit. My prayer is that you will be inspired and that this inspiration will be passed to the Seniors with whom you are working. I hope in journeying together you will be able to give them hope and encouragement for the future.

There are always lessons to be learnt and progress to be made, but journeying in the knowledge of God's love and care gives strength to the spirit and rest to the weary soul.

Thank you Liz for your persistence; for seeing a treasure for our Seniors and for wanting this to be shared in the wider setting.

*Janet Sparkes*



This book is dedicated to the many SENIORS  
whose love and encouragement enrich my life

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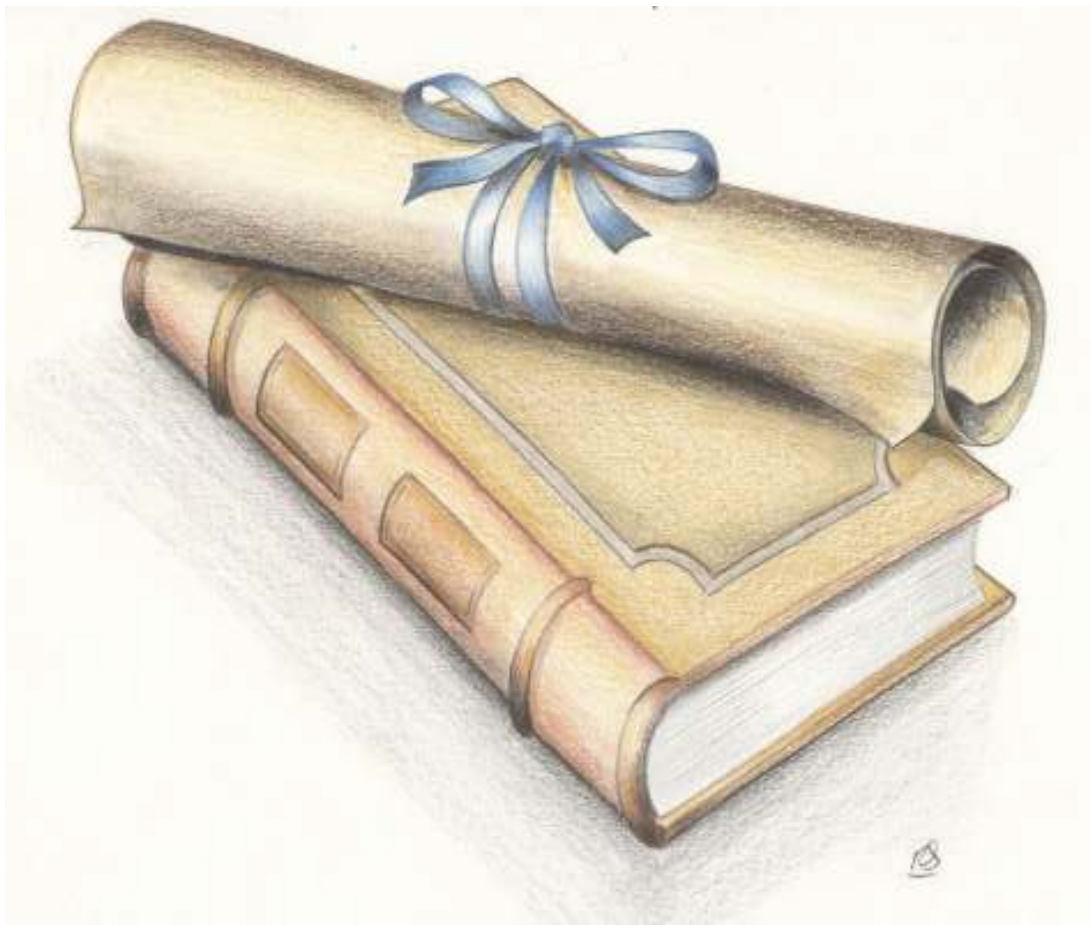
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*John Bunyan's*  
**Pilgrim's Progress**

**AN INTERACTIVE SENIORS RESOURCE**



**Written by Elizabeth Stacey**  
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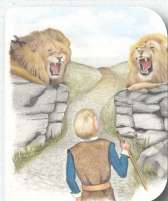
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## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

### A Personal Introduction

I have used this material successfully with some eighty and ninety year old Seniors. They enjoyed reading Pilgrim's Progress, finding it stimulating and helpful and were able to participate fully in each session, adding their own insight into any discussions. They commented that the Pilgrim's Progress Interactive Study had helped them gain a greater understanding of what the Christian life was all about. Many found faith and all experienced comfort.

In my experience, many older people are lonely, isolated and have a fear of dying. Often they would like to talk to someone about such feelings, but feel they can't. Pilgrim's Progress offers a natural exploration of these and other life issues as we journey together with its hero, Christian. Our group was able to identify with him in all his difficulties and doubts, as well as rejoice with him when he reached his final destination.

Christian's experience of death and his arrival at his final destination, captured so vividly in the closing chapters, gave us the opportunity to talk about life after death, without it being too personal or frightening, giving opportunity for discussion about God's provision through Jesus of eternal life.

It was amazing how the Lord blessed our efforts with His presence and a revelation of His goodness. All of those present felt a real sense of His love and care for them.

### Using this resource

It is important when you use this material to tailor it to suit your own particular needs and those of your group. Consequently, I have provided an outline and some suggestions rather than something set.

This resource is based upon 'A Pilgrim's Progress' by Geraldine McCaughrean, which won her a Blue Peter Award and can be obtained from Amazon or any good bookshop. In it Geraldine retells the story of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in a lively and helpful style, which is easy to read and understand. You will need a copy of this book to use alongside this resource. She has kindly given us copyright permission to use parts of the book to print out the dramas.

*John Bunyan's 'A Pilgrims Progress', retold by Geraldine McCaughrean,  
published by Hodder Children's Books ISBN 978 0340 844106  
(A dramatic version of this book is underway.  
Contact Geraldine McCaughrean via David Higham Associates Ltd for details.)*

As part of the introduction I have included some history about John Bunyan which you may find helpful in setting the scene for the rest of the story.

Each session is broken up into various parts to provide interest and to give Seniors the chance to comment and share ideas. Drama proved to be a valuable teaching aid and is used in most sessions. The drama seemed to maintain interest, prompt memory and allowed us to present big issues in a non threatening way.

Ronald Sweetenham has produced some lovely artwork which can be photocopied and used to help provide a visual aid. You may wish to enlarge and print some of these for props or background, or use them for publicity; the choice is yours.

For our very first session we used a PowerPoint presentation, but quickly realised our Seniors could not connect with it. We found a flipchart a much better way to aid communication and used it throughout.



There are nine sessions, each one broken up into an Outline, Main Points and Things to Get Ready Beforehand. See the following example. The main points may vary slightly in each session.

## **OUTLINE WITH SESSION NUMBER AND TITLE**

### **WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM LAST TIME?**

*(Starting from week two)*

Recap for a few minutes on what was covered last session, to see how much the group remembers. Fill in the gaps before starting on the new session.

### **MAIN POINTS OF THE STORY:**

Each section is in capital letters. When print is in italics this usually follows some questions and is suggesting some possible answers. When italics are in brackets this is for your information and should not be spoken out.

### **CONTINUING THE STORY:**

### **DRAMA:**

### **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS:**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT TRUTH TO REMEMBER:**

**SONG:** *(if appropriate)*

**PRAYER:** *(if appropriate)*

### **THINGS TO PREPARE BEFOREHAND:**

**Read** the necessary chapter/s in the book and the session notes.

**Identify main points:** *(you can use the ones I provide, but you may wish to change some of them to relate better to you and your group)* If you are using a flipchart, it is sometimes easier to prepare the different sheets before the session. It is a good idea to keep a copy of what you have done previously to help memory.

**Prepare questions to stimulate discussion**, but be flexible and change them to suit what comes up in discussion if it fits in with the overall theme.

**Print off Drama** and distribute beforehand. Choose some of your helpers to take part and bring in some extras if needed.

**Artwork:** Something relevant is provided each session for you to use if you wish.

**Song:** If appropriate, choose a song that can be used at some point in the session.

**Prayer:** Have a suitable prayer to draw the session to a close. This is optional, as you may feel it is not right for your particular group.

**To take home:** At each session there will be something relevant to give to participants to put in their Travel Guides to help them remember the session.

## **MAKE SURE EACH SESSION IS STIMULATING, LIGHT-HEARTED AND LOTS OF FUN!**

### **VISUAL AIDS AND OTHER PROPS:**

I used a roll of lining wallpaper to keep track of Christian's journey. To make this, start with the edge of the roll of paper facing toward you and unroll. Use the artwork and whatever text is given out at the end of each session to stick on, or write on the roll week by week. You can include some written headings, comments and pictures, anything relevant that would help you and your group to remember the stage of the journey for that session.



Before long it will be a useful map and reminder of just how far Christian (and your group) has travelled. I refer to this map and ask you to use it in Session Eight, but you could refer to it more often. It provides a good visual aid and gives the Seniors a chance to comment and remember.

**TRAVEL GUIDES** will be given to each person at the first meeting and will be used to record Christian's journey session by session. They consist of some printed verses or hymns relevant to the study, and will be found at the end of each session's notes ready to photocopy, cut and distribute. Some of your group may need some help to paste them into the Travel Guide.

Please encourage 'pilgrims' to bring these Travel Guides with them each time, as they are intended to help them remember and to prepare for the discussion.

Instructions for making up this guide are at the end of session one.

**TO TAKE HOME:** Something appropriate for the Travel Guide with relevant artwork, Bible verses and the Most Important Thing to Remember from the session.



