

Transitions

Mark Pickering reminds us of Jesus' example of compassion, clarity, and courage in the face of change and uncertainty

Navigating transition is often challenging and risky. Whether it's coming off a slip road onto a motorway, stepping into a rowing boat, or transferring a sick patient between intensive care units, that point of transition between one settled state and another can have disastrous consequences if not managed wisely.

Even harder is when the new situation you're moving to is uncertain, unstable, or inherently dangerous. That is where most of us find ourselves as 2021 unfolds. Gone are any thoughts that COVID would be an intense but short period of stress before we all got back to normal. Like the soldiers who left the UK in 1914, expecting a brief war that would be over by Christmas, we now know that the struggle is much longer, much harder, and involves many millions of people. Whenever COVID is finally 'over', whenever that might be and whatever that might mean, we like they will be in a world that is changed forever.

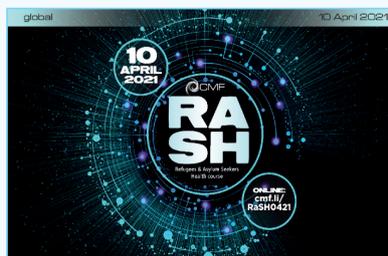
Currently, we see hope as the UK vaccination program proceeds rapidly and deaths fall; there is a reasonable roadmap out of current restrictions. Spring is here, and a hard winter is past. And yet, around the world, many nations are hitting new peaks of infections and deaths. The global vaccine situation is far more challenging, and none of us knows what new and unpredictable variants may lie around the corner. For the NHS, there is the immense challenge of record waiting lists, with 4.6 million officially awaiting care and over 300,000 waiting over a year.¹

As we face the months ahead, let me suggest that we pray for three things that Jesus himself modelled, as the 'Servant of the Lord' from Isaiah:

Compassion – stress and mental health challenges abound, and most people have their own personal grief or struggle. Let us commit to compassion – towards others and ourselves – not breaking bruised reeds,² but binding up wounds – physical, psychological and spiritual.

Clarity – we need to stick to whatever vision God has called us to. What is it that only you can do in this season? Don't let the urgent crowd out the important or be derailed by the expectations of others. Jesus came to 'open eyes that are blind' and be 'a light for the Gentiles'.³ What is he calling us to do?

Courage – most of us are weary and worn out; some of us may be tempted to give up. We will need the Lord's help to keep going, to speak up where necessary, to achieve the vision God has for us.



Let us not falter or be discouraged until the Lord 'establishes justice on earth'.⁴

In all this, CMF's mission is more relevant than ever. This is the first year of our three-year plan, *Wider, Clearer, Closer*, and you will be hearing more detail on that as the year goes on. But for now, let me encourage you to consider our two underlying pillars of *membership* and *engagement*.

Do you have a friend – nurse, midwife, doctor, or student – that you could encourage to join CMF or come to an event? Are you part of a local praying network, such as a Catalyst Team or a local group? We have some excellent online events planned – I'd love it if you could join us:

- Our first ever NHS leadership conference for clinicians and managers – 27 March
- The inspiring Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health course – 10 April
- A fantastic National Conference – 24 April with associate pre and post-conference seminars
- The exciting NAMfest – a great opportunity to introduce new nurses and midwives to CMF – 15 May

In every challenge, both known and unknown, that you and your colleagues will face this year, CMF is here to unite and equip you to live and speak for Jesus.

The people of Israel knew what it was like to live through difficult times of change. Even after the bleak period of exile ended, and the remnant returned to the land of Israel, things were not like they used to be. The new temple was a shadow

of the former one, they had no king, and there was danger on every side. And yet God was with them, and the words of the prophet Isaiah came to pass:

Do not fear for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you...When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned... For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. (Isaiah 43:1-3)

Whatever this year may bring for us, let us not put our faith in vaccines, governments or health services. All of these may be part of God's good provision for us, but we should never risk idolatry by trusting ultimately in them, rather than in our sovereign Lord.

Mark Pickering is CMF Chief Executive.

references (accessed 11/3/21)

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| 1. Trigg N. Covid-19: NHS waits at record high as second wave hits care. <i>BBC News Online</i> , 11 March 2021. bityl.co/5wj0 | 2. Isaiah 42:3 |
| | 3. Isaiah 42:6,7 |
| | 4. Isaiah 42:4 |

Update

Junior Doctors

The past few months have been hectic and tiring for many junior doctors and, indeed, all healthcare professionals. As a committee, we have been seeking ways to support junior doctors in particular. We have begun hosting a regular prayer and reflection time entitled Prayer and Share every Tuesday evening from 7-7:30 pm. This has been a great opportunity to meet up and pray when many cannot do so in person. For more information on Prayer and Share, please contact Paula Busuulwa via prayer@cmf.org.uk.

We are also preparing for this year's Junior Doctors' Conference (JDC), which will take place in November 2021. We hope this will be in-person (with an online offering) – watch this space for updates. (Recordings from JDC 2020 are available on the CMF website).

The Junior Doctors' Committee is also helping support Catalyst Teams (local and regional groups) and the students' team, with a particular focus on our final years, who will shortly be transitioning to FY1. Please don't forget to follow us on social media for regular updates. You can find us on our Instagram, @cmfjuniors and join our Facebook group, CMF Junior Doctors.

Virtual Saline Solution

Saline Solution is a one-day training programme in effective and appropriate Christian witness in the healthcare workplace.

All over the world, the Saline Solution course has been re-invented as a virtual course to respond to the limitations on in-person training due to COVID-19. We have now run three such courses in the UK, which have been a real blessing. We now have a team who have learned how to make the virtual training experience as helpful as possible, even for tired healthcare workers in the evenings! A taster of how we have done this is available at cmf.li/3ve5JWC. Plans are underway for a Saline festival in the coming year. This will be a virtual hour together to share stories in small groups. So, if you have ever led or participated in a Saline Solution course, watch this space, and do get in touch if you have any stories to share.

National Online Conference

Whole-life discipleship – is your life an orange or a peach?

As a Christian healthcare professional, do you continuously feel stretched between juggling work, church and the rest of life? Perhaps you feel guilty that you're failing as a Christian because you don't have enough time or energy to serve in your church, that you are not a 'good and faithful servant', and maybe even that Jesus is disappointed in you? Is work just a means of providing income and giving to 'gospel work'? Do you only see church and Christian workers doing 'ministry'? If so, you might be wondering whether your life outside of church and Christian 'stuff' matters to God? Do you find that life can become meaningless and joyless outside of church?

Maybe without knowing it, you have made artificial compartments in your spiritual life. The church compartments are holier and 'more pleasing to God' than all the other parts. Your life is an orange!

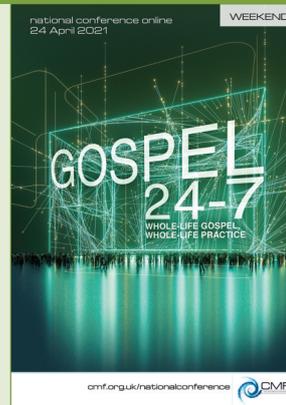
Instead, the whole counsel of God's Word depicts life as a peach – a beautiful, blossoming ripe peach in which the whole of life is your spiritual worship and service, with every aspect of your life to be lived for him.

'And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.' (Colossians 3:17)

'I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.' (Romans 12:1-2)

When it comes to living for Jesus, when we see our lives as peaches rather than oranges, our minds are liberated and our hearts filled with joy and thankfulness – our work, where we spend most of our daily lives, very much matters to God and how we work is part of our spiritual worship.

That's why our theme at **CMF National Online Conference** this year is 'Gospel 24-7: whole-life gospel; whole-life practice', with a fantastic day of talks and fellowship. There will be a pre- and post-conference seminar programme. And to whet your appetite, we



are giving you a copy of *The Great Divide*, written by Mark Greene, our conference speaker, with this edition of *Triple Helix*.

We would love you to join us this year to grasp the majestic scope of the gospel more deeply so that you can blossom in your work and the rest of life for Jesus Christ our Lord.

Register at: cmf.org.uk/nationalconference

Steve Sturman is CMF's Associate Head of Doctors' Ministries and a consultant neurologist in the West Midlands.

Time-out for God: West Midlands online retreat

Isn't it interesting that time-out is a punishment for a child, but it is a treat for an adult? In February, CMF in the West Midlands hosted an online retreat morning entitled **Time-out with God: Finding God's peace in troubled times**. It was a weirdly refreshing change to have a Zoom call with a 'cameras off, mics off' rule - we weren't there to spend time with one another, but with our God. Ross and Liz Bryson led the morning, helpfully and biblically guiding us to think about giving our heavy burdens to Jesus, finding Shalom and maintaining good habits.

Best of all, alongside these led sessions were periods for personal time alone with God. In such a busy season, I would never have etched out a whole morning in my diary for time alone with God (and if I had done, I probably would have felt guilty about all that I could have been doing instead). However, this event made me realise how much I need regular time to enjoy God's presence.

It happened to be a beautiful sunny day, so I used the allocated alone time to get out for a walk and enjoyed God's creation as well as his company. As the Nurses & Midwives link on the West Midlands Catalyst Team, I was thrilled to see some of 'my own kind' at the retreat too. To find out more about the work of Catalyst Teams, visit cmf.org.uk/catalyst-teams. If you're a nurse or midwife, and you'd like to explore how being on a Catalyst Team can help nurses and midwives in your region, email me at georgie@cmf.org.uk.

Georgie Coster is CMF's Associate Head of Nurses & Midwives and an HDU staff nurse in the West Midlands.

A force for hope

New initiative to reach Christian Nurses & Midwives

What could God do with a movement of nurses and midwives who know and love Jesus in all they think, say, and do? How could they transform our health service, our profession, and our nation? How can **you** be part of growing such a *force for hope*?

Throughout 2021, CMF is running a campaign called '**a force for hope**', to bring Christians in nursing and midwifery together to bring change to our nation and our world. This will include events, resources to help you pray and get friends and colleagues involved, and more.

We are asking all CMF members (doctors, nurses, midwives, and everyone else) to think of and pray for one Christian (or 'not yet Christian') in nursing and midwifery, and then:

Get information from our website at cmf.li/AFFH about events for nurses and midwives to which you can invite them.

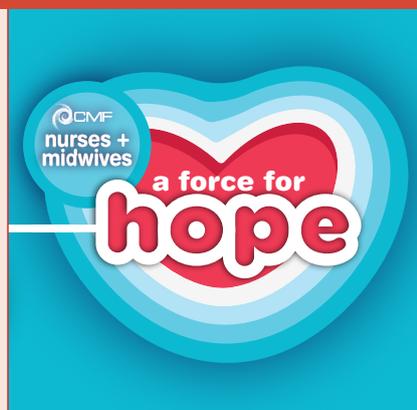
Go and tell them that there is a network of nurses and midwives who love Jesus and would welcome them with open arms.

Give them an invitation to a CMF event and encourage them to come, going with them if that's possible. You could also give them a gift of a year's CMF membership.

The first events you can invite them to are the **CMF National Conference** in April (where we will have a nurse and midwife focused seminar as part of the programme), **NAMfest** in May, and the **Nurses Christian Fellowship (NCFI) Virtual World Congress** in July.

NAMFest is an online Nurses and Midwives Festival on 15 May. It will be an afternoon of fun and fellowship, including a mixture of short inspiring addresses by key nurses and midwives such as Jaqueline Dunkley-Bent, worship led by Tim Hughes, prayer led by The Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Justin Welby and Pete Greig, art and poetry, short seminars, a chance to connect in regions and meet others more local to you, a quiz with a difference, and lots of stories of hope from those working in different areas of nursing and midwifery around the country and the wider world.

More details of the **NCFI World Congress**



9-11 July 2021 are coming online regularly – see ncfi.org/events/ncfi-world-congress-2021 – we hope to get a good UK contingent together for the first time in decades.

So, let's come together in 2021 to celebrate nurses and midwives in this

country and the world over, and to praise and serve the amazing God who has called us into these incredible professions!

For more information on NAMfest go to cmf.li/NAMfest-21 and for *a force for hope* go to cmf.li/AFFH or see the flyer in this edition of *Triple Helix*.

Newly and Recently Qualified Nurses & Midwives online retreat

On 7 February this year, we held the first **Newly and Recently Qualified Online Retreat for nurses and midwives**. Many of our newly and recently qualified nurse and midwife members have been redeployed or have faced additional challenges in the transition from student to qualified life over the last twelve months. With many of us feeling weary and worn out, it was refreshing to gather together for fun and fellowship from the comfort of our own kitchens and living rooms.

We enjoyed a few hours together on Sunday afternoon baking along with one another, as well as having time to reflect and pray together. We considered the joy of being known and loved by God and having unlimited access to him – having been given 'keys of the kingdom'. Whilst our chocolate orange shortbread was in the oven, we sang together. Once we took the shortbread out and drizzled chocolate on top, we were all encouraged by breaking off into pairs to pray for one another around the country.

If you couldn't make it, look out for the next event at cmf.org.uk/nurses_and_midwives; we'd love for you to join us! Contact us on nursesandmidwives@cmf.org.uk **Pippa Peppiatt** is CMF's Head of Nurses & Midwives.

Training

Speakers' Track Scotland

How do we formulate and communicate ideas and arguments addressing the vital ethical issues we face today? Since November last year, CMF's third Speakers' Track has been running, with nine participants and two leaders from around Scotland and the North of England. We meet every other month (currently on Zoom), choosing a topic to tackle in advance, and then each of us will individually think, read and prepare a mini-talk covering an aspect of that topic.

The format is flexible depending on what we as a group find most helpful. In our last session, we focussed on different aspects of the euthanasia debate. Each participant prepared a five-minute talk on one facet of the topic, addressing it to an imaginary audience of politicians, other professionals, or members of the public. Our actual audience was a small group of five other Speakers' Track participants and a leader, who then asked a few questions and gave some feedback. This allows us to learn from each other and to hone our ability to communicate in a safe environment. Thankfully there haven't been any hecklers yet!

Discussing issues like this can quickly become a purely academic exercise when it is a deeply emotive and personal topic. So, in the second half of the session, we discuss the real-life experiences of group members in our professional and personal lives, the lives of patients, or other contacts asking us 'for a pill to end it all'. We discussed how easy it is to brush off this line of conversation to avoid talking about it when it is sometimes appropriate to explore the person's fears and concerns in question.

The Track lasts for two years, and we look forward to being able to meet up in person when allowed as we learn to think and communicate with wisdom and skill on these issues. In our next session, we will discuss gender identity and its implications.

If you are interested in joining a future Speakers' Track, please contact volunteer@cmf.org.uk **Ed Tulloch**, alongside his wife Sarah, is the Southeast Scotland Catalyst Team Leader and a GP Trainee in Edinburgh.

Global

Rethinking mission in the age of COVID-19

Who is My Neighbour Now?

CMF Global ran **Who is My Neighbour Now?** online for the first time on Saturday 6 February. Twenty-five delegates joined us, and Fi McLachlan and Simon Clift led sessions exploring global healthcare and mission.

The updated title (previously Who is My Neighbour?) recognised that COVID-19 has caused people to question global needs and their personal calling to mission. However, rather than putting thinking about their mission vocation on the back-burner, we invited delegates to explore afresh where God might be leading. The online format removed geographic boundaries and proved a versatile, flexible way to explore these issues. Sessions included a biblical overview of mission, current global healthcare needs, and practical steps for the future. We were also able to share videos of our members explaining how mission has changed for them in light of the pandemic.

Over lunch, we gave attendees the opportunity to schedule a call with a mission agency; several of them arranged further contact off the back of these calls. One delegate said that the day 'help[ed] me grow my interest as well as recognising the global mission in my workplace'. Another appreciated the balance 'between the biblical meaning and heart for mission' alongside 'discussion of contemporary challenges'.

Fi McLachlan is CMF's Head of Global.

Refugee and Asylum Seeker Healthcare Course

CMF Global is delighted to run the **Refugee and Asylum Seeker Healthcare Course** online for the first time on Saturday, 10 April 2021. God calls us to care for the stranger in our midst; to protect orphans and widows; to 'act justly and love mercy' (Micah 6:8). How does this translate to the way we care today?

Over the past 20 years, refugees numbering hundreds of thousands have come to the UK, with many seeking asylum. The Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health Course aims to equip Christian healthcare practitioners and others to:

- Improve knowledge of the healthcare needs, responses, and challenges for refugees and asylum seekers in the UK
- Hear examples of good practice
- Foster a dialogue between those working with refugees and asylum seekers for mutual encouragement and support
- Inspire creative ways to engage with health systems for better provision, support and care

The programme is an interactive online learning experience led both by those who have been refugees and healthcare professionals working in this field. If you regularly encounter refugees and asylum seekers in your everyday practice, then this is the day for you! Please visit cmf.li/RaSH0421 for further details and to book.

Sonia Quane is CMF's Global Coordinator.

Thank you for helping us reach our target

In December, we got in touch with all our members and supporters to let you know about our ambitious plans for the coming year, including an overhaul of our website, building up our nursing and midwives' ministry and improving our engagement with local groups and volunteers.

We set a target of £80,000 to enable us to fund this work, and thanks to your generosity we have met and exceeded this target, with a total of £87,540 raised!

We are now pressing ahead with all these initiatives and will be sharing more in *E-News* and at future events.

Thank you once again in your partnership in the gospel.

Staff movements



Sonia Quane

Sonia Quane joined Fi McLachlan in the autumn as the new CMF Global Coordinator.

Obituaries

Richard Cook, *q* 1958, Oxford, Consultant in Paediatric Surgery and former CMF President and Chairman. Died 9 December 2020.

Margaret 'Peggy' Edmunds, *q* 1941, died 19 February 2021 at the age of 102. With her husband John, she was one of the founders of CMF in 1949.

Peter Green, *q* 1948, Edinburgh, surgeon and medical missionary [see *Triple Helix*, Spring 2021]. Died 2 January 2021.

George Johnston, OBE, *q* 1956, Belfast. Consultant Gastroenterologist. Died 27 November 2020.

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Dates for your diary

All events are online and further details will be circulated by email and on our website.

APRIL

10 **Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health course (RaSH)**
cmf.org.uk/RaSH0421

24 **National Online Conference**
cmf.org.uk/nationalconference

MAY

15 **NAMfest**
cmf.li/NAMfest-21

JUNE

12 **CMF General Committee**

JULY

8-9, **Developing Health Course Online**
cmf.org.uk/global/dhc

9-11 **NCFI World Congress**
ncfi.org/events/ncfi-world-congress-2021

For further information please contact:
events@cmf.org.uk.

CMF News

is issued by the CMF Office

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Items for inclusion in the Summer 2021 issue should be sent to CMF Head of Communications Steve Fouch by **30 June 2021**.

A company limited by guarantee
Registered in England no. 6949436
Registered Charity no. 1131658
Registered office: 6 Marshalsea Road, London SE1 1HL

Design: S2 Design 020 8771 9108
Print: Partridge & Print Ltd