

International conference for Christian Science nurses

In early September I flew from Heathrow to St. Louis (via Atlanta) to attend the International Christian Science Nurses Conference (ICSNC). These biennial conferences are organized by the Christian Science Nursing Network, a US-based organization that supports the public practice of CS nursing worldwide.

The conference took place in the beautiful, secluded setting of Cedars Camps in Lebanon, southern Missouri - a three-hour drive from St. Louis airport. ICSNC took place over four days - September 4th-8th, 2019. Over one hundred Christian Science nurses attended, from nine countries: USA, Canada, Australia, Cameroon, England, Wales, France, Portugal, and Switzerland.

The theme of ICSNC was "Here I am, Lord," based on Isaiah chapter six, verse eight. The conference included workshops on a range of subjects, including cleansing and bandaging; preparing special nourishment; and responding to the challenges of night-duty. Bonnie Castroman, Manager of Christian Science Nursing Activities at The Mother Church, gave a report and update on her work.

My favourite talk during the conference was entitled "Mary Baker Eddy and the Scriptures," given by Brad Stock, Professor of Religious Studies at Principia College. Professor Stock referred to Mrs Eddy's extensive scriptural research during her young adulthood and confirmed that she wrote extensive commentaries on the Scriptures before her discovery of Christian Science. Professor Stock's talk affirmed the pivotal role of the Bible in the Christian Science movement and instilled in all of us a deeper commitment to "search the Scriptures" (John 5:39).

ICSNC concluded on Saturday evening with a concert by two Boston-based musicians - and *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurses - Kathy Glover and Kristin Palkoner. On that final evening, as I walked back to my bunk-bed in the shared cabins that participants use during the conference, I thought of this verse from hymn 150:

*We thank Thee for work in the wide harvest field,
For gladness that ripens when sorrow is healed;
Made strong with Thy goodness that meets every need,
We gather the fruits of the Sower's good seed.*

I returned home to South Wales encouraged, inspired, and deeply enriched after spending four days in the company of Christian Science nurses whose active ministries embrace the globe.

Alistair Budd

