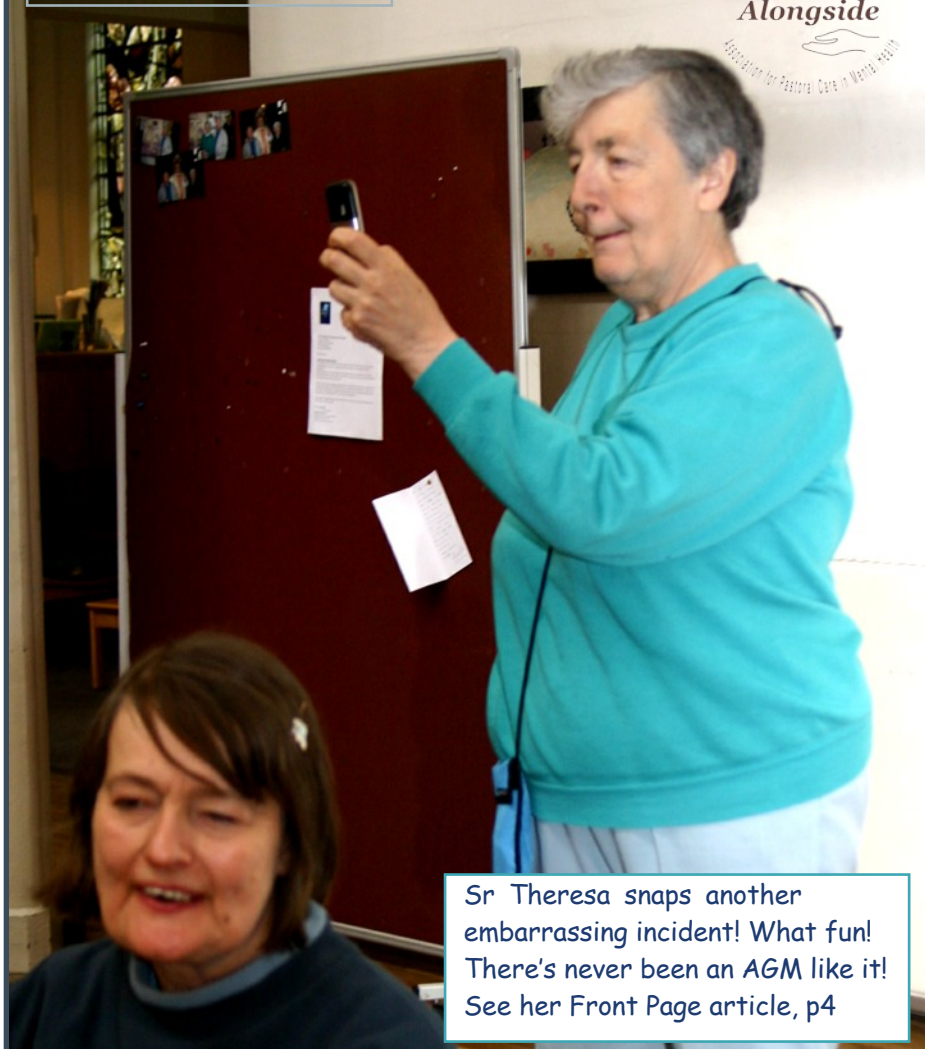


July - August 2011

*Being  
Alongside*  
Association for Pastoral Care in World Health



Sr Theresa snaps another embarrassing incident! What fun! There's never been an AGM like it! See her Front Page article, p4

# *Being Alongside*

The Bi-Monthly magazine of *Being Alongside* / apcmh

# *Help is at Hand*

<b>Samaritans:</b>	<b>08457 909090</b>
(national number which will put you through to your nearest branch)	
<b>Saneline:</b> (6 - 11pm each night)	<b>08457 678000</b>
<b>Rethink Advisory Service:</b>	<b>08454 560455</b>
<b>Young Minds Parents' Helpline:</b>	<b>08088 025544</b>
(9.30 - 4 weekdays, free from mobiles and landlines)	
<b>Carers in the Community:</b>	<b>01642 818332</b>
(led by Edna Hunneysett. This is her home number)	
<b>MIND:</b> (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm)	<b>08457 660163</b>
<b>Maytree:</b> (24 / 7 + answerphone)	<b>020 7263 7070</b>

## **The Barnabas *Drop - In Sessions***

*'Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas  
(which means Son of Encouragement)' Acts 4:36*

**St. Paul's Community Project in partnership with BA / APCMH**

***Mondays 2pm - 5pm***

Plus various activities: Table tennis, dominoes, scrabble, art / craft,  
poetry reading, tea / sandwiches / cakes and chat.

***Wednesday 10am - 12pm***

A more reflective discussion time with tea and biscuits, an opportunity  
to all share concerns or to receive one-to-one support (by appointment).

Free. All Welcome.

Venue: St Paul's Church Centre, 3 Rossmore Rd, NW1  
(5 mins walk from Marylebone Station; buses 139 & 189 stop outside)

**call: Sister Theresa: 020 7724 8517**

*'When he arrived and saw the wonderful things God was doing, he was filled with excitement & joy, and encouraged the believers to stay close to The Lord whatever the cost. Barnabas was a kindly person, full of the Holy Spirit & strong in faith. As a result large numbers of people were added to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-24)*

# *In This Issue*

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Thank you for all your contributions - essential really! Don't be bashful about submitting material. See p 19 for 'How to'. Next BA due out 1 September. Material to the editor by 19 Aug, but asap is always more helpful & inclusion of submissions more likely.

**Meanwhile, do visit**

**[www.beingalongside.org.uk](http://www.beingalongside.org.uk)**

**Even more reason - BA's newsletters are being uploaded so they can be read on line - for free!**

*Being Alongside* July - August 2011

# *Front Page*

with  
***Sister Theresa Pountney.***



We have just celebrated St Barnabas' Day on 11 June. He was the saint we read about in the Book of Acts who came alongside Paul and helped him in the task of sharing the gospel to the Gentile nations.

Our Barnabas Group (see p 2) at St Paul's Rossmore Road in Marylebone, which meets on a Monday ( 2- 5) and Wednesday (10 - 12) has been going from strength to strength since Pam Freeman and myself started it on a monthly basis about 7 years ago. Later we managed to get some funding so now we are able to meet twice weekly.

Our activities on a Monday are table tennis and board games along with refreshments. On Wednesdays we have discussion, chit chat and occasionally a film or a talk. Most Mondays we have a small jumble sale which helps raise funds for outings and refreshments.

We purposefully try and keep Wednesday as a smaller group with the chance for 1-2-1 conversations and listening time with more privacy.

On Bank Holidays we try and meet for half an hour then go out to a local park or museum. Some of the places we have been to are a City Farm, Green Park and Zoo as well as Regent's Park and Parliament Hill Park.

Recently we have enjoyed visits from Rev'd Neil Bunker, Liaison Mental Health Chaplain for Westminster.

Sometimes we join in the All Age Days with other members of the Church and community.

Sometimes we use the poetry and stories in the *Being Alongside* magazine.

## *Being Alongside* July - August 2011

Some of our future events are discussions about conflict:: how to be assertive without being aggressive, and how to keep oneself safe.

Our Volunteers have a monthly Support Group and from time to time regular supervision.

Please continue to pray for us and, if you are nearby, pop in for a cuppa.

*Theresa Pountney C.A. Str. National Committee Member*



*Above and overleaf:*

Some Barnabas Group members enjoying being alongside.

As Str Theresa writes in her piece above, the poems, prayers, pleas and photos are used and eagerly appreciated by our readers, so please keep them coming!

The editor apologies to Diana Klewin for mis-spelling her name in the Front Page article of the previous *Being Alongside*. Sorry Diana!

## *Being Alongside July - August 2011*



Members of the St Barnabas Group stride out in the Park.

Many thanks to all our contributors! Your offerings are so vital. Submissions are welcome from all areas of the community, especially insights from the varying faith communities. Whilst we all appreciate a well balanced magazine, I can only put in what I receive - so I hope you're working on your next piece...!

Copy for next issue - due September 1st - to the editor by August 19 please, but sooner is always more helpful!

### *Don't Joke..?*

My wife was hinting about what she wanted for our upcoming anniversary. She said, "I want something shiny that goes from 0 to 150 in about 3 seconds."

I bought her a bathroom scale.

And then the fight started.....





## *Laugh Your Way to Well- Being*

**suggests Roz D'Ombraine  
Hewitt**

(see also p 13)

Waiting in the rain outside a very ordinary-looking four-story house in west London on a freezing cold March day isn't usually a recipe for enjoyment. But among the crowd who'd gathered in front of 91 Fernhead Road that morning, it seemed everyone was smiling and nodding and occasionally bursting into laughter, enjoying the chance to swap happy memories of the man we'd come to see honoured with a Heritage Foundation plaque, one Sir Norman Joseph Wisdom.

Norman was born in 1915 and grew up in the ground floor flat of number 91 with his older brother Fred. Probably few, if any, of the hundreds waiting for Robin Gibb – another lifelong fan – to arrive and unveil the plaque to honour Norman had ever met the diminutive star in person. But of course we all knew him through his most famous screen persona, Norman Pitkin. In his hallmark tight-fitting tweed suit and matching flat cap, the peak permanently stuck up and set at a jaunty angle, Norman played the well-intentioned, but disastrously accident-prone hero of a series of slapstick comedies.

Made between 1953 and 1966 - for a time the black and white films reportedly earned more money than the James Bond films - over the years they've lost none of their appeal, even gaining new fans among younger generations who grew up with them on TV. So unsurprisingly, when last Christmas Tesco released a set of 12 gems that included his first, *Trouble in Store*, and another classic *The Square Peg* in which Norman plays a former road digger who when parachuted into France on wartime duties is discovered to bear an uncanny resemblance to a high-ranking Nazi officer, the DVD was an instant bestseller.

## *Being Alongside July - August 2011*

Norman died, last year, aged 95, on the Isle of Man and every obituary emphasised that no one in showbiz had a bad word to say about him. He was also enormously respected for his talent. Not only as a comedian, but a 'serious' actor and had received the accolades to prove it. America, the graveyard of many a British wannabe's hopes, welcomed him with open arms. He starred on Broadway in the musical *Walking Happy*, for which he was nominated for a Tony, appeared on the legendary Ed Sullivan show and in the hit movie *The Night they Raided Minsky's*. But Norman turned his back on further job offers when his second wife left, immediately returning home to be with his children.

A talented singer and songwriter, in the 50s the first of his self-penned hits *Don't Laugh at Me (Cause I'm a Fool)* topped the British charts. But it was his talent for making audiences laugh for which he's most warmly remembered by millions of fans. His appeal was international: in Albania, especially, he was regarded as a national treasure, but even he was surprised when having travelled to the country to meet adoring fans, he was welcomed by the President of Albania himself.

Norman was knighted in 2000, but perhaps he should also have been made an honorary doctor, for services to medicine. We've all heard that laughter is the best medicine and he certainly dispensed it by the bucket-load. The saying does also seem to be supported by research. When I was writing my book (*Moving On: A Guide to Good Health and Recovery for People with a Diagnosis of Schizophrenia*) I was amazed at the number of scientific studies reporting the ways in which laughter can boost our physical and mental well-being: one of the contributors to the book told me that by making himself laugh he was able to keep the unkind 'voices' in his head at bay.

In the US there are over 500 laughter / yoga clubs. Using the technique of deep yoga breathing members learn how to make themselves laugh. It may sound a touch artificial – after all, shouldn't laughter be spontaneous. Nonetheless after an hour or so everyone feels so much better they usually come back for more. Now a few laughter clubs have popped up in the UK where you can exercise your chuckle muscles. For further details go to [www.laughyoga.co.uk](http://www.laughyoga.co.uk) Alternatively, you could listen to Norman's hilarious duet with Joyce Grenfell *Narcissus*, known as The Laughing Song. It's available in a rather crackly version on YouTube. Or settle down on the sofa with one of Norman's classic capers. But be warned, it could seriously improve your health.

*Roz D'Ombraïne Hewitt*



## *Two Poems:*

### **1) *Hearing and Believing***

I hear  
But I do not believe  
I fall  
But the trip deceives

I wander  
Through the book  
But never make  
A second look

Could it be  
That he -  
Explanatory  
Will also see

The trials  
That make  
The horizons  
Of my crimson lake

Seem Yellow butterflies  
Or something that size  
Or even half as wise  
As some flighty enterprise

I hear Lord  
And I believe  
That, as with Samuel,  
You will intercede

Each of us holds  
A blossom  
That slowly unfolds  
Its Christ

And hope is highest  
For the giver  
When the will denieth  
The flowing River

I hear Lord and you hear me,  
The water-fall of love re-run -  
The Heart's dashing voluntary.

This poem got lost in cyberspace  
and inspired me to write a  
second one about the 'vision' of  
a future seen through a  
computer's consciousness.  
Pto for the second poem.

**St Marylebone Mental  
Health Support Group**  
meets on the 1st and 3rd  
Fridays of each month.

Welcoming Cuppa  
at 10.30am

Meeting begins 11am  
& ends about 12.30

## **2] Cosmic Screen**



David Bowie: "On the silver screen".

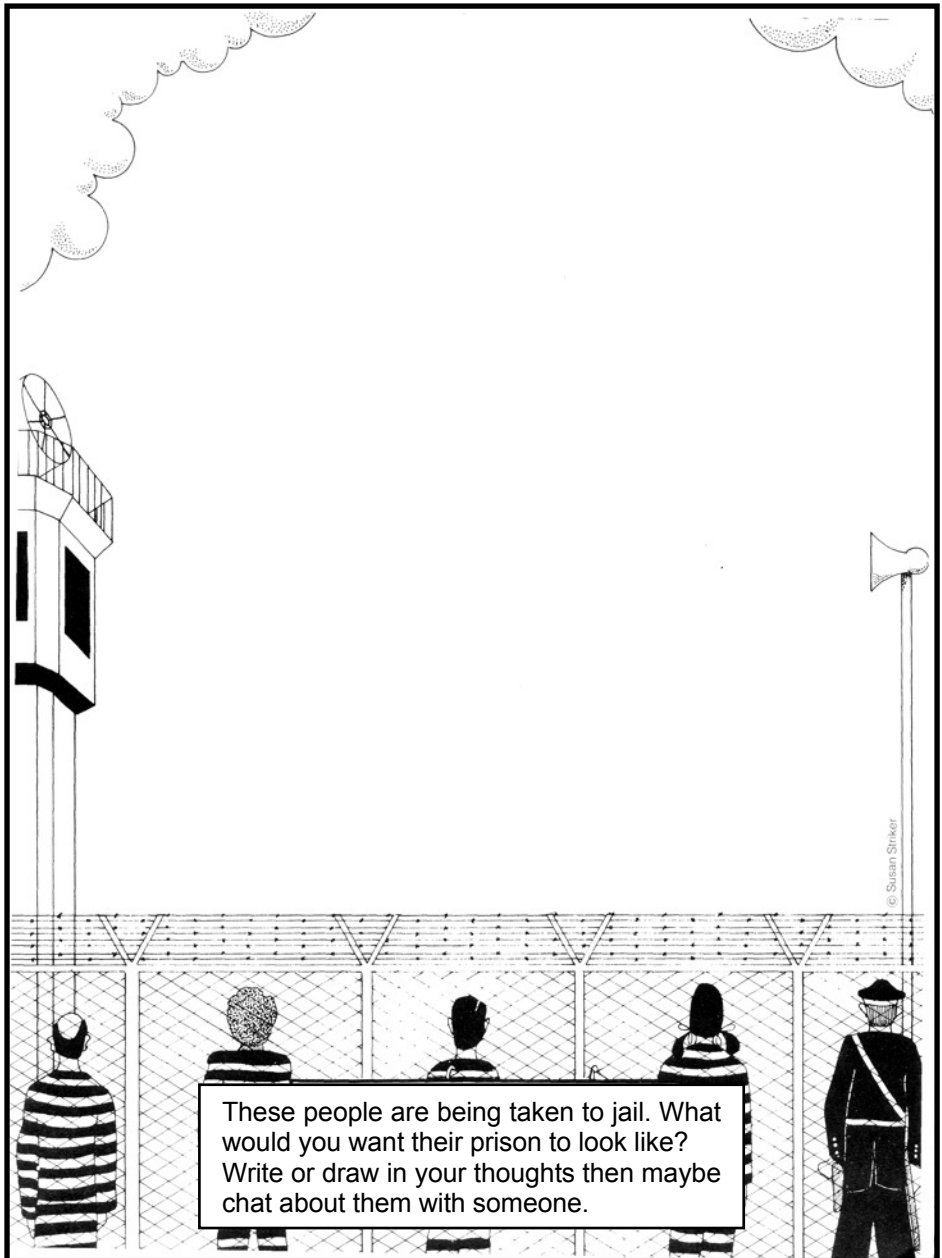
The language bells -  
The message sells:  
We look to the moon  
And miss the stars: The plough like a broom  
Sweeping gallant Hussars.

We too play our part  
When the cosmic prayers start  
And new meanings embark;  
The rhymes crestle  
As rosary beads nestle  
And the sky is a knight Looking over Earth's flight;

The Maid is a Queen  
On the candle-lit screen;  
And Lourdes is a focus  
For blues and ochres;  
For, look now, the clowns  
Are playing around  
With the words on the ground While angelic Trapeziums  
Do coloured Jesus-isms  
Don't let the tears carry you away -  
Prayer is here to stay:

In my poor word  
The world is heard  
Like a crimson flower On the convict's cloak  
Of which the dice spoke -  
And so be brave  
Burst from your cave  
And paint the screen  
With thoughts that wean  
Your prayer  
Into an atmosphere  
Where Saints can clearly read  
Reflections of the creed.

*Simon Partridge*



## *Moving On...*

Because Change is the default setting of the Universe, it is always pragmatic - let alone healthy - to be willing to change, adapt and move on. Here is part of Robert's story of leaving behind the pain, and in the process, helping others find a little more joy: a Win - Win situation! (Not good news for some churches though!) Would other readers care to share 'what helps', and what looks as though it should, but doesn't?

### ***Spring Is On Its Way***

Now that the weather is getting better, and the flowers are starting to appear I am reminded of what I experienced as a child, and how that has made my life so difficult as regards the church,

I had a clear sense when I was about 6 years old, that I could find the love of God in my mother's garden but not in the church.

A long while later, a psychiatrist diagnosed me as abnormally sensitive and the difference between my mother's garden and the church was that in the church there was an atmosphere of conflict between my father and other members of the congregation, and what had happened to me was that I tuned into this bad atmosphere and I felt very depressed and anxious every time I was taken to church.

What this also meant was that statements about God's love did not mean what they should have meant, and instead they sounded to me like the forging of lies and platitudes which were the proverbs of ashes. This is what is said in Job Ch 13 verses 4 and 12.

So one of the ways I do experience the love of God is through voluntary work at Strode Park, a home for physically disabled people, many of whom are in wheelchairs. I am working in a little nursery garden which is run by the occupational therapy department there. As this work progresses, I will see the unfolding of creation and see the flowers and vegetables start to grow, and this is exactly what I saw and felt as a child and I can bypass all the arguments and debates in the church.

Also, as I work and create an atmosphere of a well cared for space, some of the clients may experience a sense of wellbeing.

*Robert MacIntosh*

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## *Book Review 1*

Don't Laugh at Me, I'm Just the Driver

by Steven Evans

Published by Authorhouse

Guide Price: £9.99

In March 2000, Steven Evans received a letter from the Queen informing him that his nomination for Norman Wisdom to be given a knighthood was included in the decision to make Norman a 'sir'. Steven was chauffeur to his childhood hero, driving him to media interviews, award ceremonies and the gigs which Norman carried out into his 90s. Their working relationship turned into a friendship that lasted 15 years. Despite suffering from Alzheimer's almost to the end of his life in a retirement home on the Isle of Man, Norman continued to be the focus of adoring attention – needing no persuasion to entertain his fans with impromptu performances.

Often joining him at showbiz occasions, Steven offers tantalising snippets of gossip, but anyone wanting to learn about the indiscretions of the stars will be disappointed. We're left guessing which one of the 60s pop group *The Monkees* he was called upon to chauffeur turned out to have such a distinctly unpleasant side. Nor do we learn the identity of TV antiques expert with whom Steven had a very brief dalliance; even revelations about Norman are relatively few and innocuous. He loved cream cakes and once ate four at one sitting, followed by a slice of victoria sponge. Was he making up for childhood neglect? - the times when, after his mother's death, and left to fend for themselves by their sea-faring father, Norman and older brother Colin would literally forage for food. Steven doesn't speculate; sensibly readers are spared the pop psychology.

The cover photo has Steven with SNW but the book is neither a kiss'n'tell, nor a biography of SNW: it's Steven's life. His rough and tough upbringing in Barnsley, his loves and losses, coming out as 'gay', major health problems from which amazingly he's always managed to bounce back. The book ends with him at 41, and settled down with his partner. It also marks the end of his sojourn in showbiz. Many he met or mixed with: Wendy Richard, John Inman, Thora Hird and SNW are now gone. Most become famous before penning their autobiographies, but Steven's done it the other way round; this book may be where his fame begins.

*Roz D'Ombraïne Hewitt (see also p 7)*

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## *Book Reviews 2 - 4.*

Christine Goodger, a retired though very much still active, Church Army Sister, reviews two books and offers a preview of her own>

### ***"Lives within a Life"***

by Robert Bayley

Pub: Chipmunkapublishing

Cost £10 all profits go to SANE.

Robert Bayley I have known for a while, as we both belong to a prayer group attached to the Northampton Chapter of The Order of St. Luke. Robert suffers from a severe form of schizophrenia, and Crohn's disease. His book gives a so called "normal reader" a privileged insight into the workings of a mind periodically wracked by delusion and paranoia. He shows us how prayer, and the Psalms, and the listening to The Scriptures, calms the troubled breast, and enables him to show his great love for the One who loves him more than anyone else. Such a book is a rarity, and shows great courage, and a wonderful command of words. It has taken Robert several years to write it, and is a story of one man's escape from the restrictions of his troubled life to that redeemed by faith and love.

The son of a priest, he shows great compassion for his sisters, and parents who have suffered greatly from serious illness, and disability.

*Christine M. Goodger*

### ***"Worshipping with Dementia"***

Edited by Louise Morse.

Pub: Monarch Books.

A very useful book of Meditations, Scriptures, and Prayers for Sufferers and carers..

"This book inspires on so many levels - to the carer for whom it is a resource, full of ideas and memory joggers, but most of all to the dementia sufferer, because it might provide the key to unlock the soul of a Christian whose mind has forgotten the loving God".

*Pam Rhodes,*

author and TV presenter.

**"Not Beyond God's Love and Care".**

*by Christine M. Goodger*

Although I am retired as a Church Army Sister / Evangelist, I have only been 're-tyred'! How has that different ministry come about and become very much part of my life today?

For many years I had been an itinerant Childrens / Family Evangelist travelling around the nation. For twelve years I was the main carer of my parents, and an aunt. All gradually suffered from a variety of dementia, caused by Strokes, Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, and Alzheimer's Disease. A very close friend and soul mate of mine started with 'real' Alzheimer's Disease at the age of 52 and was dead by 56 years of age. The decline was rapid, and very difficult, painful, and a heart rending time for those who loved this kind and very clever midwife and Marie Curie Nurse. Who cared for her loved ones, and especially her spiritual needs, as recognition of family and friends was no longer there? The familiar liturgy of the church, hymns, words of Scripture, the receiving of Jesus in The Sacrament of Holy Communion which were part of her life for many years, she was able in some way to recognise to within a few hours of death.

I try to support those who are main carers of those with dementia, as they struggle to keep their loved ones in the familiarity of their own homes. Carers can become 'marooned' unless there are those who will help for an hour or two to give them a break to get them out from the four walls, which can become like a prison. As the illness progresses, the sufferer cannot be left on their own. Both carer and patient need the support of prayer, and regular visits, with The Sacrament. Music can be a help such as familiar hymns, "Songs of Praise" on T.V. and The Daily Service on the radio. But such can also become an irritant to the sufferer, and discernment is needed as moods and life style changes. This I had to learn. I have helped folk find good caring Homes at the first physical parting when the carer can no longer cope and a home, hospital, or hospice is needed.

I was fortunate that both my parents were Christians, but very different in character. My father loved drama, gardening, and art, but these were lost. His sight and hearing went, and he had cancer. His frustration caused flare ups. R.N.I.D. and Action for Blind People were a great help, and with 'gadgets' he was able to hear stories, and local news on tapes, and a 'Chatterbox' helped him hear TV programmes, without my mother and I being blasted to pieces. A dark note: the Elders of their church visited, but



## *Being Alongside July - August 2011*

did not help their spiritual welfare, nor did the minister. My own priest said. "You take Holy Communion to them". They had not been offered it at Christmas or Easter, and, as former Anglicans, this was important to them.

My mother was easier. She loved singing and music, and we would sing together a great deal when speech communication had almost gone. I took my parents' funeral services, and also that of my brother in law who I cared for. He had M.N.D.

Caring for the bereaved has been part of my ministry and I've accompanied many kinds of death. Jesus wept when he felt others grief and he gives us great privileges and the strength to bear others' grief. My experiences have been varied: Deputy Matron in a Residential Home, respite care work amongst the aged, sitting with the dying helping them to be at peace in their last hours. I thank God for those experiences years ago; as in latter years they have been used over and over again.

Six times a month I visit Residential Care Homes to lead themed "Songs of Praise" type worship, using pictures, familiar objects, hymns, songs, and readings, which can awaken something within even the most confused. It gives me great joy when I see lips moving to a familiar refrain, chorus, or The Lord's Prayer. We have simple Holy Communion Services with hymns too. The Sacrament is also taken to those who are bedridden.

It is privilege to be asked to go and be with someone who is dying, and pray with them as they enter nearer into His presence. Only God knows the secrets of their hearts. There are those I know are Christians, others I do not know, but their funerals / cremations I often conduct, and the promises of Jesus are proclaimed. I am not a Universalist who thinks everyone will get 'there' in the end. That is why Jesus' Sacrifice of His life for us and His Glorious Resurrection are at the heart of what I believe and I have experienced the victory over death, in being with dying Christians.

Quite recently I was asked to go to Blankenburgh in Belgium and help relatives interr a couples' ashes. The couple had met there on the sands during the war; this was their wish. I had sat with both as they died; both needed the assurance that God would not leave them. We have to remind ourselves that GOD IS ALMIGHTY. To Him be the Praise and Glory.

*Christine M. Goodger*  
June 2011.

## *Poem:*

### ***I Am Courtesy***

I am the forgotten one,  
Ignored by so many;  
Yet those who use me  
Feel better inside.

I keep tapping on shoulders  
Reminding people -  
*Remember the golden rule.*

'Thank you'  
is my favourite sound  
Accompanied by a warm smile.

I get angry when ignored,  
Discourtesy breeds conflict,  
I'm all for a peaceful life.

My greatest wish is  
For parents to teach  
My principles at home.

If all parents lived it,  
The world would be  
A happier politer place.

I dare you to try courtesy!

*Jean Wearn Wallace*

## *Friendship*

*That best portion of a good man's life - his little,  
nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love.*

*William Wordsworth*

*Friendship with oneself is all-important because without  
it one cannot be friends with anyone else in the world.*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

# Spiritual Journeying Group

*Are you curious about the meaning of life? Are you looking for something a bit different?*

## 'Sight & Insight'

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June,  
7:30 - 8:45pm,  
St Mary's Church  
Park Road, Camberley GU15 2SR

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July,  
1:00 - 2:15pm, High Cross  
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3SY



Spiritual Journeying

The Spiritual Journeying Group is for those of us who sometimes find our daily lives difficult and challenging. It reaches out to anyone who asks questions about the meaning of life and wants to explore their own spiritual dimension. A knowing, caring God is at the heart of our themes but no-one is expected to view things in any prescriptive or fixed way. We expect and encourage differing perspectives of faith. It is an open group to which people are invited as and when they can come.

It would be lovely to see you there!

**7:30-8:45pm**  
**St Mary's Church**

**1:00-2:15pm**  
**High Cross**

28<sup>th</sup> Jun - Sight & Insight -

13<sup>th</sup> Jul

26<sup>th</sup> Jul - Recognising our own Goodness

10<sup>th</sup> Aug

30<sup>th</sup> Aug - Glove in the mud: Coincidences

14<sup>th</sup> Sep

For enquiries please contact Jennine Thomas on  
07505477457

Supported by:



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# *The Who & What of Being Alongside*

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*'Being Alongside' is the operational name for the 'Association for Pastoral Care in Mental Health', (apcmh), a Christian based, voluntary association of individual members and affiliated groups who recognise the importance of spiritual values and support in mental health. It has a network of supporters throughout the United Kingdom and it welcomes and encourages people whatever their own faith or belief system. Governed by its National Committee, BA / apcmh s primarily concerned to promote and encourage "being alongside" people experiencing mental or emotional distress.*

UK Registered Charity: 1081642

UK Registered Company: 3957730

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Views in *Being Alongside* are not necessarily those of the organisation.

Origination by BA;

printed by **PrintInc**: 020 8255 2110



Was there ever so much fun at an AGM?  
Elizabeth, Miriam and Diana treat the assembled company to an Action  
Song. I blame the aerobics session we had earlier!!