

CMF at 70 - a new era

Mark Pickering looks back to look forward

70

is a significant number in the Bible.

It often indicates completeness, such as the 70 descendants of Jacob,¹ the 70 elders of Israel,² or the 70 years of a traditional human lifespan.³ This year in June, CMF will celebrate its 70th anniversary. Our inception in 1949 was just one year after the birth of the NHS itself. We'll be marking the occasion in several ways – at National Conference in May, at the AGM on 15 June and in our summer publications. We are also preparing a video celebrating how God has faithfully kept CMF through every step of these last seven decades. We'll be remembering some of the people and events that have shaped us as a fellowship of Jesus's disciples in healthcare, whilst looking forward to the challenges and opportunities of the coming years.

Biblical commemoration is never just a sentimental nod to nostalgia, remembering the good old days with fondness. It always has a regenerative and futuristic element to it. In celebrating the Passover, the Israelites recalled God's mighty acts when he rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Yet even today, modern Jews end the celebration with 'next year in Jerusalem!' – a cry for God's restorative action, infused with

Messianic hope. For believers in Jesus, each time we take communion, we not only look back in gratitude to Jesus's saving sacrifice, but we are inspired in the present to live for him with renewed focus. It urges us to look forward to his return in glory as we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.⁴

I took up the reigns as CMF's fifth chief executive on 1 March, after a seamless three-month interregnum during which John Greenall and Graham Sopp led the Fellowship. Prior to that, Peter Saunders served for 27 years with CMF, nine years as Student Secretary followed by 18 years as Chief Executive. Peter has been a tower of strength at CMF and has taken the organisation forward in many ways. Yet Peter would be the first to acknowledge that he, like all of us, stands on the shoulders of those who have gone before. We are all part of the body of Jesus on earth, stretching back 2,000 years to the days of the first disciples, and founded on Jesus himself, our rock and firm foundation.



CMF has been a lifeline to me throughout medical school, during my junior doctor years and in my life as a GP. Every step of the way, it has been the medium through which I've been encouraged to live and speak for Jesus. I have learnt what it means to live as a Christian who is also a doctor, and I have been given opportunities to serve, to partner with, and to train others in doing so. More than that, it has given me so many precious friendships; both with those who have walked the road a little longer than I have, whose wisdom and experience I can draw on, but also with those younger than me, to whose lives I have been able to contribute. CMF has been like a family to me and to many others.

As CMF celebrates God's goodness to us throughout our first 70 years, there is much on the horizon; perplexing challenges in society and healthcare that we need his wisdom in approaching; suffering of mind, body and spirit in our patients that we need his sustaining power in responding to, and incredible opportunities that we need his courage and vision in grasping.

Will you join with us as we launch out in faith into a new era? Can we 'Connect, Grow, Speak and Serve' together as we unite and equip each other to be more effective servants on the worldwide multidisciplinary team led by the Great Physician himself?

Let's make this a year of recommitting ourselves to serve God through his calling to us as healthcare professionals. CMF is a fellowship of thousands of individuals and we all need each other to fulfil his mission. Is there an event you could come to? Is there a local Catalyst Team you could join? Could you give your time or resources to help support CMF and our members through writing, mentoring, or through one of the other myriad opportunities there are?

We're in this together – let's look back in gratitude, look up in the present, and look out for the opportunities that God will give us, as we serve him in the next exciting chapter for CMF that he is writing through each of us.

Mark Pickering is CMF Chief Executive

references

1. Genesis 46:27
2. Numbers 11:16
3. Psalm 90:10
4. 1 Corinthians 11:26

Finances

Better than expected for 2018

At the time of writing, we are busy with the accounts for December 2018. The most recent completed accounts are for September 2018. Total income for the first nine months of the year is £23k higher than budget, which reflects the donations made to support the growth in ministry in 2018, especially in the development of volunteering. Expenditure is £7K under budget. Overall, CMF was £30k ahead of budget at the end of September. However, donations to support the development of volunteering and other new ministry initiatives have fallen over recent months. We hope that members will commit to regular giving to support this work.

CMF Pastoral Care

CMF's ethos has always been to enable Christian doctors to live out their faith in the workplace. But what does that really mean? When you are over-committed, tired and challenged at multiple levels, how do you apply God's word and find 'grace to help in time of need'? The pressures of medical life are huge at all stages of the career cycle. The opportunities for fruitful service are massive. The difficult bit seems to be getting godly solutions to the problems and godly wisdom to realise the potential.

Local churches are invaluable in supporting Christian doctors and nurses, but we have realised there is a need for specialised materials, peer support and mentoring to help Christians navigate the healthcare environment and apply God's word into their often unique situations. We aim to expand our resources for pastoral care to start to address these needs.

To take matters forward, a new post in Graduate Ministries has been created to support pastoral care. This will support the development of a network for peer support and mentoring, study and training materials and explore innovative ways of enabling members to apply God's word and live out their faith day by day. Pray for this work, that many may be encouraged and enabled. Consider too whether you could be involved in supporting this initiative and look out for further news in the months ahead.

Volunteering

Taking a look at a range of opportunities in CMF

Catalyst Teams



currently functioning with at least four more in the pipeline.

Team roles enable members to serve in an area of interest, receive training and support and to be linked with those doing similar roles in other teams. They are also time-limited in order to keep them focussed and to help in regular review. One example of a team role is as a Prayer Catalyst.

Prayer Catalyst:

- As part of the Catalyst Team, gathers prayer requests and supports other Catalysts in areas such as student or juniors' ministry
- Links 'out' to members leading hospital/practice prayer groups, seeking to encourage others to pray in their workplaces, and might consider a day of prayer for a region.
- Links 'in' to central CMF, both receiving and disseminating prayer resources and requests, and might link with Prayer Catalysts on other regional Catalyst Teams with optional training and resourcing webinars and face-to-face sessions.

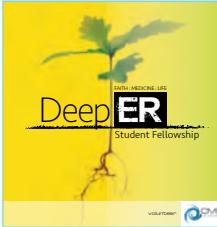
Dr Angela Wilkinson, Catalyst Team Leader in Mersey says, *'Forming a Catalyst Team has allowed us to rethink what we are doing in the region and why. It has revitalised the region. From a tired monthly meeting, we now have a junior doctor group, a student group and are looking towards hospital multidisciplinary groups as well. We are so thankful for how God has blessed this work and what he is doing in the region.'*

We see a multiplication of teams of medics and nurses in every region of the UK, passionate about seeing the kingdom of God manifested in the lives of CMF members. We see teams allowing the grace of Jesus Christ to bring transformation – first in and then through them – to the places they live and work. So how about it? Let's see the vision of CMF fulfilled through the building of transformational teams.

John Greenall is happy to discuss the potential for a team in your area. For more information including an interview with one of our team leaders see cmf.org.uk/catalyst-teams or contact volunteer@cmf.org.uk.

'You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 2:5)

Deep:ER:



Applications are open for Deep:ER Fellowships 2019-20. Closing date 31 May 2019. Aimed at intercalating students and gap-year medics and nurses, spend a year, part-time, applying faith to your studies. For more details and to apply, visit cmf.org.uk/deeper or email volunteer@cmf.org.uk.

Training: Global and Evangelism Tracks



CMF runs training tracks developing leaders in various areas. The second 18-month Global Track started 29-30 March 2019 with a residential at All Nations College for 25 students and junior doctors.

A twelve-month Evangelism and Apologetics Track headed up by our new Evangelism Associate, Richard Scott starts with eleven participants in May. Our Thought Leaders' Track with nine participants continues. We are also developing masterclasses in leadership, writing, speaking, media and debating. Contact volunteer@cmf.org.uk for more details. To see how we are developing leaders across CMF visit cmf.org.uk/volunteer/training-tracks

Associates



Associates are volunteers who can commit to partnering with CMF on a project for two years. Contact us at volunteer@cmf.org.uk.

Student Conference 2019

Learning to 'Work, Rest and Pray' in God's perfect motion

Nearly 400 medical and nursing students gathered at Yarnfield Park in Staffordshire in early February to 'work, rest and pray' together for a weekend. The fun began even before the students arrived as some of them participated in carpool karaoke – a conference tradition that is growing in popularity.

This year, medical students from all over the UK were joined by 16 Sydenham Conference delegates coming from countries as far afield as Botswana and Brazil, Kyrgyzstan and Kenya.

Inspiring comments like the following from one of the Sydenham delegates should prompt us to support this very worthwhile opportunity to prepare student leaders from abroad for their roles at medical schools in their own countries:

'It was like a dream coming true for me! I learned a lot from all the Bible studies and lectures and especially from your example of Christian living! I hope to always remember every detail and to apply all the learning here in Brazil... You were instruments of God in my life!'

Many of the students studying at UK medical schools also come from other countries where they may not receive the depth of relevant Bible teaching that is offered at the conference.

John Wyatt was the main speaker with a series of talks around the theme of finding our place in God's narrative.

Every year, delegates can choose to attend four seminars out of a possible 19 with topics ranging from beginning of life ethics to more theological issues like 'answering difficult questions' (this year presented by former CEO Peter Saunders) and personal topics like 'facing failure' (presented by Head of Student Ministries, Rachel Owusu-Ankomah). All the speakers are experts in their fields who give their time freely, and are blessed by their participation. One of them wrote, 'Had an



amazing time at conference. What a joy!' But the conference is not just about learning and spiritual growth. There are opportunities for students from the various regions to meet and greet each other and make lasting connections for mutual support and encouragement. Time is set aside for activities that are just plain fun – the *techno-ceilidh* on Saturday night is always very popular and this year the large room in which it was held was packed to capacity. Delegates can get in touch with their inner child at the sweet table; and get rid of excess energy (do medical students have any?) by participating in organised runs or keep-fit sessions.

And let's not forget about the food! Mealtimes are eagerly anticipated as the venue provides a wonderful range of nutritious and tasty meals that make the inevitable queuing worthwhile.

The Student Conference is heavily subsidised by CMF; we are so thankful to all our graduate members. A special thanks to those who go above and beyond to help with transport costs and to subsidise first-timers.

This event is so important in the lives of Christian medical students. The impact it has is encapsulated by the following feedback:

'The discussions were so interesting and have changed the way I think about many topics surrounding Christian ethics and my faith.'

'The chance to get to know other Christian medics was incredibly encouraging!'

'After feeling disconnected with God for a while it was nice to be reminded so beautifully of the truths that we believe.'

'Amazing! This was my first year attending and I can say that this was a life changing event! I loved the sessions and how it addressed many issues/challenges that medical students face and how we can solve these using a biblical and a godly approach.'

National Student Council 2019/20

The National Student Council (NSC) is a representative body of medical and nursing students (two per region) who act as a consultative forum for the Student Ministries Team, assisting in vision setting and forward planning. They also play a big role in choosing a theme and relevant seminar topics for the annual Student Conference. Many members also get involved in running events there, for example, the popular pub quiz and *techno-ceilidh*.

Last year, Becky Horton chaired the NSC with support from Vice Chair Jeremy Foster. As Becky graduates this year, Jeremy now steps into the role of Chair and will be supported by a new Vice Chair from Bristol medical school, Silas Anderson.

We are grateful to Becky for her able leadership, and to Jeremy and Silas for being willing to serve their fellow students.

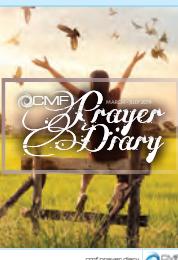
The NSC meets twice a year and the energy and enthusiasm that members bring to the meeting is always a great encouragement to the Student Ministries Team. NSC members give of their time, but also gain valuable experience in leadership and organisation.

Postponed conferences

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the *Medicine, Mission and Me* retreat in May and the *Developing Health Course* in July have both been postponed to 2020.

If you would like further information, please contact global@cmf.org.uk

Prayer Diary



CMF produces a prayer diary three times a year. If you would like to receive this, share prayer requests or share answered prayers, please email prayer@cmf.org.uk.

The prayer diary is also available via the PrayerMate app for iPhone and Android: praynow4.org/christianmedicalfellowship

Graduates

Senior Doctors' Conference

Are you a senior doctor looking to make changes in your working life, or considering or coming up to retirement? Or perhaps just reflecting on how being a disciple of Jesus permeates your work, family and Christian ministry?

This year, CMF is launching our inaugural Senior Doctors' Conference from 13-15 November at The Hayes, Swanwick. There will be the opportunity for fellowship, teaching, friendship and sharing lives as senior Christian doctors in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside.

We will explore topics such as rest and restoration in the Lord, recovering from setbacks, mentoring junior doctors and medical students, becoming spiritual fathers and mothers, mission opportunities in the UK and abroad, serving the church as a doctor, and running the race with joy till the end.

Please save the date in your diaries. We would love to hear from you regarding suggestions and ideas for this conference. Contact me at: felicia.wong@cmf.org.uk

Juniors

It has been nearly six months since the new Junior Doctors' Committee met for the first time. This has been a period of settling in and getting to know each other and assessing where we should be focusing our energy.

Half the committee is engaged in supporting students in the transition to becoming junior doctors. We want to ease the transition to the next stage of members' careers. Leo and Sajan attended the Student Conference and found the opportunity valuable in supporting final years in this transition. They hope to work closely with the National Student Committee and the *Nucleus* team providing valuable resources to help final year students and FY1s.

We want to achieve this by developing local and national connections, and equipping juniors with the tools and resources to serve God locally. Currently we are working on the next Junior Doctors' Conference (Save the date: 25-27 October). We have also restarted the Juniors' Forum page in *Triple Helix*.

A big challenge is helping juniors, who inevitably move often, to find other local juniors to connect with. Please pray for wisdom in how best to support juniors around the country in finding others, and for the formation of groups. It is vital that we meet with other Christian doctors to encourage and inspire one another.

Nurses

Writers' Day Course

In March, we held our second writers' day course for nurses and midwives, led by the indefatigable Andrew Fergusson. The aim of the day was to identify nurses and midwives who have a real passion for writing, and to help give them more skills and confidence.

We also have the ulterior motive of nurturing more writers for our regular CMF nursing magazine, *Spotlight* – this is a great way of encouraging new writers to put their newly acquired writing skills into practice immediately.

Three nurses and two midwifery students attended. Andrew likes a maximum of five participants, so they can have individual input. Already I have heard back from them all with such enthusiastic responses that I'd like to share a few:

'I absolutely loved the writers' day. It was so lovely to meet other Christian nurses and midwives who love writing... Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to go. I'm very happy to try and write something (for Spotlight). I'm keen to put everything I've learned into practice!'

'I really enjoyed the writers' day on Saturday. It was so helpful, and Andrew taught us the essentials for good writing in the future.'

'It was definitely good to bring a prepared written piece. I think it builds confidence to read your work aloud and hear others affirm that you do have something worthwhile to say!'

Our thanks to Andrew for sharing his time and wisdom. Please contact Pippa if you are a nurse or midwife who would also like to develop their writing skills.

Staff movements



Sharon Green

Sharon Green will be joining the CMF Office Team as Mark Pickering's new Executive Assistant from early May.



Richard Scott

Richard Scott has joined us as a CMF Evangelism Associate, developing new resources for sharing faith and an Evangelism Track.



Julie Smith

Julie Smith joined this April as an Associate Staff Worker for nurses, joining Pippa's team with the aim of forming new nursing groups and providing pastoral support to nurses & midwives in East Anglia.

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Dates for your diary

MAY

3-5 CMF National Conference, Yarnfield Park, Staffordshire

JUNE

15 CMF Annual General Meeting (General Committee), Johnson House, London

26 BMA Breakfast, Belfast

OCTOBER

24-26 RCGP Exhibition, ACC, Liverpool
25-27 Junior Doctors' Conference, Hothorpe Hall, Leicestershire

NOVEMBER

18-20 Seniors' Conference, The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire

Please note that the Medicine, Mission and Me retreat in May and the Developing Health Course in July have both been postponed to 2020.

For further information on all these events, please contact: events@cmf.org.uk

CMF News

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