Advent: Expecting and Waiting

But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. Luke 1:13.

Zacharias was told before anyone else that God was setting in motion his own visit to earth. He was visited by an angel at the temple where he was performing his priestly duties. The angel’s message was too good to be true! But Zacharias didn’t respond to the news of the coming Savior as much as he expressed doubts about his own ability to father a child at his old age. His age spoke more loudly than God’s promise. As a result, God prevented Zacharias from speaking until the promise became a reality. His son, John the Baptist, prepared the way for our Savior.

Advent is a season of expectant waiting and preparation for the nativity but also for the second coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. There are several meanings of ‘coming’ that Christians describe in Advent. Advent is marked by a spirit of expectation, of anticipation, preparation, of longing. There is a yearning for deliverance from the evils of the world. For many today, the world appears dark, scary, and hopeless so the “good news” of a Savior can offer light to someone in need.

As Faith Community Nurses we have the calling and unique opportunity to spread the good news of hope as we minister to and provide the “intentional care of the spirit”. We can provide comfort as we focus our attention on eternity where God will dwell with his people and peace will be constant. Energy, joy and satisfaction in serving God will never cease. This is the certainty for God’s people in the day of the Lord. We can learn from Zacharias the need to believe and live out our purpose to provide hope, encourage those who doubt and fear, and comfort those who suffer. Are you willing to speak out and prepare others for the coming of the “light of the world”? Blessings to you and your families! Have a Merry Christmas! Marcia

Bio-Ethics Conference was a Blessing to Many

The conference was attended by over 220 participants. 16 exhibitors provided excellent resources and covered a large number of venues. The workshops were very well attended and provided many practical tools for health care workers, administrators, students, pastors, and lay people. Strong spiritual principals were provided and powerful testimonies were given. The comments we received from the conference reflected the positive outcome from the conference. Here are a few of the comments we received: “I got a better idea of helping families with disabled children and care-givers; Will look to see how my church can do better in this area; Begin a ministry with the perspective "God has given us a GIFT. (Gift vs. Problem); How can we help/surround/support?; I learned 2 important gifts we have to offer to those who are suffering: 1) our presence, 2) God's Spirit working through us; There is always hope for people no matter their circumstances; My vision of people needs to stay routed in God's perspective.”

Our speaker, John Kilner, was powerful in his presentations, approachable to all, and guided us through scripture as he met his objectives of helping believers address complex situations and make decisions with Biblical integrity. As always, New Hope Church provided the perfect atmosphere of warm hospitality, delicious food, and a welcoming environment. The planning committee was full of praise and thanksgiving after months of prayer. Resources from the workshop can be found at: http://ncdefca.org/bioethicsconference/
Upcoming Events and Courses

**Increasing Your Confidence as a Patient Advocate**

*Saturday, April 30th,*

SAVE THE DATE for this exciting conference. Our guest speaker, Lores Vlaminck, will share her knowledge and years of experience with you. She speaks nationally on a number of topics. Here are a few:

- Palliative care assessment tools
- Responding to difficult questions from seriously ill patients
- Professionalism, practicing to the top of your license

The complete schedule will be on our website by late January. CEU’s will be available and registration will begin in early March.

To connect to links press CTRL and click on blue highlighted areas.

All links to these events are on our website:

**FCN Foundation courses in 2016** (complete listing of courses in 2016)

**EFCA Online Foundations Course:** [Click here](#) for brochure & application

**Westberg Symposium**

This 50th annual conference will be held April 7—10, 2016 in Chicago. Lois Ustanko is looking into the possibility of providing a bus for all FCN’s in MN to make the trip together. More details will be coming later. It will be a great opportunity to network, learn, and fellowship together.

**Security Conference at Andover**

January 9, 2016 at Constance E Free Church in Andover, MN. Time: 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cost: $20.00 (Continental Breakfast and Lunch) Purpose: Area Church Security Experts and Church Leaders converging to share entry level to advanced Best Practices in Church Security. The Lord has already placed personnel in your congregation to accomplish this mission. Learn to identify and implement doable policies and procedures.

**Increasing Your Confidence as a Patient Advocate**

Elim Care’s Annual Spring Event will be held at Wayzata EFree Church in Wayzata, Minnesota on April 30th from 8:30—3:00 PM. We will be working on the schedule over the next month and will have the full day’s schedule available in late January. You won’t want to miss this opportunity to add tools to your tool box as you advocate for your patients and families through difficult and challenging times.

**Elim Care Spring Networking Event**

**Increasing Your Confidence as a Patient Advocate**

*April 30th @ Wayzata EFree Church, Wayzata, MN*

Serving as a consultant for palliative care, hospice, home care and assisted living, Lores continues to share her passion for excellence in care and services through coaching and mentoring. Her extensive nursing background includes clinical practice in cardiac and intensive care, outpatient clinic services as well as serving as a home care and hospice administrator/director for 19 years in greater Minnesota. Lores obtained her BSN and Master’s degree in nursing education from Bethel University, St. Paul, MN. She is an active member of Leading Age of Minnesota, HPNA and Sigma Theta Tau. Lores is also a trainer for the End-of-Life-Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) and the Education for Physicians on End-of-Life Care (EPEC) curriculum that encompasses palliative and hospice care. She was named 2010 Geriatric ELNEC Educator of the Year by ELNEC. Lores also serves on Elim Care’s Board of Directors.

**Lores J. Vlaminck**
RN, BSN, MA, CHPN
Principal, Lores Consulting
A Prayer for Health Care Workers
Presented at the Bio-Ethics Conference by Shelly Rock, RN, FCN Coordinator, and Elim Care FCN Advisory Board Member

Almighty, Creator God who formed the universe and its inhabitants so creatively and who purposefully made humankind in your image—male and female…. intending us for health and wholeness, Shalom with you and with one another.

Oh Lord we grieve the fall and the rebellion that separates us from you and the wholeness that was intended for each one of us. But out of nothing of our own effort or deserving, you pursued us and provided your very self in Jesus. Not only has Christ come to reconcile us to you but to provide us an example of your very heart—Jesus is our great physician, our wounded healer, our suffering servant.

Sustaining and Transforming Spirit, you have called us out as healthcare professionals, equipped us for the task of tending to the medical and health needs of your people. You will not leave us or forsake us but will guide us forward to be salt and light in your world for the sake of your Name and your beloved people.

Many of us entered our health professions with great confidence in our intellectual abilities and capacities only to be challenged and humbled and amazed time and time again. Lord you see our weariness and our inabilities and you come along side us to restore us and to remind us that you do not assist us in our healing work but that WE ASSIST YOU. May our identity not be grounded in our degrees, titles and achievements but in you Lord. We have learned that health is more than physical health. Remind us that wholeness is initiated by you and that even death can be a part of well-being. Protect us from the temptation of trying to be everything to everyone all of the time. May we realize that there are many other professional disciplines and ministries ready and waiting to join us in restoring health to your people…that we are not alone.

May we be advocates for the dignity of each person under our care. They have been purposefully knit together in their mother’s womb and bear the image of your handiwork.

May we be advocates for justice that quality and accessible care may be had by all who are in need of it. That the voiceless would be heard and that the forgotten would be remembered.

May the hearts of our healthcare leaders and politicians seek your will. That the decisions legislated and enforced would not seek first their strong financial statements or political points but that they would seek first what brings you glory and reflects your character.

Give us the grace each day to be patient with our co-workers, our demanding patients and the sometimes unreasonable expectations of our supervisors. Give us an ability to forgive ourselves and others as we remember all that Christ has done for us.

We need wisdom Lord in the face of difficult ethical dilemmas and the courage to listen to your Spirit, seek wise council and to stand for truth in a relative culture.

Grant us honesty to recognize our own brokenness, burnout and biases. Restore us to wholeness and use us in spite of our falleness.

We answer your call today Lord to join you in your work of loving and caring and advocating for the health of your beloved people.

In Jesus Name, Amen

At the end of the Bio-Ethics Conference, time was dedicated to prayer. We asked God to intervene on behalf of various spheres and the people we serve. These prayers were led by representatives from healthcare, the church, the education community, and the younger generation. Following these prayers the participants huddled into groups of 3 and prayed together as they asked God for wisdom and guidance.
RESOURCES

If you are unable to click on and access links, please email: mflom@elimcare.org

Please take the time to check out our website. We are adding new resources and links on a regular basis that are listed by topic: www.elimcare.org/fcn

Press CTRL and Click on the links below to go directly to the different sites:

Alzheimer’s Disease Resources:
- How Alzheimer’s affects the Brain
- Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Center A site offering practical advice for daily cares and so much more.

Cancer Resources:
- Virginia Piper Cancer Institute
- Becoming a Patient Advocate

Caregiver Support:
- Titled Today’s Caregiver: Today’s Caregiver is the first national magazine to provide information, advice and support specifically addressing the needs of family and professional caregivers...
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers: They provide a self-care education program for family caregivers. The Powerful Tools for Caregivers program will provide you with tools and strategies to better handle the unique caregiver challenges you face. Training is available to become a class leader.

CPR and AED’s: New contact information at Allina for help with CPR courses and AEDs
  Carol Frazee NRP  Office 651.241.4470 • Cell: 651.226.7965 • carol.frazee@allina.com

Dementia:
- Meaningful Activities for those with Dementia

Mental Health:
- Major Depressive Disorder: Disabling and Dangerous
- How to Improve Communication in Your Relationships

Miscellaneous:
- What do I need to know about you as a person to give the best care? Medscape provides a case study with ways to improve the care you can give to your patients. The site offers a number of great resources.
- Menopause and Mood Disorders:
  Befriender’s Ministry: Befrienders Ministry principles guide the ministry and characterize the care a Befrienders brings to others. Honoring these principles supports and strengthens the befriending relationship. 1.God is present, 2.Caring not curing, 3.Nonjudgmental presence, 4.Active listening
  They provide trainings throughout the state. Check dates and locations on their website.

Spiritual Resources:
- Daily Devotionals for the Chronically Ill
- Can You Serve God Where You Are?
A PATIENT ADVOCATE

Mel Bamel, 81, has been in the coronary unit of the hospital for just over a week. He's worried about his pacemaker, his nausea and his slurred speech. He's worried that the doctors who know him best are scattered at several hospitals around Washington and its suburbs, and that the physicians who are caring for him here can't quite agree on what's wrong with him or how to fix it. He's worried about how long he'll stay here, which nursing home rehab unit he'll go to next, and whether he'll be able to return to his own home some day. He certainly doesn't want to go back to the last rehab center, where the air conditioner broke down in the midst of a hot and sticky Washington summer.

Sitting by his side was Joannie Friend, a nurse who talked about his symptoms, explained the side effects of his drugs, and gave advice on coordinating care from all those doctors. She promised to call around to find a nursing home that would be right for him. She spent about 45 minutes with him, and clasped his hands in prayer before she left. Friend is not part of the hospital. She is a parish nurse, working out of her Presbyterian church in Bethesda, Maryland, a Washington suburb.

A recent survey of 6,000 churches by the National Council of Churches USA found that 70 percent provided some health care by trained professionals, whether paid or volunteer. Half gave financial help to people who couldn't pay medical bills. The movement is alive Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand, among other countries. The specifics, naturally, vary. A nurse at a church with many young families may focus on well-baby visits and helping new parents adjust. One whose congregants are elderly might focus on fall prevention or helping people tap into community services for the aging, said Alyson Breisch, who trains parish nurses at Duke University.

BODY, MIND, SPIRIT

Such nurses also provide a spiritual component to healing. Sometimes it takes the form of a traditional religious practice, like Friend's moment of prayer with Bamel. Sometimes it's more amorphous, addressing people's values and sense of meaning in life. For a variety of legal and regulatory reasons, parish nurses typically don't do things like dress wounds, change IVs, or administer injections. They do teach people at the church, in homes, and at hospitals how to manage diseases like hypertension, asthma or diabetes. And they serve as advocates to bewildered patients trying to navigate a fragmented medical system.

Since the parish nursing movement gained momentum in the Chicago area in 1984, it has spread across the country. Nurses work in both liberal and conservative denominations, rich communities and poor ones, cities and suburbs. Sometimes they take on multiple missions. Most members of St. Paul United Church of Christ in St. Louis are elderly and white and Mary Ann Brischetto helps them deal with chronic diseases of aging. When appropriate, she gently helps them plan their end of life care. But the church has also reached out to poor younger families in crisis, whose health, economic, social and emotional problems are intermeshed, and who may respond better to a nurse than to a case worker at the welfare office. Brischetto helps connect them to health and social services they may not have known they were eligible for; in several cases, she has been able to get a correct diagnosis instead of an inaccurate label for a troubled child.

She cites the case of a boy deemed mentally retarded because of poor school performance who needed nothing more than an eye exam and a strong pair of glasses. And she recalled one recent night when she divided her time between the hospital bedside of a dying old woman, and the local jail where a 17-year-old boy was being held.

"It's the most exciting form of nursing that there is," she said. “This is not a field of nursing you go into to retire. You go to give life, and to share in life.”
Suggested Books and Additional Resources

**Just a few Websites and Links to FCN specific Health Ministry Tools:**

Press CTRL and Click on the links below to go directly to the different sites:

- **Honoring Choices:** Minnesota hopes to inspire and support many community-based conversations regarding end-of-life care planning. This website offers a number of resources including a "toolkit" of videos, text and web-links to support these conversations.

- **National Institutes of Health:** 10% of US adults have drug use disorder at some point in their lives.

- **Health Care Ministry:** The Diocese of St. Cloud has a number of great resources for Parish Nursing.

- **Mayo Clinic Teen Suicide Prevention video:** A great video that you can present at groups as you discuss this very difficult and ever increasing problem.

**A Few Suggested Books, Newsletters, and Journals:**


- **Face to Face with Jesus** by Samaa Habib and Bodie Thoene: The thrilling and heart-wrenching true story of a former Muslim woman's journey to heaven and back when she was victim of a terrorist bombing.

- **Josie’s Story:** A mother’s amazing crusade to make medical care safe. Description: In 2001, 18-month-old Josie King died of dehydration and a wrongly-administered narcotic at Johns Hopkins Hospital. ... Her mother, Sorrel King, tells the story and explains how Josie’s death spurred her to work on improving patient safety in hospitals everywhere. Check out the website: [www.josieking.org](http://www.josieking.org)

**YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A NURSE**

I am forever grateful to the special nurse who recognized that I have what it takes to be a nurse. Because of her, I moved up the ladder from nurse’s aid to LPN to RN, and ultimately, I received my BSN. Today, I have more than 20 years experience in the ICU, and I recently took a supervisor’s position. Now, I am considering getting my master’s degree. I owe it all to Maida Leverich, RN who mentored, supported, and encouraged me many years ago. She gave me the motivation to pursue my dreams of becoming a nurse, even though I didn’t believe in myself. Her words of encouragement helped to jump-start me into this wonderful future I now have. Lisa

This story from Lippincott Williams and Wilkins Inspiring Nursing Story of the Day is one of many that you can receive in your inbox weekly. To receive these stories contact: email@reply.lww.com.
Elim Care Faith community Nurse Ministry works with congregations and communities in a collaborative effort by integrating Biblical principles into areas of health and wellness.
The Faith Community Nurse cares for the physical, emotional, relational and spiritual needs of individuals and families of all ages.

Marcia Flom, RN, FCN
Elim Care Faith Community Nurse Coordinator

Helping you to Help Others

Elim Care and Ridgeview Medical Center collaborated together to offer training to Faith Community Nurses who wanted to develop another tool in their tool box for helping patients and families begin the discussion of end of life issues. 7 nurses and 1 doctor attended the training at Cornerstone Assisted Living Facility in Plymouth, MN. Elim Care provided scholarships for the training to those who could not get it paid through their church or workplace. Ginny McMillan, FCN at New Hope Church, had this to say about the day:

“This was one of the best workshops I have ever attended! There was a lot of role playing ("practice" is a less scary description) and wonderful helps (sheets we could laminate) that guided us through the conversations on Advanced Care planning and Directives that we can have with others. The 8 hours went by very quickly and the facilitators from Ridgeview were wonderful! We got lots of helpful information and I am anxious to put it into practice. Several from our Sunday School class have already asked Ken and me to go through the conversation with them. (My husband Ken and I did the workshop together for that very reason. . .something we can do together that is very practical and helpful). THANKS, Elim!”

Our thanks goes out to Sue DeGolier, Director of Volunteer Services, and Mary Jordan, Director of Social Services at Ridgeview. They facilitated the training and provided great resources for all to take home. Also our appreciation to Cornerstone for their great hospitality and refreshments.

Please visit our website at: www.elimcare.org/fcn for resources and a schedule of upcoming events.