JANUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE

is a small voluntary organisation which aims to enhance the quality of life and well-being of older people by working with those providing practical, pastoral or spiritual care

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE – OUR LATEST BLOGS

[ALL our blogs are available to read on our website at www.fiop.org.uk]

Spiritual Care and Dementia

Rebecca, a retired physician, often feels anxious and overwhelmed. Now wheelchair bound due to Parkinson's disease, she's frustrated by immobility and memory loss caused by dementia. But, when her brother, Steve, visits and plays hymns for her using his phone, Rebecca's face exhibits joy and excitement. As the music plays, they sing along, and Rebecca seems transported to another place and time. Several hours after Steve has left, she can still be heard humming hymns.

Knowing that Rebecca's faith is important to her, Steve takes the time to nurture her spirit in ways that she would, if she could. Her compromised memory and lack of dexterity prevent her from finding a music source and playing the hymns she loves. So, Steve addresses her spiritual needs through religious music to uplift her and bring her joy.

According to a Pew Research Study conducted in the United States, approximately 70% of people over 70 say religion is very important to them (Pew Research Center, 2018). Although statistics vary from country to country, elders are typically more religious than younger adults. Yet as people age, and memory loss may occur, they become increasingly unable to participate in religious organizations or initiate faith practices that provide comfort, connection, peace, and encouragement. Family, friends, and professional caregivers need to assist them in practicing their faith and nurturing needed spiritual and religious connections to enhance their overall well-being.
For the last 22 years I've served as a spiritual care provider/chaplain in long term care and hospice settings in Richmond, Virginia. It's been my extreme privilege to minster predominantly to and with people experiencing dementia, their family care givers, and facility staff who care for them. Providing holistic care for people requires more than addressing physical, psychological, emotional and social needs. Spiritual needs must be addressed, too. Yet, we sometimes hesitate to talk about spirituality and religion with others because they are deeply personal. Too often this important aspect of peoples' lives may go unaddressed.

We are all spiritual beings, and each person's spirituality is as unique as he or she is. Spiritual care involves addressing the core of who we are and how we live. When grappling with spirituality and striving to answer life's existential questions such as – who am I, why am I here, what is my purpose, does some higher power exist -- many people connect with a particular religion or faith expression. They may join with other like-minded believers to follow a particular faith tradition –Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hindu or one of many others. Some people are born into a family system which professes and practices a particular faith tradition. As they age, they

may remain within their family's faith tradition or, through self-searching and spiritual questioning, change to embrace a new faith. Some people never resonate with a particular faith group or belief in a divine being, but continue to express their spirituality in non-religious ways, such as reverencing nature or practicing various meditative styles.

Even people in advanced stages of dementia receive comfort as we provide personalized spiritual care, helping meet their spiritual needs and nurture faith connections through things like our physical presence, gentle touch, soothing prayers, scripture reading, nature sounds or sights. Whatever has historically been important to them.

Just as providing physical and emotional care requires an assessment to learn medical histories, concerns, and contributing factors, conducting a spiritual assessment helps discover a persons' spiritual strengths and needs. Whereas physical and emotional assessments are often achieved via a list of questions on a computer or clipboard, it's best to gather spiritual assessment information through relationship building and subsequent conversation. If a person is no longer able to easily converse due to dementia or other illness, family members or close friends can assist with completing an assessment.

Spiritual Assessment Tool

- ***What gives you hope, purpose, peace, joy?***

Libby rarely attends church anymore. She used to enjoy assisting people in need or creating craft items to give away, but now she isolates herself at home. She feels her memory loss affecting conversation and her ability to do the things she's always done well. She's embarrassed. A church friend, Jane, misses Libby's presence and appears at her home one day with ingredients to bake cookies. Jane knows **Libby loves helping others**, so she assists Libby with setting the stove's temperature, mixing ingredients, and preparing the cookies. They amiably chat while waiting for cookies to bake and then deliver them to another church friend who's recently home from the hospital. Libby beams with **joy** and feels her sense of **purpose** fulfilled. Jane encourages her friend back to church, and they continue meeting for a weekly service project for months.

- ***What nurtures your spirit?***
- ***Where/when do you feel the closest to God? ****

***Examples*:** *Being with family and friends or your faith community, revelling in nature, enjoying your place of worship, listening to or playing music, observing or creating artwork, visiting with or caring for pets, doing acts of service for other people …*

Hazel does not like being touched. She often yells out in pain from the crippling arthritis she feels, and she routinely dismisses people from her room in the care center where she lives. Hazel doesn't recognize her children anymore, much less the nurses who care for her daily. She's often found sitting in her wheelchair by the nurses' station where they can keep an eye on her.

One day her minister, Ben, arrives for a visit. He asks if she'd like to go outside on a beautiful spring day, and Hazel surprisingly responds, "Yes." They sit for an hour quietly overlooking a nearby park, listening to birds sing and watching tree branches sway in the wind. Gradually a serene look of **contentment** captures Hazel's face. Nurses marvel at her calmness as Ben returns her for lunch.

Prior to visiting, Ben had talked with her children about **what nurtures Hazel's spirit and where she feels closest to God**. They'd unanimously agreed, **being in nature.**

- ***What spiritual/religious practices or symbols bring you comfort and peace?***

Examples: *Meditation, prayer, being in nature, movement, a worship experience, reading sacred scripture, praying, being in a worship center, hearing or making music, enjoying artwork, seeing religious icons, a Menorah, hearing Buddhist chimes, smelling incense, …*

John, an 85-year-old former accountant who has Alzheimer's disease, can't sit still. Much of his day is spent pacing, as if he's looking for something. Each afternoon his wife, Margaret, prepares tea and a plate of his favorite cookies. When he sees her place them on the table, he sits and noticeably calms down. As they enjoy their snack, Margaret reads familiar **scripture passages** which they often repeat aloud together. She reads a brief **devotional**, and they close by reciting the **Lord's Prayer**. John is no longer able to converse, but those few minutes of holy communication enhance each of their lives. When it's over, John is often able to relax for a while. **Practicing his faith has contributed to John's well-being.**

Even though I have been specifically addressing spiritual care for elders experiencing dementia, providing spiritual care is essential for all older people, indeed for all of us. How much healthier would we all be if we paid as much attention to our spiritual health as we do to our physical and emotional health. Not only would we experience enhanced well-being ourselves, but our spiritual health would also benefit those we seek to serve. So, what gives you hope …

Kathy Fogg Berry *is the author of* ***When Words Fail: Practical Ministry to People with Dementia (****Kregal Publications****), a contributing editor and writer for* ***Dementia-Friendly Worship: A Multifaith Handbook for Chaplains, Clergy, and Faith Communities*** *(Jessica Kingsbury Publishers), and contributing writer for the* ***Practical Handbook on Dementia*** *(pccs-books.co.uk) to be published in 2022. She has been a trainer for the Alzheimer's Association since 2004 and has spoken on spiritual care and dementia on the state, regional and national levels in the USA.*

Berry, K. (2018) *When Words Fail: Practical Ministry to People with Dementia and Their Caregivers.* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.

Coaten, Dr. Richard, Hofenbeck, Mark, Austin, Dr. Roz, editors. ***Practical Handbook on Dementia.*** "Spirituality and Dementia." Monmouth, England: **PCCS Books, NP25 3SR**. **www.pccs-books.co.uk** (expected publication date in 2022)

The Practical Handbook of Dementia is the second book in a series of 'practical handbooks' on different mental health issues that are being edited by Dr Roz Austin, Assistant Professor Mark Hopfenbeck, and Dr Richard Coaten from a UK and international perspective. This book offers high quality, relevant chapters written by people with dementia, their carers, and leading researchers, clinicians and therapists that aim to improve understanding of practical ways of helping people with dementia to live in the community, or in care settings with dignity, and in a way that fosters compassion, creativity and growth.)

Pew Research Center. (2018) 'The Age Gap in Religions Around the World. Why do levels of religious observance vary by age and country.' *Religion and Public Life.* June 13, 2018.

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE – A NEW PROJECT

Older people in Scotland's faith communities: a community resource for a resilient society

time + commitment + enthusiasm + energy + older people + faith communities = what?

What happens when older people in faith communities give their time?

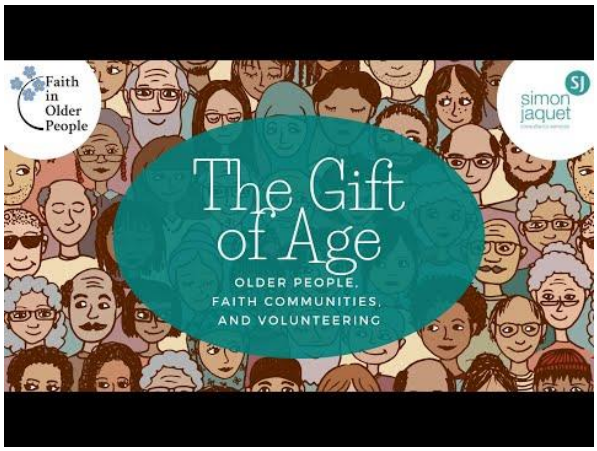
A new piece of year-long Scotland-wide research is about to look for the answers to this question and our research team want to hear from all faith communities about the roles that older people play – both within their faith community and in the wider community.

Most faith communities have older people in them, and in some cases this group can form a large proportion of the people there. But this research will look more deeply, at how older people are perceived in the faith communities they are part of, what activities they are involved in and impacts these result in.

Amongst many attributes, we know that older people can bring life experience and wisdom – but are these things used and valued? We'll be exploring what older people bring and what that means for the people and the communities around them. Finding out the personal impacts for older people themselves of the time they give to their faith community, will be another important area for us to build an understanding of.

By the end of our research in summer 2022, we hope to have identified the contribution made by older people in faith communities to volunteering, community well-being, and citizenship. We also intend to gather stories of innovative and challenging ways in which older people are involved, perhaps within that finding examples of people and places which have managed to respond positively to the challenges of the pandemic.

Funded by The Tor Christian Foundation, Faith in Older People (FiOP) and Simon Jaquet Consultancy Services Ltd have been commissioned to carry out this research.



For further information on the project please contact Simon Jaquet
simon@simonjaquet.com

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE, CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD AND CHRISTIANS ON AGEING

Harvest field: A celebration of the contribution of older people to our faith communities
Wednesday 17th November 2021 10am-1pm by Zoom

Our four speakers gave excellent and stimulating presentations on the contribution of older people; their changing needs; the importance of social care and our spiritual needs as we age. All presentations are available **HERE**

FiOP and the Church of Scotland Guild have worked together over several years undertaking projects, consultations and organising events.

We have much appreciated working with Iain Whyte the General Secretary who is retiring at the end of this year and give him our thanks and all good wishes for the future.

Mr Iain Whyte
General Secretary, Church of Scotland Guild

ANNA CHAPLAINCY Seminar

I have just completed the Anna Chaplaincy Course and would thoroughly recommend it to those who wish to serve older people. It allows the opportunity to reflect on the spiritual tasks of ageing; how we change over the years and what support is needed by those who experience dementia or other life changing illnesses. The course also embraces the practicality of the role of an Anna Chaplain and the skills required. There is time for discussion and there is an excellent handbook and course materials.

Do visit the Anna Chaplaincy website to get more information and access to resources:
Anna Chaplaincy | Offering spiritual care in later life

I also draw attention to a recent blog on its website on loneliness which is an issue concerning all of us by Eileen Simmons, Anna Chaplain, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex
Loneliness in old age (annachaplaincy.org.uk)

Maureen O'Neill
Director, Faith in Older People

FAITH IN OLDER PEOPLE BOARD

Rev Harriet Harris and Dr Jo Hockley completed their term of office at the September AGM. Very warm thanks to them for their contribution over the past few years. We welcome to the Board, Amy Crichton and Deidre Wallace who will bring a range of skills, experience, and knowledge to the work of the Board.

The FiOP Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21 are available from our website – click HERE (Report) – click HERE (Accounts)

FIOP's FIRST EVENT IN 2022

HOW CAN FAITH COMMUNITIES HELP OLDER PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE ABUSE
Katherine Southern, Development Manager, Hourglass Scotland and Northern Ireland
Tuesday 8 February 2022

BOOK YOUR FREE PLACE NOW VIA EVENTBRITE – click HERE

Hourglass is the only charity dedicated to calling time on the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people across the United Kingdom. With more than 25 years' experience and expertise, the mission of Hourglass is to listen, advise and support older people at risk of abuse and their loved ones throughout the UK. Every year, more than a million older people are physically, psychologically, financially, or sexually abused, or neglected in the UK. That's one in six older people who are victims of abuse.

What can faith communities do to respond to this epidemic of violence? In this talk, to be followed by a Q&A, the Development Manager for Hourglass Scotland will provide an overview of what all faith communities should know in order to effectively recognize and respond to abuse. The talk will cover what the charity knows about the scope and nature of abuse of older people in Scotland, the effects of the pandemic on older people at risk of abuse, and the warning signs of abuse and neglect. The talk will also address how faith leaders can help prevent abuse by creating communities receptive to the voices of survivors, and how they can respond to the spiritual needs of victims and survivors.

Katherine Southern is the Development Manager for Hourglass Scotland and Northern Ireland. She is originally from the U.S., where she was an elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and she is now a member of Church of Scotland. She served on the interfaith council at her university and maintains an interest in interfaith work.

SAVE THE DATES

ZOOM workshop – NB numbers are limited

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

Talking about mental illness – Dr Gill Yellowlees

Tuesday 8th March 2022 ** Time: 1.30-4.30 (3 hours) ** Registration fee: £30

MALCOLM GOLDSMITH LECTURE 2022

We are delighted that Dr Kathryn Mannix and Rt Rev Richard Holloway will be presenting the lecture on **Thursday 12th May 2022** by Zoom at 4.30 pm. The focus will be 'With the End in Mind'

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

SUBMISSIONS TO THE CONSULTATION ON A NATIONAL CARE SERVICE FOR SCOTLAND

Faith in Older People submitted a statement to the consultation on the importance of strengthening the provision of spiritual care in social care and that this would reflect the need to ensure that the education and training of those who care for us includes this dimension to foster better understanding of its importance to those of faith and those who look to nature, creativity and relationship for their spiritual wellbeing.

In addition, FiOP also submitted a statement in collaboration with Scottish Care and the NHS Chaplaincy stressing the importance of spiritual care as an integral part of person-centred care; the statement is available through the following link : https://www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FiOP-response-Oct-2021.pdf

DIRECT EXPERIENCE CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS - NATIONAL PLAN TO END THE NEED FOR FOOD BANKS

You may be aware that The Scottish Government is currently running a consultation on a draft national plan to end the need for food banks as a primary response to food insecurity. The consultation will run until 25 January 2022.

The Scottish Government wants to ensure that people with direct experience of food insecurity have opportunities to contribute to the national plan on ending the need for food banks in a safe and supportive environment. As an organisation that supports households who may experience food insecurity, we would value your help in promoting this opportunity.

Your wider networks are encouraged to contribute to the wider consultation online.

Should it be needed, information about supporting people with digital access, including Scottish Government funding which may be available for this purpose, is available on the Connecting Scotland website. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this further, require any additional information or wish to raise any particular accessibility issues, please do not hesitate to get in touch via email: FoodInsecurityTeam@gov.scot

Caroline Moffat | Disability Equality & BSL Policy **|** Age Equality and Older People Policy **|** Equality Unit **|** Equality and Human Rights
Scottish Government, Area 3-H North, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ **|** Caroline.Moffat@gov.scot **|** 07973 723902

The new **Low Income Winter Heating Assistance (LIWHA) benefit will replace the current UK Government's Cold Weather Payment scheme next year**. I am pleased to let you know this is now live and will be open for responses over the next 3 months, closing on 23 February 2022.

As you may have seen, since our last engagement, the approach we have taken to the LIWHA has changed. The proposals set out in the consultation will provide greater certainty for low income households about the support they can expect towards the cost of heating their homes in the winter. The new benefit will remove the requirement for a

sustained period of very cold weather from the eligibility criteria and will provide a guaranteed annual payment of £50 each winter to eligible households receiving income related benefits. This is equivalent to the value of two Cold Weather Payments and should ensure that most people will be better off under the new benefit.

Whilst the consultation is ongoing we would also like to move forward with engaging with the stakeholder reference group again. We intend to carry on holding these meetings via MS Teams and will be in touch soon with proposed dates.

In the meantime, you can find the consultation here:
https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781802016949

I would like to apologise that we have not managed to engage on this with you prior to now. However, I would like to assure you that working with individuals and organisations with experience of the benefits system remains central to our approach and we appreciate your input going forward. We look forward to working with you again.

Kelly Coote, Winter Heating Benefits
Low Income Benefit Policy Unit
Social Security Directorate
Scottish Government

GENERAL INFORMATION

Generations Working Together

Excellence Awards for 2022 are now open for nominations. The awards provide an opportunity for individuals and groups to celebrate their learning and success in building relationships between younger and older generations. Intergenerational relationships have an even more important contribution to make in the rebuilding of our communities. Although the approach is growing it is so important for everyone to raise awareness of the impact these intergenerational relationships have on improving health, physical and mental well-being for older and younger people and on reducing ageism.

The five categories include:

1. Creative use of space and place
2. Creative use of technology
3. Enabling inclusive communities
4. Social justice and dignity
5. Tackling climate change

Award winners will be announced during our National Conference which takes place online using Zoom from Monday 7th – Friday 11th March 2022.

Closing date for nominations is Monday 31st January 2022 at 12 noon

Please read the guidelines then complete the nomination form and return to Bella Kerr

A message from Paul McKenna, Interfaith, Toronto, Canada

Dear interfaith friends in Scotland and Wales: I trust that you are well given the many challenges we are experiencing on the planet. I have been involved in interfaith, globalist, and intercultural work for forty years in Toronto, Canada. I am the creator and the copyright holder of the multifaith Golden Rule Poster that features Golden Rule texts in 13 religions. This poster has achieved international renown as an interfaith and educational resource.

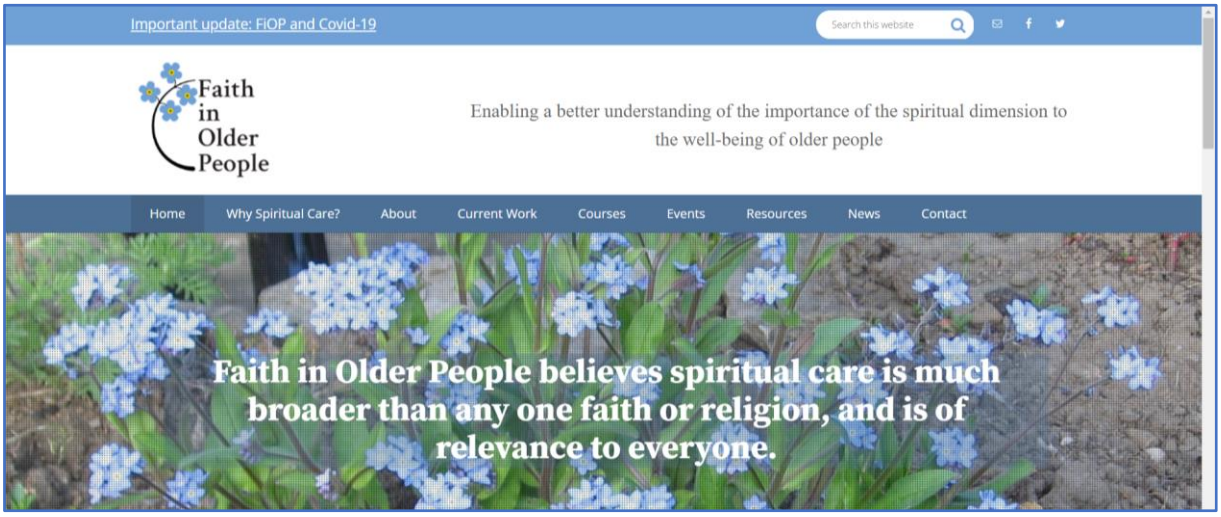
I have had this poster translated into a number of languages and I have decided to make the electronic versions of these posters available **— free of charge —** to educators like you. You are free to download, post and print (in volume) the poster in numerous languages.

A sample poster is available here. Other available posters include

Spanish Golden Rule Poster (free online)
Amharic Golden Rule Poster (free online)
Hebrew Golden Rule Poster (free online)
Urdu Golden Rule Poster (free online
Turkish Golden Rule Poster (free online)

BOOKS and RESOURCES

Faith in Older People's website offers a full listing of resources, including a wide range of books at www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk -



Topics include:

Ageing
Care Homes
Chaplaincy
Church and Dementia
Mental Health
Music
Palliative Care
Spiritual Education

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY - we'd like to ask you to become a FRIEND OF FIOP
An annual contribution of, say, £25 would make an enormous difference to our small organisation. As a Friend you will receive our regular eNewsletter and invitations to our regular events.
PLEASE CONTACT US FOR AN APPLICATION FORM – info@fiop.org.uk
You can find out more about our work on www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk
OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO THOSE WHO PREVIOUSLY SIGNED UP

IF YOU WISH TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM OUR NEWSLETTER, PLEASE EMAIL info@fiop.org.uk

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