

Welcome to the first edition of the new CNM E-Newsletter, which we will aim to bring out every couple of months to keep you up-to-date with what we are doing, other news and events in nursing and midwifery from a Christian perspective, items for prayer and any other matters that may be of interest. The traditional,

paper CNM News will be changing to become a slightly longer journal published once or twice a year.

If you would prefer to get this newsletter as in an email or online version, please let us know at **info@cnm.org.uk** or ring **020 7234 9668**

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for new Christian nurse student groups at Oxford Brookes, Manchester, Kings College London & Southbank University, London
- For Dimity & Annie as they travel around the country supporting student nurses
- For the coming year, and all the challenges and opportunities it presents us and our colleagues & patients

In the News

Is there a crisis of care in Nursing ?

<http://bit.ly/ukRYja>

Spiritual Care Confusion

<http://bit.ly/sfaArN>

World AIDS Day 2011: Is faith healing costing lives?

<http://bit.ly/tv7Cxs>

To strike or not to strike? How should Christians respond to the current dispute over pensions?

<http://bit.ly/swmG6A>

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Follow us

Welcome to the newest member of the CNM team—**Dimity-Grant Frost** works with CNM part time developing the student ministry with Annie Leggett, mostly in and around London, but also across other parts of the UK.

Dimity has worked in oncology and palliative care for many years, and is currently working part-time as a research nurse with the Royal Marsden.

Contact Dimity on **dimity@cmf.org.uk**



Upcoming Events

23 February 2012—Refreshment Evening—for nurses, midwives and students in Greater London, at 18:30, 6 Marshalsea Road SE1 1HL, with time for food, fellowship, prayer and studying the Bible together. Contact **annie.leggett@cmf.org.uk** or ring **020 7234 9667** for more details.

March 10 2012—'Heart of the Matter: Keeping a pure heart in professional practice' - day conference for nurses and allied health professional, Beeston, Notts. Details at www.cnm.org.uk

25 April 2012 'Where Spirit Meets Bone' a day conference on spiritual care in the clinical setting. Medical Education Centre, Northern General Hospital, Sheffield

May 12 2012—God Loves the NHS. A day conference for all Christians working in the health service. Aintree University Hospital, Liverpool. Booking form and details at <http://bit.ly/uXbfOC>

See the CNM Notice Board for details of these and other upcoming events
www.cnm.org.uk

Advent

One of my favourite stories in the New Testament is that of Mary and Elizabeth sharing the news of each other's pregnancies (you can read the full story in **Luke 1:26-38**) Two ordinary women, sharing the joys and fears of imminent motherhood, as women do the world over to this day. Yet in that sharing, they realise that they are at the centre of something amazing that God is doing. And that God breaks in to such mundane and ordinary lives in such unexpected ways is truly amazing. There is another side to this as well; God being born as man to an ordinary, teenage peasant girl in a backwater town in a disregarded edge-of-empire province seems the most bizarre way to bring about the work of salvation of mankind. Surely it requires a palace, great signs in the heavens, kings and leaders from all over the world coming to acknowledge the birth? Even the three kings were nothing of the sort - in Matthew's account the travellers who find Jesus were actually Zoroastrian Priests (Magi) and astrologers from Persia following celestial signs, not kings (**Matt 2:1-12**). And they have to slip out under cover of darkness to avoid giving the game away to a tyrant and mass murderer. Luke tells us that the first to greet Jesus were shepherds – people on the outskirts of society – one step removed from vagabonds and beggars (**Luke 2:8-20**). Hardly an upbeat, glorious heralding of the King of Kings, born in a barn.

But in such a humble birth, Jesus lifts up the humble, and in being born naturally, with all the blood, pain, indignity and mess of human childbirth, He lifts up the value of women and mothers too. In this arrival, Jesus identifies with us and shows us the value of all our arrivals, the dignity and value of all our births.

Which is why this passage gives me pause. Because at the same time we remember this miraculous pregnancy and birth and the value God places on each life brought in to the world, and each mother who brings that life forth, thousands of women and children the world over are dying in pregnancy and childbirth. Poverty, lack of proper facilities and care, poor diet, war, disease – all contribute to an appalling daily death toll of women and their babies. In Niger, 1 in 7 women will die in childbirth. Even in this country, our maternity units are understaffed and under resourced. How many lowly births will happen this Christmas, unnoticed by the world, but precious to God? What a challenge for us as nurses and midwives to see each one cared for and valued!

Mary's prayer when she visits Elizabeth is known as the *Magnificat* (**Luke 1:46-55**) – and talks of rulers being brought down, the humble and poor being lifted up, filling the hungry with good food, yet turning away the rich and unjust. She saw then that the child she carried was going to turn the world upside down. That is the real message of Christmas—God breaking in to bring salvation, hope and life into a dark world, turning the old order of things on it's head, in the manner of His birth, His life, and above all in His death on the cross and resurrection.

My prayer for all of you, working in every part of the NHS and the private sector, as nurses, midwives, students or teachers, is that you would know the presence of the God who made Himself present in a lowly birth, and who care for the weakest and most disregarded. And that you would be able to show all who you care for and work alongside in this coming year the true meaning of the gospel

Have a blessed, peaceful and fruitful new year

Steve Fouch
CNM Secretary