



December, 2007

Joy to the world, the Lord has come!

Dear friend,

I am grateful the Lord is present for all of us, providing encouragement and joy in our journey through life. Some examples of my joy from the Lord during the last months:

Presenting *Renewing the Call to Care* at the NCF Retreat in OH 10/12-13

I enjoyed teaching about nursing as ministry for Jesus Christ, and God's resources to bring positive influence to nursing settings. The Lord's people at the retreat also brought joy, including the gift of a plaque, *I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord...to give you hope and a future* (Jeremiah 29:11) This Word was confirmation of God's guidance and encouragement in the transition and role change I've experienced (which has gone well).



Clarifying my new NCF staff role

God gave hope and joy as I spent time in November to consolidate God's direction during my August retreat and reflection on visits with retired nurses this fall. Summary of my ministry for this season of life:

My Purpose: Proclaim good news of Jesus and the Kingdom (from Matt 10:7, Acts 8:12...); Testify to the good news of God's grace (Acts 20:24).

Ways to live out the purpose: (from I Corinthians 14:1, 3) building up, encouragement and consolation

Ministry focus in InterVarsity/NCF: While NCF staff and volunteer leaders focus on students, faculty, and nurses in practice, my ministry focus will be on the NCF constituency who are retired or nearing retirement. Some issues they face:

- appraising one's significance – past, present, future – in light of changes in life
- dealing with health issues
- applying faith to new challenges, including aging and death
- experiencing the gift of time without a demanding schedule
- wondering about purpose and legacy in their current season of life

It will be my privilege to...

- listen to the Lord and people I visit as they share about their issues in life
- provide ministry of building up, encouragement, consolation
- assist the nurses to make a difference through passing on their legacy of knowledge and resources, enabling NCF to *tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done* (Psalm 78:4).

I'm excited about this new avenue of service, including linking the wisdom of wonderful nurses with others who are carrying on their Christian influence in nursing. I enjoyed visits with retired nurses in Cleveland, Minneapolis and Chicago areas the last weeks and anticipate future travels. Let me know if you want more information about *Passing on Your Legacy in Nursing: Making a Difference through Sharing Knowledge and Resources*.



With Virginia Ohlson (center) and her sister, Dorothy Lundbom in Chicago

Opportunities to proclaim the good news of Jesus

I've enjoyed getting to know people in my apartment complex as well as some international students at University of Wisconsin.

An InterVarsity friend and I hosted women from Asia and the Middle East for 2 dinners in my apartment, and it is joyful experience to be part of what God is doing in their lives as they learn of Jesus and Christian faith. One student is a Christian, and 2 others from Islam and Buddhist backgrounds are in Bible studies through InterVarsity International Student Ministries. We anticipate another dinner in January.



Prayer Requests

- Financial update: I continue to be employed full time in my new NCF staff role. There is a \$4000 deficit in my ministry account. Pray that increased income in December will cover the deficit and provide funding for the future – for all staff. *
- I'll be with family in MN for Christmas and InterVarsity staff conference 1/2-6 in St. Louis, and will also meet with more retired nurses.
- Pray for wisdom as I make plans to meet with people in N. and S. California and Florida during January – March.
- Give thanks for Pat Emery, NCF Director. I'm grateful that God has called her to leadership of NCF.

I pray that God will bring encouragement and joy to you and your family in this Christmas season. I thank God for you!

In Christ's joy,

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(* Financial support may be sent to NCF, Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895, or give online at www.intervarsity.org/donate/to/Mary_Thompson Thanks for your partnership.)