Making Your Faith Based Community 
Dementia Friendly

There are many ways in which you may become dementia friendly.
Here are some suggestions:

**Member Considerations:**
- Be aware of the 10 warning signs of dementia
- Provide participants with a friendly, relaxed greeting
- Make good eye contact, speak clearly and concisely.
- Avoid jargon words when possible
- Be patient and allow plenty of time for questions & answers
- Be tolerant of changes in behavior and communication
- If the member needs help, ask if there is someone you can call who might be able to assist
- Invite a person with dementia to provide feedback or suggestions for ways to make services and approaches more accommodating
- Be mindful of all ability levels when planning events, meetings and classes
- Offer shortened or simplified services
- Familiar prayer, hymns and practices may offer great comfort
- Provide a quiet area for use during services, events and other offerings
- Arrangements for transportation may be helpful for those no longer able to drive
- Consider developing a support group or memory café
- Volunteer visitors or assistance may be offered to those needing more support
- Consider recording services or providing home visits for those who are homebound or unable to attend regularly scheduled services
- Become aware of how spiritual beliefs connect to the individual’s or family’s understanding of dementia

**Environmental Suggestions:**
- Simple signs with clear, essential information
- Use universal symbols when possible (ex: arrows)
- Signage should be displayed at eye level whenever possible
- Glass doors clearly marked
- Font on documents, bulletins and signage is clear and large enough to read easily
- Doors clearly marked with simple signage / symbols
- Restrooms should be handicapped equipped with clear signage, grab bars, non-slip floors, temperature controlled faucets (100 degrees or less)

**Communication Techniques:**
- Speak to the person with dementia, not the care partner, whenever possible
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Pay attention to your body language, tone, volume, pace of speech
- Use shorter sentences
- Avoid using jargon or slang phrases
- Use closed-ended questions / offer simple choices for answers
☐ Make eye contact
☐ Stay calm and listen carefully
☐ Be patient and flexible
☐ Avoid arguing or correcting

Support Options:
☐ Promote awareness of the 10 Warning Signs
☐ Host a dementia family education program or volunteer training program
☐ Make it a priority to reach out to those with dementia and their family care partners
☐ Maintain a supply of dementia related reading materials / resources.
☐ Encourage those with concerns to call the Alzheimer’s Association 24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900 for dementia support, resources and education

Resources:
Alzheimer’s Association MA / NH Chapter: 24/7 Helpline (800) 272-3900
Dementia Friendly America www.dfamerica.org
Boston Alzheimer’s Initiative (617) 635-3992
Dementia Friendly MA www.dfmassachusetts.org
Dementia Resources

Alzheimer’s Association: 24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900
Alzheimer’s Association website: www.alz.org/manh
Alzheimer’s Association caregiver Center: https://www.alz.org/care/
Alzheimer’s Family Care Guide (request online or Helpline 800.272.3900)
Participation in Research: TrialMatch: https://trialmatch.alz.org
Community Resource Finder: http://www.communityresourcefinder.org/
Aging Services Access Points: www.800AGEINFO.com
Geriatric Care Managers: https://www.aginglifecare.org/
Memory Café’s MA: http://www.memorycafedirectory.com/memory-cafes-in-massachusetts/