

# Prayer/News



*No 58 January 2016*



The words of the Psalmist in Psalm 56 v 11 "In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid." can be a source of encouragement to us as we go into a New Year. There may be many uncertainties, trials or suffering to be faced but we need to remember that our trust is in a person and that person is Jesus. How we respond to our difficulties often reveals what kind of faith we have. May our faith in 2016 be shown to be a strong and steadfast faith dependent upon our gracious God and Father knowing that "He who promised is faithful."

In September we were able to celebrate our Annual Thanksgiving Service at West Worthing Evangelical Church. It was good to gather together to give thanks to our gracious God for His Hand upon our work and to praise Him for His faithfulness to us over another year. The meeting included a report from our manager, Phyllis Alabaster together with reports from the Chairman of Trustees, Robin Turnbull and our Trustee/Treasurer, Alan Hare. We were happy to welcome Rich Owen, Pastor of Worthing Tabernacle who brought a word of encouragement and challenge to us from the book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon, who wrote this book, was a great king with many talents and yet we know that he was a man who sinned and failed God. The questions of Ecclesiastes are the questions that are asked today. Rich reminded us of the meaninglessness of not knowing God in this life. As believers we have Christ who alone is the "solid ground – all else is sinking sand." He also reminded residents that Koinonia is built on solid ground. It is a beacon in a dark world and where residents know the rock amidst the chaos of the world in which we live. Yes, when we know God we are satisfied. After this time of thanksgiving it was good to share in fellowship over a cup of tea.

At the beginning of November Koinonia residents were able to show their gratitude to those who lead our epilogues each evening by inviting them to a fish and chip supper. This was much appreciated and a good opportunity of enjoying fellowship one with another. Tony Sargent kindly brought the evening to a close with the epilogue. We are grateful to Eileen Gwynne, one of our residents, who took over the role from Mabel Knight of organizing the speakers' rota. Our sincere thanks go to both Mabel for so ably managing this over many years, and to Eileen for now taking on this important role in the life of Koinonia.



We again would like to thank all our Friends for your support to our Christmas Coffee Morning at the end of November, which raised over £550.00.

As mentioned in our last Prayer/News we have continued throughout the summer with our Outings, which so many of us have really enjoyed. After our visits to the Look & Sea Centre, Arundel Wetland Centre and tea and scones at the Southern Pavilion Restaurant on Worthing Pier we were happy to make a return visit in July to Chichester Cathedral where we once again enjoyed a lovely meal in the Dresden Room of the George Bell House. We too were able to spend some time in the Bishops Garden. In August we enjoyed a great day out on the Arun and Wey canal with a picnic lunch. The highlight for some of our residents was being able to join the captain on his navigation of the canal! We ended our trips out by a visit to Denbies Wine Estate where we enjoyed the coach trip amidst the beauty of the Sussex/Surrey countryside and also the train-ride around the estate. In December our Christmas trip to Haskins enabled us to enjoy their festive Christmas decorations finishing the afternoon off with mince pies and cup of tea together.



Christmas celebrations in Koinonia were much appreciated by the residents. Particular thanks go to Philip Hudson, Tony Sargent, Rich Owen and Robin Turnbull who all led our special Christmas Services and to Worthing Tab members who led the carol singing. Christmas Day was a very special time

where we were able to join together in singing carols and listen to God's Word. This was followed by a very tasty Christmas lunch cooked by Michael, our chef, followed by a surprise visit from Father Christmas.

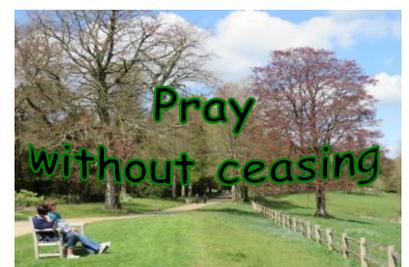


In very recent years changes within the regulations governing Residential Homes have meant a much more rigorous set up in recording in complying with CQC standards and best practice guidance in the day-to-day running of a Care Home. This has meant much more demand in administration for our Manager, Phyllis as too for both our Senior Staff and Care Workers. Please do remember all of our staff and the challenges and changes that have affected each one of them.

In 2015 we also saw changes within our Board of Trustees. In September we were sad to see Barbara Burling stepping down after 15 years of service. Barbara has been a great support to the Home for all those years with her husband John, who was the Chairman before our present Chairman Robin Turnbull. Barbara was the 'Nominated Individual' for many years for the care in the Home with regards to CQC as well as serving in other capacities. We wish her every blessing. We are grateful to Colin Carpenter who has now taken on this role. In May Alan Hare joined the trustees as one able to be more involved in the finances of the Home. He lives in Crowborough and is a member of Forest Fold Baptist Church. He too, is a trustee of Pilgrims' Friend Society and is their Treasurer. So why would Alan take on yet another responsibility in a highly regulated industry like the Care Industry. In Alan's words:

*"When I first saw Koinonia and came through the door I was immensely impressed by what I saw and I have grown to love and value what it does the more I have become involved. I value the homely atmosphere, for it is first and foremost a home and the residents and staff make it a home. It is a lovely home from the era in which I guess most of the residents grew up in. A lovely Christian lady with all of her staff runs it (and I have had the wonderful privilege of meeting nearly all of them as I have tried to help Phyllis prepare for the new Pension Scheme). It has a kindly Christian businessman as its Chairman and a Board of Trustees who I have come to respect for their Christian wisdom and faith. Although I do not know many of the volunteers I do know from what I've heard you are also a significant factor in making Koinonia what it is. We have much to be thankful for in that the Home is nearly always as full as it can be with an occupancy rate of around 94%. That is very high for a Care Home today. It is the result of all that I have mentioned and the answer to many prayers, I know. And for someone who looks at the finances that is the key to the success of the Home. There is no doubt that the finances were under strain for some time as Jeanette*

*Gwynne House was developed, fitted out and then assimilated into Koinonia but the ongoing high occupancy has kept Koinonia on its feet, when other Homes I know would not have survived. Let there be no doubt about it, that step to expand – taken in faith – put pressure on the*



finances. And God has answered your faith and prayers in a very remarkable way. Looking forward, there will continue to be pressures on costs – there is the additional pension costs and we also have the new Minimum Wage coming into force. As always, our trust is in our God and we thank you for all you have done as Friends of Koinonia and are doing to make this Home a successful Christian Home for our dear older brothers and sisters in Christ.”

## Prayer Matters

**1 Thessalonians 5:17**

- *Praise and thank our gracious God for His Hand upon the work of Koinonia during the past year. May that vision of loving care and spiritual support and fellowship to elderly saints continue and be blessed by Him. Pray that Koinonia may remain faithful to our God as we seek to serve Him in an ever-changing world.*
- *Pray for support for Phyllis as she manages the Home. Pray that she and the trustees may be given wisdom and insight as they seek to put in place regulatory legislation now required by CQC.*
- *Thank and praise God for all the staff and the differing abilities and skills given them in caring and supporting the residents. Without each and every one of them Koinonia would not be the Home it is.*
- *Praise God for the high occupancy levels of 2015 praying that these will be maintained during 2016. Pray that we would be effective and efficient in our finances particularly remembering the need of replacing the lift in Jameson, which has now become a drain on our resources.*
- *Pray for further interaction and communication with local churches and an increase in those wishing to support the work of Koinonia..*

*Koinonia Christian Care is a charity, which was set up by Evangelical Churches in Sussex linked to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) to provide accommodation for elderly Christians principally in the Sussex area. For further information telephone the Manager on **01903 237764** or write to: **Koinonia Christian Care, 4 Winchester Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 4DJ** or see our web site: **[www.koinoniacare.org](http://www.koinoniacare.org)***

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