

Tuesday, 1 September 2009

"Take mission off the table and the church becomes terminal"

Terry Calkin, Senior Pastor, Greenlane Christian Centre



Glad and Sad



It is nearly two months since I last wrote a prayer letter and it feels more like six months. During that time I have had some very "glad" moments and some really "sad" moments - and everything in between too. So my theme for this letter is **"glad and sad."** Partnered with this is the theme of mission which was emphasised again for me through the above statement from the message on Sunday.

It began with me being rushed to Whangarei hospital with a **kidney stone**. We were in the middle of the training and preparation weekend for the Desert Detectives camp but as I tried to deal with the pain and thought of having to leave what I so love doing I also knew that there was an experienced team who immediately took over the reins and completed the training, preparation and began camp, without me being there. I did return to camp and it was very encouraging to see the team just getting on with what they came to camp to do - to share God with the children through fun, teaching and especially relationships. Most encouraging was knowing that there were two church teams present who have caught the missions opportunity that SUPAkidz camps provide both as a place for training as well as sharing the Gospel.

Two days after camp I climbed on to a plane to fly halfway around the world to see my family on **South Africa**. It was great to be back with Mum and Dad, especially as Dad was a lot healthier than when I last saw him. The first week my brother and sister and their families joined us at a friend's beach house. When I say

beach I mean a beautiful, white sand beach with waves continually rolling in. I realised how much I missed the land that I grew up in. BUT it was also really good having 11 of us, both young and old, together in the same place. It gave me a chance to catch up with my brother and sister and to "terrorise" my nieces and nephew. The next two weeks I spent with my parents. During this time I also caught up with a few friends and was challenged about mission through some church involvement, meeting with friends and just having time to read and think.

While in South Africa I decided that it was time to support the **All Black rugby** side. Well did I choose the wrong time, with them being beaten by the Springboks two weeks in a row. I left South Africa with a great sadness: I know that my family are trying to be part of the solution there but they are greatly frustrated by the selfishness of some people, and some things are now worse rather than better.

The final word goes to the bathroom attendant at O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg just before I was about to fly out of South Africa. As I walked into the bathroom he announced, **"Welcome to my office!"** I laughed out loud and thanked him for giving me a lift. Then I got to thinking about what he said, when you have 16 hours on planes ahead you have some time to think. For us as Christians our office of mission is wherever we find ourselves, whether it be at home, at work, at school, at play or as part of a church fellowship .

Cut off the section below, fold in half and keep it in your Bible.

Thank you for being a part of the team that supports the work I do.

Blessings and peace

Andrew





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Break open your words, let the light shine out
Psalm 119:130 (THE MESSAGE)


Prayer Dates and Information

- Please **pray** for children and leaders who have returned to their communities excited about God and the Bible.
- Please **pray** for Raewyn Rowney our SUPAkidz staff worker in Wellington as she actively looks for key leaders to head up the SUPAkidz camp team in the region.
- Please **pray** for Nigel Winder our SUPAkidz staff worker (and regional director) in Southland as he prepares to run the first SUPAkidz camp in the region in October.
- Please **pray** for me as I continue teach Bible in schools to a year 3 class at our local primary school every Friday morning.



Fingers (James 10)

I had to miss rugby for a week because I badly bruised my fingers in a school playground game of touch rugby. Then to make things worse my favourite rugby side lost twice to the Springboks.

It was great to be at camp with Dad even though he did arrive late because of his kidney stone. My dad is crazy!



Wiggly (Chris 7)

I got a wiggly skateboard (only has two wheels) for my birthday. I was determined to be able to get all the way up the driveway on it so have been practising, but James beat me to it.

I also suffered a large lump on my head as a result of a collision at school. Yes I know you might be thinking that our school is a dangerous place, but I love it.



Morning (Thomas 4)

I now go to morning kindy which means I go everyday rather than just 3 days. The best thing is that I am back with all my friends and we have so much fun!

I am now a master builder of Lego ships - spaceships. I even play with them in the bath.



For pictures of us check out
<http://picasaweb.google.com/ramsbottomfamilynz>

Wall walking

"I could do SUPAkidz camps 365 days a year." This came from one of two SUPAkidz camp directors who were part of our Camps Focus Group day. Their enthusiasm for seeing children's lives changed is just so infectious and very encouraging. On the other hand the real challenge is to see churches as enthusiastic about children's lives being transformed by using the resources, training and adventures that Scripture Union has to offer. The 3 days before the focus groups we spent time together as a SUPAkidz team planning for next year and looking at the vision for the department for the next few years. For me the whole urgency of mission came through very strongly again. We also had some time for a few walks including what you can see in the picture. Yes it is the right way up.



I have also been very busy with various activities from Bible in Schools story telling training, telling the story at Starship Hospital Children's Church, running an all-age service sharing about mission and an evening with parents looking at nurturing children's faith.

Home

It was great to be in South Africa with family there for three weeks but at the same time difficult knowing that Gill had to juggle teaching, getting the boys to school and various other activities and everything else that goes with being a mum. The day I left she spent the day building Lego projects with the boys and their enthusiasm for Lego has not stopped since.

As usual things have been busy at the Ramsbottom house. Physical activity remains the way that "The Boys" take on life. As a result, Chris has received two lumps on his head and James has received numerous cuts and bruises on his legs and had to be taken to the A & E to have his hand x-rayed but he only had badly bruised, not broken, fingers. Thomas has managed to stay away from any physical injury but has had a chest and an ear infection to deal with. Neither of the boys received any prizes at their rugby prize giving but they had a good season and are now starting to look forward to the cricket season.

We also had the three cousins come and stayed for a few days while their mum and dad were away skiing. Having six kids is just great fun although transport does become a challenge.

LifeShapers Gym



Friday 2 to Monday 5 October
October SUPAkidz camp training and preparation. Pray for the team as they get to know each other and spend time preparing resources and programme items.

Monday 5 to Friday 9 October
LifeShapers Gym SUPAkidz camp. Pray for Paul Dadd as he directs camp, campers and leaders.

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Auckland

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Invercargill



Sunday 4 to Tuesday 6 October
October SUPAkidz camp training and preparation. Pray for the team as they get to know each other and spend time preparing resources and programme items.

Tuesday 6 to Friday 9 October
Top Secret SUPAkidz camp. Pray for Nigel Winder as he directs camp, campers and leaders.