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Churches should bring back healing to their ministries, Virginia Beach prayer minister says

By Jane Bloodworth Rowe
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Jane Bloodworth Rowe | For The Virginian-Pilot

The Rev. Nigel Mumford, founder of By His Wounds Inc., spoke on healing and prayer at Church of Holy Apostles in Virginia Beach on Jan. 14, 2017.

Nigel Mumford creates a sense of peace when he enters a room, said Lynne Bouvier Graham.

Graham, a parishioner at Church of the Holy Apostles, was among those who attended “The Path to Healing and Wholeness,” a presentation on healing and prayer that was held at the church Jan. 14.

“Jesus commanded his disciples to preach the kingdom and heal the sick,” said Mumford, priest associate for prayer ministry at Galilee Episcopal Church. “Somehow the church has gotten away from the healing.”

Mumford said he became interested in the relationship between prayer and healing in 1989 when his sister, Julie Sheldon, a ballet dancer with the Royal Ballet in London, was healed of dystonia, a neurological disorder.

“My sister was so sick,” said Mumford, who added that she was near death and trembling so violently that she was in danger of breaking her neck. She was healed during a prayer session with Canon Jim Glennon, who founded a healing ministry in his native Australia.

Soon after his sister’s healing, Mumford, a former Royal Marine who had immigrated to the United States in 1980, was working in a frame shop that he owned in Connecticut when a customer complained of a horrible headache.

“I think that an angel lifted my arms, and I touched her head,” said Mumford, explaining that he was hardly aware of what he was doing.

The pain was relieved, and Mumford pursued his interest in the healing ministry.

Because of his military background, Mumford was particularly interested in ministering to members and veterans of the military, and this interest brought him to Virginia Beach.

“I major in the healing of stress,” said Mumford, who founded “[By His Wounds](#),” a nonprofit aimed at creating awareness of Christian healing, as well as “[The Welcome Home Initiative](#),” which aims to help military combatants who are dealing with stress.

“I’m not a healer, God is,” said Mumford. The key to allowing God to work through you, he said, is to “listen, love and pray.”

“There are six words that can change someone’s life,” said Mumford. “They are ‘How can I pray for you?’”

The healing ministry extends to those who have emotional or spiritual pain, said Mumford. While the problem or disease doesn’t always disappear, the sufferer finds peace and comfort.

An international speaker, Mumford has written several books. The latest, “Dying to Live: How Near Death Experiences Transformed his Life, Faith and Ministry,” was inspired by a near-death experience in 2009, when he was hospitalized with swine flu and in an induced coma for 19 days.

For those who attended the workshop, the message was significant.

“The topic of healing is appealing to me,” said Betsey Brooks, who attended the service. “I want to get past the physical and emotional and get to the spiritual.”

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