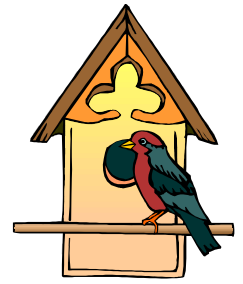




A ministry of
InterVarsity Christian
Fellowship

Greetings from Grace

JULY 2010

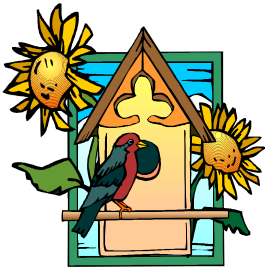


FAITH AND HEALTH

Engaging students and nurses with the Good News of Jesus Christ to bring God's love and healing to nursing and healthcare.

I have always been taught that whatever vocation a person might choose, we are Christians first. I was also told that our faith is not a one day a week endeavor. We represent Jesus in all that we do. Nurses Christian Fellowship is about Christian nursing. We are not just nurses who happen to be Christian; we desire to be Christians who live out our Christianity through our profession of nursing. This is one place where faith and health intersect for Christian nurses.

I've always been grateful for this teaching and seek to encourage others to incorporate it into their worldviews. This will be the focus of the NCF Global Project to Uganda. For many nurses, both in the US and in Uganda, nursing is just a job, a way to make money. It is hard work, unappreciated work, 24/7 work. However it is also privileged work. We get to care for people at some of the most vulnerable times in their lives. If we approach it as Christians first, we get to represent Jesus to people. We get show His love to others as we serve Him. The nine nursing students from the US and three nursing students from Uganda will grapple with what it means to be a Christian nurse in today's healthcare environment – how we can live out our faith through our nursing practice. Hopefully, this will ultimately lead to excellent, compassionate, and quality healthcare for those whom God has entrusted to our care.



Christian nursing gets much of its unique perspective on healthcare from the Bible. It teaches us about the importance of caring for our physical bodies. The incarnation of Jesus speaks to the value that God has placed on our physical bodies. Jesus gave us the example of caring for the whole person when he healed people and forgave their sins. At the Christian Community Health Fellowship conference in Nashville, Dr. Karl Watts pointed out that Jesus could have done any number of miracles to prove He was the Messiah and improve the lot of the Jewish people. He could have eliminated poverty; he could have overthrown the Roman government and ushered in the expected Messianic reign; but instead He healed people physically. Jesus understood that our faith and our health are intimately connected.

Healthcare has been a powerful tool in communicating the gospel message. Just as people were impressed in Jesus' day that He was able to heal the blind, lame, lepers and demon possessed, many today see the effects of medical science as miraculous and come for healing. Mission hospitals were and continue to be places where people come to be healed physically and hear the Good News about Jesus.

(Continued on page 2)

PRAISE AND PRAYER

Praise — Thank God for:

- A successful site visit to Uganda in May. God provided in miraculous ways for Connie and me many times during our trip. Volcanic ash delays meant school was out in Uganda and made navigating Kampala streets that much easier. Our partners at FOCUS Uganda share a common goal to ultimately influence society and healthcare through student ministry. We were able to see everyone we needed to see to arrange an excellent overview of missionary nursing for the nursing students.
- Good meetings with Christian Community Health Fellowship in Nashville, TN and with the Wesleyan Medical Fellowship in Marion, IN
- The four nursing students in the 83 active NCF student chapters who committed to following Jesus this past academic year.

Prayer — Ask God to:

- Use the NCF Global Project to Uganda to transform lives of the nine US and three Ugandan nursing students for God's purposes.
- Give wisdom and stamina to Renee Lick and Connie Jarlsberg as they lead the Global Project to Uganda.
- Guide Irene Akena and other Christian nurses invited to the NCF Global Project celebration tea as they consider beginning NCF in Uganda.
- Restore Mom's health as she recovers from a slight stroke and prepares for surgery to unblock a carotid artery this summer.
- Provide for the financial needs of NCF as we close the books for the last fiscal year and begin a new one.

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However there are challenges to the intersection of faith and health. Healthcare is expensive and sustaining it both here and abroad is a challenge. Many churches and mission organizations are seeking to "get out of the healthcare business". Indeed many of the church based hospitals that provided charity healthcare in the US have been sold and many mission hospitals have been turned over to governments.

Healthcare professionals may look to science and technology as the answer to healthcare problems and forget the God who Sovereignly instituted the created order that allows us to study and develop healthcare. Healthcare has become big business, 17% of our GNP according to some reports. It is easy for healthcare professionals to get caught up in the busyness and business of caring for people physically that we forget we are just the instruments that God uses to heal. We may neglect to provide spiritual care and relegate that to the clergy.

The problem not only lies with those in the healthcare arena but also occurs among those involved in theology and missions. Pastors are concerned about the souls of their

congregations and leave the health issues to healthcare professionals. They rarely talk about taking care of our physical bodies. Theologians grapple with the role of faith in healing and some have mistakenly attributed disease to a lack of faith. For those with chronic diseases and infirmities it adds the burden that not only are they physically impaired but they are also spiritually deficient. Mission organizations and churches see healthcare as a means to plant churches instead of focusing on the Church's role to care for the sick, injured and dying in both physical and spiritual capacities.

Reuniting faith and health is making slow progress. One Christian college is planning a nursing master's degree in Global Health Ministry that will equip nurses for healthcare missions in the future. I know of two seminaries that are looking at the issues of faith and health and teaching about the role of the church in healthcare. I continue to work with a group of healthcare professionals involved in beginning a Center for the Study of Health in Mission that will include things like Best Practices in healthcare missions. My prayer is that these and other efforts will bring glory to God.



SUMMER SCHEDULE

July 14-15, 2010

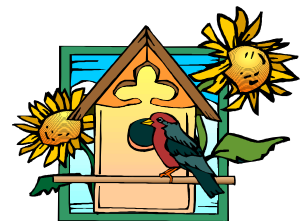
Orientation for the US nursing students going on the Global Project to Uganda July 16– August 7, 2010
Arlington Heights, IL

September 12 & 13, 2010

Christian Community Health Fellowship Board meeting
Chicago, IL

September 17-18, 2009

West Coast Healthcare Missions Conference
Fuller Seminary
Pasadena, CA



18W271 Kirkland Lane
Villa Park, IL 60181
(630) 268-9436
GJTaz@comcast.net

Gifts for the ministry of Grace Tazelaar can be sent to Nurses Christian Fellowship P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895