

Daniel: the Dynamic CDF Annual Family Conference, October 2018



Conference 2018

‘Slow braised beef, or salmon in white wine sauce, or field mushrooms stuffed with chopped onions and goat’s cheese’, read the menu in the entrance to the dining room. I had just arrived and sneaked a look. Food is important to me. Maybe to you too.

John Rainer was to be speaker at the meetings and he was going to unlock parts of the book of Daniel. I looked forward to this with anticipation. Learning about my Heavenly Father and His purposes for me is even more important than food. Probably for you too.

People were arriving and Hothorpe Hall seemed alive with hugs, laughter, handshakes, kisses – what a sense of family. I love it.

I had been to a CDF conference around 50 years ago but then felt I was too busy with church, family and work. When I returned to the conference three years ago, I realised I had missed out over the years. A lesson for you – don’t make the mistake I made! The warmth, encouragement and excellent teaching runs alongside relaxation, fun and laughter from two-year-olds through to octogenarians and over.

Registration had been seamless, and following dinner (superb), there was a welcome meeting where Frances Vose, the conference organizer, grinned and gave us the secret code whereby we could sneak in after 11pm and Susie Matthew emphasized that it was Jesus who was inviting us to this time of encouragement, refreshment and renewal.

The children had their own activities, supervised by Kirstie, Tash and Jack. They were divided into two groups, aged 5-11 and 12-16. Both groups studied Daniel, with games, videos and discussions. There was fun and laughter, but no sweets – only Jaffa cakes!

We were blessed indeed to have Desmond Tham and the worship group lead us into a heavenly place at each meeting.

Mark and Miriam Kondowe gave the first Mission Partner update. Shalom Dental Services had been inaugurated in Blantyre, Malawi in 2000 and had grown to a staff of 32. Spirituality is the core value as they supply quality affordable dental care, which is free to the underprivileged. “Don’t give us money – give us dentists”, said Mark.

John Ranier, vicar of St. Peter’s Church in

ShIPLEY, stood in at short notice due to health issues with the original speaker. John took us through Daniel 1, emphasizing that Jesus quoted from the book of Daniel and exhorted us to take the book as seriously as Jesus had. Like Daniel, we live in a hostile culture; how do we live for God in such a culture and can we influence this culture? John showed from that *integrity* and *spiritual gifting* were key. Living with integrity (truthfulness and honesty) is counter-cultural and can be risky, but lack of integrity leads to real trouble. Spiritual gifting (in Daniel’s case, knowing what Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, Daniel 2) enabled Daniel to do the humanly impossible. We need to develop a deep relationship with God and to pursue Him for such gifting. John explained that we live in a post-truth society. “Not a post-tooth society”, said John – and then promised solemnly not to tell any more dental jokes! We adjourned to the lounge where there was much conversation and catching up over drinks.



John Rainer

Sunrise was beautiful and viewed by those present at the well-attended prayer meeting, where we focused on the work of

continued over...



Fruit Platter

the CDF, the conference and those who held office. Then breakfast; what a feast!

Following worship, Jonathan Longhurst introduced the mission partners who were present with us – Simon and Grace, Tony and Ann, *Nina and Aiden*, and John from Dentaaid. There followed a video from two other mission partners who practise dentistry and lecture, in an extremely hostile culture in the Far East, where Jesus cannot be mentioned. They described the situation there as ‘intriguing’.

Nina and Aiden had just returned from another Far East country where evangelism in any form is illegal. In addition to dental treatment, they had joined groups helping the elderly and doing social work carried out largely by house-church Christians. Following arrests of some Christians they had worked with, they are now back in the UK for a season with their two-year old adopted son.

John Rainer then gave us ‘Thoughts From a Lion’s Den’, commencing with a hilarious story about Donald Trump and a parrot. Then the serious stuff – in Daniel 6:4 we read that Daniel was ‘trustworthy, neither corrupt nor negligent’. The story of Daniel in the lions’ den is not primarily a children’s story, but an account of a man who would not compromise, even when faced with being thrown to wild animals. Daniel would have been frightened. How does this speak to us? – there are people with an agenda to persecute Christians. John Rainer himself faced false accusations and the Lord

delivered him. Not every story has a happy ending, but the Lord sometimes brings people to face their worst fears, where they find that Jesus really is Lord. ‘Do not fear’ occurs 365 times in the Bible.

The Clinical Session is covered elsewhere. However, most of us who were not ‘clinical’ went to one of two Non-Dental Activities. Wendy and ten others went to the Craft Session where Karen Paterson taught and supervised tile and glass painting and card making. Christmas ornaments, coasters (tiles) and Christmas and birthday cards were produced. Jason Vose organised people and cars on a Civil War History tour. Phil, a local guide, met us in the parish church in Naseby, which is also the visitor centre for the Naseby battlefield. The background to the conflict was explained, and we visited two memorials, one overlooking the battle site itself. The battle of Naseby was important for three reasons:

- The king’s army was destroyed
- The parliamentarians gained central England
- Documents which led to the execution of the king were captured.

After lunch (sumptuous) and free time, there was a combined EGM and AGM. The EGM concerned a change of wording due to new legislation and took around two minutes. The AGM was relatively brief, with reports having been sent to members. Prince Thomas expressed a willingness to stand as president and was elected president-elect. Statistics showed, overall, a slight increase in numbers (around 100) coming to conference.

Following worship, there was a mission update session. Debbie Hardyman spoke on ‘My Trip to Madagascar’, which had been supported in part by the CDF. Some of her husband’s family had been missionaries there, and she spent a week working with a hospital in an unpronounceable town in the north of the country, which took hours to reach along poor roads. The staff prayed together at the start of each working day and patients had to wait for an appointment, while hearing the gospel. Social work and gospel were integral to one another and there was a delightful unity amongst the staff.

John Elkins, financial director of Dentaaid, told us that though Dentaaid works in over 70 countries around the world, the dental needs of the UK were increasing, especially amongst the 250,000 homeless. A surgery in the back of a lorry was treating such people from Cornwall to Peterhead. Volunteers are continually on trips overseas and large amounts of refurbished equipment is taken out to areas where needed.



Enjoying the delicious food

John Rainer then spoke on 'The Gabriel Papers', covering Daniel chapters 7 to 12, and reading 8:15-19. Following a vision of a ram and a goat, Gabriel appeared to Daniel, and spoke of the future. In somewhat coded form, he assured Daniel that the Anointed One would come. This message indicated that the Messiah would come to Israel around 30 A.D. which is why there was Messianic expectation around the time of Jesus. Gabriel appeared again prior to that time, speaking to Zechariah and Mary. Our God speaks to us too concerning the future and like Daniel, whilst living in difficult times, we need to do so in the assurance that the Messiah will come, bringing a new heaven and a new earth.



Prince Thomas

After dinner (incredible), there was a games evening, with an array of different table games, and people moving from game to game 'when the music started'.

On Sunday, the early morning prayer meeting focused on mission, and Jonathan Longhurst took us through our mission partners and situations, after which each was brought to the Lord.

Following breakfast (so much), we had further mission reports. Simon and Grace Stretton-Downes spoke of recent challenges: their son's cardiac surgery, Grace's fractured collar-bone, the roof blowing off their home in Liberia, the fitted kitchen *not* fitting, termites, humidity and so on. Missionary life is far from glamorous. They entertain people passing through and Grace dresses wounds and teaches on hygiene, whilst Simon carries out dental treatment (including removing a jaw) in Trinity Dental Clinic. Eddie, his assistant, has now left for Nairobi to train as a dentist. There are just five dentists in Liberia and Simon has trained assistants to extract teeth.



Naseby Battlefield Trip

Tony and Ann Giles work with the dream team at Dreamland Mission Hospital in Kenya, as well as at Hope Medical Centre in N'zao, Guinea and in the Gambia. Tony showed us slides of horrific ameloblastomas and other disfiguring tumours and spoke of repairing scores of cleft lips and palates.

John Rainer's final session was on Daniel 10, entitled 'Fresh Perspectives on Prayer'. Most Christians consider prayer of vital importance and yet rate themselves as only mediocre pray-ers. In chapter 10, Daniel is probably in his 70s and though unable to return to Israel with those setting out to rebuild the temple, was praying in Babylon. We can make certain assumptions –

- The world we see, touch, etc. is not everything. The *unseen* spirit world is just as real.
- The spiritual world is frequently the origin of things that happen in 'our world'. For example, when God speaks, or evil spirits oppose us.
- We have access into, and can affect, the unseen world through prayer.
- In the spiritual realm, there are powers opposed to God and which are linked to institutions, empires, etc.
- There is warfare and we are involved.

Jews returned to rebuild the temple, but spiritual powers were opposed to this. These were events linked to the coming of the Messiah. There was spiritual warfare.

Do we need to pray differently? Paul teaches in Ephesians 6 that there is warfare. This is not an extreme ministry but involves our praying. Persistent praying is required and persistent pray-ers are major players in bringing in the kingdom of God. Spiritual forces are often recognized in third world countries, whilst they are frequently ignored

in the West and cause havoc and undermine Christian work.

Our response should be –

- God is on our side! Remember this when praying.
- It is not easy to grow as a pray-er, because we are opposed by spiritual forces. For example, family problems can hinder Christian work.
- In the Name of Jesus, we can take on spiritual forces. God is greater.
- Don't buy into the lies that we are rubbish at praying. God told Daniel that he was a great man – God says the same to us!

Stop to take up the challenge - and pray.

The children's workers spoke about their work during the conference. They had taught very much the same as John Rainer! There had been films and games and they had taught the children how to pray.

There was a final communion service. There was a time of Godly chaos during 'the peace', and following the bread and the wine, the ministry team prayed for those requesting prayer.

The conference concluded with a lunch of roast turkey with all the trimmings, followed by delectable crumble and custard (or cheese).

Conference is a truly fabulous time – make a date in your diary now to be there next year.

Barrie Lawrence

Next year's conference will be held at Hothorpe Hall 1st – 3rd November 2019

Purpose into Practice

Clinical Talk CDF Conference 2018



The clinical talk this year was presented by Dr Jane Lelean and was titled **Purpose into Practice**. Dr Lelean is a Dental Business coach, trainer and mentor. She sold her practice after 20 years of clinical work to fulfil her calling to be a full time coach.

Jane is the founder of the Institute of Dental Business and runs a variety of courses and workshops to 'together make your good practices great'. She is the first Dentist in Europe to be accredited by the International Coach Federation as a Professional Certified Coach and coaching is one of her preferred roles. Jane is heavily involved in Dentaid and has been helping out in the mobile dental units all over the country in the recent past.

In today's harshly competitive dental environment fuelled by marketing gurus, Dr Lelean's talk provided a fresh perspective into patient centred dentistry. She reiterated the point that the focus comes from within our faith and service attitude rather than financial gains. There are several courses created and run by her like:

- Patient Centred Sales - she quoted the verse 'Treat your neighbour as yourself'. Giving importance to people, relationships and the team. Prosperity and contentment will just follow on as a result of that. It focuses on enabling patients to make the best choices for

themselves.

- Transform your Practice in Ten Days – building your practice on the 'Rock'. Having a clear vision, mission and purpose.
- Young Dentists Forum – A group to help newly qualified dentists to support, empower and encourage. It gives a platform for the graduates to discuss the challenges of work and inspire each other.

Jane reflected on the verse Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

It is enough for us just to know that God has the best plans for us. It is not for us to know what the outcomes are but to trust in His provision.

The session involved a lot of audience participation and it gave us time to apply the principles to our own personal situations. We discussed what would be our ideal situation in relation to our work but how the realities of our work are very different to those. We discussed the challenges in present day dentistry - the constant rush, financial challenges, tied up in red tape, fractious teams, patients or team members leaving the practice, broken families, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies, mental health issues etc. Such challenges can make us think - where is God in all this?

Jane brought our minds back to the scripture in Proverbs 29:18

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

We need to think about our purpose and if we have got purpose we have got to START.

We were encouraged to write one thing that we wanted to change. This could be

anything and not necessarily dental and approach it using the acronym START.

- S – Start. Where are you right now? Evaluate yourself truthfully and honestly in relation to the problem.
- T – Target. What is it that you want?
- A – Abstacles. A twist on the word obstacles. What are your blocks and obstructions to get to your target?
- R – Resources and resourcefulness. The resourcefulness is even more important than resources. What is within you to help you get over, under, by and through the obstructions.
- T – To do. You need to actually do it otherwise everything else is in vain. STAR is the cognition but only the T will make things happen.

A very important part of this process is **accountability**. It is key to be accountable to somebody you can trust. We are human and fallible, so finding someone who we are accountable to helps us to stay on track.

Proverbs 10:17 says:

"Whoever heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction leads others astray."

For most of the time we have a tendency to go astray; so it is important to evaluate ourselves. Jane effectively used the example of sailing to illustrate her point. As we sail, we have to avoid the obstacles but keep steering towards our target. The obstacles move us away from the end point and we deviate away from the path. It is vital that we can stop, reflect and steer back toward our target again.

This can be used with the pneumonic TRACK.

- T – Target. Where are we headed to and where am I? What have I achieved? Stop and reflect at these points.

- R – Results. What are the results?
- A – Actual. What did I/we actually do? Look at the fine detail to challenge behaviour, capability and value.
- C – Change. What are we going to change?
- K – Keep. What are we going to keep?

A variety of issues can be dealt with using this approach. We discussed an example of wanting to change and improve personal prayer time. Being honest about it helps to identify the obstacles {abstacles}. The resourcefulness within us provides the means to avoid the blocks. Accountability helps us to be open to correction. As we TRACK our progress, we hope to reach our end goal with fewer deviations. We can use the same approach at work to have better time management, record keeping, attitudes or team work for example.

Micah 6:8

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good, And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

The above summarised what our Lord requires of us. We pray God will enable us to practise that on our Monday mornings as well.

Jane also has a real passion for coaching and mentoring. She progressed to five questions called – Jane’s five magic questions! She used an example of choosing a uniform. Most of us in practice will know how tedious it is to choose a uniform that everyone is happy with! The best part of doing this exercise was that the same principles could be used for any situation from what may seem trivial like choosing a uniform to what may seem like very significant decisions in life. We approached this problem with these 5 questions:

- What does X mean – X is nominal and can be anything. In this case it was the uniform
- What is important about having X that is its usefulness.
- What is essential about having X?

- What is the usefulness and value of X?
- What is the purpose of X?

And then we viewed it from different perspectives.

Patient Perspective – How do patients perceive our uniforms and what do they value?

Business Perspective – What does the uniform represent to the business and to what purpose? What is the usefulness and value to it?

Team Perspective – How does the team view their uniform?

We discussed the five magic questions from each one’s perspective

An often ignored group is the *Emotional Stakeholder’s Perspective* – People who are indirectly affected by your work i.e. family and friends. How are the people close to you affected by decisions? For example, if the practice chooses to work long hours; how does it affect the emotional stakeholders? We found it a really important viewpoint to consider as well during decision-making.

This helps to try and understand the value of the problem and its effect and views from different viewpoints.

It was a remarkably fresh, encouraging and engaging talk. The lessons and tips learnt will be beneficial not just in a dental scenario but in most walks of life. A new way to do business differently without sacrificing our Christian values. As we embark on this path keeping God in the centre, He will certainly reward us and stand by us in times of need.

Deuteronomy 31:6 *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

Dr Lelean finished her talk by saying –

“Your future requires your attention TODAY”.

A lot of the points mentioned here were made more relevant and brought to life because of the passion and presentation style of Jane. This ‘bare foot’ presenter is obviously gifted in this role and was able

to convince us of the importance of reflecting, reviewing and acting to initiate change in our own lives and in our work places. We are personally grateful to Jane for her talk which helped us to just take a step back from the mad rush of Dentistry which seems to take over our lives and to take the time to just introspect and focus on the things that really matter. For anybody wanting any more information or help in these matters Jane is very happy to help and can be contacted via Sarah Felton, the CDF administrator (cdf.sarahfelton@gmail.com).

Kapil & Amarinder Sanghi

DENTISTS WANTED FOR SHALOM DENTAL SERVICES

Two GDPs are sought for a busy, vibrant, private dental practice in Blantyre, Malawi, East Africa. This position is available immediately.

The positions would suit either two individuals or a couple.

Applicants should have at least two years post-qualification experience.

Experience in implants or orthodontics preferred BUT NOT ESSENTIAL, or someone happy to be trained in either orthodontics or implantology.

They should be a keen and enthusiastic team player.

The offer of a contract includes a car, accommodation and an attractive remuneration package as an associate dentist.

Shalom Dental Services is fully equipped with digital radiographs and new Adec chairs, experienced dental nurse assistants and a dental laboratory on site.

Malawi is English speaking, and a beautiful and friendly place to live, with opportunities to visit Lake Malawi, game parks and visit the Zomba Plateau and Mulanje Mountain.

Expressions of interest should be sent to Mr Mark Kondowe, Director and clinical lead, via the CDF administrator (cdf.sarahfelton@gmail.com).

Further details can be viewed on the web site: Shalomdentalmw.com.

Expressions of interest may be followed up by a video chat and successfully short-listed applicants will be invited to visit the practice in Malawi, air fares provided, for a final interview.

Mark Kondowe

Cambodian Adventures



As part of my dental degree at Sheffield University, we are required to undertake an elective programme, whether this be close to home, or in another part of the world. I wanted to choose somewhere that I could develop my skills in practising Dentistry, and use them to make a positive difference to the lives of people who are truly in need. I opted to undergo my elective with the charity 'One-to-One'. One-to-One is a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO), aiming to meet dental, medical, educational, vocational and physical needs, whilst simultaneously demonstrating love in practical ways.

They are a Christian, faith-based NGO, which hopes to meet the holistic needs of children who are orphaned or living on the street, people living in slums, poor families, people with HIV and prisoners. I spent two weeks working with the One-to-One team, based in a couple of the provinces of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. For the first week, we set up our mobile clinic in a local church in Takeo Province, creating a fully-functioning clinic where we could deliver a range of dental treatments to the local community.

What were my first impressions of the area?

I was amazed at the sheer level of deprivation where we were working,

particularly compared to the main city of Phnom Penh, where there seemed to be numerous dental clinics offering up-to-date treatments such as endodontics, crown/bridge and implants. However, it soon became clear to me that these clinics are just not accessible for people living out in the rural provinces, where basic dental treatment is simply unaffordable for many individuals. In addition to this, being rather inexperienced in travelling anywhere out of the UK, arriving in this extremely busy and humid part of the world was a lot to take in all at once! The hospitality and accommodating nature of the team at One-to-One was such a blessing for me at this time, as it took away a lot of my anxieties right from the beginning, allowing me to settle more easily into the trip.

What were my experiences after a week?

After a week, we had provided dental treatment to lots of people in need, receiving great appreciation from them and their families. I was so surprised in



particular by the level of cooperation from the children who received treatment. Children as young as five-years-old were having fillings and extractions carried out without a single tear or complaint! I was also taken aback by how many patients we managed to deliver treatment to in a single session - it was the busiest I have ever felt over my whole time at dental school, which has no doubt given me heaps more clinical experience and allowed me to become a quicker and more efficient worker. We definitely couldn't have done the work we did without the help of the entire dental team, which included the dentist, dental nurses and assistants and dental students in training from the local University. They were such a hard working and committed group of individuals, always keen to help us with whatever they could and ensure we were well fed and looked after during our stay in Cambodia.

How did Dentistry differ between Cambodia and England?

Although many of the treatments that we carried out were essentially the same as here in England, there were lots of fundamental differences between the way treatment was delivered. For example, being used to such a well-regulated, high standard of cross-infection control here in England, I was shocked by how 'dirty' some practices appeared in comparison to this. Handpieces were used for the entire day, even being shared between patients if we were not careful to wipe them before our colleagues took their turn with them. In addition, we relied heavily on alcohol gel to clean our hands effectively between patients, as opposed to washing them with soap and water. Nevertheless, the team tried their best to keep the working environment as clean as they could for us and the patients in our care. The clinic was surprisingly well equipped to carry out a vast range of treatment - from scaling and fissure sealants, to fillings and extractions. I very rarely felt that I did not have instruments or materials which



would not be suitable for the treatment I needed to deliver. The aim of our treatment was to get patients out of pain and try to stabilise their mouths as much as possible in the short space of time we had with them. This meant that treatment plans were often more invasive than in England, as the patients we were treating may not see another dentist for several years. We carried out extractions on almost every patient, taking away as many poor prognosis teeth as possible to prevent them causing pain in the future.

What was the plan for each day on the programme?

We would set our alarms for around 7am each day, meeting the team for breakfast shortly after this at a local restaurant. We would then be driven to the mobile clinic, and start working around 9am. The morning clinic ran from 9-12:30, after which we were taken for lunch at a local restaurant, and then continued with clinic from 2-4:30pm. We were supervised by one dentist, who would screen and treatment plan for each patient and then send them on to us to deliver the treatment. Following the clinic, we returned to our hotel for a late dinner, and had some time in the evening to relax before bed. Definitely a full day's worth of work, which was exactly what I wanted, having travelled all the way from England to take part in the programme!



Where did I see God in my elective experience?

There was an immediate sense of God's presence as I began working with One-to-

One. We set up the clinic inside the local church at Takeo province. Just being in a place of worship made me feel that little bit closer to home and of course a lot closer to God. Prior to my trip, I was given some advice from a friend at church, which was to 'let myself be blessed by the people in need'. I didn't honestly appreciate the true meaning of this until I had spent my first day working on the clinic. I was able to see just how appreciative these people were for the treatment we were providing and how incredibly happy and positive they seemed as a community. Coming from such a wealthy country, it struck me how we (myself included!) have developed a bit of a 'blame culture', so often getting into a rut with complaining about certain aspects of our lives, and looking for someone else to point blame. In contrast to this, in the majority of cases I came across in Takeo, I would only see happy, smiling faces walking towards my chair (even if their presenting complaint was pain!). I was incredibly blessed by the gratitude received from every single patient under my care, which brought to mind this verse; Luke 6:38 says "Give and it will be given to you". I believe as we generously give more of ourselves to God and His people, we will in turn receive His blessings in abundance.

I felt that God was also at work in many of the team at One-to-One. Our team leader was very open in sharing his story with us; about his journey to Faith and what his job means to him. When he was younger, he lived a very different life, becoming involved with crime, drugs and alcohol. However, as he was introduced to the Christian Church, he began to learn more about God; discovering the great love and compassion that He offers us. A few years ago, he decided to give his life God, turning his life around, now living it for God and the good of His people. Working with One-to-One allows this man to serve his country, spreading God's love and message to every individual he cares for. This was such a beautiful story to hear and demonstrated how the Christian ethos of the charity is drawing people closer to God through their work.

How has the trip influenced your future practice in Dentistry?

After working with One-to-One, I have gained knowledge and skills in my practical work for example I feel that my extraction techniques have developed, and I am now able to work at a faster pace when carrying out treatments such as checkups and fillings. Since returning to Sheffield, I have noticed a significant shift in my confidence level. I find myself able to make decisions a lot more efficiently and effectively than before, allowing me to become a more productive worker. I have no doubt that this will serve me well as I progress in my career. In addition to this, the trip has inspired me to consider another elective in the future, which may well involve returning to this area of the world to work with One-to-One again!



Would I recommend One-to-One to others?

I would highly recommend One-to-One to anyone planning an elective. I felt safe and well looked after by the team and was given such an amazing opportunity to use my skills to serve a community in need. For an individual new to travelling, this programme was ideal for me, as every aspect of the trip is planned for you. Accommodation, food, internal transport, and the placement itself is well organised and all of your hard work is of great value to the charity. I would say that doing an elective away from home is a great way to escape from day-to-day stresses and commitments and give yourself some much needed headspace to look at the bigger picture - what I would call 'giving your brain a mental vacation!'.

Catherine Gough
Dental Student
Sheffield University

From the President's kitchen table



Connected to God, connected to each other and connected to CDF – looking in the right direction

We walked round Birkrigg Common the wrong way last week. Birkrigg Common is a small hill with large areas of limestone pavement near our home. From it there are splendid 360° views around Morecambe Bay, down to Blackpool, up to the Lake District and out to the Isle of Man.

Recently, when some friends were on holiday, my husband and I had the pleasure of taking their dog, Poppy for walks. They suggested some of her favourite places; one being a clockwise circumnavigation of Birkrigg Common.

Previously our walks would have taken us in an anti-clockwise direction due to the foibles of our old collie dog. Like many other rescued collies, and mature adult humans for that matter, myself included, she could not tolerate changes to her normal routines, hence the regular anti-clockwise circumnavigation.

Walking contrary to a familiar path, was an eye-opening and thought-provoking experience for me. Accustomed as I was to this particular hillside, walking the other way was a totally different experience. It was difficult to be quite sure that I knew where I was.

Sometimes in life when we see familiar things another way we are taken by surprise at their strangeness. Perhaps we feel unsettled and uncomfortable, or refreshed and inspired, excited by the new perspective. We may wonder how we missed this new aspect. Stop, stand, look and discover something new and unexpected.

From time to time I find the same when reading a familiar Bible passage. I find there is always something new in Romans 12. It had to be learned by heart at my school and now I am glad. *“Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and worship”* (Romans 12:1 NIV). As recent prayer copied into my journal reads;

Lord, today I offer you my body as a living sacrifice. I am available to you. I give everything to you once again—my life my time, money, ambitions, plans, hopes and desires. Show me your good, pleasing and perfect will. BIOY¹

And so as dental professionals we should be constantly reviewing the familiar and appraising what we know and do with fresh eyes and from a new or different perspective.

The General Dental Council² expects us to provide good quality care based on current evidence and authoritative guidance; to work within our knowledge, skills, professional competence and abilities and to keep up to date throughout our working life. Not only must we accumulate the appropriate number of CPD hours, but we must also organise this as a personal development plan or PDP, relevant to our field of practice. To me that's quite a tall order, so where could we start?

In CDF we seek to equip Christian dentists to live out their Christian faith in life and work and to encourage and support dental students and dental care professionals in their training and those who have recently qualified. At Conference Dr Jane Lelean gave a talk entitled, *“Purpose into Practice,”* on just this subject. Thank you, Jane, for a most helpful, equipping and practical session. (see pages 4-5)

Thanks to our late CDF colleague, Alan Lawrence OBE, we are now all familiar with the concept of evidence-based dentistry.

Alan's article, *“The challenge of introducing an evidence-based approach to our Christian faith,”* (CDF Newsround, Winter 2000/2001) encouraged us to be evidence-based Christians, *“always prepared to give an*

answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15). He continued, *“the Bible is a living textbook brought to life by the work of the Holy Spirit”* that helps us answer questions of eternal life when we use it for our continuous spiritual development.”

Bible study and fellowship with other Christians, especially other Christian dentists helps us make sense of this evidence in the Bible so that we can put it into practice as we come to know God better and understand more of ourselves. Thus, we keep up to date, finding new insights in those familiar passages.

I was inspired by his writing and based a presentation to my MOrth course colleagues on becoming evidence-based people. I'm not sure what impact my talk had but Prof liked it and that was what mattered at the time!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Alan's wife Judith, who until April this year, has opened her home to Council members for meetings, welcoming and feeding us too. Thank you very much Judith, we are all extremely grateful.

Finally, I leave you with this, *“So, here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.”* (Romans 12:1, The Message)

Susie Matthew
CDF President

Refs:

1. Bible in One Year, 29th July 2018
2. GDC Standard 7.1,2&3

CDF Council Vacancies

There are currently two vacancies on CDF Council. The first is the Regional Groups Co-ordinator and the second is the DCP representative. Details of what the jobs entail can be got from Sarah Felton, our administrator.

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If you are interested please contact Susie Matthew via Sarah.

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