

From the President's Kitchen Table Connected to God, connected to each other and connected to CDF – Foundations



The month of March is just about the last opportunity I have to prune my roses.

If I am to cultivate large quantities of blooms for my rose petal confetti, now is the time to make the cuts; to shape the plants, bringing out their beauty and encouraging a long season of flowers and fragrance. In the garden pruning has the potential to produce an abundance of flowers, fruit or ornamental foliage.

To begin pruning, I stand back and look. I visualise how my plant should look when I have finished. What shape should it be? What do I hope it will become? Only then do I start making cuts. First of all, I remove any dead, damaged or diseased stems and, if necessary, cut right back to the main stem. Next, I look for last year's weak and spindly growth and off it comes followed by any stems that cross over spoiling the plant's shape and beauty. I am aiming to allow light and space into its centre. Again, I stand back, take time and look. Is there anything else that needs to go? If there is, I remove that stem too. Finally, I burn the prunings to reduce the risk of spreading disease. Then I wait.

Jesus said; *"I am the vine and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful... No branch can bear fruit by itself... Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me"* (John 15:1-4). Since we are in Christ, we are those branches that God is lovingly pruning.

continued over...



Foundations - the Bible teaches us about foundations. It is only when we build our lives on the firm foundation of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father through the work of the Holy Spirit that we can become that perfect child of God that our Father yearns for us to be. *“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* (1 Corinthians 3:11).

At dental school we lay the foundations of our dental knowledge, ready to add new learning throughout our whole careers. We learn from lecturers, tutors and others who are learning with us. If we rely only on ourselves, we will surely have precarious and weak foundations.

I’m not sure that I realised any of this when I was a student. I could honestly say that I got through dental school on fear. Fear of failing, fear of disappointing my parents, family and friends, fear of failing myself and then what would I do? It is only now, looking back, that I can appreciate and understand those formative years of learning.

So, what has pruning got to do with foundations? God does not just lay our foundations, leaving us to get on with creating our lives. No. As we grow, He continually prunes, nurturing us into the beautiful, flourishing people that He longs for. Pruning stimulates growth and builds a resilient plant that sends roots

deep into the ground. A plant develops that can survive and thrive despite difficult weather conditions, drought or flood, warmth or prolonged cold.

God’s repeated loving pruning of our lives stimulates healthy growth. For plants, this is particularly true if the pruning is carried out in winter. Weak stems can be stimulated to grow vigorously by hard cutting back. Repeated cutting, year by year encourages vigour. Am I taking the analogy too far? Yes, perhaps, but I’m sure you grasp my point. It will take many years of God’s careful pruning for Him to achieve His desired result.

But even firm foundations can be shaken, unsettled and tested. It is not only young people who find challenge and uncertainty in life. Those of us who are

older are continually confronted by new experiences, opportunities and tests. If I am honest, I find myself saying, *“I would rather have things a little easier please God. I’m not up to the challenge, I’m worn out by it all. Give me a break.”*

My current challenges, due to NHSE Orthodontic Procurement, even though I am not a bidder in the process, are stretching me to the limit. Daily I must return to the fundamental Bible promises if I am to cope. I know God hears my voice and He is merciful when I seek His face. He will not hide His face from me nor reject me, forsake me or hand me over to destruction. In Psalm 27 I read His promises that He will receive me, teach me and lead me on a straight path.

I can know this as I seek to remain connected to God by reading and rereading these truths in the Bible, praying and being honest with God, difficult though this is for me. The connections I have with others are opportunities for me to share my worries and to receive prayer. Through CDF God has opened up new connections and brought new friends into my life and for this I thank Him daily.

My daily prayer for us all is that we seek to remain connected to God, connected to each other and connected to CDF.

“Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27:14)

Susie Matthew
CDF President



CDF Scotland Regional Day



Saturday 23rd March 2019 saw dentists from across Scotland gather at Letham St Mark's church in Perth once again to celebrate what God is doing in the profession and seek His guidance for the year to come.

Despite rumours that GDPR (having wiped out half our mailing list) would also see attendance drop, we praise God that this was the largest ever CDF Scotland gathering with 78 delegates! We were also delighted to welcome several of a new generation to conference as a result of a CDF Scotland baby boom in the last few years.

The day was focussed around the theme "To be in His presence: Walking with God in the moment." Over the years at our CDF Scotland conference, we have found that God uses the meeting to speak to us as a group as well as personally – often in profound and life-changing ways. The format of the day provides space to listen to God, speak to delegates as well as time for fellowship and discussion to help unpack what God might be saying to us.

This year, our speaker was Stuart Keir, assistant minister at Central Baptist Church in Dundee. He explored John 15: 1-8 in the first session and Luke 10: 38-42 in the second session. Each was followed by time for discussion, prayer and reflection.

Stuart's pastoral yet challenging approach followed on from similarly themed talks in recent years. God is supporting our troubled profession, yet firmly correcting Christians to live differently.

In addition, we heard reports of how God is using dentists around the world to reach the lost: particularly in areas hard to reach due to discrimination and intimidation of Christians. From work training locals to extract teeth in Burundi, to Gospel preaching in the face of Islamic State in Burkina Faso, and education in an unusually difficult country in East Asia. The provision of healthcare and education provides an opportunity to share the Gospel. We thank God for these opportunities.

Times of fellowship at the conference are very important as, despite being a relatively small group north of the border, we are widely dispersed. Time to share the joys and challenges of life in dentistry have, I know, been incredibly important to many over the years. In a break from tradition, we also stayed for a fellowship meal at the church itself this year. A Chinese banquet for nearly 40 arrived and was soon demolished!

As I reflect on the day, there are four tensions in the Christian life that were

present across the talks, discussions and missionary reports. These were;

1. We can do **nothing** alone, yet we can do **all** things through Christ
2. We are **not indispensable**, yet we are called for a **purpose**
3. We are called to **service**, yet we require **space** with God
4. We are placed **in the world**, yet we are often **counter to the prevailing culture**

These tensions are both reassuring in some senses, yet challenging in others. All the while, we are confident that Christ goes before, is with us and is at our back. In the midst of feeling that we are pulled in all sorts of directions in our professional and personal lives, we can, and must, rely on God; calling upon Him in our time of need.

Although we are the Scottish regional branch of CDF, we do welcome others from elsewhere! We'd be delighted to welcome you to our events. If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive updates about future conferences, please ask to be added by contacting scottishcdf@gmail.com.

Colin Levey

(on behalf of the Scotland regional planning group)

Improving Oral Health in the Philippines



I currently work for Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust as a Specialist in Paediatric Dentistry, working in both hospital and community settings.

Last year I had the opportunity to travel to the Philippines and provide some oral health input to a non-governmental organisation (NGO) called Young Focus (www.youngfocus.org). Young Focus (YF) believes that education is the most effective way to tackle poverty faced by children and young people in the slums of Manila. The organisation was initiated in the early 1990s by a Dutch/ English



couple, Paul and Ann Van Wijgerden, who worked with YWAM in the Smokey Mountain rubbish dump area of Manila. I know Paul and Ann through my local church, who have supported them financially and prayerfully for many years.

YF provides a preschool for three to five-year-olds and parenting classes in health, nutrition and hygiene. Through their school sponsorship programme hundreds of children aged 6 to 20 are enabled to access education locally and supported in this with after school sessions. YF was aware that some of their children had 'bad teeth' and were keen to know the extent of dental disease affecting the children. A brief internet search on dental disease in the Philippines suggested very poor oral health. I therefore offered to provide an oral health needs assessment for them together with some preventive work.

I love to travel and the prospect of seeing and experiencing a new and different culture excited me. The possibility of using my skills and knowledge to help needy people was an added bonus.

The Philippines is an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia consisting of about 7641 islands. Being near the equator, it is always hot and while I was there in

February, the temperature was in the mid 30s most days and humid.

Over a busy fortnight, I examined all the preschool children and some primary and secondary school children (over 400 children in total) using desks for them to lie on and a head torch. One of the teachers translated for me and recorded my data. I also provided oral health education to the children, their teachers and to parents.

The children's dental health was shockingly poor. I am used to seeing extensive caries, having worked in deprived areas of Greater Manchester, but I had never seen so many grossly decayed teeth in such young children and in virtually every child. 96% of the three to five-year-olds had caries and the mean number of decayed teeth per child was fourteen. Many had multiple draining sinuses and were experiencing pain.



Prior to my trip I had wondered whether I would be able to carry out some simple restorative work; ART or hall crowns. Within half an hour I realised that due to the extent of the caries the only possible treatment for these children was multiple extractions and as the children were aged 5 and under, this would need to be carried out under general anaesthesia – not a treatment option in Manila. Despite the extent of dental disease, the children were happy and rarely complained about their teeth. I concluded that oral pain had become the norm for them and they were incredibly resilient. The only way forward is prevention.



In the preschool I was able to establish daily supervised toothbrushing with fully fluoridated toothpaste (1450ppm) using the 'spit don't rinse' method. YF will continue to provide toothbrushes and fluoride toothpaste.

The future: I arranged meetings with dentists working in the Department of Community Dentistry at the University of the Philippines, Manila. They were seeking a new outreach project for undergraduate students and came to visit YF later that week. They are hopeful that YF may be suitable for a student led preventive programme in the future. Hopefully, over time the dental health for

these delightful children and their families will improve.

I was very impressed by the YF organisation and staff. The vast majority of the staff are Filipino and demonstrated such compassion and dedication to the children and their families. I found the Filipino people to be extremely friendly and helpful and Manila to be a fascinating (if somewhat manic) city.

If you would like any further information please contact me via cdfadmin@cdf-uk.org or visit www.youngfocus.org.

Allyson Shepherd

Free Dental Care for Fishermen in Bridlington



Fishermen and their families in Bridlington received free dental care as part of the Seafit Programme. Dentaïd joined forces with The Fishermen's Mission and The Seafarers' Hospital Society to provide dental care at the harbourside onboard the charity's mobile dental unit.

The scheme helps fishermen who often struggle to access dental treatment and other medical care because they work long hours at sea. Seven patients received treatment including several who had been living with long-term dental pain.

Volunteer dentist Jane Lelean extracted seventeen painful teeth and did four fillings along with scale and polishes, oral cancer checks and dental health advice.

Jane, a CDF member, has been involved with Dentaïd for six years. She has worked on their mobile clinic with the fisherman in Poole and Peterhead as well as with homeless people. She says that she aims to screen and treat, providing dental first aid. "I feel like I am making a real difference. I felt dentistry was a real calling for me." She also says that she is blessed so that she may bless others through dentistry. "The fishermen work really hard in dangerous situations. They put their lives at risk to put food on our tables. Even as a vegan, I find this really humbling."

"This was a very busy clinic for our volunteer dental team. The fact that they had to remove so many teeth shows that some fishermen are living in constant dental pain but still aren't accessing dental care," said Dentaïd CEO Andy Evans. "By taking our mobile dental unit to the harbour not only did we help them out of immediate pain, we also helped them re-engage with dentistry which is crucial to their general health and wellbeing."

Many of the patients had not seen a dentist for several years and were suffering from constant pain. "We were told you were coming and I couldn't wait

to see you as I'm having trouble with my teeth and am in a lot of pain," said one patient who hadn't attended for fifteen years and required multiple extractions. "Only being ashore for a brief time between fishing means it's difficult to make and stick to appointments and I have other priorities," said another fisherman who attended the clinic, co-ordinated by the East Riding Healthtrainer Service.



Dentaïd has also run quayside clinics in Poole and Peterhead as part of the Seafit programme and will be working with the Fishermen's Mission and Seafarers' Hospital Society to provide more dental care for fishermen in the future.

News from Liberia

Simon & Grace Stretton-Downes are CDF Mission Partners working in Health Ministries with Serving In Mission (SIM) at ELWA hospital in Liberia. They arrived in July 2017 and are hoping to serve there for the next few years.

Simon works in the Trinity Dental Clinic, alongside Melvina, another dentist, two Dental Nurse Practitioners, a Hygienist, two Denturists and a great supporting staff. Alongside the extractions, there are root canals and composite fillings and a whole range of swellings, infections and traumatic injuries to deal with. There are opportunities to teach, train and encourage the Team.

Grace works three days a week in the hospital assisting with wound care, stores management and some small group teaching.



They are giving thanks to God that after thirteen months in the planning and six months in the building, Trinity Dental Clinic re-opened its doors recently. It has brought together all their creative and practical skills and they rejoice in its completion.



Eddie 'broke ground' on 28th August 2018 before he left to start his five year Dental course in Nairobi.

The new sign was made in Northallerton last summer and carefully transported back with them in November and has now gone up.



This is the team on their opening morning wearing their new uniforms and name badges. They are grateful to Grace who organised them!



Jaylee is there to welcome the patients at reception. They saw sixty-five patients on their first day. As there are now eight surgeries, they have nearly doubled their previous capacity.



Archie is always ready to help. The headlamp and old drill cart are signs that they are still waiting for the arrival of new operating lights and suction units. They are on a 75-day journey from South Africa to Liberia - via Germany and are expected to arrive by late April.



Here is Daniel selecting an instrument from the Central Sterilising Area. The large skylight provides great illumination and means that there is now so much light and space.



Melvina has been a great support. She frees Simon up to focus on supervising and getting the new Clinic ready.



There have been plenty of opportunities for DIY. Simon has fitted wall fans, door locks, shelves, etc, in addition to assembling drill carts and dental chairs.

CDF Annual Conference 2019

1st – 3rd November 2019

Hothorpe Hall, Theddingworth, Leicestershire



This year's CDF Conference is being held at Hothorpe Hall again on 1st to 3rd November.

Our speaker is Peter Chilvers. Peter trained at UMDS (Guy's & St Thomas'). Three-in-One asked him to tell us a little bit about himself.

"Having graduated and completed VT I spent six months working in Zambia with Andy Patching, using the dental unit alongside his colleague Chonde. After returning I changed tack and worked with UCCF based in London assisting the Christian Unions at Imperial, King's and St George's Hospital, amongst others. During that time, I worked part time at a mixed but predominately NHS practice in Gillingham, Kent.

"After five years with UCCF, during which I married Esther, we moved to Sunderland where I took up the post of Associate Minister in a church plant, Bethany City Church, that at the time met in the



Stadium of Light, again whilst working at a mixed dental practice, this time in Washington.

"After five years in the North East, the Lord moved us back down South to serve in a Baptist Church in Bedfordshire. Hockliffe Street Baptist Church is a large church family with real breadth of backgrounds and ages and experience. It also happens to be the home church of Tony and Anne Giles!



"In Leighton Buzzard I also work one morning a week in a predominantly private practice in the town which is great. We have two boys and at the time of writing are in the process of adopting a little girl.

"Spare time is spent with friends and family. I wish I could run more, play more sport, read more and play music more!"

Hothorpe Hall is a beautiful house set in Leicestershire countryside with lovely grounds. Feedback from previous conferences have always been positive with the food and accommodation being very highly rated. It is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones in a relaxing environment.

While You Were Waiting

In the last edition of Three-in-One there was an article from Ian Wilson who was looking for your best story. One that can make you laugh, cry, think but illustrates lives being changed because of the story.

Ian is trying to start a small book project called "While You Were Waiting" that can be placed into Dental Practices around the UK free of charge for waiting patients.

- The booklet will aim to create interest and be an easy quick read which a patient may want to take away with them.
- It will contain stories from around the world & the UK with animations of how colleagues have served the poor & marginalised, made a difference, etc which is a big interest point in UK Dentistry.
- Called, "While You Were Waiting" with a link to the 'While You Were Waiting' website.
- Can't be overtly evangelistic otherwise other practice owners won't receive it. The stories need to be more about changing lives.
- The stories can be funny, serious, contemplative etc.
- Each story you bring will allow me to end the 'chapter' with a quote/ reflection that would create 'evangelistic' interest for the reader.
- End of the booklet is an opportunity to find out more about why the booklet has been written with a Q code that can be used on their mobile phone that takes the reader to a website explaining the Christian faith.

Ian is still keen to hear your stories, so why not drop him a line via cdfadmin@cdf-uk.org.

View From my Chair



In the last edition of Three-in-One I wrote about the fact that I had ordered a new e-bike attachment for my wheelchair and was waiting for its delivery. I'm sure you have all been waiting with excitement for the next instalment. Having ordered the attachment in September it was finally delivered in January.

I had to travel to Widnes in Cheshire to collect my e-bike. Now, as those of you who know me know I am a little bit of a soft southerner. I think that when we meet for conference in Leicester, I've travelled a long way north. All the signs on the M1 tell me I am heading to The North so surely, I'm right! Anyway, I considered the trip to Widnes quite a journey.

The company which imports the e-bikes was set up by someone who is tetraplegic and decided that the best people to offer advice on wheelchairs and other mobility equipment are those who use them. This means that many of the staff employed are wheelchair users. The rep who came to my home to demonstrate the bike was a wheelchair user too. My neighbours were fascinated and amused as our driveway was filled with a vast array of wheelchairs.

When I went to the showroom to collect the bike and have my wheelchair adapted, the engineer was a wheelchair user too and someone else was also collecting their e-bike. There were three of us whizzing around the industrial estate where the company is based when we were taken out on our driving lesson. The weather was somewhat

inclement that day with lots of snow and ice around. I'm guessing that if I managed to control the bike at its maximum speed in those conditions, I should be fairly safe. That said, I don't think I have ever been so cold when I returned to the showroom with frozen fingers and nose. It took a few hours to thaw out completely!

The e-bike has given me an amazing sense of freedom and I am delighted to now be able to "out-run" my nieces who up until now have referred to me as their slowest Aunty! I cause quite a stir when I arrive at church and I don't think anyone really trusts my driving of it yet. In my defence I have yet to run anyone over...!

There was something lovely about being in a place where the wheelchair users outnumbered those who weren't. It gave a great sense of belonging and of being with people who had a closer understanding of what the difficulties of your life are. The sense of being with people who understood me made me think about CDF. I know I found that sense of belonging with CDF too. When I made the decision to leave dentistry and come off the register due to ill health it was difficult to find people who really understood how I was feeling. While dental colleagues understood the feeling of leaving a career I had worked so hard for, they didn't really get the sense of loss of what I felt was a calling from God to be a dentist. Likewise, my friends from church had some sense of the loss I was feeling on a spiritual level but had always been slightly bemused that anyone would choose to be a dentist, so failed to understand that I might miss it on any level! When I contacted the CDF pastoral team, they really understood that. It was a sense of being with people who understood me more.

Because of my contact with the pastoral team I decided to go along to my very first conference back in 2011. I headed north wondering if I was crazy. I didn't know anyone who was going other than two people I had spoken to on the phone on a couple of occasions. Once I arrived, I was overwhelmed by the friendly welcome and how quickly I settled in. I have made friends who understand me and the conference

weekend is now a highlight of my calendar. I tell everyone how I love spending the weekend talking about my two favourite things: Jesus and teeth.

Further information about this year's conference and details of how to book should be sent out soon, so keep an eye out. I can't recommend coming along highly enough. So, go on, be brave and book. Whether you have to venture north like me, or have to head south I can highly recommend it!

Tracey Dalby

Three-in-One Editor

Associate Opportunity

Chu's Dental Care are looking for a dental associate to join the team and provide good quality dental care in a friendly and ethical manner. We are an independently run, busy and family friendly NHS dental practice that has been established for many years in Dunfermline town, which is commutable from many areas in central Scotland by road or rail.

Since taking over in January 2018, we have refurbished and updated the surgeries and public areas. The successful candidate will be joining a long standing support team and will be taking over an established and steadily growing list of loyal NHS patients who have been with the practice for many years. There is scope for private dental treatment, as well as opportunities to expand in any area you may have a specialist interest in as we grow the dental practice to reach its full potential. Sessions: 3-5 days a week, negotiable Enquires should be sent via cdfadmin@cdf-uk.org.

Associate Opportunity

Near Ashby, East Midlands
Two surgery, fully private, recently refurbished.
Well located for Nottingham, Derby and Leicester.
Super supportive team. Excellent long-term potential.
Minimum of one year's experience, interest in endodontics an advantage.
2019 start flexible summer-autumn.
Contact Sandra via cdfadmin@cdf-uk.org.

Deadline for the next issue of Three-in-One is 1st July 2019. Please send contributions to Tracey Dalby: editor@cdf-uk.org

CDF, PO Box 12023, Colchester, CO1 9NX

Email: cdf.sarahfelton@gmail.com Website: www.cdf-uk.org

The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily express those of the Christian Dental Fellowship council or their members

Christian Dental Fellowship is a registered charity. Charity No. 261350