

# CNM NEWS

Issue N<sup>o</sup> 6: Easter 2003 A.D.

## “FAQs”

by Peter Swift

*Many thanks to our readers who completed the survey we conducted late last year. A number of frequently asked questions arose some of which we will attempt to address here.*

CNM is frequently asked about its charitable status. We have looked in to this but feel that the administrative costs would outweigh any possible advantage. We will however keep this under review from time to time, but until our membership base and budget grows it may not be cost effective... "catch 22"!

Many people have enquired about local groups. We presently have active groups in London, Bristol and Birmingham. While we would dearly love to help groups form elsewhere we believe the best strategy is first to put on an "away day" or half day event which may then become the means to kick start a local group. CNM has 120+ members spread

across England & Wales with most of these clustered in the major conurbations. If you would like to have a CNM sponsored event in your locality then why not give us a call? [But bear in mind that it can take nine months from planning to execution!]

We would like to develop our internet services more. The idea of setting up a chat-room received universal approval but no-one said that they would/could access it! So we will put this on ice for now. But there may be scope to develop "special interest groups" which communicate by e-mail. We note that we have a number of academics on our books and wonder if it would be useful to facilitate contact between them via CNM. What do you think?

On the whole "CNM News" gets a thumbs-up from our readers. Some have suggested expanding or making it more frequent. We presently publish it three times per year. As things stand we probably do not receive enough

material to enlarge the paper. We would consider making CNM News a quarterly publication if we could be confident of having sufficient articles. So please... write, write, write!

This June CNM will be holding its second AGM and some of the existing committee will be retiring and others will take their place. Thanks to the support of its members CNM has survived a tricky birth and now the next committee will have the responsibility of seeing that CNM moves from surviving to thriving. It will be an opportunity to review our mistakes and learn what works and what doesn't. We are keen that all our members feel involved in this process, especially if they are unable to attend the AGM. Please write or e-mail us with your views and ideas.

CNM is sometimes asked about its relationship with other Christian healthcare organisations. CNM is affiliated to UCCF as one of its "professional groups". Within this forum we meet annually with Christian Medical Fellowship, Christian Dental Fellowship and the Christian Therapists Network.

Although we are not formally affiliated to the Nurses Christian Fellowship International we have a cordial relationship with them. We also coordinate our activities with NCF Scotland. ■

## Answers from Job

Anna MacKenzie  
Health Care Assistant  
& UCCF Staff Worker

*We live in a world full of questions, a world that is forever asking 'why?' We witness tragedy each day on individual, national and international scales. And together with the whole world we cry out in anguish, wondering if we will ever see justice restored.*

As people in nursing and caring professions, we are face-to-face with this anguish on a daily basis. We are at the front line of the battle, and we see pain and suffering take root in many different ways: the young family facing cancer, the elderly person left alone to die.

As Christian members of staff, we often feel we should be better equipped ►

# Answers from Job

*continued from the front page*

▶ to deal with these situations. We assume that we must have the right answers as to why this is happening. When in dialogue with patients, relatives and colleagues - surely we have something more to say?

But the truth is we often have nothing to say. We could form glib theological answers in our minds, but how on earth could they relate to the real hurt, the real pain, the real grief?

The book of Job thrusts us into a world seemingly out of control. A world where justice doesn't always prevail. A world full of questions. And as Job's life becomes one full of terrible pain, grief and suffering - he is not afraid to ask questions:

Why am I still alive, when suffering? Why was I allowed to be born in the first place? Why does God hide from me, and consider me his enemy? Where is my hope?

How does the book of Job tackle these questions?

For the first 37 chapters, we see a human response. Job's 4 friends Eliphaz, Bildad,

Zophar and Elihu, each attempt to answer Job's pleas for help. They rattle off lengthy spiels consisting of their own thoughts, observances and wisdom. They give simple, cold answers to the problems Job is facing.

Job is confronted by the accusation of Eliphaz: You are a sinner, and your arguments are blighted by sin; by the theological prowess of Bildad: God is being just with you; and by the legalism of Zophar - You're not doing enough before God.

As Job is tormented by their trite and polished answers, the reader realises that human wisdom is not equipped to handle these earnest questions.

Job's questions seem so familiar to us today. For those involved in any kind of nursing or care work, hurting people often shout their questions at us. How can the book of Job help us as we come face-to-face with human suffering?

The main character of the book speaks at last in chapter 38. The LORD, the God of the universe at last comes to answer Job's questions.

But the surprise is, that God does not answer Job's 37 chapters of questions.

Instead he asks more. Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Have you ever given orders to the morning or shown the dawn it's place? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God's dominion over the earth?

Who is this God? Job finally sees: I know that you can do all things, that no plan of yours can be thwarted... now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Job longs for answers. And the answer God gives is not a long philosophical explanation of the problem of evil. The answer given is God himself - the God who is sovereign over all. The God who calls people into relationship with him. The God whose wisdom far outweighs human wisdom. The God who offers a personal relationship with him as the answer to the problem of evil. The God who allows his creation to relate to him, to be real with him as Job was, and to find hope and true joy (even amid sufferings) in him.

As we live as Christians in a world where there is such a thing as innocent suffering, and where people will shout their questions at us - let us show them our God. He won't answer their questions - he is the answer to their questions.

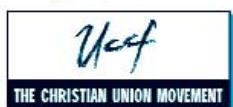
## GOD IS WORKING TODAY AMONGST NURSING STUDENTS

'TODAY'S STUDENTS WILL SHAPE TOMORROW'S WORLD'

CHRISTIAN UNION GROUPS LXISI TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST IN VIRTUALLY EVERY UNIVERSITY AND IN MANY OF THE COLLEGES OF ENGLAND, WALES AND SCOTLAND. THESE GROUPS TOGETHER FORM THE CU MOVEMENT, WHICH IS A CENTRAL PART OF UCCF.

### UCCF is committed to...

- The gospel (we have a clear evangelical basis)
- Making disciples of Jesus Christ amongst today's students
- CUs which are student led and unite people from many backgrounds around the gospel



### Could you be a part of the staff team that serves the CU Movement?

- CU Staff Workers work with the students leaders of local CUs. They are directly involved in ministry within a group of CUs, helping them get into the Bible and equipping and supporting the leaders. The men and women we require are normally graduates with at least a couple of years' work experience.
- We are also seeking a specialist staffworker to work amongst nursing students.

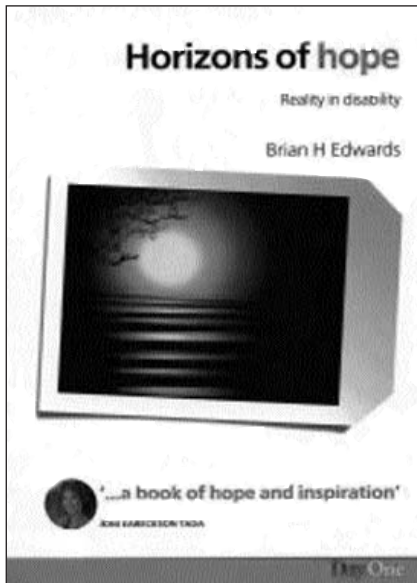
### Are you interested?

- CU Staff Worker appointments run from September, initially for three years. We would train you for the work and place you in a regional team. We guarantee your salary, but you would be responsible to raise some of the funding for your post.

### Please write for an information pack and application form to:

- Mike Sims, UCCF, 38 De Montfort Street Leicester, LE1 7GP. Telephone 0116 255 1700 Email [mrs@uccf.org.uk](mailto:mrs@uccf.org.uk)

# bookreview



## *Horizons of Hope* Reality in disability.

By Brian H Edwards

Published by DayOne. Paperback £7.99

Horizons of hope draws together testimonies from eight families who have a member with a disability. Each family has had to overcome many struggles on the road to adjusting that life with a disabled family member inevitably brings.

Brian Edwards begins his book by letting us into something of his life with his wife Barbara. Married for 35 years Brian and Barbara Edwards were described by friends as being one and are probably best known for their marriage preparation book "No longer two". What is perhaps less well known is that throughout her married life Barbara lived with rheumatoid arthritis and for the last 12 years of her life was confined to a wheelchair. "From games captain to a wheelchair was not an easy journey, but Barbara never allowed her chronic disability to distract her from those things she counted important in her life." (p25)

All eight accounts are open and honest about the very real challenges each family faces. They are both heart warming, inspirational and a great challenge to our modern day value system. Many families discuss regular hospital visits and the little things that made what was sometimes almost unbearable, tolerable. Brian Edwards chooses the example of a smile and a warm greeting from the meal hostess making everything seem better, even if only for a short while.

This book is very easy to read and each testimony stands alone but the overarching message is that there is rich value in disability lived out in light of the hope that only Christ provides. ■

# Do Not Give Up *Meeting Together*

By Angela Thavaraj

## *Reflections on the past 7 months for the Bristol based Nurses Prayer group*

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews certainly knew the importance of meeting with fellow believers for encouragement and to 'spur one another on towards love and good deeds.' Although we might not always feel our day-to-day work fulfils this high calling of love and good deeds, meeting together regularly can be an active step towards developing our spiritual growth as Christians.

The Bristol based prayer group was set up in October 2001 with the aims of meeting for encouragement and fellowship and to enable us to grow in our knowledge and love of God. It is intended as a forum to discuss a Christian response to issues in nursing and to support and pray for each other in our work and witness as Christians. We are also committed to praying for the work of CNM nationwide and for the committee.

I moved to Bristol in August 2000 and was prayerfully considering the opportunity to start a group locally. I had been involved with the London based prayer group a few years earlier, before CNM was officially launched and had experienced the benefits of meeting together on a regular basis to support and pray for each other. I also gained much enthusiasm and inspiration from the weekend conferences away and the day conferences in London. I made contact with nurses from my own church and advertised in a few other local churches. At our first meeting there were 5 of us and we planned to meet on a monthly basis. This however proved to be too much of a commitment for most people. In the New Year, we resolved to meet every other month and include a meal at the start of each meeting. This has proved much more successful. At the last few meetings the average attendance has been 7, but I am in contact with over 20 nurses (from an initial number of 7).

After the meal we spend time reading the Bible together and have been working through the book of Philippians. Spending time in God's word first, ensures that we are concentrating our minds on His agenda, before praying together. I have been greatly encouraged by the response from many in the group who share the view that the prayer meetings are a great source of encouragement and benefit. The group is still in its infancy but for all of us involved, it is a precious and valuable time to meet together to bring before God and each other the burdens and joys from our profession. We are trusting God for His leading and guiding in the future of this group and continue to pray that it might be used for His glory. ■