

have resources we can share with community partners, not least our buildings and committed volunteers. We can help those working in health and social care to find out about community groups hosted or run by churches which welcome people with dementia.

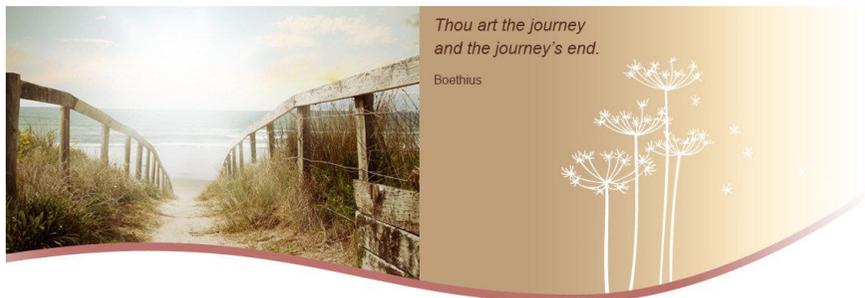
- ✓ Anna Chaplaincy also provides a context for **networking and learning** about the issues around ageing and dementia; look out for workshops on a variety of relevant topics aimed at church members.

Want to find out more?

Perhaps you would like to find out about Anna Chaplaincy in your area, or are interested in exploring being an Anna Friend or Anna Chaplain? Please contact Julia Burton-Jones, dementia specialist project officer, at julia.burton-jones@rochester.anglican.org.

Please share your ideas and experiences. We are keen to hear from people living with dementia and their families with ideas for how churches can help.

For information about BRF's The Gift of Years and Anna Chaplaincy visit the website: thegiftofyears.org.uk



March 2017



Anna Chaplaincy with People with Dementia

Peter and Jean have been active members of St Mary's Church for seventeen years. Jean was diagnosed with Alzheimer's three years ago, and lately Peter finds it hard to get them to church for the main 10.30 Sunday worship; Jean struggles to sit through long services, but faith is an important source of strength and hope for them both.

Esther went to Sunday school as a child but has not been to church most of her adult life. Since her diagnosis with vascular dementia, she has less contact with friends and feels lonely at times. Her daughter Helen is hoping to find social activities to help her stay connected and wonders if local churches might help.

Life with dementia

Every person with dementia has their own story to tell, and each family is affected differently, but there are challenges with which faith and pastoral support can help. People with dementia and their carers want to stay connected with church and community life. Knowing how best to offer support may not be obvious, though, which is why the Diocese of Rochester has a special project helping churches respond.

Why Anna Chaplaincy?

A new way in which our churches are responding is through having their own Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends. Anna Chaplaincy is a new role across all Christian churches aimed at supporting older people. It has been pioneered by The Bible Reading Fellowship's The Gift of Years. 'Anna Chaplain' was chosen as a title because it echoes the work of Anna, who the Bible tells us recognised the baby Jesus as the fulfilment

of God's promises; the name Anna emphasises that this is a hope-filled ministry, in the tradition of older people having prophetic voices and life lessons to share. Rochester is the first diocese in the Church of England to introduce Anna Chaplaincy. It covers Bromley and Bexley Boroughs, Medway and West Kent. Having Anna Friends and Anna Chaplains keeps the needs of people with dementia and their families at the forefront of church life. It stops us missing the needs of individuals and allows us to introduce new groups and activities. It contributes to raising awareness of dementia.

What have we done so far in Rochester Diocese?

Anna Chaplaincy was launched in late 2016 through funding provided by The Henry Smith Charity. We now have a team of volunteers supported by a dementia specialist project officer:

- ✓ 26 Anna Friends and Anna Chaplains – many with experience of dementia in their family or professional lives, several in ordained or licensed lay ministry roles;
- ✓ Covering 20 parishes in thirteen deaneries;
- ✓ Working in four Anna Chaplaincy hubs, each with a lead Anna Chaplain:
 - Medway – led by Margaret Hollands from Hoo St Werburgh
 - Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley – led by John Tootell from St Edmund's Temple Hill and St Mary's Stone
 - Bromley – led by Judith West from Christ Church Chislehurst
 - Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells – led by Rev Anne Bourne from St Luke's Sevenoaks

What is the difference between an Anna Chaplain and an Anna Friend?

All our Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends are volunteers. They have been recruited through a careful process and provided with training and support. Anna Chaplains are in leadership roles, supporting other volunteers and spending at least a day a week in the role. Anna Friends spend several hours a week working with people with dementia but have fewer responsibilities, tending to focus on direct contact with people with dementia and their carers.

What do Anna Friends and Anna Chaplains do?

Each person has their own role agreed with and supported by their local parish leadership team. This might include:

- One to one spiritual and pastoral support for people with dementia and carers;
- Being the parish link with a local dementia care home, visiting and taking services;
- Working alongside local organisations supporting people with dementia and signposting the help they provide;
- Setting up or supporting parish activities aimed at older people and those with memory problems, such as dementia cafès, community cafès, dementia friendly worship services, holidays at home, friendship groups and information events.

So how can Anna Chaplaincy help you?

We may not have the capacity to respond to every need ourselves, but we would like to help people with dementia tap into the support available from local organisations and stay in touch with their local church.

- ✓ We hope to be a **voice for people with dementia** and their families, advocating on their behalf and working with others in our local communities to help them become dementia friendly.
- ✓ We are keen to respond to **spiritual needs in dementia** so that faith continues to be a source of strength and encouragement through diagnosis and beyond.
- ✓ We want to make sure older people living in **care homes** have their spiritual needs considered and that links with local churches are positive and life-giving for residents, their family and friends, and support staff working with them.
- ✓ We would like to contribute to growing **partnerships** between churches and other local agencies working with older people – working together we can achieve more. We are members of the Dementia Action Alliance and involved in local forums. We