



MHA was founded in 1943 by the Methodist Church as a charity to provide care, support and accommodation for older people in need. MHA continues to provide to over 18500 older people thanks to the commitment and dedication of its 7000 employees and 5000 volunteers.

We continue to work closely with the Methodist Church and are partners in mission in local areas in engaging with the components of Our Calling. Worship. Learning and caring, service and evangelism form part of what we do through our residential care homes, retirement living and communities schemes.



## Worship

In most of our schemes at least weekly worship takes place. This is led by a mix of our dedicated chaplains, local ministers and preachers. Holy Communion is also administered, and where someone might be confined to their room, then often communion can be taken to them. We are grateful to local Methodist presbyters and other local clergy who are able to assist us with this, and as you can appreciate is an immense support for those who are no longer able to get to church.

We have become increasingly experienced in leading worship for those in later life, including those living with dementia. We are keen to share with the church our experience and resources in this area. There are a number of workshops and events, which we would be happy to tell you about. Please talk to us at our stand.



## Learning and caring

Each of our homes has a dedicated chaplain. Their role is to offer pastoral care to residents, their families and to the staff working in the home and scheme. The chaplain is often supported by volunteers from the local church in the offering of pastoral care. The chaplain will also lead group discussion, bible studies and prayer groups, again with the support of the local church or circuit.

We have resources that will help you as a church to be better equipped in the learning and caring of those in later life. See [mha.org.uk/faith](http://mha.org.uk/faith)



## Service

Our communities schemes provide the opportunity for those still living at home to join in with local activities, thereby helping to combat the loneliness and isolation that so many older people face. Activities and services include befriending, lunch clubs, assisted shopping, dance and exercise classes, cheerleading groups, outings, holidays, escorts to appointments and much more.

We have many opportunities for people to join in serving the older community, either in communities or in a home. Again, please come and talk to us to find out more.



## Evangelism

We serve people of all faiths and none, and our services are offered to those in greatest need. All are invited and can choose to partake in the regular pattern of Christian worship and study groups that take place. By being in the community through our communities schemes, and through our chaplains and volunteers we are able to witness to the love and grace of God.

### A story.

Herbert moved into an MHA Care Home and told the Chaplain on their first encounter: "I'll have no need of you, I'm an atheist". However, as time passes, without undue effort from the Chaplain, the resident warms to the Chaplain. Instead of vacating the lounge when a service was about to start, on one occasion Herbert stays put. At the next service, when asked by the Chaplain if he would like to be taken to his room, Herbert said he'd like to remain and, later, remarks to the Chaplain that his homily "made me think". Each time a service was held in that lounge, subsequently, Herbert was firmly settled in his chair in the corner.

Sadly, Herbert's health began to deteriorate - to the extent that he needed to remain in his room. The Chaplain made a point of calling to chat, and on one visit Herbert made reference to his musical background – having been a member of several bands

and friend of various well-known musicians. This gave a new line of conversation and prompted the Chaplain to search on *YouTube* for recordings of those mentioned. He asked Herbert if he would like to watch these, which they did together, bringing a broad smile – and a few tears – to Herbert's face.

One day, Herbert asked the Chaplain if they could talk confidentially. There followed the most moving account of an incident which had haunted Herbert's memories. As a child he believed he had witnessed a tragic event involving his father and one of his siblings. Such was the trauma suffered as a result of this, Herbert had suppressed the memory and had never spoken of it to anyone. As Herbert wept, the Chaplain sat quietly beside the bed and, after a while, Herbert said he felt a lot better.

A few days later the Chaplain was informed by the Nurse on duty that Herbert was very poorly, and may be nearing the end of his life. The Chaplain went to Herbert's room and asked Herbert if he could sit with him. Herbert welcomed this and expressed his gratitude for the Chaplain's support. While Herbert still identified himself as an atheist, the Chaplain felt it appropriate to ask if he could pray for him. Herbert's response - "Well it can't do any harm," - brought a smile to both. The Chaplain left Herbert to rest, and not long after was informed that Herbert had died peacefully.



Every day of the year, our residents and members, are being supported, loved and cared for by our chaplains, staff and volunteers. Our residents and members are being given the opportunity to worship, to continue to grow in their faith and to be part of a community. We have volunteers who enjoy and get so much out of serving. And with out the help and the support, with out the giving of time, without our financial givers who give either through MHA Sunday or through regular giving or leaving a legacy, the work of our chaplains, our communities schemes, and other therapies including music therapy, could not exist. So thank you.

If you would like to be involved by giving in some way then please talk to us. We would love for you to come to one of our events and for you to feel equipped to be able to serve this generation in your own context. Finally, for those who are already volunteering, praying or giving in any way. Thank you so much.