

Worship Development

Starter: *[In pairs]* Share your experience, or lack of it, of life in a residential home, and of worship in that setting

Reading: Read or sing Hymn 685 in Hymns and Psalms.

Allow time to read the following comment and the questions - and reflect alone.

Comment: Dr. George Matheson, the author of the hymn, said that he was inspired to write it as he brooded over his sorrow through bereavement and that the hymn was the fruit of pain. It encapsulates many images of life's experiences which folk of mature years may well identify with. As the average age of residents increases, through later admissions and people who have lived with

there for many years, it becomes necessary in our care of them, including our provision of worship opportunities, that we find ways of bringing memories of those experiences into our services and especially prayer times, so that they are able to identify with, and partake fully in the worship.

Personal Focus Questions:

1. Which of the images in the hymn speaks to you, and why?
2. What circumstances might have made the other images as relevant? Can you put yourself into those situations?
3. How do you make provision in worship for those memories to be awakened and brought before God?
4. Can you remember a service in which you were helped to bring your memories, either pleasant or otherwise, and give thanks for them, or place them in God's hands?

13. Worship in Residential Homes

Share together in threes some of your individual reflections.

Return together as a group and share any insights. Now discuss together the following applications.

Applications:

You are asked to lead worship in a residential home, e.g. Stones Place -

would you -

1. Choose your hymns with traditional words (from Hymns and Psalms) or use hymns/choruses from the newer books, or a mixture of both, and why?
2. feel it necessary to choose your prayer language carefully, since many of your congregation would be more familiar with 'Thee' and 'Thy' than our more 'familiar' approach?
3. Would the same consideration apply to the Bible reading - e.g. AV rather than 'The Message'?
4. What would be the best way to involve these folk with so much life-experience, in the prayers, or other parts of the service?

And finally - Be prepared for all kinds of interruptions - loud talking, maybe about you!? - people being taken out because they have visitors - or because they have pressed their call button - and all that after you have sorted out the wheelchairs, the frames and the self-propelled chairs!

If you would like to visit Stones Place at worship time, or to arrange for a speaker for your LP meeting please contact either the Chaplain, Rev. Alan W. Barker on 01522 543168 or Sandra Clack - 01522 509324.