
*Singing and Sharing
the Good News of God's Love
with those in Residential Care*



Finding Creative Ways to Worship
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Our Aim is :

- to find ways of creating a relaxed , friendly, safe and homely setting that will encourage informal interaction between those leading the Worship Service and those attending.
- to provide a time of worship and sharing together that is meaningful to all those attending, that will uplift and sustain the believers, and interest those who may be seeking.
- to present the Service in a friendly and respectful way, provide some fun and friendship something creative which is easy to understand and remember.
- to use a Memory Box and other visual aids to bring interest to the topic and help stimulate discussion and memories of happy days.
- to give them something to take away that will be a gentle reminder of their time together and a means of giving information for future events.

Some possible questions to ask before preparing a Service

What criteria do you use when planning a Service, and how do you choose what to say or sing?

Do you use topics the residents may find helpful, or do you prepare something you think would be good for them, or that you would like them to hear?

Do you prepare Services to a set programme? For example 'Words of Jesus', 'God's promises', etc. If not, is this something you may find helpful?

Do you keep to the same pattern for the Service every time or is there room for doing things differently? Get inspired! Use your imagination and try inventing new ways of communicating.

Do you take time to speak with the older people either before or after the Service?

Do you know their names or anything about them? If not, how can you get to know them better?
(Name badges may be helpful)

*Although the people and circumstances
in these stories are fictitious,
the situations are based on real life stories*

Most of the older people who are in residential care are not there by choice. None of them would really wish to be there, but for one reason or another they are no longer able to live independent lives or look after themselves properly.

Let me introduce you to 5 residents who fall into this category. (Leader select 5 people to take on the roles of Ethel, Stan, Dorothy, William and Martha and ask them to read out their stories to the group.)

ETHEL can no longer walk very far without falling. She loses her balance very easily so has lost her confidence to go out anymore.

This makes shopping and cooking meals difficult. She has always been an active, independent person getting involved in many outdoor and indoor activities and often helping to run them. She had a lot of friends and always enjoyed getting out and about.

Ethel has been a Christian since childhood and her faith and her local church have always been a very important part in her life.

Now in her 90s, many of her friends have died. Other friends are in the same situation as herself and have moved to residential care homes wherever they can find vacancies, or have moved away to be nearer their families.

Ethel's husband died 20 years ago, and until recently she has managed very well. She was in her own little bungalow and loved her independence so is very sad to have to end her days in a home.

She misses her church and her Christian friends and feels lonely being surrounded by strangers.



Ethel suffers from arthritis and is always in pain, her hearing is not very good and she hates to wear her hearing aid.

She has always been a very happy little lady, and appreciative of anything that anyone does for her but her situation is causing her depression.

STAN is in his 80s. He tried to stay in his own home, but circumstances and bad health overtook him and he had to give up his home and the garden he loved and move into residential care.

He was proud of his accomplishments and of his independence. He loved to grow lots of vegetables in his garden and was always sharing his home-grown produce with his neighbours and friends.

Stan's wife of 60 years has severe dementia and has had to go into a separate home which caters specially for those with dementia.

He tries to visit her as often as he can, but finds it difficult to get to the home where she is and he hates to ask or depend on others for transport.

Often, when he does get to see her, she doesn't recognise him, which leaves him feeling very sad and distressed. He misses the wife he knew and loved and feels very alone without her.

Stan has 2 sons who are married with children but one lives in Scotland and the other one lives quite a distance away.

They don't get to visit him very often as their work and family commitments keep them very busy but they are happy that their

Mum and dad are being looked after by professionals.

Stan feels very sad most of the time, and perhaps a little bit afraid of what the future will bring, but he tries to put a brave face on it, and no one would ever know how he is really feeling.



DOROTHY's husband has just died. She fell and broke her hip shortly afterwards and her mobility has been so impaired by this that she is no longer able to live in her own home.

She is grieving for her husband and for the life she used to live.

She feels she is surrounded by complete strangers who don't know anything about her or her husband and the lifestyle she is used to.

In her loneliness she wonders what is to become of her?

She suffers a lot of pain with her hip and is finding it difficult to get mobile. She is constantly afraid of falling again and can no longer walk confidently.

Dorothy has no family so she has to rely on kind friends for support, but they are also getting older and finding it more difficult to look after themselves and she doesn't want to be a nuisance.

~~**WILLIAM** has had a stroke. He can no longer dress or feed himself properly and his speech is affected. But he can understand fully all that is going on around him, which only adds to his frustration.~~

He absolutely loathes being dependent and is very ashamed when he is sometimes incontinent.

Not surprisingly William feels there is no purpose to his life anymore and has lost the will to live.

This makes him grumpy and bad tempered and hard to communicate with. He feels such a nuisance to everyone and often thinks of how he could end it all.

He has never been that sociable anyway and never had time for church. He doesn't like depending on anyone or anything, and is very critical of 'so called' Christians or the 'goodie two shoes' type of people.

He never married and he has never wanted that many friends so is probably very lonely.

MARTHA has dementia but acts fairly normally still so it is not very obvious on first meeting her. She is quite unaware of it and could carry on a reasonable conversation with you and you may not be aware of her limitations.

But her dementia results in her sometimes doing very silly or dangerous things like going out shopping in the middle of the night or crossing busy roads without realising the danger.

Martha very rarely recognises her family or her friends, but she quickly picks up if someone is angry or frustrated with her. She doesn't understand why and it distresses her and makes her cry.

When someone talks to her or makes her laugh she feels good.

Her daughter finds it difficult to visit. She is in complete denial of the situation and of the aging process, and when she does come, she gets frustrated or angry with her mum for not making more of an effort, so she doesn't stay very long.

Needless to say her mum is more distressed after her daughter visits, even although she very rarely recognises who she is.

Divide into 5 small groups around the people taking the parts of Ethel, Stan, Dorothy, William or Martha.
(Leader give each group a sheet of paper and pen.)

Ask each group to discuss together and identify the named person's feelings and list them on their sheet of paper.

As well as the 'feelings' list ask them to identify some of he needs they think they may have.

(Give 10-20 minutes for the groups to discuss together and let them know you want them to report back their discussions.)

Have a flipchart set up and ready for feedback from the group with the three columns: Write **FEELINGS** on top of one and **NEEDS** on the other.

Leave the third column blank for the moment.

*Start with the feelings column and ask each group to call out the feelings they identified in each story. Get someone to write them under the **FEELINGS** column. Allow time for discussion if appropriate. Do the same with the **NEEDS** Column and ask them to explain why they have come up with their answers.*

Ask two people to read the verses in Matthew 9:36-38 in the two different versions below:

New International Version: Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

The Amplified Bible: And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news (the Gospel) of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and every weakness and infirmity.

When He saw the throngs, He was moved with pity and sympathy for them, because they were bewildered (harassed and distressed and dejected and helpless), like sheep without a shepherd.

Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is indeed plentiful, but the labourers are few. So pray to the Lord of the harvest to force out and thrust labourers into His harvest.

LEADER ASK: WHAT DID JESUS SEE AND WHAT DID JESUS DO IN THIS PASSAGE? (*Discuss*)

Jesus looked at people and situations and understood what they were feeling and what they needed. He found a way to help them by getting others to help them. He told stories (parables) that related to the situation that would help them to understand or change it.

GO BACK TO THE FLIPCHART COLUMN 3 AND ASK THEM TO IDENTIFY WHAT JESUS WOULD SEE AND DO IN RESPONSE TO Ethel, Stan, Dorothy, William and Martha?

Does what Jesus compare in anyway with what you have identified?

Would you be able to respond as Jesus would?

*Some things to ask yourself
when planning a Service?*

- will this service make a difference to them?
- will it meet any of their present needs?
- will it bring them comfort?
- will it show them something of God's love for them?
-

Have you heard the term 'Friendship Evangelism'?

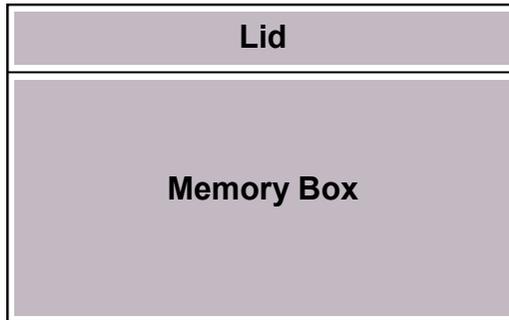
Friendship evangelism is about getting to know people and being their friend before sharing the Gospel with them. Take time to speak with the residents before the service or afterwards, find out their names, and something about them, their families or interests.

Arrange with the staff for the best time to be there so that you can have tea or coffee served after the service which will give an excellent opportunity to chat or pray for them.



Memory Boxes

Have you ever used a memory box?



The Memory Box can be used as a visual aid to add interest and anticipation as you speak. It should contain relevant items which can be used during a Service and is a useful tool for telling stories and engaging residents in telling theirs. It helps concentration as well as helping the residents to remember.

To make a Memory Box

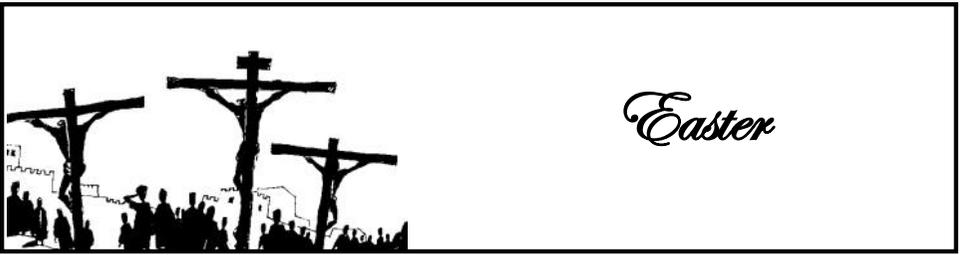
Use a reasonable size cardboard box with a lid and cover both of them with some colourful wrapping paper to make it attractive and noticeable. It is worth taking time to do this fairly securely so that it will last.

Make sure it is big enough to hold the various items you may need to put in it, so give some thought to this before you start.

I used a cardboard box that 5 reams of A4 copy paper had been packed in. You could ask your church office if they have a spare box you could have.

Using a Memory Box

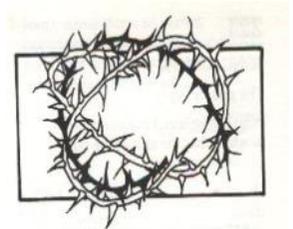
Here are some ideas to get you started.



I filled the box with all sorts of things relating to Easter: Palm Crosses, Easter Bunnies, Chickens, Spring Flowers, Easter Eggs, Simnel Cake *I asked someone from church to bake a Simnel Cake (Easter Cake) which is a fruit cake with marzipan baked in the middle. A round of marzipan is placed on the top of the cake for decoration with 11 marzipan balls placed evenly around the top.)*

I took the cake out of the box and asked if anyone knew why this was called an Easter cake? Did they know why there was marzipan baked in the middle? (There is a round of marzipan on the top of the cake with 11 balls dotted around the edge.) I asked if anyone knew what the balls represented? We discussed this at length.

The 11 balls on top represent the 11 disciples, minus Judas who betrayed Jesus. The marzipan which is baked in the middle of the cake represents Jesus in the tomb.



We talked of Judas's betrayal, and I brought the Palm Sunday Cross out of the box and asked if they knew how and why Jesus had to die on the cross.

After some discussion and explanation we sang an Easter Hymn.

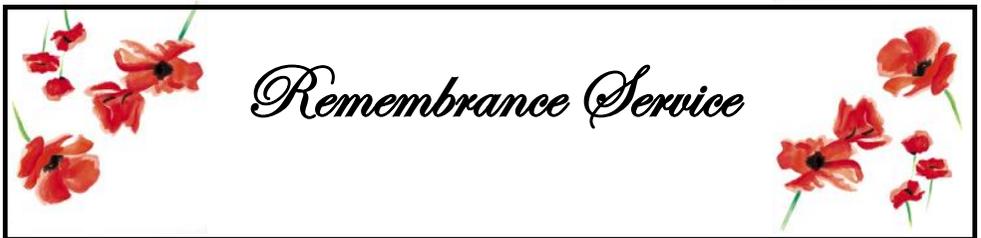
Next I took the Bunnies, Chickens, Spring Flowers and Easter eggs out of the box and placed it on a table for them to see. I asked them what these items had to do with Easter.

Another discussion: new life, new beginnings, resurrection, etc.

We talked and read some appropriate verses about the resurrection and discussed about the new life and new beginnings available because of what Jesus had accomplished by His death and resurrection. To finish we sang a favourite resurrection hymn.

We had tea and a piece of Simnel (Easter) cake and each resident was given a Palm Sunday Cross, an Easter Card and a small Easter Egg to take back with them.

Any discussions we had were short and to the point and always involved interaction from them in some way.



(This is a particularly good service to get some of the men to attend)

If possible, get a couple of people to go to the home a few hours before your service begins and give out printed invites and a personal invitation to the service .

Fill the Memory Box with Poppies and cover with the lid.

I used a table with a white lace cover and a wooden cross with some poppies strewn around it as a visual aid.

We sang an appropriate hymn. "O God, our help in ages past, our hope in years to come" which led us into a time of remembrance and 2 minutes of silence to think on those who died to bring us freedom. We thanked God for them.

At the end of the 2 minutes someone says:



“They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun, and in the morning we will remember them.”

We continued our time together discussing the cost of freedom and remembering Jesus who died to bring us freedom.

The poppies are then distributed amongst the group.

Christmas Nativity

Using the ‘Good Tidings of Great Joy’ pack we sang and read our way through the Christmas story and have the head-dress for Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, Kings, Angels in the Memory box ready to come out at the appropriate time.

By the end of our service everyone had something to wear on their heads and felt part of what was going on.

It is great fun and a real celebration of what Christmas is all about.



'Good Tidings of Great Joy' is a resource available for doing a Christmas Service and has the whole service written out with carols, prayers and Bible readings on a CD ready for you to print. There is a hard copy of the Leader's Service Sheet Included in the pack which is also on the CD, together with an Order of



Service for the residents so you can print or photocopy as many copies as you need. A Christmas Card and invitation to the Christmas Service is also on the CD and in the middle of this book to photocopy.

These pictures were taken at a Christmas Service in one of our local residential homes

Another occasions to use a Memory Boxes is Harvest.

I had a toy tractor tucked away in the box, and brought it out and asked who had driven one of these. We had some farmers and land girls able to tell us their stories. I used seeds and wholemeal bread which added to the discussion on the goodness and faithfulness of God and His provision for us.

You will find some A4 sheets included with this booklet which you can photocopy and use to make some Christmas Cards and invites, Easter Cards and Invites, Invitations to the Remembrance Service and a Remembrance Poster. There are some Name Badges which you can either copy on to sticky labels or print on card and put some doubled sided tape on the back. See the next page for some ideas on how to use them.

SOME POSTERS, INVITATIONS & CARDS

for you to photocopy and use

EASTER CARD

used as invitations but with information about future events
and a chance to give them something
to remind them of the service.

REMEMBRANCE

Use the Poster to advertise and as a reminder about the service
See if you can have one put on the Home's Notice Board
It can also be used as a visual aid
Remember to give some personal invitations out
some time before the service

CHRISTMAS

Christmas cards with greetings, including
an invitation to join us for the service and
information for future events can
Best given out on the day
or left with some of the staff
to be given out on the morning of the event

NAME BADGES

Print these out on sticky labels or use card and double sided sticky
tape on the back. Peel off and stick each person as they arrive.
Names can be printed on in advance if you know who will be
coming, but they can easily be written as they arrive



**If you require any further information
or to discuss any ideas,
please do not hesitate to contact me
I would love to hear from you and find
out how you have used this booklet.**

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**This booklet, CD and publicity sheets to photocopy
Cost £5.00**

Pilgrim's Progress
A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS PUBLICATION
MINISTRY FOR SENIORS