



SEEDS OF HEALTH MINISTRY

from

National Episcopal Health Ministries

St. Pauls Episcopal Church
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Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

MAY/JUNE, 1998

National Episcopal Health Ministries

Welcome to the first issue of **SEEDS OF HEALTH MINISTRY**, the newsletter of National Episcopal Health Ministries.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information to individuals, congregations, dioceses, and provinces engaged in health ministry activities, and to connect us as we scatter the seeds of health and healing across our congregations and communities.

If you have information you would like included in the next issue, please contact the editor at 202/543-2092 or jang@boo.net

National Episcopal Health Ministries was formed in 1996 by people of the Episcopal Church who believe that the church, at the local level, needs to live out

The mission of National Episcopal Health Ministries is to scatter seeds of healing ministry throughout the provinces and dioceses of the Episcopal Church, thereby assisting local congregations in reclaiming the Gospel mission of health and healing.

Jesus' command to heal and to make whole in body, mind and spirit. National Episcopal Health Ministries is composed of nurses, clergy, hospital chaplains, social workers, psychologists, teachers, health educators and others committed to this belief. The mission of National Episcopal Health Ministries is to scatter seeds of health ministry throughout the provinces and dioceses of the Episcopal Church thereby assisting local congregations in reclaiming the Gospel mission of health and healing.

National Episcopal Health Ministries serves as a re-

source to provinces, dioceses, and local congregations. Collaborating with other faith communities, institutions and health organizations, National Episcopal Health Ministries provides education and support to those engaged in health ministries.

SEE PAGES 2&3 FOR LISTINGS OF NATIONAL EPISCOPAL HEALTH MINISTRIES STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND PROVINCIAL COORDINATORS.

"AS FAR AS THE EAST IS FROM THE WEST..."

Psalm 103:12

This article was written by the Rev. Gary Young, and is reprinted with his permission from *The Wellness Fax* (vol. 2, issue 11, Nov. 1997). Please direct all inquiries about this article or *The Wellness Fax* to: The Rev. Gary Young
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This verse has always held some fascination for me. The differences between east and west are beyond mileage. A Westerner traveling east quickly notices the differences in dress, language, and thought. The shock is only equal to an Easterner traveling west.

My New York City brother-in-law once asked about the western landscape and mountains, Adams, Hood and St. Helens, which I call home. "How can you live there knowing that at anytime there could be a volcanic eruption?" I wondered how he could live in Greenwich Village knowing that at anytime who knows

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Upcoming Events



Parish Nurse Institute
(Wisconsin Model)
July 5-12, 1998

Waycross Episcopal Conference Center
517/274-7779

Parish Health Ministry Conference
Diocese of Long Island
Friday, October 16, 1998
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Mercer School of Theology
Garden City, Long Island, NY
contact June Gerbrecht at 516/248-4800

If you would like to have information about an event you are sponsoring included in the "Upcoming Events" section, please contact:

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Editor
Janice Genevro

Volume 1
Number 1
Spring, 1998

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East and West, continued from page 1

what could happen. "As far as the east is from the west," says the Psalmist.

Perhaps nowhere is the distance of east from west so noticeable as in the arena of medicine. Western medicine focuses primarily on treating disease. And for sure we have overcome many - small pox, TB, polio while some still remain - AIDS, cancer, and the common cold.

We, in western culture are taught to "go to the doctor" when ill but little thought is given to helping us maintain a state of health and wellness. Since over half of deaths are preventable and lifestyle related (tobacco usage, sedentary lifestyle, poor nutrition, and alcohol) maybe we should reexamine our medical beliefs and concepts.

A few months ago I heard about the Chinese practice of Qigong (Chi kong). Qigong has been practiced in China since ancient times, Simply, it is an exercise system of slow movement combined with visualization and meditation for the purpose of improving health and eliminating disease. After doing some basic reading, I signed up for class.

The class met for seven hours both Saturday and Sunday. The instructor, Chen Hui Xian, looked to be about 50, later I learned her age was closer to 65. During the class she told us her story. She discovered Qigong when her body was ravaged by cancer

Today she shows no sign of the diseases and credits Qigong with her healing.

During a break in the class, I learned more of her life. Raised in rural China in a Christian family she left her faith and became a serious Marxist. During her education she was selected to become an English teacher. Though she wanted little to do with Western thought, she persisted in her studies and reached her goal just prior to the China's cultural revolution. During the long and difficult upheaval she was sent to the rural area for re-education. At its conclusion she returned to Beijing and resumed her teaching post. However, her illness quickly incapacitated her and she was given no hope of survival by her doctors.

One day, sitting in a doctor's office, she was engaged in conversation by another patient, who invited her to attend the Qigong exercise class in a local park. This, she says, marked the

beginning of her healing. When I asked what led her to become a Qigong instructor she told me the rest of her personal story. During a Qigong meditation she experienced a vision of Jesus touching her, telling her of her healing, and saying "I want you to take Qigong to the United States and help heal others."

Hui Xian's story is an improbable one, but she is its living witness. Today she teaches Qigong at Oregon College of Oriental Medicine in Portland.

First challenged by the eastern practice of Qigong, I now find myself challenged by her vision of faith and the mission to which she has dedicated her life. Yes, the distance of east from west in medicine and in faith is great, but the words of the hymn are true, "in Christ there is no east or west." —

RESOURCES

Health Ministry in the local Congregation by Stephanie Ulrich and Allen Brown is now available. A short paperback, the book is a collaboration between a registered nurse who works in health ministry in a large Midwestern parish and a priest who has served for many years on the staff of the Presiding Bishop at the Episcopal Church Center. The book offers a fine introduction to health ministry, exploring why the local congregation is the appropriate place for health ministry and discussing its biblical and historical roots. It is excellent for introducing clergy, vestry members and bishop's committee members to the concept of health ministry. *Health Ministry in the Local Congregation* is the most recent in the Church Vitality Series, published through the National Episcopal Church. It can be purchased by contacting Episcopal Parish Services at 1-800-903-5544. The cost is only \$3.00.

- Jean Demon

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For more information about
NEHM, contact your provin-
cial coordinator (see page 3).

National Episcopal Health Ministries Provincial Coordinators

NEHM Provincial Coordinators have agreed to serve as resources for individuals, congregations, and dioceses in their provinces. If you are interested in learning more about National Episcopal Health Ministries, or about health ministries activities in your province, please contact your provincial coordinator. If you have information that you would like to share with others in your province, please let your provincial coordinator know!

The work of coordinators in each province will be highlighted in upcoming issues of "Seeds of Health Ministry."

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