



Offering spiritual care in later life

Introduction to Anna Chaplaincy for Older People



Enabling all ages to grow in faith

**Anna Chaplaincy is part of The Bible Reading Fellowship.
Other BRF programmes/ministries include:**

Living Faith
Messy Church
Parenting for Faith



Maggie Dodd, Anna Chaplain, St Albans

- My role is a full time post, supported by St Albans' two Methodist Churches but I worship as an Anglican at St Stephen's with St Julian's Churches, St Albans.
- I started my role late April 2021.
- I have particular care for people living with Dementia. My own Mum lived with the disease for over seven years and was cared for in a residential home in Sandridge. I live in a multi-generational home, with my two young daughters, my husband and his 89 year old Mum.
- I have always enjoyed the company of older people and I love my role, I am privileged to care for and support so many wonderful older people.

Why the time is right for an expansion of ministry to older people



The growing need for Older People's ministry

- Changing demography
- The need for spiritual and religious care
- A 'ripe' time for ministry to people in their later years asking 'big questions'

Increasing ageing population

- In the UK there are now more people aged 60 and above than there are under 18 – for the first time ever
- Two million people over 75 years of age live alone
- The number of those over the age of 85 are expected to nearly double by 2043
- There are around 850,000 people living with a dementia (set to more than double to two million by 2051)

The need for spiritual care

- The need to give and to receive love
- The need to sustain hope
- The need for something and someone to believe in
- The need for creativity

There's a need to achieve spiritual wholeness

In old age...

We tend to be more reflective - more about
'being' than doing

A time to consider death

The 'good news' of the hope of eternal life is
ever more welcome at this stage

An elderly couple is walking away from the camera on a brick-paved path. The woman on the left has white hair and is wearing a maroon jacket and dark blue trousers, carrying a white bag. The man on the right has white hair and is wearing a dark blue jacket and dark trousers, using a walking stick. They are walking towards a brick building with a red door and a small porch. The path is flanked by a brick wall on the left and a garden with various plants on the right. The text "Anna Chaplaincy for Older People – offering spiritual care" is overlaid in white on the image.

Anna Chaplaincy for Older People – offering spiritual care

Anna Chaplaincy is...

- Community based
(going where people are, to those in need)
- For people with strong, little or no faith
(47% of older people served are not church members*)
- Inclusive of relatives, carers, and care professionals
- Person-centred and non-judgemental
- Ecumenical (wherever possible)

*Anna Chaplaincy Impact Report 2021

Growth of Anna Chaplaincy

- Started in Alton, Hampshire in 2010 with former broadcaster Debbie Thrower
- Now more than 230 Anna Chaplains and those in equivalent roles (e.g. Older People's Pastor)
- Emerging ministries to older people, often *by older people themselves*
- Wide ecumenical spread: Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Free Evangelicals etc.

Ministry includes...

- Accompanying – walking alongside
- Listening to people's 'stories'
- Sensitive spiritual care
- Diverse contexts – to those who are housebound, care homes, retirement facilities, community groups, dementia-friendly cafés ... and many more



Who can become an Anna Chaplain?

Anna Chaplains for Older People

- May be lay or ordained, male or female, paid or voluntary
- It's a vocation - gifts for this ministry are recognised and an individual candidate supported by local church; a chaplain is 'sent'...
- Linked and supported by BRF, Bible Reading Fellowship, through the national Anna Chaplaincy Network

Key principles of an Anna Chaplain role

- Appointed and authorised by, and accountable to, their local church or group of 'Churches Together'
- Ecumenical and community based
- An advocate and champion in the wider community
- Reaching out to people of strong, little or no faith

The role of an Anna Friend

- Support a local Anna Chaplain
- Offer several hours a week to older people's ministry
- Have a passion to care for older people
- Have the usually DBS checks and completed the basic Safeguarding courses

Advantages of Anna Chaplaincy for older people

- Extensive network of those working in older people's ministry raising professional standards
- Online training courses and BRF materials - relevant publications and blog

<https://www.annachaplaincy.org.uk/blog>

- Regular online get togethers, themed events and an annual gathering for teaching and sharing
- Sharing of a wealth of experience, including 'Messy Vintage' (Messy Church for older people)

BRF's Anna Chaplaincy core team developing it nationally

The team has extensive experience in ministry to older people, and are on hand to offer advice, support and guidance.

- Debbie Thrower – Founder and Pioneer
- Debbie Ducille – Church Lead
- Julia Burton-Jones – Training and Development Lead
- Alex Burn - Coordinator



Contact: annachaplaincy@brf.org.uk

annachaplaincy.org.uk

Dementia Friendly churches and services

Quick discussion

Talk to the four or five people sat around you for 5 mins, and make a list of key elements you think are important in making a worship service Dementia Friendly.

Dementia Friendly churches and services

Key elements

- Good signposting
- Simplicity
- Familiarity
- Interactive & Engaging
- Flexible
- Creative & Fun
- Accessible

Good signposting

- Badges
- Signage
- Zones/areas
- Make things as visual as possible
 - prayer hands

Simplicity

- Shorter service – no service sheet
- No longer than 30 mins if possible
- Simplify hymns – reduce verses to two or three
- Communion – is it essential, will people manage to eat the wafer, swallowing hazard

Familiarity

- Sing well known and well-loved hymns
- Use well known prayers and blessings
- Use the same service structure every session
- Get to know your guests and tailor post-service activities to suit

Interactive & Engaging

- Memory Worship – setting up, giving the elements of the worship space to guests.



Interactive and Engaging

- Talk/Sermon – like an all-age talk, plenty of engagement, with objects, things to show and pass around.
- Prayer requests
- Activities after the service

Flexible

- Time of service – and timings
- Allow for people to move away if they need to
 - quiet area
- Worship space – what suits the needs of guests the most.

Creativity & Fun

- Offer a simple craft – nothing too complicated
- Colouring books and autonomous activities
- Make the service fun – share interesting and engaging objects or a funny story
- Warmth and friendship will be what people remember

Accessibility

- Plenty of helpers – help with hymns, showing people to activities, engaging guests
- Hearing Loop/AV/Speak clearly and slowly
- Large print hymns
- Area of worship – signage/horseshoe seating/zones/avoid jazzy carpets or chequered floors

Church isn't just the building

- Progression of dementia, support for members of your church - visiting
- Well-organised Pastoral Visiting Group
- Care Home support and services/visits
- Sharing the love of God with a care home community

A photograph of three people standing in a garden. On the left is an older man wearing a straw hat, sunglasses, a blue and orange striped sweater, and red trousers. In the center is an older woman with white hair, glasses, a blue floral patterned top, and light-colored trousers. On the right is a younger woman with blonde hair, sunglasses, a white button-down shirt, and dark trousers. They are all smiling. In front of them is a small table with a yellow floral tablecloth, holding several white cups and saucers. The background shows a wooden fence, green bushes, and a house under a blue sky with clouds.

Thank you for listening.
Any Questions?