

# Greetings from Grace

March 2009



A Ministry of  
InterVarsity Christian  
Fellowship



## Compassion

*"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had **compassion** on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'" (Matt 9:35-38 NIV)*

These verses are a favorite among healthcare missionaries. They speak to wholistic ministry - caring for the body, mind and spirits of people. Jesus was moved by compassion - literally a gut wrenching concern for the people.

I will be involved in five conferences this year, the Christian Community Health Fellowship annual conference on The Church and the Ministry of Healing in Nashville, TN in May; the NCF Summit entitled Nursing as Ministry: Caring in Context in Texas in June; The West Coast Healthcare Missions and Ministry Conference at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, CA in September, the Global Missions Health Conference in Louisville, KY in November, and ending the year at Urbana 09 Student Missions Convention in St. Louis, MO.

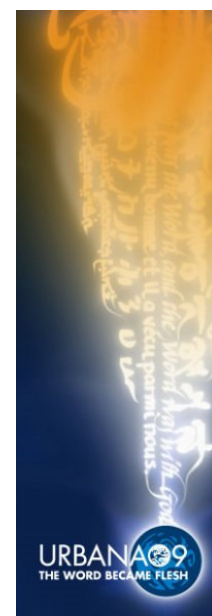
I've been grateful to have the winter months without travel to be used to focus on preparing for these events that motivate and encourage healthcare professionals to follow Jesus' compassionate wholistic ministry. During these months, God has also graciously brought people and resources to me.

Connie Jarlsberg has joined me on NCF staff. Her time with World Venture in Uganda allows us to share mutual friends and history in missionary nursing. Her foreign missions experience is more current and she is considering how we can prepare nurses for a future in missions by taking nursing students on a Global Project with InterVarsity/NCF next year. She will also be taking part in several of the conferences here in the States.

The Human Needs and Global Resources (HNGR) program of Wheaton College hosted the regional coordinators of the Luke Society for their symposium. It was great to see them, Apolos Landa from Peru, John Boateng from Ghana, and Pal Oroszi from Ukraine. They have served as hosts to so many HNGR students, several who spoke of how God used their six month internships to shape their careers in a variety of disciplines.

I serve as an alumna representative on the Wheaton College taskforce for AIDS. In February, we invited Dr. W. Meredith Long and Deborah Dortzbach, former colleagues at World Relief, Inc, to campus to present updated information and awareness about AIDS. They co-authored a book,

*(Continued on page 2)*



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## Spring Schedule

### March 25-28, 2009

NCF National staff meetings  
Atlanta, GA

### March 31-April 3, 2009

InterVarsity Spring  
Leadership meetings  
Madison, WI

### April 4-11, 2009

Vacation with Mom  
and Woltjer family  
Hilton Head, SC

### May 27-31, 2009

CCHF board meeting and  
annual conference  
Nashville, TN

### June 25-28, 2009

NCF Summit 09  
Nursing as Ministry: Caring in  
Context  
Irving, TX

(Continued from page 1)

*The AIDS Crisis: What We Can Do*, for Urbana 06. The Wheaton taskforce had encouraged a community read and discussion of the book. God has frequently used Meredith and Debbie to challenge me. As I lamented to them about the lack of knowledge and concern for AIDS in the US and the current trend to water down the Biblical mandate for abstinence and faithfulness in marriage, Meredith pointed out that compassion comes out of suffering and cannot be mandated. He observed that Africans have suffered the devastation of AIDS; but in the US and elsewhere, AIDS has been limited to certain populations. In addition, the advances in treatment has made AIDS a chronic disease and removed the urgency.

As we observe lent, I have reflected on Meredith's observations. My high school Latin reminded me that compassion comes from *passion*, the word for suffering as in the *Passion of Christ*, and *com*, the prefix for together - Suffering together. Jesus compassion for us came out of His suffering with us. In my work among the poor and underserved, I have seen how God redeems suffering to advance his Kingdom. In training lay health personnel, it is often those who have experienced problems that are most effective in helping others in similar situations. Of course the ultimate redemption of suffering came on the cross as God redeemed that evil for the salvation of the world.

I sometimes wonder if Jesus still sees us as "sheep without a shepherd." There is so much uncertainty in the world. But uncertain times also bring the opportunity to reevaluate our priorities and to bring the Good News of Jesus to a hurting world. It is my privilege to bring the Good News to nurses and healthcare professionals, to challenge them to have the compassion of Christ as they care wholisitcally for their patients, and to encourage them to care for the poor and underserved around the globe. Thank you for joining me on this mission.

## Praise and Prayer

### Praise – Thank God for:

- Bringing Connie Jarlsberg to NCF to expand the work of missions.
- Family and the shared times together. It's good to have 2 for 1 meal outings with Mom, Valentine flowers from John and Jan, vacations with Tricia and family.
- His faithful provision for not only my needs but also my desires. My 30+ year old Zenith television died and I am enjoying a new flat screen HD TV.
- Warm clothes, sturdy houses, abundant food, clean running water, and good health, even when the temperature is below freezing.

### Prayer – Ask God to:

- Use the planned conferences to raise up the next generation of healthcare professionals who will use their knowledge and skills to provide wholistic care for the poor and underserved around the world.
- Give wisdom to NCF and InterVarsity leadership as we face uncertain financial times. Many staff accounts are in deficit.
- Redeem the uncertain financial picture to restore our trust and dependency on Him.