

PSALM

TAKING AGEING AND FAITH SERIOUSLY

NEWSLETTER VOLUME TWO ISSUE TWO

JUNE 2019



Welcome to the summer issue of our newsletter! Whatever the weather, and despite ongoing political uncertainties, we hope that you enjoy reading about PSALM's activities.

PLAYING FAIR ACROSS THE GENERATIONS – PSALM'S ANNUAL LECTURE, 27 MARCH

It is normal to expect that the next generation will be better off than their parents – but this is not what life looks like today. Ann Morisy's lecture outlined the challenge at the heart of fairness across the generations – our 'vertical obligations' to future generations alongside the 'horizontal obligations' to people here and now. She described with clarity and compassion the

various factors (demographics, economics, changes in society etc) that have created a 'perfect storm' in our current situation. This can risk pitting the interests of one generation against another, with the possibility of resentment between the generations developing.

With stories and examples that resonated long after the lecture, Ann brought this difficult subject to life, along with the dismal responses so far from society and politics.

How can we avoid a build-up of resentment between generations? There are no easy answers, but we can help by developing our own intergenerational relationships, taking to the streets to make a fuss and demand change (while having fun as in the Jubilee debt campaigns) and moving to a simpler, more generous life-style – and all other ideas welcome! We are often aware that we have more than we need, but find that we are attached to what we have. There will be a personal cost to bringing about change – but we can spread generosity like sunlight!

For more information and the lecture handout, go to PSALM's website or read *'Borrowing from the Future: a Christian approach to intergenerational fairness'* by Ann Morisy, published by Bloomsbury.

NEXT WORKSHOP:

FAITH, ART AND AGEING

Thursday 15 August
11 am to 3 pm

At St Pancras Church House,
1 Lancing St NW1 1NA

Cost £10
(£8 for PSALM members)

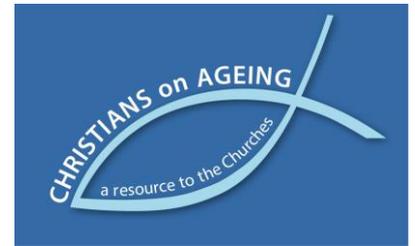
To book, please email
psalm@stpancraschurch.org

Ring 020 7388 1461

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



Christians on Ageing is a resource to the Churches and a voice for older people. If you are interested in making more of life for older people in the Church, you will be welcome at:



BEING OLD, BEING BOLD

Living by faith, seeking truth and accepting challenge

This conference in Sheffield on 25 September (10 am to 4 pm) is an opportunity to hear and share experiences that will help Christians on Ageing to plan new ways of supporting and promoting good practice. Cost - £30 including all papers, refreshments and lunch. (*Discount for Christians on Ageing members using code in 'Plus' magazine for summer 2019.*) There will be contributions from local churches, an inter-active musical interlude with a Sheffield U3A ukulele group, and a range of interesting presentations, including intergenerational fairness, a Salvation Army report on working with older prisoners and a discussion with Albert Jewell on a Christian response to people with dementia.

For more details, contact info@ccoa.org.uk or visit www.christiansonageing.org.uk

To book, click on 'Conference', and go to 'Book here'

BOOK REVIEW – 'Aging Matters; finding your calling for the rest of your life.'

The author of this book, R Paul Stevens, is a Canadian Pastor. He has reached his threescore years and ten and, no doubt aided by his eight grandchildren, has begun to reflect on the business of growing old.

The book provides disciplined and thoughtful reading, supported by detailed references, bibliography and index. Paul Stevens has done a great service in pulling together many hard-won insights within such an accessible volume. He finds his own voice as he reflects on the challenges faced by ageing friends and family, and humbly speculates on the resources he will draw on when experiencing similar challenges. He then directs the challenge to us - is there late-life work you need to do? If so, what is it? And note, the challenge is in relation to late (as opposed to 'later') life as he expounds about death and dying in a frank and fearless manner.

The material is organized into three sections - Calling, Spirituality and Legacy – with each chapter having material for personal or group reflection. The Biblical references provide a very adequate summary about what the Bible says about ageing. If you feel that your life needs a book on ageing from a Christian perspective, then I recommend this one. But just a warning – the prominent spelling of 'aging' might lead to loss of the 'e' that is so essential to British ageing!

Pub: 2016 by William B Erdmans; Grand Rapids, Michigan and Cambridge UK

Ann Morisy (adapted from a review for the Church Times)

GOOD COMPANIONS: FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE IN LATER LIFE

A PSALM workshop held on 9 May 2019.

What do we really want from our relationships?

Around a dozen participants gathered to discuss this challenging subject, beginning with an exercise to tease out the characteristics of good friendships and the way that these are affected by the passage of time. Two stimulating stories served as ‘case studies’ – one from an article in the ‘Guardian’ and the other from Jill’s new friendship with Len and her family’s reactions in the long-running radio programme ‘*The Archers*.’ These reminded us that different cultures and life experience affect our attitudes to relationships, especially after major changes such as bereavement. A model from Transactional Analysis helped us to understand more about the dynamics of relationships. Asking what makes for healthy encounters, we inevitably found ourselves in the familiar territory of family and church and our memories of the past; however, we did not allow ourselves to shy away from the challenges of new relationships that might lie ahead.

So, after lunch we tackled the pros and cons of dating in later life! Several participants bravely shared their experience of on-line dating. A stimulating discussion ensued, though our conclusions were very mixed! We realized that our expectations change as we grow older, and also that challenges are present in any new friendship.

Towards the end of the workshop, we drew on some theological insights from ‘*The Four Loves*’ by C. S. Lewis, thinking about the different biblical words used to express love. We shared ideas on where and how to find love – in all its different forms – and finished our time together reading the well-known passage from Paul’s first letter to the Christians in Corinth: ‘*Love is patient and kind ...*’ (1 Cor 13)

Inevitably the programme conjured up many emotions: nostalgia, pain, feelings of loss, but also amusement and laughter. Most of us went away with some questions, but also with the confidence to explore what sort of intimacy or relationship is appropriate for us in our own future. Do we look to our long-established relationships for good companionship? Or will we now take a few risks and forge something new and adventurous? Either way, we have some clues about being good friends ourselves as well as looking for friendship from others.

Eileen Turner

DID YOU KNOW.....

As we age, our breathing rate slows down, and it is interesting to note that children and women breathe faster than men do. A person at rest usually breathes between 12 and 15 times a minute.

From Health24

PSALM'S AGM

The AGM heard that 2018 had been a good year for PSALM, with continued networking, consultancy, running workshops and seminars, and a new opportunity to lead a training day for ordinands. Eileen Turner joined the team, and co-led sessions on Decluttering and 'Psalms for PSALM' when we thought about our life experiences through the wisdom to be found in the Biblical and contemporary Psalms. We were pleased to re-elect our existing officers and to welcome Rev Lizzie Baughen as a new trustee: we also said farewell to two trustees who have served PSALM since its beginning – John Willmer and Irene Money, whose service has been much appreciated and who have shared their time, knowledge and experience graciously and generously. There are vacancies for additional trustees – let us know if you would like to know more about what is involved, or might be interested in coming to a meeting as an observer.

The annual report can be read or download from our website, and we are happy to post printed copies on request.

A final thought from the annual lecture:

'When we are young or in our prime, we do not think of ourselves as already being the dwelling place of our own future old age ...

If you have received this copy of the newsletter and are not already on our mailing / circulation list, do contact us if you would like to join PSALM or to hear news of our future events and activities.

A prayer for Summer 2019

*Lord God, you are the same,
yesterday, today and for ever.*

*As we look to the future, with its challenges,
possibilities and uncertainties,
may we know that you will continue to lead us,
help us and protect us.*

*Nothing that happens can make us
fall from your hands of love.*

*May we rest in the warmth of your presence
and feel the cool breezes of your Spirit
as we trust in you. Amen*

CONTACT US:

PSALM
*Taking ageing and faith
seriously*

Registered Charity no:
1103130

☎ 020 7388 1461

psalm@stpancraschurch.org

www.PSALM.org.uk

PSALM, St Pancras Church
Euston Road
London NW1 2BA