

**Register for the Fall Conference Sept 19-22 by August 19 - Call 574 825 9471
invite other Free Methodist health professionals to attend!**



Free Methodist Healthcare Fellowship

Whole Person Care Newsletter

**FREE METHODIST HEALTHCARE FELLOWSHIP TO HOST
NATIONALLY KNOWN SPEAKER
AT 2014 CONSULTATION SEPT 19-21
AT THE ESSENHAUS, MIDDLEBURY, INDIANA.
www.essenhaus.com**

Willard Swartley is professor emeritus in New Testament at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He has been dean of that school and acting president. He has published many articles, reviews and books including Health, Healing and the Churches Mission: Biblical Perspectives and Moral Priorities. Published by Intervarsity Press in 2012, this book was a featured book of the month by IV Press, which is how I became aware of it and of Dr. Swartley.

On Friday evening he will present a biblical understanding of health, illness, suffering and healing. He will continue on this on Saturday morning and then move onto the church as a healing community and include disability, God's two hands of love, which is one of the chapters in his book. When looking at illness, suffering and healing, he brings in many different Bible verses rather than a few that happen to support one viewpoint. He also wants to address the issue of health and medicine as an idol and making medicine a God, which leads to impossible expectations

On Saturday evening, we will have an open discussion of our Church's mission in terms of promoting healing and being a healing community. How can our individual churches promote health and be healing communities? How can our organization promote this? How can we promote this in our own church? Also how can what we learned today impact our professional

lives, as well as that of our church? Dr. Swartley will have left, but Dr. Howard Snyder will be at the conference and can help moderate the evening discussion.

TO REGISTER:

CALL ESSENHAUS IN MIDDLEBURY IND. (574 825 9471).

We have a block of rooms reserved, The cost varies from \$102 to \$142 a night. REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR THE SPECIAL ROOM RATE IS AUGUST 19. By registering for a room in our reserved block you have registered for the conference and you can pay that registration on arrival. Cancellation is possible in case you are not sure.

We know who is coming by who has reserved rooms. When you arrive you can pay the conference registration fee, which will be \$70 for one person and \$30 for the second plus \$25 a person for our Saturday night banquet. Breakfast is included in the room rate. Students, residents and others with financial hardship should e mail normwetterau@aol.com. There may also be limited funds to help with the room for students and residents.

Our group includes all people in health professions including hospital and nursing home chaplains. Please invite these people. There are hundreds of them who are Free Methodist and live within a 5 or 6 hour drive of the conference center. Invite them.

Hope Africa Dental School
by Norman Wetterau MD

There are no dental schools in Burundi. Bishop Eli Buconyori had a great vision for a full health sciences university at Hope Africa. Indeed, there is a medical school, nursing school with an MA in nursing, physical therapy school, optometry or eye disease school, and an MS in public health. A year before his death, I met with him as he shared his vision for a dental school. Progress is being made. Six dental chairs have been sent from the US to the school. Additional material is needed.
(continued on next page)



Sent to Hope Africa in late 2012, this container included equipment to begin the dental school.

The Hope Africa dental school program is 6 years and has been accredited by the government. The plan is to finish the second story on the second building of the Van Norman Clinic and put the clinical part of the dental school there. There is a local dentist who is already teaching and willing to increase his time there as needed. There are 25 students enrolled in their second year.

The Bishop's vision was often way ahead of resources and reality, but he was a believer in prayer and miracles. Indeed, the medical school now has 8 American doctors, which seemed impossible 5 years ago. In a sense, the dental school is still a dream, but a dream with some beginning in terms of students and some equipment. One good thing is that the University did not admit any dental students this year, so there are only 25 students now who will need clinical experience in the coming years. The head of Hope Africa, Gerald Bates, is asking for equipment and donations to finish the dental part of the building. He wants dentists who would volunteer to teach a course, starting in 2015. What may be needed the most is someone to help coordinate all this. Without this person, things may remain disorganized and people could arrive to teach and not have working equipment.

As we pray, let's pray for this person, ideally this dentist, either young, mid career or retired, would go there for a significant part of the year or go as a full time missionary. Hope Africa has a several full time surgeons. Let's ask God for a full time dentist. Another option would be someone retired who would have this as their full time project, spending part of the time there and part here recruiting dental instructors and donations of equipment. Maybe God would give the school both.

People with an interest can correspond with Gerald Bates and/or Barbara Rose of Friends of Hope Africa, email go@haufriends.org.



Follow-up on Alcohol Article in Last newsletter

Several members e-mailed agreement with the supported position of total abstinence. Since over half of those who use alcohol drink above the safe limits on occasion, and many do this often and are addicted, and since drinking is often a social event, and social events, even in Christian circles, can become focused on alcohol, the position of total abstinence has much to argue for it.



Since that short article, Life and Light had several articles in their May edition. Alcohol is not the only addiction, but is an important one. Christianity Today's recent May issue had on its cover a picture of a drink and the headline: The Case for an Alcohol-Free Life. This author had been one of those young evangelical Christians who wanted to enjoy his freedom and drink. His young Christian friends did the same, and in reality, they were a group of educated Christians who generally drank moderately but clearly wanted to enjoy their freedom to drink alcohol. He then moved to a church in a poorer neighborhood and saw the ugly side of alcohol. With so many around him having alcohol problems, and so many in the church in recovery, how could he keep insisting on his own freedom to drink? A second article showed that our evangelical brothers of 100 years go were really radical reformers in their approach to alcohol. You cannot really address poverty, marital discord and poor health unless you are willing to address alcohol. Christians who insist on their freedom to drink need to take a serious look at the situation. Those who were for abstinence were not the conservatives, but the radicals.

Finally, I had my own experience this spring. I was visiting a close relative that is a very committed Christian and has good Christian friends. The wives left on a woman event and the men stayed with the children. The first part of the evening was great with the kids swimming and everyone having a picnic. Later, when the kids were settled down in front of the TV, the 5 men gathered at the kitchen table to talk. The host brought in some international beers and began talking about their features. People began to choose which beer they wanted to try. One other person said he did not usually drink, but ended up trying a beer. All the talk was about beer and when they finally wanted to know if I wanted to try some, I said no, I did not drink, and told

them that our own church is generally an abstinence based church. No one brought me fruit juice and the talk about beers continued. No one had more than one beer. Even though I felt close to these people, I felt very uncomfortable, and finally left the room. Since my social life is very integrated in my church, would I attend there if I moved to the area? I have no doubt that those present would feel terrible if they read this. There was no sin involved. I have been with other Christian friends who felt uncomfortable when I refused wine. If a Christian should decide to offer alcohol, as a minimum, they need to have a nonalcoholic beverage and make sure that this is offered in the same way that the alcoholic beverage is offered.

This will become more complicated where marijuana is legal. Again there is freedom. Maybe the next time the group will be smoking a joint while the kids are watching TV. They can be talking about the various strains and features of what they are smoking. I am not sure what they will offer those who do not choose to smoke. Maybe they can be the designated driver or have a few drinks of whisky.

The Free Methodist Healthcare Fellowship can be a leader in helping our denomination address these difficult issues and maintain the radical type of viewpoint Christians once had.

CAHO Board



The CAHO board will meet with Free Methodist Healthcare Fellowship at our fall retreat September 19-21.

The CAHO board plans to meet Friday before our retreat at the Essenhous in Indiana. This group will be a great addition to our weekend fellowship. Missions are not the main focus of the Free Methodist Healthcare Fellowship, but they are an important emphasis. Many of our members are involved in CAHO and we plan to link our website with their new expanded and improved website. We hope to have at least one mission article in each of our newsletters.

New Directions for Free Methodist Healthcare Fellowship

We still hope to have more of a magazine than a newsletter. This magazine will not only be for our members, but for the whole church as they consider wholeness and full health. A future article will be on the recent developments in health care that emphasize team-based approaches for chronic disease, integration of behavioral health into primary care and the patient centered medical home. The upcoming speaker at our fall retreat, Dr. Willard Swartley, will also be addressing this theme of Health, Healing and the Church's Mission.

Secondly we are reaching out to others to become part of our group. One group is the chaplains. They are not medical people, but they deal in illness daily and are part of our team.

Finally, General Conference in 2015 will have health and wholeness as one of its themes. I hope that our group can be represented there and help the bishops promote this theme. I have asked if we could do a workshop. I also hope we can have a table and have a paper issue of our proposed magazine to hand out to those who are attending. This General Conference would be a real opportunity to present ourselves with our new vision for promoting health and wholeness in our whole church rather than just a group of doctors, dentists and nurses who meet only for our own spiritual edification.

