



Whole Health

Newsletter of the
Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Inc

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Energy for ministry

Well here we are again! Another year is almost ended and we move into Advent where we anticipate the birth and return of our Lord, Saviour and Healer — Jesus Christ. I love Christmas and all it represents — a new beginning, freedom to have an ‘abundant life’ in the here and now, and life eternal. Isn’t that the good news of the health and care ministry in which we are invited to play our part? We literally are the bringers of God’s good news story in word and deed!

In Ephesians 2:10 we read that we were ‘*created in Christ Jesus to do good works ...*’ God has a purposeful plan for each one of us and for AFCNA. He had it prepared in advance for us, and he wants to see us working at this work! He wants us to be purpose driven, fulfilling his purpose for our lives. If he calls us to pastoral health and care ministry then that is where he wants us to focus our energy. God equips us and motivates us.

Philippians 2:13 says ‘*It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose*’. God creates desires within us to guide us to accomplish his purposes. We need to listen to him and let him be the rudder that steers our ship through the seas of life. This is also true for the future of AFCNA.

When we are called to serve in God’s plan we can expect to do more than we would feel capable of doing in our own strength. God does not call us to minister in our own knowledge and ability. Instead, he calls us to do what **he** can do! It is in him alone that we are ‘... *able to do immeasurably more than all we*

ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us’ (Ephesians 3:20). If we listen to, and act upon his prompting, great things are possible and even probable!

When juggling family life, work, ministry and the other demands of our lives, we should draw on his power that dwells within us via the Holy Spirit. How much divine energy do you need to accomplish your ministry goals in 2013? How much divine energy does AFCNA need to accomplish its ministry goals in 2013?

‘It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose’

Well we can ‘...*labour and struggle with all his energy which powerfully works within us*’ (Colossians 1:29).

It is available to us all if we ask, believe and act in his will.

This is my prayer for you in your pastoral health and care ministry as faith community nurses or health ministry workers, my prayer as the incoming chairperson of AFCNA for 2013 — that God will guide our ministry path, empower our ministry with the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and fill our hearts with the love of Christ so we can bring people to Jesus for healing and demonstrate Jesus’ love in all we say and do.

Please join me in prayer for AFCNA and the whole pastoral health and care ministry in Australia and internationally!

Pray that we may discern God’s plan and fulfil his purpose to his honour and glory and the healing of his people.

— Anne van Loon RN PhD
Chairperson, AFCNA



Advent expectancy

The four weeks leading up to Christmas are a time of expectancy. As children, we could barely contain ourselves as we waited for Christmas morning — **early** — when we could gather round the Christmas tree in our lounge to open our presents and find out what Santa had brought us!



In the church, too, these four weeks — known as Advent — are a time of expectancy, as we think of Christ's coming. We prepare to celebrate his coming as the human child in Bethlehem. We rejoice in his continual coming to us through his word and sacrament. And we await his final coming at the end of time, to claim his own for eternity.

Many churches and Christian homes highlight the expectancy of Advent by using an Advent wreath — a simple wreath of greens with four candles around the outside, and one larger one (the 'Christ candle') in the centre. On the first Sunday one candle is lit; two are lit on the second Sunday, three on the third, four on the fourth, and all five on Christmas Eve.

Waiting for something we are looking forward to can be a real test of patience. God's Old Testament people certainly found this to be the case as they waited for him to fulfil his promise to send a Messiah Saviour. But God's timing is always right. World conditions were absolutely right when Jesus was born that night in Bethlehem. There was peace in the Middle East, trade routes north, south, east and west facilitated the spread of the Good News, and many other factors could be identified to illustrate what St Paul described as *'the right time'* (Galatians 4:4).

Expectantly awaiting the development of Parish or Faith Community Nursing in Australia is also proving to be a test of patience ... and of trust. Many of us had hoped this ministry would expand more rapidly than it has. But God has his own timetable. Our role in this time of expectant waiting is to be faithful — faithful to the vision of what this ministry can mean, and faithful also in our efforts to tell others about what it can mean. And this will best happen as we work within those church bodies that we are part of.

Meanwhile, Advent and Christmas blessings!

Robert J Wiebusch

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Closing date for next issue: 10 March

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In no event will AFCNA be liable to anyone for any decision made, action taken by anyone in reliance on information in this newsletter.

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Christchurch conference

In September Susanna Warner, Leonie Rastas and I attended the New Zealand Faith Community Nurses Association (NZFCNA) conference in Christchurch as representatives of AFCNA. It was a special time, particularly as I knew many of the nurses present, having moved from New Zealand a couple of years ago.

The conference began on a Friday afternoon with a guided retreat, led by experienced retreat leaders. This was a great way to wind down from the pressures of day-to-day life and to seek God as we gathered together. The best part of it for me was the hour we were given to wander round a nearby park and admire the details around us. We were encouraged to draw or write, if they were ways we were able to express things. I found it most helpful to take close-up photos of some of the beauties of creation, to be able to admire the details.

The conference was attended by about 30 delegates from all parts of NZ and included three from Australia. The theme was *Called together to bind the broken hearted: sustaining resilience when hope is wavering*.

This was especially appropriate as we were in Christchurch. The conference for 2011 was to have been held there, but had been cancelled because of the earthquakes.

Presentations were given by members of the NZFCNA board: Elaine Tyrrell (*Reflective practice — learning from our patients and their families*), and Elizabeth Niven (*Hope — in health and illness, in faith, in our lives*).

A key point that Elaine made was the importance of having the ‘best-fit’ nurse for the patient. Some patients respond better to extrovert nurses, while others to quieter nurses. Elaine gave examples from her work on a rehabilitation ward. She found that patients remembered how nurses ‘were’ rather than what they ‘did’.

Elizabeth talked of how patients who may have very little hope will face facts at a pace that preserves their ‘protective cocoon’; they cannot necessarily be expected to remember everything told to them in one go. Elizabeth also reminded us that, in Christian understanding, hope is learning to look forward to the fulfilment of God’s creation, confident in the memory of what God has already achieved in Jesus Christ.

Other speakers from Canterbury included representatives from the police chaplaincy, Rev Paul Eden of the Ellesmere Co-operating Parish, Steve Graham (Principal of Laidlaw College), and representatives from *Habitat for Humanity*. The after-dinner speech was given by Dr Christina Stinson of *Mercy Ships*.

The police chaplains spoke of the five top needs for resilience in the disillusionment stage that Christchurch has now reached as the city is being rebuilt. These five needs are: physical health, healthy family relationships, a social life, emotional health and spiritual health. Paul Eden also covered some of these topics as he spoke about the resilience needed at this stage of Christchurch’s rebuilding.



Earthquake damaged church

Steve Graham talked of how, in the midst of disaster, people must be allowed to grieve and to take care of themselves. They need to listen to the promptings of their heart to see how they can help others to begin to restore order, celebrating each small step rather than waiting until it is all done. They need to work



together knowing that others will be working alongside, finding the living, giving hope of God, and then letting hope begin to arise.

Paul and Helen Taylor from *Habitat for Humanity* in Christchurch told us of the work their organisation has been doing in helping those whose houses were uninsured for valid reasons. Paul related how as a builder he has 'saved a life', as one of the clients coming to him was almost suicidal with worry and had lost all hope because of the state of his home

and his finances. The *Habitat for Humanity* team was able restore some hope to this man.

All in all, it was a great conference. It was very worthwhile coming to Christchurch to see for ourselves a little of what is happening and to see that even when such a disaster falls on you God gives the resilience to cope. Thanks to the Christchurch nurses for all their sterling work!

Thank you AFCNA for the funds to help with attending this conference!

— Helen Vaughan

Adelaide Hills mental health project

Millie Davey is an experienced Registered Mental Health Nurse who works in the Adelaide Hills area. It was found that many people who are hospitalised for mental health issues go home from hospital and return to isolated lives with little social connection. As a result they relapse and require further hospitalisation. Millie has established an Adelaide Hills project to address this.

This project is endorsed by SA Health. It is a pilot project that uses volunteers from churches to befriend a person with severe and persisting mental illness. The project has had great outcomes for clients who have had fewer, and often no, admissions since being involved in it. The friends contact the clients and they have social gatherings and do things they both enjoy, together and within a group. Since Millie started this project, the number of mental health relapses that clients have experienced has decreased to zero in some cases!

Millie is paid by SA Health for one day to coordinate the project. She volunteers one or two additional days per week to assist the volunteers and clients and coordinate the program. She sources her volunteers from three churches in the Adelaide Hills area — Aldgate Baptist, Sunset Rock Uniting Church in Stirling, and Christian Outreach Centre in Mt Barker.

Millie uses the FCN model, and educates the volunteers (based on concepts she learned

in AFCNA and through the Graduate Diploma course at Australian Lutheran College). She matches volunteers with clients, using their gifts and passions.

This ministry is being well received in the Hills communities and within the health sector. In late November Millie was invited to speak to all the directorates of mental health in Country Health about the project. Two new churches (the Uniting Church and the Catholic Church in Strathalbyn) have been prepared for this ministry by completing the Health and Care Ministry course offered by *Baptist Care* in November 2012.

Millie showed AFCNA board members a four-minute DVD of her pilot project in action, showing it to be a very enriching ministry.

To find out more about this project contact Millie at: milliedavey@bigpond.com



AFCNA leadership changes

At this year's AFCNA annual meeting, Anne van Loon (Baptist) was elected to succeed Heather Banham as chairperson. Other committee members are: Liz Elder (Anglican), secretary; Judy King (Anglican), treasurer; Helen Vaughan (Baptist); Millie Davey (Baptist); Jo van Brussel (Lutheran); Susanna Warner (Baptist).

Guest speaker at the meeting was music therapist, Matthew Huckel.



Baptist Care (SA) offers health and care courses

Anne van Loon has taken on the role of Executive Manager for Health, Wellbeing & Ageing at Baptist Care in South Australia. She has begun a new initiative called 'b care' within the SA Baptist churches, but this initiative is open to any other Christian person or church interested in health and care ministry. The aim is to get people to communicate together, and share resources and information about health and care ministry.

'b care' offered its first course at Baptist Care House in Wayville in suburban Adelaide in November. It was attended by 30 people from Baptist, Uniting, Independent Christian and Roman Catholic churches. Participants included seven pastors or chaplains, eight nurses and a blend of other people interested in health and pastoral care.

Anne has decided to move away from only teaching nurses to broaden the scope of the ministry and equip people in teams to work



Course participants

together in health and care ministry. She encouraged churches to send a few people. Several sent two-four people, which means their ministry group has a number of people who are equipped to support each other from the outset.

Inquiries may be directed to: Dr Anne van Loon at Baptist Care: ☎61 8 8273 7104 avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au



As the milestones along life's highway are passed, and the years add up, some people convince themselves that their life is now in decline. Some are old long before they reach an age limit. Others have the secrets of youth even in advancing years. It is the quality of life, not the numbers, that counts.

One of the secrets in handling increasing age is to live each day to the full. If you want to go somewhere ... Go! If you want to do something ... Do it now! If God is calling you to FCN ser-vice, do it now!

Fear of the unknown, and doubts about one's ability to adapt to changes in lifestyle ... anxiety about unfamiliar surroundings, and the heartache of having to relinquish personal possessions and an accustomed routine, are very real.

Too old?

However, wherever you are, God is! And ... the strangeness of having to move into a home for the elderly is soon replaced by companionship with fellow contemporaries, and the comforts of being cared for.

Even if you become frail and can no longer appreciate the wonders and beauty around you, and have wrapped yourself in self-pity and coloured your life a drab grey, life can still be a wonderful experience when lived with God.

As you advance in years remember the 'eternalness' of God! As God has been with you at every stage of your life, so he is with you now, and will be for all eternity.

(At a Parish Nurse conference in the United States in 2001, the oldest serving Parish Nurse present was 86!)



PNG nurses study Parish Nursing

Six nurses from Goroka in Papua New Guinea came to Adelaide in July to attend an *Introduction to Pastoral Care Nursing* course. They were members of Lutheran Nurses Outreach Ministry (LNOM) — a joint venture between the Goroka hospital and the nearby St John Lutheran church. They were joined for the course by two Australians, each of whom had a PNG connection. LNOM was formed after some nurses from Goroka visited Adelaide, and heard about Parish Nursing.



Participants in Golden Grove course.

The course was organised by the Lutheran church's Parish Nursing Coordinator, Lynette Wiebusch. One of the presenters was Margaret Voigt, who served as a nurse educator in PNG for many years. A former missionary to PNG, the Rev Len Tucharke, also contributed to the program.

While in SA, the PNG nurses also visited two hospitals, a Lutheran aged-care facility, and the Barossa Valley. Plans are being formulated for an introductory course to be held in Goroka in August next year.

This was the third course organised by Lynette this year. In March 11 South Australians participated in a course at Pasadena.



Discussions continued over lunch at Pasadena

One of these has been appointed to the Parish Nursing team in Nuriootpa as an Enrolled Pastoral Care Nurse.

In June 11 Queenslanders completed a course presented at the Zion Lutheran Home in Nundah in suburban Brisbane. Among them were nurses who had trained in Finland, Holland, India and Papua New Guinea. One had completed a Diaconal Nursing degree in Finland before migrating to Australia.

While in Adelaide, the six PNG nurses were among the 60 people who attended the 2012 Lutheran Pastoral Care/Parish Nursing seminar, held at St Paul Lutheran church in Blair Athol on 28 July.

Theme for the seminar was *Family matters*, and the program began with a study of *Biblical snapshots of family*, led by Dr Margaret Hunt. Other presenters included Dr David and Mrs Roslyn Phillips of *Family Voice*, Pastoral Care Nurse Angela Uhrhane of Wodonga, college chaplain and counsellor, the Rev Peter Bean, and congregational family support workers Lyn Benger and Julie Hahn.



Seminar participants get involved, blowing bubbles!

A Pastoral Care/Parish Nursing seminar is being planned for western Victoria on Saturday 13 April. It will be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran church in Hamilton.

Theme for the seminar is *Called to care*. Brochures are available and registrations close on Friday 29 March.

For further information contact Lynette Wiebusch (lynette.wiebusch@lca.org.au)



At home and abroad

In late October, Heather Marchant, Helen Vaughan and Theresa Jokisch met in Helen's home in Canberra to share information and pray for each other. Theresa is Faith Community Care Nurse at the Holy Covenant day care centre in Canberra.



Lutheran Parish Nurses from Australia, Palestine, Finland and the United States took part in a study tour to northern Finland in September. Such study tours are organised annually by Lutheran Parish Nurses International. This year's tour included a two-day conference at the Diakonia University of Applied Science (DIAK) in Oulu, followed by a field trip into Lapland and across the border into Norway. The group met with Diaconal Social Workers and Nurses in Rovaniemi, and heard from an indigenous Saami health worker. They learnt that the Rovaniemi parish, which comprises six congregations, has 30 diaconal staff, including both nurses and social workers. DIAK has several campuses throughout Finland, and is the institution that trains Diaconal Nurses and Social Workers for the Lutheran church in Finland.



Countries where Parish Nursing has been established include: Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, England, Ghana, India, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Swaziland, Ukraine, the United States, Wales, Zambia, Zimbabwe.



Each Wednesday morning in the heart of one of the most deprived neighbourhoods of Birmingham, England, two nurses host a drop-in centre, listening to members of the community, taking their blood pressures and pointing them to health and social service providers. What is significant about this is the fact that many of the clients are from non-Christian faith communities.

A lunch follows the drop-in session, to which everyone who comes through the door is invited. Church members are also able to access the facility, not just through the drop-in but through follow-up visits. The program includes a worship service in which the faith underpinning the Parish Nursing work is publicly apparent.

AFCNA MEMBERSHIP 2012-13

Name: Address:

..... Postcode:

Phone: (.....)..... Email:

Employer: Denomination:

1. I give permission to have my name entered on the AFCNA data base Yes No

2. I hold current nursing registration. Yes No

3. I am practising as a Parish/Faith Community Nurse. Yes No

Type of membership: Full (\$30.00/year) Concession (\$20.00/year)

I enclose: AFCNA Membership: \$..... Donation, AFCNA General Fund: \$.....

Donation, AFCNA Gift Fund: \$..... Total \$.....

Make cheques payable to: Australian Faith Community Nurses Association

Mail to: Australian Faith Community Nurses Association, PO Box 2707, Kent Town, SA 5071



Courses at Australian Lutheran College

Diploma of Theology (Counselling)

New this year are two Vocational Education and Training courses:
Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology

Diploma of Management

Courses are available by flexible education or on campus. For further information:

The Administrator

School of Theological Studies, ALC
104 Jeffcott Street, North Adelaide SA 5006

☎08 8267 7400 Email: alc@alc.edu.au

Website: www.alc.edu.au

Prayer Corner



O Lord, *give to my eyes light to see those in need.
Give to my heart compassion and understanding.
Give to my mind knowledge and wisdom.
Give to my hands skill and tenderness.
Give to my ears the ability to listen.
Give to me, Lord, strength for this selfless service
and enable me to bring joy to the lives of those I
serve.*

Author Unknown

Please pray for ...

- * AFCNA's office bearers for the current financial year.
- * The development of Parish Nursing in Papua New Guinea.

2013 WESTBERG SYMPOSIUM

The 2013 Westberg Symposium will be held on 4–7 April at the Marriott Memphis in downtown Memphis, Tennessee, USA.

It will be part of *Healthy Communities, Communities of Faith* — a larger Church Health Conference celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Church Health Centre.

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I Say ...

'We have lost the plot in caring for those most disadvantaged among us.'

— **The Rev Gregor Henderson**
Uniting Church in Australia

In a word

'The Lord is close to the broken-hearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit.'

Psalms 34:18



2013 Australian Christian Diary

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Membership renewal

The AFCNA financial year is from 1 July to 30 June. Full membership is \$30.00. It gives full access to the AFCNA website, voting rights and discounts for AFCNA events.

Associate membership (\$20.00) is for retired nurses and health professionals, students and other interested persons.

If you have not renewed your membership for the current year, please send your renewal to the treasurer, Judy King, as soon as possible.