

## **The Need is Great**

60-80% of nursing home residents never receive a single visitor.

Many nursing home residents are impoverished and live on less than \$40/month.

Many are lonely and suffer from depression as well as altered mental status. At least 1/3 of residents have suicidal thoughts.

Many residents do not know Jesus or they need the constant reassurance of salvation and hope of the gospel because they live in the valley of the shadow of death.

***And yet...less than 3% of American churches have a recognized nursing home ministry.***

There are 27,000 nursing home residents in Kentucky.

**Be a friend to ONE.**



# Faithful Friends Kentucky

*Do not cast me off in the time of old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails. -Psalm 71:9*

## **Our Mission**

Enriching and elevating the lives of those who live and work in long-term care communities by extending Christian compassion, charity, and friendship.

## **Our Vision**

Churches, small groups, or individuals will partner with every long-term care community in Kentucky to provide Gospel-centered friendship and to promote a culture change within so that every resident and every staff member feels supported, valued, and loved.

We want to help you get started, whether you plan to adopt one long-term care resident, one unit, or one community...we have everything you need.

## **It's a Pro-Life Issue!**

As Christians, we are called to defend life. When we speak of life issues, we often mean abortion issues.

But that's really just being *pro-birth*...let's be truly pro-life, from the cradle to the grave.

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." James 1:27

# Ways to get involved

## Group Activities

Consider taking your family or small group to the nursing home for afternoon activities. Think about what talents or interests you have and how you could share them with the residents. Crafts, music, games, manicures (nail painting only), pets...if you have an idea, check with the facility to make it happen!

## Sunday school/Bible lessons

Many residents cannot leave to go to church. Consider offering 1 hour mini-church meetings with a Bible lesson, hymn singing, and prayer. There are many resources available to assist you, from curriculum designed just for nursing homes to cd's with hymns you can use to sing along.

***\*See our tips for ministry during a pandemic. You can still implement many of the above ideas, you'll just have to get a little creative!***

## Bless the Staff

Don't forget the staff! Caring for the residents is hard work, both physically and mentally. Consider bringing little treats for the nurses and CNA's, offering to pray with them, and looking for ways to minister to them.

## Birthday Blessings

Adopt a resident for his/her birthday! Consider having church members adopt a residents to make them feel special on their birthdays and beyond--foster relationship building all year.

## Misc Ideas

Donate books or magazines, send cards to residents, donate prizes for Bingo games, read with residents, assist with labeling clothes for residents or helping them find their lost clothes in the laundry.



## Tips for Visiting Residents

Going to a nursing home can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. Here are some suggestions:

- Pray for God to lead you.
- Leave purse/wallet/money in your car.
- Always knock before entering a resident's room (this is his/her home!).
- Introduce yourself. Ask their name.
- You can say, "I'm here to visit with you today!"
- Conversation starters: Where are you from? Where did you go to school? Tell me about your family. What kind of work did you do? Do you have a church home?
- Ask if you can pray with them.
- A light touch, hand pat, light hug is ok. Do not attempt to assist residents with moving.
- Do not take residents a snack or drink without checking with staff. Many residents have fluid restrictions or choking issues.

Just  
remember  
all you  
have to do  
is be a  
friend!



## Need more ideas?

Try these:

Weekly Sunday visits:

Sunday school lesson and gospel singing (1 hr.), followed by visiting room to room with residents (1-2hrs)

Sunday school fun packs: Bible theme, scriptures, written prayer, word search/crossword puzzle

Spiritual encouragement packets: Bible coloring pages, large print devotional with scripture, word search, cartoons, jokes, etc.

"Jingle Bags"--church members can adopt a resident and fill a Christmas gift bag with needed items. (examples include lotion, shampoo, pens, notepads, socks, pudding cups, soft candy, etc.--always check with facility)

"Sunshine Bags"--same concept as Jingle Bags but for the summer (residents are often forgotten in the summer)

Christmas caroling; assisting staff with Christmas parties

Pen pals--great way for people who can't visit to get involved in person.

For more information, tips, and resources, visit our website:

**[www.faithfulfriendsky.org](http://www.faithfulfriendsky.org)**

or email [marla@faithfulfriendsky.org](mailto:marla@faithfulfriendsky.org)

270-478-1001

*"You shall rise up before the gray-headed and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the Lord." -Lev. 19:32*

## Ministry Resources:

### **Ministry Educational Resources:**

Training videos and workbooks, Sunday school lessons, ministry support books and personal support:  
[www.godcaresministry.com](http://www.godcaresministry.com)

### **Resources for music:**

[www.sonshinesociety.org](http://www.sonshinesociety.org)  
or [christianconcourse.com](http://christianconcourse.com)

### **Our Daily Bread Devotionals:**

large print, shipped quarterly; free but your church may want to make a one time donation-  
<https://ourdailybread.ca/daily-bread-devotional/>

### **Free, large print New Testament Bibles:**

[www.godcaresministry.com](http://www.godcaresministry.com)

## Community Resources:

An ombudsman is an advocate for residents in long-term care. Your local ombudsman can assist you with questions about residents' rights and help point you in the right direction for other services available for residents in need. To find your ombudsman, visit  
<https://ombuddy.org/find-an-ombudsman/>.



## What about ministering during a pandemic?

*Ministry to residents when you're not allowed inside the facility is challenging, but it's more important than ever.*

Current guidelines allow residents to have visits and activities outdoors. If the weather is bad, these things can take place indoors. Most nursing homes will have designated spaces for visits and activities. During the entire pandemic, facilities have been applying the state and federal guidelines in various ways, so it's always best to consult each facility about their policies.


Facilities may require you to have a negative covid test or proof of vaccination for entry, and you will still be screened at the door. Masks are still required in most places, and some even still encourage distancing. Most facilities will ask that you schedule your visits in advance, and if you're doing any sort of group activity, always work on scheduling that with the activities director. There may be a time limit on visits and/or activities.

### Ways to get started right now:

- Send birthday cards to residents along with a non-perishable snack
- Connect members of your congregation with resident pen pals
- Donate craft supplies, games, cd's, dvd's, books, magazines, Bibles, etc.
- Provide scripture/ devotional pages, activity pages, prayer cards, etc. on a regular basis
- Provide residents with a goodie bag. Items you might include: pudding cups, peppermint patties, non-skid socks, paper, pens, markers, word search books (large print), shampoo, lotion, body wash
- Visit with residents- be a good listener! They are lonelier than ever after a year of isolation.
- Have a small gospel sing-along with residents (probably needs to be outdoors). Bring a guitar playing friend or bring your cd player- either way, residents will be thrilled!
- Have a small, outdoor church service with residents. It doesn't have to be complicated. Sing a few hymns, share some scripture and a few thoughts, and pray together.

### Culture change tip:

Try to eliminate the "f" word from your vocabulary- a nursing home is not a "facility," it's a "care home" or "care community!"



The Lord is close to  
the brokenhearted and  
saves those who are  
crushed in spirit.

-Psalm 34:18