



# *Whole Health*

*Newsletter of the  
Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Inc*

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## *A new dawn*

AFCNA has been slowly forging inroads and while not growing at a phenomenal rate has grown and with faith will continue to grow. The pioneers of our association have tilled the soil diligently and while they may not have seen the harvest they first expected they have seen many mature in their walk and ministry.

We all know that God is faithful and in him all things are possible. But how many of us sit and wait for just the 'right moment', not quite willing to move and begin until we have all the parts of the puzzle in place. While it is important to plan and pray before we commence any ministry or service, we also need to step out in faith. In March this year a small group of us met for a weekend retreat.

Our first day was a time of refreshing and revisioning, and we were encouraged to reconnect with the landscapes of life as God intended. Karen Gibb, our facilitator, encouraged each of us to find the landscape that best depicted our life at that moment. For me it was the sunrise over a quiet, calm and perfect beach.

This beautiful, serene setting developed into a new day and a future of promise. Meditating on the scene before me I had the picture of Jesus approaching by boat on blue and pristine water. He disembarked and walked toward me, his face full of compassion and acceptance and his eyes held my attention. In his eyes were love, and his enduring promise of a future beyond anything I could imagine.

His promise to me and I believe for AFCNA was of new beginnings. Now was the time to start afresh — a new dawn, bringing a new day and an awakening for AFCNA health ministry because as surely as the sun rises, so too will

God's promise be revealed. God's promise is simple; true refreshing comes as his Spirit breathes life into his ministry.

Charles Ringma suggests that dreams don't always come to us in a complete form but as starting points which grow as we think and develop them. They are like that often heard saying: 'From little things big things grow'. While not all of our dreams may be realised, we have the opportunity to see ourselves as creators, and the ministry before us full of potential and possibilities, if we are prepared to take hold of our dreams and grow them carefully.

Dreams need to be nurtured with prayer to mature and become purposeful. In this we can see and experience God, and all his power. If we sit back and wait for that perfect moment we risk missing the boat. Now is the time to make a commitment, to put in the time and energy needed in order to see our dreams reach fruition.

In the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus explains that 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, when it grows, it is the largest of all garden plants and becomes a tree, and the birds of the air come and perch in its branches' (Matt 13:31-32). If we have courage and faith to step out and build our dreams, anything can happen. Sadly, many of us dismiss our dreams as impossible. Now is the time of new and good seed; exciting days are dawning and it is time for us as ministers of health and faith to grasp the possibilities God has placed before us.

**Heather Banham**  
**AFCNA Chairperson**



## 'Wheelies' in church

There are more than 22 000 people in Australia who suffer from Multiple Sclerosis — twice as many females as males. The symptoms generally appear first in people aged 20–40. There is no known cure.

MS affects the functions of the body that are controlled by nerves, including sight, speech, mobility, balance, memory and cognition. Each person is affected differently, which makes it difficult to predict what course the disease might take. Symptoms may range from minor inconvenience to chronic disability.

Margaret\* is one MS sufferer who is now confined to a wheelchair. Some time ago she wrote some 'handy hints' for caring for people in wheelchairs. Following is a paraphrased version of what she wrote. It applies to all people whose mobility is restricted.

*It's not only polite, but necessary for wheelies to have a wide car park so they can transfer from car seat to wheelchair with the car door fully open.*

*Churches should ensure that their buildings are accessible to 'wheelies' by adding ramps and rails.*

*Wheelchair-bound people should be able to feel part of the congregation ... and not an 'inconvenience'.*

*It's not 'nice' for wheelies to be left alone up the back, down the front, or in the aisle. It's better to have some shortened pews in the body of the church so wheelies can sit with family or friends.*

*People with restricted mobility have difficulty moving among groups. They find it easier when people come to them to have a chat, especially when they sit or squat so the 'wheelie' can look them in the eye without having to tilt their head back.*

*Don't assume that people who have lost their mobility have also lost their intellect or their ability to converse.*

For years I was pastor of a church set high above street level, with steep, narrow steps leading up to it. It was impossible to get a coffin into or out of the church for a funeral. Certainly no 'wheelie' could get in!

Years after I left, the ground under this weatherboard church was excavated, and the church lowered to street level! Not all old buildings would allow this, but it's important to be sensitive to the needs of people whose mobility is restricted to a wheelchair.

— Robert J Wiebusch

## Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Inc

PO Box 2707  
Kent Town, SA 5071  
[www.afcna.org.au](http://www.afcna.org.au)

**Webmaster**  
Tim Owen  
[webmaster@afcna.org.au](mailto:webmaster@afcna.org.au)

**WholeHealth Editor**  
Rev Robert Wiebusch  
56 Donaldson Dr, Paradise, SA 5075  
Tel: 08 8336 3936  
[robert.wiebusch@lca.org.au](mailto:robert.wiebusch@lca.org.au)

*Closing date for next issue: 16 October*



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## Disclaimer

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



# Reflections on ...

## *Invitations in the landscape of life and other things*

As I sit here enclosed in my bright red 'cosi' to keep out the wintry Canberra chill, I'm reflecting on the AFCNA retreat held on 5 and 6 March at the Nunyara Conference Centre, Belair, in the lower Adelaide Hills. The centre has spectacular views of Adelaide and the sea beyond. It's a place to experience rest, renewal and recreation.

I arrived in the dark, so it was not so apparent but the lights of Adelaide were spectacular in themselves. After finding my room, I settled in for a good night's sleep in preparation for what the next two days held.

Saturday morning while helping myself to the breakfast provisions, I looked out over the spectacular Adelaide and sea views. When I headed downstairs to the retreat room just about everyone had arrived. It was great to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. There were 15 present on the Saturday, and eight on Sunday.

Heather Banham welcomed us and introduced Karen Gibbs, our spiritual guide for the day. *Invitations in the landscape of life* was the theme of the day, and the first session centred on Ps 46:10, ***'Be still and know that I am God'***. Times of worship and prayer were woven throughout the day's program.

Once the scene was set we formed small groups and came up with a heap of words that described the landscapes in our world. Our words were placed on a board and we each then chose a word that we felt akin to. This word was the basis for reflection and a day of personal journey. Karen gently led us on that journey. We spent quiet time among the trees, in the warm sun with our thoughts, feelings, notebooks and most importantly with God — seeking inspiration from his word as his Spirit spoke to us.

For me it was a timely exercise as I had been going through a difficult time. My word was 'desert'. Initially I connected with this because I felt that was where I was. When I

initially explored the word I thought of somewhere dry and stark, a sense of sameness, a lack of definition and despair. However as I pondered, God showed me that in the desert there was also an oasis — a place of refreshment, shade and life in the form of trees, hidden life (often only seen in times of rain), and that the landscape does change, even if only when the wind moves the sand.

We were then asked to picture where **we** were in the landscape, and then where Jesus was in relation to us. I found this exercise useful as I was feeling very alone in my 'desert', only to find Jesus right beside me — in fact shading me.

The use of scripture was profound and we were asked to seek the invitations that stood out personally, in ministry and as an organisation. We also looked at how love was embedded in our story and what in the passages we explored brought us rest in God. Karen encouraged us to see if there was something that needed to be let go, taken up, laid down or embraced. Finally, what connection did these scriptures make to our landscape? I discovered that the 'desert' wasn't a bad place to be; the oasis is found in the desert; God led his people out of the desert into Canaan, the land of promise and finally that we can have hope in the desert.

As Karen suggested in our wrap up, I didn't leave having all my questions answered; in fact the exercise had opened up a whole lot of new questions! I am pleased to report that my desert experience was resolved when attending another spiritual retreat in the form of *Colour* — the *Hillsong Women's Conference* which I attended several weeks later.

I must admit to having a feeling of both anticipation and trepidation as I prepared to attend the retreat. Having never been on a retreat before, I wasn't sure if it was something I wanted to do! I needn't have worried: the experience left me wanting more!





We shared a lovely dinner together on Saturday evening in celebration of the tireless work Anne van Loon has given since the inception of AFCNA and to bestow AFCNA life membership on her.

On Sunday I awoke to another wonderful day with much anticipation and less trepidation than the previous morning. Only about half the group from Saturday attended but what we missed in numbers we made up for in enthusiasm.

Heather Banham led us in worship and then she led us to workshop the wording of a vision for AFCNA. Heather had prepared several documents to help us work through where we have been and want to go.

Not only did we come up with a vision statement but some new ideas to better help FCNs and encourage others to take up the vocation including the idea of having regional get-togethers. We concluded the day fittingly with communion and worship.

It was sad saying goodbye to friends, but I went home with renewed enthusiasm ready to meet with my local FCNs later in the week.



View of Adelaide from *Nunyara*

Interestingly, *Nunyara* means a place of healing and in 1902 Nunyara was built by a Christian doctor as a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients. It later became an RAAF convalescent hospital and then a conference centre. Throughout its history healing has always been part of its culture — physical, spiritual and emotional. My experience certainly embraced that culture ... and I'll be signing up happily for the next retreat!

— Heather Marchant, Canberra



Anne van Loon (right) receives AFCNA life membership.



## AFCNA Mission and Vision Statement

Day two of the retreat saw a small group of members examining where AFCNA as an organisation 'fitted'.

For AFCNA to continue, encourage growth, and attract not only health professionals but also faith communities, and increase denominational interest and community support, we needed to consolidate who we are and what we believed.

As we brainstormed ideas and talked through possibilities, new mission and vision statements emerged.

As a board and an association we are excited about the future, confident in the knowledge that AFCNA will continue to glorify God through health ministry.

We hope that you too will feel confident when introducing health ministry, by referring to the AFCNA mission and vision statements.

— Heather Banham



## AFCNA Mission Statement

*The Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Inc develops and supports Nurses in Christian health ministry to promote the health and wellbeing of Australian communities to the glory of God.*

*We will be the leading organisation that inspires, progresses and promotes Christian health ministry in Australia, by*

- *providing nurses who work in faith communities with education, resources, professional standards, and networking opportunities;*
- *providing the faith community with resources, education and consultancy to enable them to*

*commence, nurture and sustain viable health promotion ministries;*

- *providing the community with a quality service that meets the physical, mental and spiritual needs of individuals and families, facilitating the growth toward wholeness within the context of a supportive faith community;*
- *providing promotion and publicity of the faith community nurse role;*
- *liaising with government, organisations and comparable professional bodies locally, nationally and internationally on behalf of faith community nurses and their employing bodies.*



## AFCNA Prayer Network

A significant development of the March retreat was the conceptualising of a Prayer Network for AFCNA. While many AFCNA members pray regularly for the ministry and those involved, it was decided it is important to have a united group, who could join together and support AFCNA in prayer.

This network will cover the ministry and work of AFCNA and pave the way forward for all our future developments.

Theo Tersic, Pat Watts and Jo van Brussel have agreed to begin the prayer network. If you would like to join them or have any prayer requests please let us know either by post or email and we will forward your information to the group.

AFCNA: [afcna@afcna.org.au](mailto:afcna@afcna.org.au) or post to **AFCNA** PO Box 2707, Kent Town, S.A. 5071.



## ‘In Between’ Newsletter

Heather Marchant, AFCNA’s national mentor, has developed an ‘in between’ electronic newsletter’ to keep members in touch with all that is happening in the health ministry world and AFCNA.

This newsletter gives brief updates and snippets of health news to keep you informed, encouraged and in touch as valued member of AFCNA.

If you didn’t receive a copy during June then Heather Marchant needs to know your current email address. Please contact her direct at [allofus@tpg.com.au](mailto:allofus@tpg.com.au) to rectify the problem.

Heather is also keen to hear from anyone who has a creative suggestion for naming this electronic newsletter!





## UnitingCare Wesley speaker for AGM

A minister at UnitingCare Wesley in Adelaide, the Rev Peter MacDonald, will be the keynote speaker at the AFCNA workshop at the Enfield Baptist church on 13 August. The work-shop will be followed by AFCNA's annual meeting.



This workshop is open to anyone with an interest in Health Ministry and caring for people in the community.

Rev Peter MacDonald will take us on a journey of discovery to his faith community and the opportunities that exist for each one of us if we are prepared to reach out to those we meet. Peter is a gifted and humble man, who is passionate about making the community a safe place for everyone. He believes all people should be treated with respect and compassion; regardless of age, belief, gender or culture. Peter writes:

For some people our society does this well. For others our communities are lonely places. When people are isolated they suffer from a loss of hope and purpose ... When individuals suffer, our whole nation suffers.

It is in our relationship with others that we encounter community values. Our relationship with friends, neighbours, school teachers and work mates shape our values. These values are critical.

Will they be values of hope or hopelessness? Will our families promote trust or suspicion? Will our community be places of safety or violence? No child deserves to grow up in an environment without trust. No adult deserves to live in an environment affected by violence.

Our community should be a place which is safe for children to grow up and discover what they can do and who they might become. Our community should be a place where the young discover that they are important not because of what they do, but because of who they are. UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide is an expression of the Christian belief that all people are of

innate worth because of the divine presence which resides inside of them. I am privileged to be part of an organisation which works at making our community a safer place to live, work and play for us all.

As a minister of UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide Peter is responsible for:

- Providing leadership to ensure that UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide in all its operations provides its services in a manner congruent with the Christian gospel.
- Providing a public voice advocating for those in most need.
- Fostering a collaborative relationship between UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide and Maughan Church.
- Fostering a collaborative relationship between UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide and the South Australian Synod and Presbyteries of the Uniting Church in Australia
- The direction of Paper Tracker
- Small Enterprises on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands

Before coming to UnitingCare Wesley in Adelaide, Rev McDonald was the minister of Renmark Parish in the Riverland and Houghton Paracombe Parish in the Adelaide Hills. He has completed his Master of Business and Administration at the Adelaide Graduate School of Business (Adelaide University). He received the Fundamentals of Leadership Prize in 2003.

Peter has chaired a variety of committees for the Uniting Church in South Australia, is a member of Morialta Trust and Associate Minister of Maughan Church. He is married to Kathryn and has two children, Miranda and Emilia

Continuing the community focus participants will have the opportunity to hear from two FCNs and their unique ministries; uncover the importance of Occupational Therapy; learn about in-home assessments, accessing specialised equipment and caring for people in their homes. This year is about diversifying, meeting needs, increasing skills





and knowledge and developing a greater awareness of our community.

A registration form is attached to/enclosed with this newsletter.

The 2011 AGM will be a time of sharing and prayerful consideration of AFCNA's future. It is an important meeting which requires your prayers, presence and input. Please consider becoming an AFCNA board member and helping to grow this exciting health ministry.

This year one of the key elements for consideration will be the AFCNA constitution and ratification of suggested changes to bring us in line with the recent move to national health practitioner registration, the

incorporation of the new vision and mission statements for AFCNA formulated at the March retreat, and basic administrative changes to allow the board to serve the membership better.

The constitutional modifications will be circulated to all members with the AGM agenda, and 2010 minutes no less than 21 days prior to the meeting, as required by the current constitution. To ensure you receive your copies please make sure AFCNA has your correct email/postal details. To update your contact details please email AFCNA: [afcna@afcna.org.au](mailto:afcna@afcna.org.au) or post to AFCNA, PO Box 2707, Kent Town, SA 5071.



## At home and abroad

The Christ for the World Mission in Calabar, Nigeria, has a medical unit comprising doctors, nurses, medical laboratory officers and other health workers. The congregation's Parish Nurse ministry is carried out jointly through this unit or independently as the need arises.

Earlier this year, health checks were carried out on 225 clergy. Screening included urine tests for sugar and protein, and blood and weight checks. Plans are in hand to establish a library of medical literature and resources that can be accessed by church members.



Parish Nurse, Thomas Ibo, checks BPs at Calabar, Nigeria



With building modifications complete, Pastoral Care Nurse ('Nanna Nurse') Shirley Klinge, has moved into the new health centre

at Faith Lutheran College in Plainland, Queensland. In March she organised 'flu injections for all the staff. The new school pastor at *Faith*, the Rev Reid Matthias, was installed at the end of February. He is quite familiar with the Parish Nurse ministry, as his former congregation in the United States had nine nurses on its staff!



In April, 10 people from Toowoomba and the greater Brisbane area completed the first *Introduction to Parish/Pastoral Care Nursing* course to be offered in Queensland. Organised by the Lutheran church's Parish Nursing coordinator, Lynette Wiebusch, the course was presented at the Bethany Lutheran primary school in Raceview, in suburban Ipswich from a Friday evening to a Sunday afternoon.



Class in session at Raceview

## *Parish Nursing: beginnings*

**The current Parish Nurse ministry — particularly in Australia and the United States — is largely the result of a vision of the late Dr Granger Westberg. During a long and fruitful career, Dr Westberg broke new ground in the areas of religion, medicine and whole-person health.**



He was a Lutheran minister who served as a parish pastor, hospital chaplain, professor of practical theology and teacher of medical students. His work was based on his belief that medicine transcends the physical because true healing involves the body, the soul and the mind. One of his most significant contributions to the church and the community at large is the founding of the Parish Nurse movement.

Dr Westberg received his degrees at Augustana College and Augustana Seminary. After graduating from seminary in 1939, he served as pastor of St John's Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Illinois. He discovered his love of chaplaincy work a little later when he sat on the board of Augustana Hospital in Chicago. The head chaplain was going on holidays, and asked if any of the other pastors on the board would like to try their hand at being a chaplain for a week. Dr Westberg volunteered and was 'sold' on the role.

Two years later he went back to Augustana Hospital as chaplain, and worked there for eight years. His ministry to hospital patients went beyond short visits to in-depth counseling and pastoral sessions.

The faculty at the University of Chicago noted his unique approach to chaplaincy. In 1952, he became the first clergyman to hold a joint appointment at the Chicago university in the Divinity and Medical Schools. Later, he taught at Baylor University Medical School in Houston and at Wittenberg University's Hama Seminary. He also established the Wholistic HealthCare Centre at Union Church in Hinsdale, Illinois.

Dr Westberg originally envisioned Parish Nursing as a partnership, linking resources of the health-care system to a congregation. In

1984 he developed a partnership between Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, Illinois, and six local congregations.

Parish Nursing has now become international in scope. Having a nurse on the staff of a congregation provides a unique forum for health promotion and disease prevention. Members of a church can discuss a health concern with the nurse before it becomes a chronic or serious condition.

Dr Westberg was the author of several books that describe the relationship between faith and health. His best-known book, *Good Grief*, has sold over two million copies.

Another book — *The Parish Nurse* — is virtually required reading for people interested in establishing a Parish Nurse ministry. Both books are available from *Australian Church Resources*.

The International Parish Nurse Resource Center (IPNRC) was established at Advocate Health Care in 1985, and moved to Deaconess Parish Nurse Ministries in St Louis in 2002. The annual Granger Westberg Parish Nurse Symposium, sponsored by the IPNRC, provides continuing education and spiritual growth for clergy, Parish Nurses, and other health professionals. Dr Westberg attended every symposium from 1987, when there were 74 people in attendance through to 1998, when there were nearly 1000.

It was a great privilege for me to meet Dr Westberg when I attended the symposium in Chicago in 1997. Dr Westberg died in 1999, at Downers Grove, Illinois.

Through his work and the Parish Nurse movement, people in congregations are coming to a new understanding of the importance of being good stewards of their health and the health of the community.

— Lynette T Wiebusch





## Clinical Pastoral Education

at  
Australian Lutheran College  
North Adelaide  
2<sup>nd</sup> semester: 26 July-22 November  
Tuesdays, 1:30-4:30pm  
For further info: [robert.kempe@lca.org.au](mailto:robert.kempe@lca.org.au)

## NZFCNA Conference 2011



12-13 August  
Knox Church  
Christchurch, NZ

**Theme:** *Earthquakes of our lives*

For more information:

[www.faithnursing.co.nz](http://www.faithnursing.co.nz)

## Books worth reading



### *Living with Dying*

Grace Sheppard; Darton, Longman and Todd; \$36.95

Useful examples of how to ease the pain of losing a loved one.

### *Living with Anxiety Another Way*

*A Medical, Psychological and Spiritual Approach*

Dr Louis Masquin; \$14.95

ISBN 978192472138

## Pastoral Nursing Care Expo

22 July, 10.00am-4.00pm

Nurses Memorial Centre

Suite 11, 431 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne

Cost: \$45.00 (including lunch)

Special guest: Joan McManus, NZFCNA

Register by 8 July: 04.0821.7375

Leonie Rastas: [leonie@apnrc.org](mailto:leonie@apnrc.org)

Sponsored by Pastoral Healthcare Network Australia and Colbrow Healthcare

## Prayer Corner



Lord, catch me off guard today. Surprise me with some moment of beauty or pain so that at least for the moment I may be startled into seeing that you are here in all your splendour, always and everywhere, barely hidden, beneath, beyond, within this life I breathe.

— Frederick Buechner

## Please pray for

- \* Colleagues in New Zealand who have been affected by the recent earthquakes and life-changing events.
- \* Congregations considering appointing a Parish/Faith Community Nurse.
- \* Those planning this year's AFCNA conference and AGM.
- \* AFCNA members who are facing health issues.

## I Say ...

'If it is true that life in each of its phases is worthy of maximum respect, in some ways it is even more true when life is marked by old age and illness.'

— Pope Benedict XVI

## In a word



'A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.'

*Proverbs 25.11*

## Something to think about

We sometimes hear at nursing conferences:  
No health without mental health.

But isn't it time we also heard the truism:  
No health, physical or mental, without spiritual health?



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## Membership Application and Renewal

1 July 2011-30 June 2012

**Full Membership** offers access to the AFCNA members only site and includes FCN resources, *WholeHealth* newsletter (three per year), discounted registration for AFCNA events, regular email updates, eligibility to become a Board member and voting rights at the Annual General Meeting. This membership is ideal for those affiliated with a faith community who hold a current nursing qualification, are working as a FCN or a health professional working in health ministry. **\$30.00**

**Associate Membership** offers limited access to the AFCNA website and resources, discounted registration for all AFCNA events, *WholeHealth* newsletter (three per year), and voting rights at the Annual General Meeting. This membership is ideal for retired nurses and health professionals, full-time students with a valid student card, or interested persons. **\$20.00**

**Prayer Network:** AFCNA would not exist without the continued prayer of members and supporters. If you would like to be a part of our prayer network please indicate your willingness below.

*Please complete and post to AFCNA: PO Box 2707, Kent Town SA 5071*

Given Name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Speciality \_\_\_\_\_

Denomination \_\_\_\_\_ Local Faith Community \_\_\_\_\_

Practising FCN/Health Ministry: Yes / No      Current AHPRA Registration:      Yes / No

I am happy to be included in AFCNA networking via the AFCNA database      Yes / No

Newsletter delivery by: email    or    Australia Post (please circle preference)

I consent to my details being shared with AFCNA members for inclusion on the AFCNA prayer network      Yes / No

Full Membership      \$30:00

Associate Membership      \$20:00 concession /student ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Donation AFCNA General Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment by: Cheque / Money order / Electronic funds transfer (please circle)

To transfer funds electronically to AFCNA: BSB 704 – 874; Account NO. 100009636; insert your name as the reference code.