

PSALM

TAKING AGEING AND FAITH SERIOUSLY



NEWSLETTER ONE APRIL 2018

Welcome to this first edition of the PSALM Newsletter! We hope you will enjoy reading about our recent and forthcoming events and activities. Do contact us (details on page 4) if you would like to know more about PSALM.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS:

Decluttering in Later Life

Monday 16th April
11am -3.15pm

St Pancras Church House,
1 Lancing St NW1 1NA

Coffee from 10.30am

Cost £10 (£8 for PSALM members)

To book, please email
psalm@stpancraschurch.org

Ring 020 7388 1461

Or write to PSALM at St
Pancras Church, Euston
Road, London NW1 2BA

A BIT ABOUT PSALM – WHAT DO WE DO?

PSALM stands for Project for Seniors and Lifelong Ministry. It is an ecumenical Christian organization and a registered charity (no. 1103130), based at St Pancras Church, Euston Road. We have been working throughout London since we were established in 2004, with churches of all denominations and independent churches to enrich their ministry in relation to older people.

PSALM provides lectures, workshops and seminars with the specific aim of addressing matters of interest and concern to people over 60, those approaching retirement, or anyone with an interest in ageing and spirituality. There are no age restrictions for attendance at PSALM events or for membership.

PSALM is active London-wide. Many of our events take place in central London, but we welcome invitations to design and run courses for groups wherever they are in Greater London.

PSALM associates are very knowledgeable about ministry to and with older people and are able to offer your church advice and ideas to enable you to extend your provision and approach. We can design and run

workshops for you, and we are also happy to provide the material we have designed so that you can host and run a workshop yourself, with or without PSALM's further involvement.



PSALM – WHO ARE WE? MEET THE TEAM



Ann Morisy is from Liverpool but now lives in South London. She is a lay member of the Church of England. Her working life has been predominantly within the field of social responsibility, culminating in directing the Commission on Urban Life and Faith as a follow-up to the report ‘Faith in the City’.

Ann is the author of a number of books on mission and social action, including a consideration of intergenerational fairness – from the perspective of a baby boomer. She has been a keen student of ageing for almost 30 years- it began as a theoretical interest – but has become more and more personal! Ann’s contributions draw on up-to-date research and thinking alongside Gospel insights and are always down to earth, engaging and frequently light-hearted.



Ann Wright has been associated with PSALM since 2010, and is particularly interested in encouraging continued spiritual growth throughout life. She brings experience as a Reader in the Church of England, member of Sage (Southwark Diocesan Working Group on ageing) and Mothers’ Union, where she has served in a range of roles including six years as Southwark MU’s Diocesan President.

She lives on the southern edge of the Diocese of Southwark and has an interest in rural life and ministry, representing Churches Together in England’s Rural Group on a European network of village churches. She is also the secretary of the Social Responsibility Officers’ network – and finds interesting overlaps between these various groups and issues of ageing and faith.



Claire Pinney is an associate of PSALM and author of the 2003 report for the Diocese of London on developing work with and for older people, which led to PSALM’s formation. Her background is quite varied: she studied Russian and Soviet Studies and lived in the Soviet Union for three years during the break-up of the USSR. She is an artist and has written and illustrated a book of illustrated poetry entitled, “Poetry Comic No.1”. She has exhibited her paintings in galleries across the UK.

Claire now works for St Marylebone Church as Parish Administrator. She has trained in providing therapeutic activities for older people and helps with PSALM’s publicity materials.

Helen Skinner and Libby Lazenby:

Helen and Libby manage all PSALM’s administrative tasks between them. Helen is based in the office at St Pancras where she works part-time, and Libby, who has a young family, works from home.

A WORD ON.....DEMENTIA

This is an increasingly important issue for us as individuals and churches. We were pleased to see the following on the website of Christians on Ageing (CCOA).

Recent medical and social care emphasise the importance of a holistic approach to dementia sufferers, as human beings are physical, mental, emotional and spiritual beings. All too often, however, practitioners fight shy of that last category (spiritual). This support is left for others to provide. This gives a two-fold opportunity to churches and other faith communities: first, to provide pastoral care and opportunities for worship to those in hospitals and care homes (sometimes through chaplains) and, second, to encourage care providers and workers not to be so hesitant themselves.

***Christians on Ageing** and other agencies have produced excellent resources to facilitate this. One of the most useful is the basic series of free pamphlets published jointly by **Christians on Ageing** and MHA: *Spiritual Care and People with Dementia, Growing Dementia-Friendly Churches, Visiting People with Dementia and Worship and People with Dementia*. Follow this link for more information*

<http://christiansonageing.org.uk/timely-topics/dementia-care/>

PSALM'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LECTURE 14TH MARCH 2018

The AGM took place at St Pancras church and was well attended. The Annual Report and Accounts are available on request, and will be posted on our website. There are two remaining vacancies for elected members on the Executive Committee: contact us to find out more if you might be interested.

The lecture was given by Ven. Chris Skilton, Archdeacon of Croydon in the Diocese of Southwark, who has a particular interest in ageing and faith. Chris encouraged us to rethink the church's approach to ministry with older people - and indeed to the way we see and treat people of all ages! He focused on issues of Wisdom, Identity and Time, and suggested these as a basis for effective service. Recommended reading: John Swinton's book 'Becoming Friends of Time'. An occasional paper with more detail will be available on our website.

A final thought from Chris: 'It takes ten to twenty years to change the ethos and values of an institution – so we'd better start now!'

A RECENT WORKSHOP..... *Memory and Memories*

Have you ever found yourself in a room and forgotten why you were there?

If so, should you blame the doorway?

This was one of the questions in a fun quiz during the recent PSALM workshop on 'Memory and Memories'. There was a real buzz in the room as around thirty people reflected on the role of memory in our lives and ways to mitigate the impact of our own forgetfulness – at any age. We are all shaped by memories, both personal and the wider memories of our community and culture, and recalling happy memories has a positive benefit on our wellbeing. Ways to handle the difficult memories so that they do not continue to cast a shadow on the present were also explored – including awareness of God's eternal presence with all the blessings and resilience that offers. Helpful tips to cope with our own forgetfulness and that of those we love were exchanged, reminding us that this common experience can be shared with compassion and humour.

And yes – surprisingly you can blame the doorway! We tend to make sense of life through story, and moving into another room sets the scene for a new chapter or episode, with the door as the marker for the new boundary. So we all agreed that the best thing to do is go back to the previous room / scene to remind ourselves of our original intention rather than feel anxious about it.

Risen Lord Jesus,

*As the seasons change, the days lengthen
and storm and sunshine alternate,
help us to face the uncertainties of life
and capriciousness of the weather
rejoicing in the light of your presence,
knowing the warmth of your constant love
and walking with you through the challenges
and delights that each day brings.*

Amen

CONTACT US:

PSALM

Taking ageing and faith seriously

Registered Charity no: 1103130

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www.PSALM.org.uk

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