



Welcome

Clubhouse appendix Vintage church



Holiday at Home – Holiday sessions for older people and those living with dementia.

Getting started

There is great delight in working with and serving people in their later life, and yet for many churches it is incidental and historical, rather than intentional and dynamic. If you are planning to adapt the Holiday Club material for your older people and those living with dementia, you and they will be richly blessed.

Taking time to consider the adaptations needed is valuable. Considering the practicalities alongside the spiritual needs is essential to ensure smooth running, spiritual nourishment and everyone's wellbeing.

In this appendix, you will find a mixture of practical tips to help in your planning – this list is not exhaustive, merely a starting point for your planning. There are also suggested additions of memory/sensory tables and adaptations of crafts for each day and theme. At the end, a

resources list of where additional information can be found is provided.

The needs of your people will govern your choices and planning. Have open ears to hear what they share about personal interests and needs. Have open eyes to see where joy is found or struggles shared. Have open hearts to God's lead in this vibrant, meaningful and rewarding area of ministry that blesses participants and planners, hosts and visitors alike.

Daily, weekly, monthly?

The decision of frequency for this material is yours to make and depends primarily on a balance between volunteer availability and your participants. Clear discussions that realistically explore people's practical availability are vital. A weekly summer session for older people who may find their usual activities have ceased for summer may be appreciated if volunteers can be found. An intense 'holiday at home' week may be more suitable if participants and volunteers have the energy for five day time

sessions in a row. Alternatively, this ready to use material could be followed to theme a number of monthly sessions over the summer months when some volunteers may be on holiday, or have other responsibilities. Asking the participants their views and opinions in creative ways is helpful in gauging energy levels and availability.

Practical tips

- **Space**

Ramps, access and facilities all need clear signage and volunteers to ensure safety. Trip hazards need identifying, as well as ensuring passageways are free of mobility aids. A full risk assessment for your access and space for use by older people is required, along with a safeguarding assessment for vulnerable adults. Appropriate signing in and out, security on external doors, dietary requirements and a next of kin contact in case of emergencies should all be planned for.

- **Volunteers**

Specific people with specific roles ensures smooth running of a session. Clear roles, dividing responsibilities, plus 'listeners' and 'chatters' to mingle are beneficial. Some older people may wish to be volunteers too, and recognising that some cross the participant/helper boundary is a blessing, as long as the essential ratios are already covered.

- **Time**

Older people move at a different pace. Be prepared to slow the pace, have people join mid activity and retain an attitude of 'no rush, take your time, we're just glad you made it.' Taking time to chat, listen, hear and tease out a story is a blessing and a delight.

- **Pastoral care**

Asking older people to remember and reminisce can be both a blessing and

painful. The same can be said regarding asking about the future. Some may hold painful memories alongside joyful recollections; others may feel they are of little use anymore, due to declining health or mobility.

Be aware of responses and languages used so that people feel at ease to share stories in ways they are comfortable with. Ensure there is a co-ordinating leader identified who can be told if someone has become upset, or concerns are raised.

- **Dexterity**

There can be no assumptions as to people's abilities and manual dexterity. Some may require help and others would be offended with the offer. Visual impairments, cognitive ability, fine motor skills and co-ordination are all affected by age and dementia. Asking, watching, gently offering and listening to responses enable a happy balance and encouragement when needed.

- **Achievement**

A sense of achievement at a task completed may feature strongly for some people. Enabling participation and taking the time, if they wish, to complete a task whilst the programme moves on is important. Taking things home, as well as having things that can be passed on to others, can be valuable.

- **Movement**

During the session, consider whether it is best to encourage participants to move or to bring activities to tables where they remain seated. A combination of the two may be appropriate, depending on your participants' abilities and wishes, and should be part of your risk assessment and daily review.

- **A quiet room**
If the event is being run as an intergenerational event, rather than just for older people, a quieter space or room may enable anyone feeling overwhelmed by sights and sounds to find a moment of calm. A memory box could be placed there, or play some gentle music. Be ready to guide and accompany people to this space as needed. Reminders that it is there may be necessary. Be aware of whether someone is safe to be left alone, who may be the accompanier and use good safeguarding practices at all times.
- **Gender stereotypical activities**
Be mindful of the activities offered and whether they typically appeal to one gender or cross the boundaries, particularly considering generational differences. Providing a balance and variety ensures all will find a point of access and relatability.
- **Worship**
Consider where you will gather for worship. How do you plan to seat people to ensure they can participate as they wish? Familiar hymns, readings and prayers may be appropriate to share and repetition over a number of days can be helpful for those who appreciate routine. Some people may enjoy singing in parts and do so automatically. Consider loop systems for hearing, font size for any printed words and how anything projected can be participated in as fully as possible. Invite people to choose hymns, share their stories and recollections of specific events, stories and biblical characters.
- **Refreshments**
Many older people will eat alone everyday. Fellowship over afternoon tea, light buffet or soup and a roll may be a highlight for them. Some may need practical help, others may wish to contribute, giving them a reason to bake. As you consider your participants and volunteers, be aware of dietary

requirements, serving practicalities and the time needed to not be rushed. Treats to take home are often appreciated.

Adapting The Club House Holiday Club material 2025

Many of the scripts and suggestions could be presented if volunteers are available to deliver them. Be aware of the needs of those with sight and hearing impairments in the delivery. Be accepting of noises, shout outs and loud voices and accept that participants are not children. They can be invited to focus together, but some may be unable to, and that is okay. The suggestions below are specifically focused on engaging those in later life and those living with dementia.

Activities for the whole week

Familiarity and comfort helps ensure people feel at ease. These activities could remain present through the week for those who wish to visit and enjoy them. Consider leaving the tables/stations physically in the same place to aid this familiarity. Volunteers could encourage those who struggle to participate in group activities to engage in a one to one card game, as a way into more interaction and involvement.

- **Who's at the door?**
This could be as suggested or adapted to involve members of the church who may share in the crafts (member of the art group, flower rota, cooking team) or partners and friends of church members with a relatable skill or story eg: a doctor, butcher, farmer, nurse who can either share what their life and work is like in the current day or what it was in the past. As participants are unlikely to be in teams, more loose groupings around tables, one volunteer could be the welcomer and introducer each day.

- **Memorabilia /pictures table**
Props and pictures that represent the stage of Jesus' story or the daily parable could be displayed. See below for suggestions.
- **Jigsaw table –**
Simply an appropriately sized and challenging jigsaw space to chat and be, hosted by a volunteer to aid participation and conversation.
- **Games table**
Vintage games like dominos, snakes and ladders, Cluedo, Scrabble etc. Participants may wish to bring games from home they can share with others.
- **Paper activities**
Each day, print pages of word searches, mazes, code cracking and colouring linked to the characters and theme of the day. These are readily available searching online and provide a talking point if needed.
- **Daily activities**
These are specific to each theme, and change each day. Using tables placed in the same place each day ensures familiarity and can encourage confidence if your decision is for participants to move between tables.



Day one

Reading

Mark 10:13-15
Jesus Blesses the children.

Memorabilia table

Images of toys and games that participants may have had or enjoyed in their youth.

Story

Depending on the interests and abilities of your group, you could act the story as presented or re-tell the story in your own words, not read. This enables eye contact and interaction as you feel able. The Wondering Questions may work well, but be aware of those who can't remember by having some clear statements ready eg: 'We can see that Jesus wanted to welcome the children and welcome is what we are thinking about today'.

Using images that can be printed and held can be useful prompts and discussions starts.

Traditional images such as:

- bit.ly/41ceEsM
- bit.ly/4idOSew

International and contemporary such as:

- bit.ly/41sFLB4
- bit.ly/3Qtxtme

Activities

Most of the day's less physical activities could be adapted for use with older people. Fingerprint art work, perhaps on bookmarks to take away and use, or large jigsaw pieces to decorate can be made or purchased from craft supply shops.

Large group prayer

This could be fun and full of laughter and prayer as the web is created. Be aware of someone needed to scoop up the wool for participants, and the need to help move the ball around.



Day two

Reading

1 Corinthians 12:12-27
One Body, many parts

Memorabilia table

Images of famous duos of the past, such as: Laurel and Hardy, Bill and Ben, Morecambe and Wise, Ginger Rodgers and Fred Astair, Sooty and Sweep. Cut the image in two and ask participants to put them back together. Chat about what participants remember about their performances and favourite sayings.

Story

A wonderful poem retelling that participants can be encouraged to join in with as they wish in the chorus. Be prepared with statements, as well as Wondering Questions to enable all to take away the key message of everyone being welcomed, even though everyone is different.

Activities

People could be encouraged to bring their button boxes in for the button activities and make a large person together. Alternatively, make paper people reminiscent of times gone by.



Tangrams may provide some participants with a good challenge, whilst baffling others.

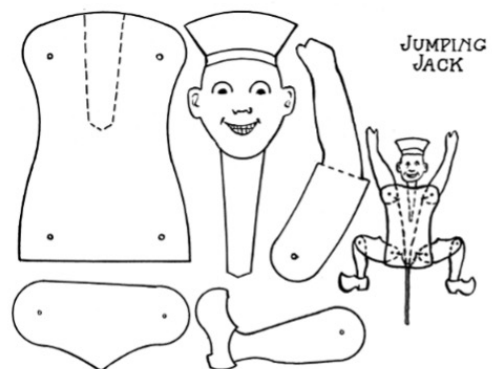
Jumping Jacks

Many older people will have owned, or played with, Jumping Jacks in their childhood.



These can be made in card with a template, string and split pins. All familiar items that may create conversation and reminiscing. As the bodies are constructed, volunteers can encourage conversation about the Bible story and

poem. Full templates of different characters, as well as bodies, videos and instructions can be found online by searching for 'Jumping Jack art template'.



Large group prayer

It may be a good time to acknowledge that even though our physical bodies may have aches and pains, possibly limiting what we can do as we grow older, the body of Christ has room for everyone. God is not finished with anyone. Small acts of service, such as kind words, tea rotas, baking, giving money for the flower rota or picking up the phone to someone who is isolated, can be rewarding. It would be a good time to reflect on how we also accept the service of others who do those things for us, and do so in love and fellowship.

Day three

Reading

Luke 5:17-26
Man lowered through the roof for healing

Memorabilia table

If it is possible, try and gather some vintage medical items, or pictures of some. Perhaps some public service images of vaccinations or health publicity of the past. Invite people to bring items they have from home to share and consider approaching local medical services who may have collections they are willing to share.



Story

Reading this story from two different versions of the Bible, such as the NRSV and the Message, may help people begin the process of stepping into the story. Adding details about housing in Jesus' time, the plight of those who were ill and the hubbub around Jesus may help paint the picture. Invite the hearers to 'step in' to the scene and wonder about what people may have been saying as they realised what was happening. Invite them to imagine they were on the roof with their friend and consider how it

might feel, or what Jesus may have said as the man was lowered down.

Activities

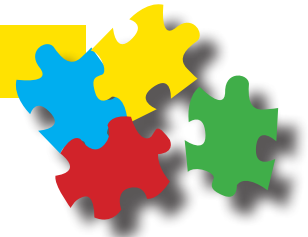
Embossing collage will suit many older people, who may have worked in industry or taken part in evening classes.

For others, a selection of word searches, crosswords and mazes could be provided around tables. These often prompt discussions and conversations as people complete the tasks and help each other.

Large group prayer

Using the Makaton signed prayer will create an opportunity for movement. Consider how those with less control of their limbs might be assisted to join in sensitively so all can take part.

Consider printing the prayer out for people to take home and read again, as a reminder of God's love for them.



Day four

Reading

John 4:1-26
Jesus talks to the Samaritan woman.

Memorabilia table

Maps, road atlases, compass, travel equipment of the past. Alternatively, pictures of old style tents and stoves, rucksacks, walking boots. Participants could be asked to bring photos of past holidays or journeys they have taken. All these represent Jesus on his journey travelling through Samaria. These items may prompt conversations about places they have been to and people they have met on their travels or journeys.

Story

Consider telling the story around tables with a set of blocks (or picture cards) on each table with a volunteer to place them and move them at each table as the story is told. This will then be clear to all hearers and enable them to also touch and feel the blocks if sight is a problem. Prepare the volunteer to lead into the discussion around the table about who is welcome, welcoming and their view on this story.

Activities

Catching Fish

Prepare an old-fashioned fishing game with card and paperclips, sticks and magnets. Depending on your group, you could get your participants to make their own set at each table and play the game between them. On each fish, write the word 'Welcome' in different languages (see reference sheet) and ask them to guess where the word is from. Depending on your group, you may wish to ask them to consider what a

welcome in that place may look like, or ask if anyone has visited that place.

Large group prayer

Provide thin card or paper on each table and invite participants to draw around their hand for the prayers. On each finger, encourage them to pray for people they care for, have met on their journey through life, or who have shown them welcome at a time of need. They may wish to share some of their stories around the table before they are gathered with others for prayer. Be aware that some may have stories of not feeling welcomed, and these need to be heard and responded to sensitively.



Day five

Reading

John 20:24-29
Jesus and Thomas

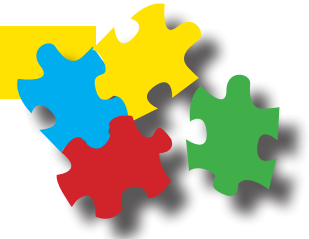
Memorabilia table

Lay out a series of questions or images, telling about some of the amazing things that have happened during their lifetime. For example, the first man on the moon, first computer, colour TVs, – first style of cars, mobile phones, cash cards, leisure air travel, medical innovations, old buses, women in trousers, reaching the North Pole. For each one, you could ask 'What date did this happen?' Or 'Who achieved this?' Or even 'What is this?' The aim is to recognise that they will have seen many things in their lives that for years would have been unthinkable achievements or unbelievable. Yet humankind has managed it, thanks to God given creativity and skill.

Story

If you have a dramatic volunteer, telling the story as the character will bring this story alive. Alternatively, ask participants to settle themselves, close their eyes if they wish and hear the story as though they were in the room. Ask them to imagine they are one of the 11 on the first reading of the story. Ask them then to suggest what they might have seen or thought if your group like to share out loud. Re-read the story and ask them to imagine they are Thomas. Again, ask them how they might feel, what they might see or why they weren't there initially. Many may have long held observations and thoughts to share or questions to ask.

Activities



Quiz

Consider hosting a quiz for participants, asking them questions in teams to symbolise Thomas's questioning. Make the questions appropriate for your group and encourage them to have a team name. Music rounds, 'What is this' round, and 'True or False?' could all be included.

Yes/No Game

If your group will appreciate the challenge, invite participants to try and last a minute of questions without saying yes or no. If your group like a little competition, have a champion and make it good humoured and fun. Perhaps demonstrate this with volunteers and time how long people can last. Remember, no pausing or hesitating allowed!

Feelie Bag Game and Two Truths And A Lie

Could both be adapted to work with older people and enable great conversations.

Large group prayer

Many older people's experience of church may have been quite passive when it comes to asking questions, others may be used to the opportunity. An invitation to ask questions to God, about the Bible and to one another could be incorporated within the final prayer time. Perhaps a chance to reiterate – Who is welcome? We are. Who is loved by God? We are. Who is precious? We are.

Prayer

This could build all week, but could be used complete throughout too.

1. Loving God, help us to welcome all who come this week.
2. Help us to be inclusive and encouraging to all we meet this day.
3. Help us to listen to the needs around us and work together to meet them.
4. And welcome all as your children and marvellous creation.
5. May that our deeds speak of your love and kindness so that your love is mirrored in all we do.
Amen.

Resources

- Livability – Dementia Inclusive church guide: travelling together. www.livability.co.uk
- Bible reading Fellowship's Messy Vintage – 52 sessions to share Christ-centred fun with the older generation by Katie Norman and Jill Phipps
- www.messychurch.org.uk/messy-vintage
- Lichfield Diocese - www.lichfield.anglican.org/transforming-communities/dementia-friendly-church/dementia-friendly-church.php
- Anna Chaplaincy – www.brf.org.uk/what-we-do/anna-chaplaincy/
- Pintrest/Messy Vintage – for specific resources
www.pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/messy-vintage/

