



A Message from the BOARD of NCFC

***“Holy Spirit, breathe on me, until my heart is clean;
Let sunshine fill its inmost part, with not a cloud between.
Holy Spirit, breathe on me; my stubborn will subdue.
Teach me in words of living flame, what Christ would have me do.
Breathe on me (x2), Holy Spirit, breathe on me.
Take Thou my heart, cleanse every part; Holy Spirit, breathe on me.”***
(Text by Edwin Hatch based on John 20:22 and music by B.B. McKinney)

This hymn reminds us of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in God’s children.

Spiritual life and vitality are a product of having asked Jesus to come into our lives.

Reading Yvonne and Jacoba’s stories may

help us to understand how the Holy Spirit can empower us to be His witness. Jacoba’s compassion for her colleague and Yvonne’s boldness to share her faith comes from their strong faith in God. Faith prepares us to serve the Lord and minister to others. At the same

time we need to develop our skills in providing spiritual care.

The indwelling Holy Spirit may work through us to comfort and strengthen those around us. NCF Canada encourages both mentors to help develop the next generation of nurses and mentees to grow into maturity with support in the LORD. If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, contact nationalchair@ncfcanada.ca to find out how.

Northern Canada has always been in our prayers. Workers often need to combat isolation and the struggle of limited resources. May the Lord strengthen all nurses and allied healthcare workers, add to their numbers more willing professionals to help keep the people and community in the north healthy and strong.

Building Relationships

By Jacoba Antwi

When I agreed to go to Northern Ontario to nurse, honestly my first thoughts were on how much money I would make and secondly on making a difference.

One would think it would be the other way around. Then the unlikely happened. I was told by the Health Authority which I was applying to that I would earn the same amount I currently earn from ONA’s collective agreement plus the northern allowance. This was less than my weekend premium. My previous experience in Kingfisher Lake had been one full of learning with very good pay, so this was very disappointing. I decided I would not go. Then the Lord started speaking to me through the Holy Spirit. The voice said softly “Just go. Go and see. You must go”.

I started asking myself, what am I going there to do? I would have to switch shifts and request vacation days, and they will most likely be

denied. They were.

The voice kept repeating, like a peaceful command, “Go and see”. It did not stop until I decided to go. When others asked me about it, I would tell them I did not want to go but had to obey God. I was looking forward to what the Lord had in store even though I was in the dark. I felt like Abraham, who moved because the Lord told him to. He obeyed through faith in God, not knowing where he was going but only as the Lord led him (Hebrews 11:8-10). He trusted God. I had to do the same and trust that He will show me what I had to do.

On arrival in Moose Factory, I learnt a lot first about the people within the first week. They didn’t trust outsiders. Most of them had a flat effect and tended to their own business. They would not respond even when I said “Hello”. When I smiled at them, they didn’t smile back. I found this very disconcerting as I am used

to smiling and laughing and enjoy making conversation and jokes often. We often don’t understand what the Lord is doing or trying to accomplish in our lives and in the lives of those we come in contact with.

This is how we know relationships are very important to Him: He sought a personal relationship with each of us and clearly stated it in His Word. With love and compassion, He draws and calls us to Himself. God was in Christ Jesus reconciling us to Him, not thinking of our sins or rejection of Him (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). He wants that relationship with us so badly that He did not wait for us to repent. He sent Jesus to die for us while we were still in our sins to demonstrate His love for us (Romans 5:8). I thought of these things and started to demonstrate love in my actions and speech to the people around me. All while I was looking and paying attention to what or who the Lord would lead me to.

In the second week of my stay, the newly hired nursing group was joined by another nurse



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Building Relationships

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from another First Nations community. During the training and orientation, we grew close as we were going to be at the same nursing station in Fort Albany. We finally left for Fort Albany and on my birthday we got together to share some food and drinks and that was when the revelation came. I saw her face change dramatically when we decided to pray before eating. That was when I knew who the Lord was leading me to.

After the meal, when it was just the two of us sitting and chatting, I asked why she reacted the way she did. She told me that she hated God and Christians because of what the church did with the Residential Schools. Her grandparents had been part of that experience and it damaged

and destroyed their lives.

The Holy Spirit led me to explain the Love of God and His love towards all human beings irrespective of race or ethnicity. I also told her it was not God who committed those acts, but humans. They shouldn't have used the name of God to hide their own evil and wicked ways.

How can someone who loves you to the point of dying for you turn around and do wicked things to you. God is not a man.

After a long conversation on the ways of men versus the ways of God supported by biblical references, she came to agree with me. As we parted ways that night I gave her my Bible and she promised to try to read it. We planned to get together again. I thank and praised the Lord that He allowed her to give me audience in the first place. As the scriptures said Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6). In the same way, my prayer is

that she will be watered and the good Lord will give the increase to bring her to Himself.

To God be the Glory, great things He continues to do. I am glad I was obedient and I pray I will continue to be obedient to His commands to further the work of His Kingdom. Let us continue to build relationships that lead to witnessing and sharing our faith in the Lord.

Jacoba Antwi is the Chair of Ontario NCFC. She is originally from Ghana, lived in the Middle East for 15 years in Bahrain where she was a teacher before coming to Canada. Jacoba graduated at Mohawk-McMaster with her BScN.



She is always active serving the Lord and will continue to serve Him wherever He leads.

This Little Light of Mine!

By Yvonne Baird



I returned to Canada in 2012 with the intention of working part time once I received my registration from CNO. When I realized it would take more than six months, I decided to work as a travel nurse in

California. Upon receiving my registration, I took a contract for six months at a private college teaching PSWs. I met Weeneebayko Area Health Authority at a job fair in Toronto, and once I heard of their job offering, I immediately felt a tug on my heart to go and be a part of this organization so I could work with the First Nations People. I did not care about how much the pay would be, I just felt a peace about this decision.

I had heard so much about how they were mistreated by the early settlers in the name of Christianity.

I arrived in Attawapiskat in April 2018. It was a cold dry day. I had one day of orientation and then began caring for patients of all ages. This was my first interaction with the First Nations People. I was excited but also hesitant, not knowing what to expect. They had a closed culture, and did not warm to outsiders easily. They exhibited a flat affect and would not make eye contact. They were very serious, didn't smile, and would only speak when asked questions about their health. Life as we know it in the south is so different from the north, and a totally a new experience for me. Besides the weather, there is

the isolated nature of the area, and a general lack of things to do. A year and five months later, I can say that I enjoy going into the community and know that with the Lord and Holy Spirit, I can make a difference in the lives of His children.

There are many challenges experienced in the community, including alcohol use and abuse, smoking, suicide, death, anger and abuse, and sexual promiscuity. A lack of self esteem can also be seen among the people. They still talk about the hurts and pains inflicted on them through the parochial schools. The first time I had a chance to speak to a member of the community about Jesus was on my fourth visit to Attawapiskat. A grandmother brought in her eight-year-old grandson to be assessed and treated for lesions on his skin (a very common occurrence there). He noticed the cross on my necklace and asked why I was wearing it. I talked with him about Jesus, how He loves each one of us, that He died for our sins, and that the cross was a symbol of Jesus' love for us. His grandmother explained, via translation by her grandson, that they believed in "The One" (meaning God), and that Cree means "highly spirited."

As we made our way through this fragmented conversation, I found out that she was raised Catholic, and sometimes goes to church. I asked if she had a relationship with Jesus Christ and she replied by telling me that she did not know what that meant. I told her about Jesus and His love. I talked about John 3:16 and Romans 10:9, how easy it is to become a follower of Christ, and encouraged her to read His word and pray to learn more about Him. She nodded her head, said goodbye, and left. I knew that the Holy Spirit was at work in her to do the Father's good work.

I prayed for her that night, believing that God is able to save her and her family. Now whenever she sees me, she smiles and waves. I do not know the impact of our talk, but I believe that a seed was sowed. I have invited her to our church service, but she has not yet come. A spiritual awakening is needed in this community. Please pray that hearts will be receptive to the Word of God and many will be won into the kingdom of God. Lord, I am available to you!!

Yvonne Baird became an RN in 2000. After completing her Masters, she worked as a Nursing Instructor. She knows the Lord wants her to help people and to be a light for Him wherever she goes. Her necklace has always been a conversation starter. Patients would ask her to pray for and with them. Jesus is not openly discussed in the classroom, but everyone knows she is a Christian. Her students would often ask her to pray for them – that was His light shining in a dark place through His children.

Nurses may not have many opportunities to talk about faith in the workplace, but God always provides an open door for Yvonne to answer spiritual questions. Her prayer is that the Lord will use her to love His people, that His light will shine, and that the community will be transformed by His grace as we continue to witness for Jesus.

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Contact us at
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