



# Whole Health

Newsletter of the  
Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Inc

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## Learning from Brendan

You may recall in my first message the year commenced with a rush for the Banhams and that momentum certainly continues. As I look ahead, my mind is filled with the expectations of a long-awaited journey. David and I are soon to travel to the UK for 12 weeks holiday. We have spent many hours, days and weeks talking,, researching, contemplating, and finalising our plans and all the preparation is coming to fruition.

Life is a journey. This is something every one of us understands. Many of us thrive

as we partake of the journey, some of us step out on the road in fear but in stepping out we become pilgrims on the journey of faith.

Brendan the Navigator (486-578) was born in Ireland, and is honoured as the patron saint of Kerry. He is thought to have spent time in Wales and Scotland before settling as a hermit on Mt Brandon in Ireland. From this point Brendan would have looked out to sea and received the calling for his famous journey. In 559 he founded the monastery at Clonfert in County Galway, with tradition holding the site as his place of burial.

Brendan was known as an adventurer, willing to take risks and to explore the unknown. His Celtic nature was to wander and to go on pilgrimage not so much as a missionary or evangelist, but as a means to follow Christ. Going off to sea, and setting oneself adrift without directional aids was an expression of self-abandonment that became characteristic of



Sculpture of St Brendan, The Square, Bantry, County Cork, Ireland

‘white martyrdom’.

Brendan’s story is an example of this impulse to wander and identify life as a spiritual journey. Today many still hear the call to leave all and to follow Christ, to take to the narrow road, to set out and not look back, to risk losing their life so they may find it.

Another aspect of the monastic life is to push ourselves to our limits. To place ourselves physically as far as we might go in trust of our caring God. The Celtic church was one of heroes, of charismatic leaders, of strong and passionate men

and women. This was the Celtic warrior spirit, alive and put to the service of the gospel, following Christ, the high king.

Is this something you can identify in yourself, or in others today? The emphasis today tends to be on the passive aspects of spirituality: obedience, loyalty and submission. I pray that the active virtues of courage, strength, outspokenness, decisiveness and the ability to stand up for something, are good Christian virtues and still evident in our world as well.

Columba (Columcille), my favourite Celtic saint, whose name means Dove of the Church and also Wolf, was a ‘wolf in dove’s clothing’. Columba had a heart on fire for God and a love of Ireland. Columba set out on his journey and founded a small monastic settlement on the island of Iona in Scotland. This site became the centre of religious life for the entire Celtic world. Columba was not afraid to take a stand



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for his belief and his passion in Christ, nor was Brendan.

As we journey through life, we too must take a stand against, and for, certain things. We are called to righteousness, justice and peace, and to stand against unrighteousness, exploitation and oppression.

Luther rightly reminds us that every age has its particular sins and evils that need to be resisted. What do you think these may be? Is it the pressure to succeed and be popular, to overcome the Aussie's lazy attitude toward life? In all these areas and many more we need to bring grace to the fore, to elevate grace over all things.

Matthew 23:23 reminds us to look for the greater vision of love, justice and mercy above our usual daily routines and systems. Let's actively promote participation instead of selfish individualism and return to the Body of Christ as a community of believers.

Just as Brendan and Columba lived, we too need to practise active participation over intention, because desire is no substitute for doing. Let's celebrate involvement and inclusion, bringing people together to participate in the joys of Christ! Don't be afraid to take a stand for Christ, to step out in the journey and be different! You will find you are not alone! In fact, you may find many others just waiting for someone like yourself to take that first step of faith, becoming the leader of Christ's newest ministry!

Now is the time to encourage our brothers and sisters to exercise their priesthood by unification, not diversity. Let's come together, strong in the knowledge that Jesus is coming back again and we need to be awake and ready! Take a stand for grace, participation and meaningful action ... for equality and responsibility!

Your journey is just beginning. Be adventurous! Become a warrior for Christ and resist the values of this age by standing for the values of the kingdom!

*'Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.'* (Ephesians 6:13)

**Heather Banham, AFCNA Chairperson**



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*Closing date for next issue: 10 November*



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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.*

WholeHealth is now published electronically for those who have internet access. To ensure that you receive your copy, please advise the editor should you change your email address. It would certainly make things easier!





## The church and health care ministry

Over the next few decades Australian society will be challenged to respond to the health and care needs of its population. There will be increased strain on the support provided to our most vulnerable citizens such as the frail aged, chronically ill, mentally ill, disabled, addicted, homeless, refugees and asylum seekers. People experiencing illness, and/or suffering from disabling conditions, will find it harder to obtain support. This will create an opportunity for caring faith communities to meet an established need via meaningful and supportive ministries.

Our Christian faith informs our values and beliefs, which define the perspective we hold regarding health and healing. Personal belief systems are an outgrowth of our faith and they order our lives to a particular focus. As Christians, that focus is to *'love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength'* (Deuteronomy 6:5), and to follow Jesus' example by lovingly serving others in need within Australia and overseas.

A caring congregation that models itself on Jesus, obeys his command to *'go, and do likewise'* (Luke 10:37b), by providing life-giving support/activities that promote health, healing and wholeness, compelling people to participate in sharing Christ's healing love.

Health and care ministry has always been central to the Christian church's mission. Professions such as nursing evolved from the deaconess and religious orders based on the biblical function of *diakonia* in the early church. It was the very reason AFCNA was commenced in 1996 to enable nurses to be prepared for this mission and ministry.

The health and care ministry is founded on Christian principles of social justice, service, stewardship, fellowship, and compassionate care. Its focus is the faith community and the geographic community that the congregation serves, or the cultural community that congregation works within.

The ministry has two key foci:

- health promotion and disease prevention, aiming to help individuals and communities be good stewards of their health, enabling them to fulfil God's purpose for their life, and the mission and ministry of their faith community.
- providing support to people with pre-existing illness/conditions, facilitating their self-care and self-management re health, so they can continue to live well and stay connected and engaged in their community.

As Christian health and care professionals, we view the person holistically, that is, more than a composite of physical, psychological, social and spiritual 'parts'. The person is an integrated whole, animated by the spiritual dimension, with its dynamic life-source coming from God.

People are enabled to grow toward wholeness in and through Jesus Christ, the source of all healing and wholeness. People are essentially relational beings, created to live in relationship with God through Jesus Christ; in relationship with others via families and communities; and in relationship with the created environment.

Good individual and community health relies on developing, sustaining, restoring, and nurturing the whole person and these essential relationships.

### What does a health and care ministry offer?

This ministry engages people within the faith community to:

- volunteer to support people in hospital, or who are home-bound, or living in residential care centres in a variety of ways such as visits, meals, letters and phone calls providing encouragement, transport, minor house/garden help etc.
- education regarding wellness, relational living, disease prevention, lifestyle enhancement and holistic personal development programs via seminars, workshops, programs, courses, etc.



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- health screening activities that provide early detection and risk reduction;
- appropriate resources and advocacy to individuals and community;

A health ministry promotes healing, health and wholeness, as a mission of the faith community to its members and the community they serve. It needs a variety of people, salaried and/or volunteers, clergy, professionals and laity, all committed to sharing the compassionate love and healing mercy of Jesus Christ.

The prophet Jeremiah stood crying for the pain and suffering he saw around him saying *‘I weep for the hurt of my people; I stand amazed silent, dumb with grief. Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why doesn’t God do something? Why doesn’t he help?’* (Jeremiah 8:21–22, Living Bible).

Having a health and care ministry means your church will no longer need to ask, ‘Why doesn’t God do something?’ There is ‘medicine in Gilead’! God is the ultimate balm in Gilead, and he wants his church in Australia to be the healing balm to our community!

Developing a health and care ministry doesn’t require a lot of money. It needs a church that is willing to become the body of Christ, demonstrating his compassion in word and deed, showing his transforming love to people in need.

It is the church’s task to motivate and activate people into health and care ministry to equip and enable the care of our most oppressed and vulnerable people. James 1:7 instructs: *‘Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you’*.

It is counter-cultural to truly care for people in need. Providing compassionate care shows the church bears the image of God — the source of benevolence. This is ‘genuine religion’, the church taking care of those Jesus told us to care for.

### Who is involved in a health care ministry?

Health and care ministry is a whole church ministry. As Christ’s image-bearers we demonstrate and convey his transforming love to the world, because we are his body — his head, his heart, his hands and feet — in this world. This ministry starts wherever there are Christian faith communities.

### What health and care ministry activities are provided?

Using three themes we empower and enable people to:

- **be carefree** — by promoting health and wellbeing

*‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’* (John 10:10b). God’s plan for all humanity is a life abounding in joy and strength for mind, body and spirit!

- **be careful** — by preventing disease/illness.

*‘Don’t you realise that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s’.*

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) We help prevent/manage disease or illness, and prevent injury, abuse and suffering by practising stewardship and social justice.

- **be caring** — by undertaking pastoral support/care activities.

*‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’* (Matthew 25:40) We care for people across the life span, especially the most vulnerable.

### ‘b care’ — a new SA pastoral health and care network

Baptist Care (SA) is aiming to bring together existing health and care ministries of participating Christian churches into a continuum of primary health and care support across SA churches. Developing such a network allows smaller churches to tailor their health and care ministry to the specific needs and unique abilities of their faith com-



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munity, while gaining access to specific resources, support and professional services from other churches and community services within the 'b care' network. They can make client referrals, obtain advice and support for their local ministry and networks and develop stronger collegial support for their ministry through the 'b care' network.

If you wish to know more about the 'b care' network and its planned activities, I would be pleased to speak to you and/or send you more information. Please contact Anne van Loon [Executive Manager Health, Wellbeing & Ageing, at BaptistCare (SA) Inc], 130 Rose Tce, Wayville, SA 5034 Phone: 61 8 8273 7104 Fax: 61 8 8272 4457 Mobile: 0409 921 337 E-mail: [avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au](mailto:avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au)

### Learning about pastoral health and care ministry

Would you like to be equipped and energised to participate in a ministry of health, healing and the provision of compassionate pastoral care? Then you are welcome to register for the '*Introduction to Health & Care Ministry*' course, to be held at Baptist Care (SA) House, 130 Rose Tce, Wayville, SA' on **12, 13 November 2012**.

The course is designed to introduce and prepare people to serve in health and care ministries within the Christian church, providing the knowledge and practical preparation needed for responsible and effective ministry in your community. It is relevant to

clergy, health professionals and interested lay workers. Registration is only \$100 for the two-day course which includes course materials, refreshments and lunch. The maximum number of registrants for this group is 30 people, so be quick.

### Topics include:

- *Ministry context:* Health & Care in Australia - churches can provide innovative responses
- *Ministry principles:* Theology of Health & Care - following biblical direction
- *Ministry model:* A Health & Care model that fits any size and shape of church
- *Ministry practice:* How to undertake Health & Care ministry - practical examples to consider
- *Ministry team:* Developing a cohesive and effective team with clear boundaries
- *Ministry ethics:* Legal and ethical issues
- *Ministry activities:* Conducting health promotion and disease prevention activities
- *Ministry responsiveness:* Responding effectively to disease and illness
- *Ministry advocacy:* Responding compassionately to suffering, crisis and abuse
- *Ministry possibilities:* Healing prayer and worship - can it make a difference?

**Course inquiries to:** Dr Anne van Loon at BaptistCare: [avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au](mailto:avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au)

☎61 8 8273 7104 📞04 0992 1337.



## The Canberra scene

Holy Covenant Anglican Church in Jamison, Canberra, has started a new ministry, steered by their Faith Community Nurse, Anne Ranse.

The concept is that the day hospice, called Covenant Care, runs very Monday from 9.30am to 4.00pm, providing a day out for 12 terminally ill clients who are being cared for at home by an elderly carer. It also provides respite for the carers. This is a 'first' for this type of service in Canberra, and the only one operating out of a church. It is a joint venture between *Holy*

*Covenant*, Anglicare and Palliative Care ACT. A registered nurse, not the FCN, attends each session as a Diversional Therapist.

Anne has trained up volunteers, so each client can have a volunteer carer. The session is held in the church auditorium, and so has to be set up and packed down each week. Another team of volunteers sees to that side of things. Clients are picked up at the beginning of the day and taken home at the end of the day so the carer can maximise their 'free' time. A pastoral care



Anne Ranse, with FCN van.

team has also been put in place, with Anne acting as the chaplain for *Covenant Care*, providing holistic care for those attending, their carers, the volunteers and the staff, as well as offering pastoral services such as memorial services, anniversary memorials and funerals.

Each Monday *Covenant Care* is operating there is an opportunity for clients to join in a prayer service where prayers are said for the clients and their families and for *Covenant Care* staff. Candles are lit during the prayers. A communion service is held once a month. At these services the majority of clients and volunteers come to the chapel and participate. This is not a requirement, but has evolved out of a request of one of the clients.

The ACT chief minister, Katy Gallagher, said, at the opening, 'It is a day with a difference that gives those with a life threatening condition, spiritual, emotional, and social support outside of their homes. For patients, the day hospice gives a chance to meet people facing similar circumstances, receive mental stimulation, emotional and spiritual support, rather than focusing solely on their illness and personal circumstances.'

When asked about her work, Anne said:

I have been a Faith Community Nurse at Holy Covenant Anglican Church for three years. I began the nursing program there one day a week on a voluntary basis, with a small donation from Anglicare Canberra and Goulburn — the welfare branch of the Anglican church. I operate a referral and consultation clinic for parishioners and older people who are isolated and housebound in the community. The nursing program specifically targets older people, as they were identified in the

local community as most at risk and socially isolated following a four- year survey of the parish boundaries (that cross over four suburbs). While my morning is concentrated on the clinic, my afternoons are out and about doing home visits and organising anything from dressings to house cleaning assistance, gardening, or shopping to medical appointments and visiting post-op parishioners. I also transport isolated house bound people to the church community centre to play scrabble or do craft or share in the Community Lunch for older people in the community. Some

clients we have befriended have trips with myself and the volunteers to *Floriade* or Tulip Tops for a picnic outing to see the magnificent displays of the Spring gardens. Some of these clients haven't been on an outing (two being wheelchair-bound) for many years.

I have had the great fortune of having had a large bequest given to me for the Faith Community Nursing program. The operators of the bequest wanted to donate this sum of money to the church to be used for work with the elderly in the community. I purchased a good second hand van with a wheelchair lift in it to transport those in wheelchairs and then, following parish consultation it was decided to try and meet a huge need in the community for a day-care centre for elderly, terminally ill people living at home. Following discussion with the Palliative Care Society, ACT, we set up a partnership and then later included Anglicare to assist us with the administration of the required standards and policies involved. They also administer the salaries of the RN and Activity Officer who are paid for by the Palliative Care Society.

I also have education programs for the parishioners on current health issues and information packages for them to take home. All this, and I am still only operating this ministry one day a week! But I have a great team of volunteers and two other RNs assisting me. One is also a FCN.

To date several of us on the management committee for *Covenant Care* have been invited to other churches across Canberra help them to know how to go about setting up such a centre in their churches.

What a wonderful way to serve the Lord and help those in need!

Blessings. Anne.



# At home and abroad

The Church Health Centre (CHC) in Memphis, Tennessee, USA, which now manages the International Parish Nurse Resource Centre, has advised that there will be no Westberg Parish Nursing Symposium this year. The next *Westberg* will be held in the northern Spring in 2013. CHC says it is unable to plan an appropriate conference in the short time since it took over managing the centre late last year.



Last year Australian Lutheran College (ALC) in North Adelaide became a 'Recognised Teaching Institution' of the Melbourne College of Divinity (MCD), which will itself become a Specialised University, to be known as the MCD University of Divinity. This year, ALC is launching its own research centre as part of a growing emphasis on professional development and life-long learning. Two vocational training programs are on offer this year (see page 6).



Parish Nursing on the Indian subcontinent moved a step forward when 17 nurses completed an introductory course presented by Dr Marcia Schnorr at the Bethesda Lutheran Hospital in Ambur. Graduates received their certificates from the president of the India Ev-

-angelical Lutheran Church, Dr J Samuel. Jovetta Wescott, from Parish Nurse Ministry Kansas, USA, will teach a basic course in Parish Nursing to more than 30 nurses in Pakistan who are interested in this role.



A significant development of the March retreat was the conceptualising of a Prayer Network for AFCNA. While many of us pray regularly for the ministry and those involved, we decided it was 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.

Post to AFCNA PO Box 2707, Kent Town, SA, 5071 or email: [afcna@afcna.org.au](mailto:afcna@afcna.org.au)



AFCNA members are invited to join their trans-Tasman colleagues for the NZFCNA annual conference in Christchurch on 21-23 September.

## 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

*Graduate Diploma of Theology in Faith  
Community Nursing*

*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](mailto:alc@alc.edu.au)

Website: [www.alc.edu.au](http://www.alc.edu.au)

## AFCNA fellowship day and Annual Meeting

Adelaide, 25 August, 10.00am–3.00pm

Rosefield Uniting church

2 Carlton St, Highgate, SA

Cost: \$5.00

Guest Speaker: Matthew Huckel, a talented  
music therapist who shares his skills with  
disabled people at Highgate Park.

Interstate members unable to attend in  
person will be able to do so by Skype.

If you have a Skype address, please let the  
AFCNA national mentor know by emailing  
[afcna@afcna.org.au](mailto:afcna@afcna.org.au)

## NZFCNA Conference

Christchurch, 21-23 September

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



## Book

### *Touching the Sacred*

Chris Thorpe and Jake Lever

Canterbury Press, \$33.95

A resource book and CD-ROM. Devotions,  
with visual aids, based on the liturgical year.

## Prayer Corner



O Lord, open my eyes to see your blessings.  
Open my ears to hear your voice.  
Open my heart that I may love you and  
others.

Open my hands, regardless of my age, that I  
may share with others.

Amen.

### *Please pray for ...*

\* Nurses who have recently completed an  
introductory course on Faith Community  
Nursing, that doors may open for them to  
serve in this ministry.

\* The AFCNA Fellowship Day and AGM.

## I Say ...

‘Broken people are like stained-glass win-  
dows. They sparkle and shine when the sun  
is out, but when the darkness sets in their  
true beauty is revealed only if there is light  
from within.’

— Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

## In a word



‘All who exalt themselves will be  
humbled, but all who humble themselves will be  
exalted.’

Luke 18:14

## 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 re-  
tired nurses and health professionals, stu-  
dents and other interested persons.

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