

Worshiping with our church family in Care Homes

- Rev Sally Rees

Care Home Residents

- Members of our churches - Faithful Christian people
- Those residents who want to return to a faith that they once held dear
- Those who do not wish to have contact with at church (but may accept spiritual care)

Care homes open to spiritual and religious provision

- Consider care Homes in your locality
- Work with others ecumenically
- Build a team if possible

Get to know the residents

- Make time to chat at beginning and end of the service
- Find out as much as possible about people
- Sit with residents if possible
- Use touch if appropriate

Get to know the staff

- Build helpful relationships if possible
- Help with activities
- Support public events

Types of services

- Worship with others
- Worship with Individuals
- Communion
- Hymn singing
- Home group (not always wanted or possible)

Services

- Keep short 20 – 30 minutes (max)
- Use ritual
- Consider all senses: Visual aids; smells; touch
- Large print
- Consider when to give something to hold / or not

Keep Simple

- One simple theme
- One simple message
- Keep a simple format e.g.
 - Introduction
 - Hymn
 - Reading
 - Talk
 - Hymn
 - Prayer
 - Hymn
 - Blessing

Familiarity

- Consider making the same beginning and ending each service
- Same hymn
- Same prayer / liturgy

Worship with Music

- Familiar Hymns
- Consider number of verses
- Choruses
- Think about pitch

Prayers

- Keep short and on subject
- Include things going on in the Care Home
- Include The Lord's Prayer
- Keep eyes open
- Use Blessings

Talk

- Keep short and use short reading
- Use visual aids
- Consider senses
- Try to find something to help focus resident

Be prepared for anything

- Illness
- Visitors
- Need for the toilet

Putting a programme together – some suggestions

- January – New beginnings; Epiphany; Christingle
- February – Whiter than snow; Pancake Dat / Lent
- March – St David's Day; Mothering Sunday; Spring following winter
- April – Easter; The Lord's Supper; Servant hood – feet washing; Jesus appears to his friends

More suggestions

- May – Pentecost; Trinity or start a series e.g. Psalms / Parables
- June – Psalms / Parables
- July - Psalms / Parables
- August – Seaside / holiday theme ? Holiday at home

More suggestions

- September - Stand alone or continue a theme
- October - Harvest
- November - Remembrance
- December – Christmas / Carol service

Worship with Individuals

- Find out favourite hymns to sing or put on CD or MP3
- Familiar passages of the Bible / use resources e.g. BRF
- Cards and texts
- Holding cross / other symbols

Amazing Blessings

- Ability for God to use to bless
- Joan; Irene
- Mum

References

- Goodall et al (2011) Worship and people with Dementia, MHA and Christian Council on Ageing
- Smelter P, V (1980) Thank you for a loaf of Bread, Lion Publishing
- Kevin Mayhew (2005) Hymns we've always loved, KM Publishing
- Williams T [Eds] (2010) Being with God, Words of Hope, Scripture Union
- Askew E (2016) Facing the storm, TLM for the Leprosy Mission

References continued

- George C (2015) Living Liturgies, BRF
- Pickering S (2014) Creative Ideas for Ministry with the Aged, Canterbury Press

Online Resources

- Liveability
- SCOP (Spiritual Care for Older People)
- Bible Reading Fellowship: Gift of Years; Messy Vintage
- Ageing well
- Age UK / Cymru
- Alzheimer's Society
- MHA (Methodist Homes for the Aged)