

Finger on the Pulse

by Dr. Faith Goldberg, Ebenezer Medical Doctor



Small Miracles on the Third Floor

Is there such a thing as a small miracle? I ponder, as I type the heading for this article. Are not all of God's interventions in our lives out of the ordinary? Maybe we sometimes miss His fingerprints in the humdrum of our daily lives? I know that I do.



Heather and Betty -
handiwork instructors

I see God's fingerprints all over the work that goes on in the activity room on the third floor. Ebenezer Home has been blessed with a spacious activity room, well stocked with handicraft material (most of it donated). Heather and her team of faithful volunteers meet with interested residents and offer a variety of activities; such as embroidery, knitting, carpet weaving and basket making. Engaging in creative work helps residents maintain hand motor skills and assists to keep the skeins of memory together.

My husband, Jonathan, runs an art class in the activity room on Wednesday mornings. One Wednesday morning I was examining a resident in our clinic on the first floor. "I can't

wait to go up to the third floor," she said, "On the first floor I feel sick and old, but when I start to paint, I forget that I am old."

Most of the residents started to paint later in life, some in their 80's and 90's! They produce amazing oil paintings, which can be framed and hung in their room or given as gifts.



Naomi with her
album of drawings

Antoinette has written a devotional book and included photos of her paintings in the back of the book. Another of our residents, Juan, who earned his living as an artist and organ player, has produced a series of cards and pictures that can be purchased by visitors (also available through the Ebenezer Home website), the income is then channeled back into supplies for the activity room. Without going into the details of residents' medical conditions, as a physician I am impressed by the way some have overcome significant physical limitations and enjoy exercising their creative gifts.

The atmosphere on entering the activity room is something that visitors often comment on; worship music plays in the background, the cheerful smile of Heather and the volunteers, a coffee trolley in the corner, the walls covered with hangings of embroidered verses.

"Creativity is so important to our mood and how we feel about ourselves." Says Heather. "Our feeling of accomplishment when we hold up something we have made and the compliments we receive from others, all add to the experience."



Jonathan (Art instructor) and Anja

Bread and Fish - Devotional

by **Johnny Khoury**, Ebenezer Managing Director



Recently, during one of our devotional times in the morning, I shared with our residents that over the years I have learnt to appreciate antiques. There is something about our maturing over the years that makes us appreciate the 'old stuff' - and no, it's not just about nostalgic feelings.

The true value of antiquity comes from the time invested in it by the artist or craftsman, which is reflected in the design, the details and the uniqueness of the piece (in contrast to mass production).

One of the challenges people face in old age is that of low self-esteem. I have often heard people say they feel like 'antiques' and few are the people who really know their true value.

Each 'antique' has a unique story to tell of the relationship between the craftsman and his masterpiece. Only after you listen to peoples' stories and become aware of the details of their lives do you realize that this wonderful masterpiece of God, which began by being woven in the womb (Psalm 139: 13-16), is now, in its old age, giving glory to the Craftsman and Creator - God.

Paul also realized that when an older person watches his body grow old it can bring him to despair. But Paul also knew that we, God's masterpiece, are connected to our Craftsman/Creator and through this connection we are given new meaning and significance day by day: "Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day". (2 Cor. 4:16)

We thank God for the hope we have of an eternal building (body) in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1). However, we mustn't forget that each one of us is no less than a masterpiece made by God, even if we find it hard to accept this truth.

In the meantime, Paul also reminds us that even though a wonderful future is in store for us, we have this present life in which we live as God's creation and we have a role to fulfil as long as breath is still within us - "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." (Ephes. 2:10)

What's New?

by **Christie Livingstone**, Ebenezer Home Secretary



I love going up to our activity room; the peaceful atmosphere, seeing how the residents do their activities, there is always something new - I like everything! The activity room is so important to the Home and has been highlighted in several of our website posts. There is always more to tell, but better still, come and see!

Some residents are "permanent members" of the room. There is Tsua, embroidering beautiful Bible verses with flowers, birds and other cute things on banners, napkins and towels; Svetlana, cross-stitching landscapes; Rachel working on rug weaving, Antoinette crocheting and Maggie making wicker baskets. Many other residents join as well.

The greatest turnout is on Wednesdays when it's painting time. Friends of the Home and off-duty volunteers also participate. There is a lot of cheerful interaction as everyone sees colors and lines becoming shapes and objects that they have in mind. Residents' characters are amply expressed through their color choices - vibrant, bright, cool, pastel - and also in the subjects of their creativity. Naomi, who loves to paint Biblical scenes, made an album with prints of her paintings and shows it to all her visitors. Her children love her artwork and take the originals back with them when they come to visit. Standing at his small table, there is Juan, making bold strokes across large sheets of paper, soon they turn into Biblical characters or words, many circled with angels holding trumpets. As someone commented on our website post about Juan, "I was blessed to take time and look through every totally AMAZING picture you've drawn. So much to take in - things "within" things... There is so much spirit in the faces of the people you draw..."

A picture is worth a thousand words. Please take time to visit the picture gallery on our website and Juan Onassis's page, see some of the beautiful artwork of our residents.