

## To Engage, Equip and Empower Nurses in Christ

### President's Message

Greetings in the name of Jesus!

*"O taste and see that the  
Lord (our God) is good!  
Blessed is the man who trusts  
and takes refuge in Him."*

*Psalm 34:8*

Trusting in God means that you believe He loves you. You believe that He is good and that He can help you.

These past two years, NCFC has gone through many challenges. To meet the requirements of the new federal act<sup>1</sup> governing not-for-profit organizations, the Board of Directors worked long hours to prepare a continuance that would be representative of our Mission and Values, adhere to our Statement of Faith and that would stay true to our Biblical roots. With God at our side we were successful in our efforts to remain a not-for-profit, charitable organization. To God be the Glory!

I am happy to let you know that your generous financial support towards this ministry is yielding fruitful results from coast to coast. NCFC has been able to offer workshops and seminars on spiritual care as well as seminars on personal

spiritual growth and development to nurses at reduced prices. Breakfast and lunch meetings in various provinces invite nurses and healthcare providers from all stages and levels in their careers to discuss the powerful experiences of Christian nursing within Canada and abroad. Through our Bible study groups, we are equipping and empowering nurses and others healthcare providers to integrate their faith into practice. Mentorship programs are also being offered to students and new graduate nurses successfully across the provinces.

I would like to thank our donors and volunteers who work tirelessly to be a support to the nursing community and encourage them to be ambassadors for Christ Jesus.



In His service and  
for His Glory!

*Judith Fanaken  
NCFC President*

### Me Too

by Julie A Desjardins

*"But encourage one  
another daily."*

*Hebrews 3:13*

I have been struggling these past few months with some things that have left me feeling not quite myself and I am finding it hard to find my balance, where I can begin to recognize myself again and know my way. This struggle has been unexpected, as struggles often are. I don't know this place, I'm not sure how I got here and I don't know the way out. I am using metaphors because the details are not important. We all struggle. We can all say "me too" and encourage each other "to throw off everything that hinders

and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" (Romans 12:1). The battle that we wage is foremost a battle in the mind. What we believe and confess about our situation, our self and God will determine how we experience life. The facts are not always the truth. It is a fact that Jesus died but the truth is He rose from the dead. Sometimes the facts obscure the truth. It may be a fact some mornings you can barely get up but the truth is you are transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2); your illness may be a fact but the truth is by His stripes you are healed (Isaiah

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<sup>1</sup> Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act

*Have comments or suggestions for NCFC Pulse?*

*Drop us a line at [nfcacares@gmail.com](mailto:nfcacares@gmail.com). We'd love to hear from you!*

# A Mother's Heart: Caring For My Daughter Through Chemotherapy

by Elizabeth Obiri-Darko

In the month of May 2014 I accompanied my daughter to her gynecologist for what we believed to be a surgical consult for a uterine fibroid. Needless to say, we were shocked when we received news that the MRI showed a tumour on the ovary which could be cancer.

She was referred to the cancer clinic for a preoperative consult where the oncologist told her that during the surgery if the tumour appeared to be cancerous she would have to perform a total abdominal hysterectomy. My daughter is 40 years old, single and has no children. The news was crushing but still we hoped that it would not be cancer.

The day of the surgery came and I waited for news from the surgeon. You can imagine my anxious thoughts, the whispered prayers, the hope in my heart. After three hours the surgeon came to me. "I'm sorry" she said, "but the tumour

is cancerous and the origin is in the gastro intestine." That meant that the cancer could be stage four! I was devastated. I wanted to cry out loud but I couldn't make a sound. I clasped my hand over my mouth, greatly troubled in my heart. As I stumbled toward the elevator a couple approached me and asked if I was alright but I could not talk and so I just shook my head. The lady reached out and hugged me. I started sobbing, not caring about all the people around me. When I could finally talk, I told them about my daughter. It turned out this couple were a pastor and his wife who were at the hospital to visit their own son. Together they prayed for me and after that I felt strength come to me. God had sent two angels to minister to me, someone to hug me and a shoulder to cry on when I really needed it. This experience helped me throughout the rest of the difficult journey that lay ahead.

A couple of days after the surgery my daughter was discharged and came to stay with us while she recovered. There was a setback and her wound took about a month to heal. She lost weight and I lost weight. I was so sad; I could not talk about my daughter without getting teary. I thanked the Lord though that we had lots of support from the church with everyone praying for us, visiting, bringing us food and supplies; NCFC prayer partners also committed to pray for my daughter. Through it all we could see how the grace of God continued to be with us.

The second stage of the treatment was chemotherapy but first it had to be determined where the primary cancer was. By now it was summer and there were no appointments available in Vancouver for gastroscopy and colonoscopy. We considered getting it done privately

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## JOIN NCFC TODAY!

- ♥ *Is God calling you to **Christian leadership**?*
- ♥ *Do you have a **talent** to share with us?*
- ♥ *Would you like to be a part of a **Nurses' Bible Study** group?*

### Here's your opportunity to join us as an ASSOCIATE!

Your participation will bring deeper cohesiveness, shared leadership and Christian identity in furthering the purpose of NCFC. It's also free for the first year.

Visit our website this summer for more information and watch your mailbox for our full announcement!



# How to Be Encouraged

by Lilian Baxter and the Thornhill Group

*“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Every third Saturday of the month our group meets together for breakfast and to study God’s Word, share information and thoughts, and pray together. Meeting regularly with a group of like-minded Christian nurses is an excellent way to learn from one another and support one another. Through the ages, long before Al-Anon made support groups popular, believers met together in homes, schools, offices, fields, prisons and hospitals, encouraging one another

to stay the course. Many Scriptures emphasize the importance of meeting together and encouraging one another, not least the familiar and oft quoted passage in Hebrews 10:25: “let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching”. Since at least 2009, our group from the Markham-Thornhill area of Ontario has been committed to doing just that. We come together from

all different areas of nursing - public health, hospitals, long term care, Parish nursing, and advanced practice – and we have learned a lot from one another. Sharing life experiences and work-related challenges is a blessing, and through the study of the Word it becomes an opportunity for gaining knowledge, wisdom, spiritual insight, practical guidance and encouragement.

For the past year we have been using a Bible Study resource written by Mary Thompson entitled “Lifestyle of Love: Studies in John 13-17”. Having turned our attention most recently to John 13:36-14:11 we find much to occupy our hearts and minds. We meditate on the central teaching of Jesus that He is the way, the truth and the life. We also see ourselves in the response of the disciples:

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## Me Too

*...continued from page 1*

53:5); it may be a fact that you are in debt but the truth is your God Jehovah Jireh owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10); your addiction may be fact but the truth is you are a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17); the fact may be you are divorced but the truth is you are wanted and loved, the radiant bride of Christ who is faithful forever (Ephesians 5:27). There are many “facts” that would have us believe that God has failed us or that our faith is poppycock but the word of “God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12); it allows us to see in the spirit what we cannot discern in the natural. We need to speak His word over these “facts” that taunt us with their version of reality. The Bible directs us to “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God”, and to “take captive every thought to make it

obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5) because if we let them run loose they attack us but when we take them captive we destroy their ability to destroy us. There have been mornings these last few weeks where my weak declaration of God’s truth over facts that were racing through my mind gave me strength for the day. Fact is, we all have days like that. Fact is, there are seasons and situations in our lives where we cannot make it alone. Whether we are the nurse, the patient or the caregiver, we all need encouragement to keep running the race, to face the facts with the truth. Spring is a time when hope is more easily renewed, when watching green shoots push through dark soil encourages us to cultivate hope in our own hearts. The season will change. As nurses we minister encouragement to our patients; but what about nurses saving nurses? How can we encourage one another to take another step, to not give up, to ask for help so we can keep on being of help? Maybe it’s through a Bible study like the one Lilian

shares about in How To Be Encouraged. Maybe it’s through writing about your own heartache as Elizabeth bravely does in *A Mother’s Heart*. Or maybe it’s through being networked as an NCFC Associate in a family of Christian nurses who pray for one another, mentor one another and encourage one another with this simple phrase: “me too”.



*Julie works as a Primary Care Nurse in Thompson, Manitoba where she lives with her husband and son. She is passionately pursuing Christ and blessed to be the editor for NCFC Pulse.*

You can follow her blog at:  
[www.dosedependent.me](http://www.dosedependent.me)

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## How To Be Encouraged

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impassioned Peters who think they are ready to surrender all then weep bitter tears when their faith is tested and falters; confused Thomases and Phillips who don't know which way to go even when told. Yet in the middle of it all, Jesus is our example – He encourages each one: “do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me” (14:1).

For months we have been able to look into these beautiful meaning-laden words and gain insight, wisdom and encouragement. We have reflected on what it means to know Jesus, to know God and in light of that what it means to know ourselves and others. As we look at how Jesus relates to us, we are encouraged to engage in

deeper relationship with our clients, going beyond facts and information, and reaching with compassion to the heart of their inner being. As nurses we help individuals receiving bad news, going through crises or even nearing death, families who have just lost a loved one and women struggling with unplanned pregnancies. The reassurance and comfort Christ gives us we are to share with others: “do not let your hearts be troubled”. We have a great hope: the way to God is through Jesus - He is our hope and the hope for this troubled world.

Our time spent reading, reflecting on, and discussing God's Word is a powerful way to prepare us for His service through nursing. It leads us to share this wonderful news, knowledge and relationship with others. Won't you join us? Wherever you

are, as part of the body of Christ you too were made to be an encourager. So join us; we can't do without you!

Are you thinking of joining or starting a Bible study group? Do you have an existing Bible study that would meet the needs of nurses?

Contact the Thornhill-Markham NCFC group...we'd love to get to know you and help you grow your own group of encouragers!



## A Mother's Heart

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for a fee of \$3,000 but God answered our prayers and the oncologist got an appointment for her in Maple Ridge about an hours' drive from Vancouver. This time the test result was a miracle: there was no cancer in the stomach or the colon! The CT scan however showed a questionable “hot spot” on the omentum so the Oncologist decided she should have 12 cycles of chemotherapy.

She had a portacath put in and then the treatments, and the trouble, started. The second day after chemo she passed out in the bathroom. We called the ambulance and ended up spending hours in emerg while my daughter received IV hydration. There was severe nausea as well. She had different drugs to reduce the nausea which ended up causing elevated blood sugars. Part of the chemo treatment included going home with a small bottle of liquid which infused over 48 hours so she had to learn to disconnect the bottle from the portacath at home, and a tricky

job that was. Through it all, by the grace of God I was able to be her cheer-lady. Sadly, the fainting attacks continued without any solution. Earnestly I prayed that somehow she would not have to do all 12 cycles. Then in the middle of December the Oncologist said the mid chemo CT scan was good and that because of the serious side effects he would suspend the chemo treatment and even support stopping the treatment altogether. We went home to think about it and my daughter opted to stop the chemo; she had completed 8 of the 12 cycles.

For now she is being followed up with regular appointments. We know that what God has started He will complete (Philippians 1:6). It has been a difficult journey for my daughter and for our whole family, yet through it all we have experienced God's grace and intervention in ways beyond what we could imagine. And so it is that this mother's heart is able to say, before the story is finished,

whatever may come, to God be the glory, great things He has done.



*Elizabeth came to know Jesus as her Lord and Saviour in 1963 while a first year nursing student in her home country of Ghana. She became involved with NCFC a few years after coming to Canada in 1989 and eventually went on to serve as the chair for the BC chapter and also as the National chair. Elizabeth is grateful to God for His faithfulness to her through all the years.*

### Contact Us

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### Visit Us

[www.ncfcanada.ca](http://www.ncfcanada.ca)

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2015 Workshops

## Spirituality in Nursing: Implications for Clinicians, Part 2

*We're hoping to meet you there this year!*

September 25<sup>th</sup>  
 September 30<sup>th</sup>  
 October 3<sup>rd</sup>

Grande Prairie, Alberta  
 St. Albert, Alberta  
 Montréal, Québec

Dates are pending for Winnipeg, Manitoba and Regina, Saskatchewan  
 Please keep checking [NCFCanada.ca](http://NCFCanada.ca) for updated information

SAVE THE DATE!

## Nurses Christian Fellowship International Congress

Since 1968, Nurses Christian Fellowship International (NCFI) has sponsored a Quadrennial World Conference in various international venues.

The next NCFI Quadrennial International Congress will be held **June 6-10, 2016** in the scenic city of Tagaytag, one hour south of Manila in the Philippines.

For more information, visit  
<http://ncfi.org/Conferences/International/ncficongress2016>

### Healthy Lives in a Broken World: A Christian Nursing Response

Our world is a broken place full of suffering yet God created us to live abundant, healthy lives. As Christians and nurses what is our personal and professional response and how do we live the life God created us to live – healthy, holy and joyful?

Network with international colleagues while listening to sought after international speakers; attend workshops, seminars, and regional and international forums. There will also be interest groups, a special meeting for students and young nurses, and a half day excursion.

This will be an event to remember! We hope to see YOU there!

Blessings!

Phyllis Ferrier (NCFI CANA Regional Chair)



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**Tino & Deborah Morgante**

### SPEAKERS

**Dr Aileen Van Ginkel & Rick Hiemstra**

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