

FACTSHEET

PASCOP – *Meaningful Ageing*

Dementia-Specific Christian Worship Service Handbook

Information from Churches of Christ Care, Qld

Background

A pilot Dementia-Specific Church Service initiative commenced in January 2014 to provide pastoral and spiritual care to residents living with dementia. Previously these residents had attended regular church services but they did not appear to connect emotionally and spiritually with the service or others attending the service. The dementia specific service encourages residents living with dementia to actively participate and enables them to talk and connect with others, and God.

Promoting meaningful ageing

Empirical evidence suggests that older people who attend church receive more spiritual and emotional support compared to those who do not attend. However, dementia has an impact on a person's ability to connect with God in the way they have in the past. Through music, singing, scripture and prayers delivered within a dementia specific church service, residents living with dementia are able to reignite their connection with God and are provided with the same spiritual and emotional support as those who are not cognitively impaired. The styles of church services are guided by what was meaningful to the person living with dementia in the past and enables them to live the flourishing and abundant life that all older people should enjoy.

Who benefits

Family members also attend the church services and have commented on the difference the services have made to their parents' mood and spirit. Some staff and volunteers take part in the service and are supportive and respectful of this time. Additionally, there is a direct impact on most other residents and staff as they live or work within a social environment that is settled, happy and engaged.

Available Now

The PASCOP-*Meaningful Ageing* **Dementia-Specific Christian Worship Service Handbook** is now available at no extra cost to PASCOP members, and available for purchase by non-members. To order your copies, contact admin@pascop.org.au.