

Looking ahead to 2020

Mark Pickering anticipates a challenging year

The end of the year is always a busy time within CMF. The Student Team are engaging with the new intake of students up and down the country and we are in the midst of the autumn conference season. Inside this edition, you'll read more about the wonderful time we had at the Junior Doctors' Conference, where 150 juniors took time out from the mayhem of their working week to focus on 'Walking the Talk'. John Wyatt reminded them of the perils of unhealthy perfectionism and of how our frail and fleeting human existence can be captured for eternal significance as we submit ourselves to God's gracious plans.

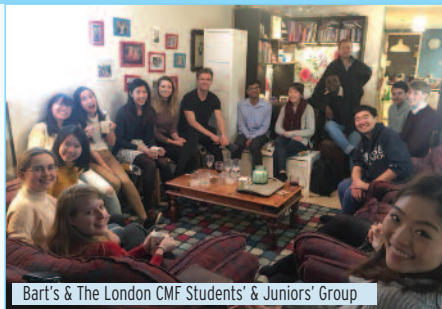
Prior to this, I was delighted to meet 13 international delegates at the Sydenham 2 Conference. All of them are serving the Lord in challenging situations, from Albania to Burkina Faso to India and Thailand. They went home hugely encouraged by the support and resources that CMF staff and members were able to give them; back to their own growing national movements where they will continue to apply the lessons learnt.

As I write, I am looking forward to meeting members during my first visits to the Scottish Conference in Edinburgh and the Seniors' Conference in Derbyshire. I'm excited to hear what God is doing north of the border and in the lives of those for whom decades of service are leading on to different opportunities and challenges in a new season of life.

Looking forward

At CMF, we are looking intently forward to the coming year, as we consider what the Lord is laying before us. At the CMF Board meeting on 5 October, our ministry plans for the year were met with enthusiastic approval. Here are a few tasters for you:

- Taking **Catalyst Teams** to the next level – we now have nine regional teams that are changing the local face of CMF around the country;
- Implementing the **Pastoral Care** project – the day conference on 7 December is the next step in embedding care for struggling members into our regular priorities;
- Increasing our **church engagement** – a new churches e-newsletter is due to launch soon (please let us know if your church or pastor would value this);
- Reshaping our **Public Policy** Department – increasing the focus on supporting members to engage with issues and to speak out;



Bart's & The London CMF Students' & Juniors' Group



SYD2 delegates



Saline training, Northern Ireland

- Launching new tracks and workshops – such as **Health and Justice** and **Medical Politics**, in order to resource and support members operating in challenging fields.

Our intrepid team of staff, along with our growing band of volunteers are well placed to move forward on these projects. We greatly value your prayers and ideas as we do this.

Challenges for the year ahead

We do, however, face a very significant financial challenge in making this vision a reality. The exciting ministry expansion of recent years has proved difficult to match with regular, sustained giving. We are now in a position of needing to be particularly focussed on sustainability and rebuilding our financial reserves.

As many of you will have read in my Christmas Appeal letter, we plan to achieve the above without employing new paid staff, but instead by focussing on growing our capacity through training and supporting key volunteers to help in specific areas. This is not only an increasingly efficient use of the resources that God has given us; it is a wonderful training opportunity that brings encouragement to staff and members alike.

Yet despite that commitment to operating within our existing finances, we still face very significant challenges in meeting our ministry aims. If you haven't done so, please do consider giving to our Christmas Appeal at cmf.org.uk/appeal. Please also pray for the staff and Board members as they look hard at ministry priorities and efficiency options in preparing for the Board meeting on 30 November, when the budget for 2020 will be decided.

CMF is a family. We're in it together. The office staff, Board members and volunteers up and down the country are all there to help you be better supported and more effective as a Christian doctor, nurse, midwife or student, both now and in the future.

During 2020, we'll be engaging with members as we begin to lay plans for our next five-year plan from 2021-2026. Do make the most of some of the various opportunities we have for support and service both nationally and within your region and do let me know your thoughts. It's always a joy to know what God is doing in the lives of members; I would love to hear from you.

Mark Pickering is CMF Chief Executive