



**“Are You Starting to Notice Changes”
Meeting - Sunday March 3, 2018 at 11:45am in Scheidt Room**

Welcome/Intro and Ministry Background.....Pastor Walworth

“Are You Starting to Notice Changes”Diane Johns

My name is Diane Johns and on March 3, 2019, as part of the Faithful Friends Enrichment Series, I was asked to give a general presentation on signals and symptoms that may prompt concern with an elderly parent or friend, and provide some information on available services. Here is a brief recap of the presentation. If you would like to hear the entire presentation, which includes more than I could include here, there is a link on Redeemer's website.

With a degree in Gerontology, numerous jobs and volunteer positions working with older adults in their home and at facilities, and more recently caring for my wonderful parents, I have had a lot of opportunities to learn about the aging process and the overwhelming position of a caregiver. While you are never ready, having an idea of what's available in advance can be very beneficial. When in the situation of a crisis, it is very hard to focus. It is also important to make sure the legal papers are in order: a trust including power of attorney and medical power of attorney. Also in advance, know if a long term policy exists and have an understanding of who to call when you need it.

Early signs of changes may be noticed by how a person cares for themselves and their home. Also if you see mail piling up or unpaid bills, this too can be an signal that some additional help may be needed. You may notice that driving is becoming a concern too. One other sign may be memory issues. Be careful not to jump to conclusions.....consult with family members and doctors, sometimes adjustments to medications can be helpful.

There are a variety of services and agencies who offer help in the home, as well as many housing facilities for every level of care. Personal Emergency Response Systems (buttons that can be worn around the neck or as a bracelet, can be pushed for help if a fall occurs)

meals-on-wheels, transportation services, and home care services are all available to help a person stay in their home as long as possible. Home care services can include skilled (RN, Physical/Occupational Therapy) and non-skilled (housekeeping, meal preparation, medication assistance, personal care). Prices vary for all of these services - most will be private pay unless skilled care is being provided, then some non skilled services are covered during that time. I have often been asked to recommend home care agencies....this is hard because it comes down to the individual workers....one agency could have good and bad workers. Ask a lot of questions (how long have you been in business?, are you licensed/bonded? what kind of training is provided?, does the same aide come everytime and if not are we notified?, what do I do if we are not compatible with the aide? etc.)- any question that makes you feel comfortable!

New senior housing facilities seem to be being built all over the place now and they seem to look more and more beautiful which *sometimes* (but not always) means more expensive. Independent, Assisted Living, Memory Care Facilities, Continuum of Care Facilities and Nursing Homes are located all over the area. Some have waiting lists so if you like a place, even if you are not ready just yet, put your name on the waiting list if possible. Try and visit during mealtimes (so you can see the food) or when activities are going on so that you can see if you or your loved one are at the same level of care as the residents.

This is just a very general overview of services. Below are some links that can be very helpful to you.

- The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (800-852-7795) has an Information and Assistance Program - they can provide you with resources and costs. www.aaa1b.com
- Alternatives for Seniors (888-932-7747) is also a great resource for facilities in the area. The church has some of their magazine or a nationwide website www.alternativesforseniors.com

If you take one thing from this article.....remember this - **Caregivers are very Important!** You must take care of yourself or you can't take care of your loved one!!! Take breaks, accept help. Mostly, remember you are not alone! Our heavenly Father is right by your side at all times. Please contact Pastor Walworth if you have any questions regarding the Faithful Friends Ministry or future topics that you would like covered for this ongoing series.