



JUNE 2008 ISSUE 119

# *The* **ENCOURAGER**

EVANGELISE EQUIP EDUCATE

*Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust*

**DON'T** tell me  
that ~~I~~ <sup>I</sup> am  
not smart...

*for I know  
much more than  
I could ever tell...*

*Mini-poster created by Isabel Lee*

# MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE?

by Joni Eareckson Tada

*"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."*

1 Corinthians 10:13

Every once in a while that verse bugs me. At those times I'm prone to think God couldn't expect from me what He does from others, because mine is a "different story." I especially thought that way when I was lying on my hospital bed: How can You be putting me through all this? It's more than I can bear – even with Your help, God!



The truth is, my story is not different. Neither is yours. My quadriplegia hasn't earned me any Purple Heart medals with God. My bouts with pressure sores and lung problems haven't exempted me from 1 Corinthians 10:13.

If the Lord allows crushing hardships to pile on top of all the other baggage that goes with being disabled, I can't whine. It never can be said of me, "She has good reason to let off steam every now and then."

Whenever I entertain stubborn, stiff-necked thoughts of resentment, I've noticed I go not forward but backward. The problems aren't easier to handle; they become harder. I must remember Hebrews 12:4, which warns complainers, "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood." What a good reminder! I'm not a martyr; nobody's drawn and quartered me, laid me on a rack, sawed me asunder, or run me through with a sword – so things can't be that bad.

True, 1 Corinthians 10:13 may bug you when you think you must disobey because the temptation is too great. But remember, we can never be forced to disobey. We don't sin because we have to; we sin because we want to.

God, thank You for the grace to endure the losses You have allowed in my life. Whatever the trial or temptation, enable me to look to You to provide the way of

*taken from one of Joni's devotional books*

# DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY

15TH JUNE 2008

We are all different but we all have the choice. Do we

# Exclude OR Embrace?



## CALLING ALL PASTORS

Do consider doing something in your service on this day. If you ring the Centre we will send you a booklet that gives many ideas on different things you could bring into your programme. If there is no space in your service on the 15th it is fine to hold this day on another Sunday.

The main Auckland service is shown below, with many CFFD teams taking part in churches throughout New Zealand, but it is important that churches throughout our land, large and small, have at least some item that recognises the talents of people with disabilities and the part they need to be given in church life.

# JOIN US...



And



harbourside  
church

48 ESMONDE RD, TAKAPUNA

(just over the bridge!)

SUNDAY 15TH JUNE 2008 2.15 - 3.30pm

Afternoon tea follows



## In Celebrating Inclusion

Run by

Christian Ministries With Disabled Trust,  
Auckland Christian Fellowship For Disabled  
Contact 636 4763 or [evan@cmwdt.org.nz](mailto:evan@cmwdt.org.nz)  
for any further details

dance  
SINGING

AND MUCH MORE...

## FUN DAYS AT THE CENTRE



*Dressing up in the 1930 era*



*Island Day*





*International Day*



*Games on an outing to One Tree Hill*

## Dean Brennan's Story

### NATIONAL GARDENING AWARD WON WITHOUT ARMS OR LEGS



When the winner was announced it made the headlines in Auckland papers, and even in one national one, and that's not surprising, for it is very unusual for anyone without the use of arms or legs to win the national general award in Housing New Zealand's biennial garden competition. Forty seven-year-old Dean Brennan was the man. He had been left a C4 tetraplegic after a freak accident ten years earlier.

Born in Britain, he was once supervisor of a staff of 17 at Clissold Park in London, whilst attending the City and Guilds of London Institute National Examination for Horticulture course for almost three years before passing it in 1987. After emigrating to New Zealand in 1990 he eventually worked for the Waitakere Maintenance as well as being a volunteer firefighter at Waitemata..

A freak accident in 1997 left him in critical care, and he remained there for six weeks. The doctors did not expect him to pull through, he was completely paralysed from his neck down, and the only way he could get attention was by clicking his tongue. When he was told he would be a head on a pillow for the rest of his life, he asked his then ex-wife who was a well known theatre nurse to the consultants to pull the plug on his survival unit. It wasn't until his family in Britain got to him that he realized they were relying on him to live.

Dean is a fighter, he was determined to overcome his disability, and he can now move both arms, and gets around in a motorized wheelchair. Through ACC he was given 24 hours attendant care, and Eleanor, one of three caregivers, was to later become his wife. Dean describes his life at the time of the accident, "I was an evolutionist, drinking and partying and smoking cannabis. I had a little bit of faith, but it was a wishy-washy kind, and I did not take the Bible seriously. Sometime after the accident, my brother asked me if we would like to go to Ranui Baptist Church. I fell in love with it straight away, and became an active member. A decision I made there to get baptized revolutionised my life. When I came out of the water everything changed.





*Dean Brennan and wife Eleanor in front of their water feature  
Photo courtesy of Weekend Gardener*

The Holy Spirit came into me and started directing me straight away. Since then I am much stronger in every way. It will be in God's timing, but I believe I will one day walk again. I realise I would not be that close to God if I had not suffered in this way. I think He chose me years ago, even when I was in the midst of an immoral sexual life and doing many wrong things. Praise His Name!"

When he moved into his Henderson state house nine years ago, he set about accomplishing a vision he had for the garden. He envisaged it being crammed with natives, and he now has almost 400 native trees and shrubs as well as countless cacti, succulents, cannas and other flowers. They are now so dense that visitors find it hard to believe the section is as small as it is. There are many beautiful ferns, and a stream runs through the garden. He initially brought in 25 tonnes of rock from a West Coast quarry, as well as lots of topsoil to fill up his raised beds and has extensively terraced the section to overcome very poor initial drainage problems. His wife Eleanor, friends and family and the caregivers do the work while Dean directs.

When he's not busy with his garden Dean works as a webmaster – looking after websites for his local church and TASC (The Association For Spinal Concerns) among others, and is keen to help the CMWDT with our webpage.

He says, "I'll just wait for God and follow His directions. I am hoping that people will come to God through my testimony. What God really wants from me is to show people that they should not sit at home and hide. As with me and my garden there is much more to do than rely on other people. I hope I can be a witness to others with spinal cord injuries to show people what they can do with their brains."

Loren Walker talks about

## **TRUSTING GOD – TAKING RISKS AND WALKING WITH GOD THROUGH THE UNKNOWN AND UNCOMFORTABLE**

As a younger man I was anxious about a lot of things, and it often limited me in the things I would do and try. As I came to know about Jesus, I began to believe that He intended for something more. John 10:10 says, *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”*. Having troubled, uneasy, or concerned feelings about my future is not my idea of having life to the full. The life that many good characters I read about in the Bible – the ones that risked everything and lived with miracles every day – give a good example of this principle.



*Loren with his wife Anita and 2 children*

I want to focus on one small piece of scripture found in 1 Peter 5:7. It is a theme that can be found in many places in the Bible, expressed in many ways, *“Cast all your cares on Him for He cares for you.”*

Another translation says *“Leave all your worries with Him because He cares for you.”* We can trust Him. Trust in Him is both a starting point in our walk with God and a place to return to each and every day. I'd like to tell you how this truth has helped me.

Back in January 1991 when I was 17 years old I fell off my motorbike riding home from my girlfriend's house at 2am. I don't remember why I fell off. It would be nice to know – but it's a grace sometimes to have less to blame. I lay face down in the road, I could hear the sound of the rain, and feel my nose was sore and numb, as was my back. The pain in my back and numbness of my legs kept me from rolling over. I called out to God for help.

Growing up I had had a few opportunities to hear about the God of the Bible, but for me it was a bit like looking at someone else's holiday pictures. It looked happy but I just couldn't relate. Though I didn't know Him personally, I had a sense that God was real. That may explain why I cried out to Him that night.

After some time on the road I heard voices, two men in a car found me in the centre of the road, and called an ambulance. When it came I was lifted in and immediately put on morphine. In the fall I had broken my nose, my back, my neck, and a rib that punctured a lung causing it to eventually collapse. I was in a critical condition in intensive care for some days, fighting high fever and the hallucinations



that went with it. One time they had to move me into a bed bath filled with cold water and buckets of ice to keep my fever in check. My digestive system was also in shock and my stomach would not receive any food that was given by tube. I was in a bad way.

There are times that God cares for us simply out of His graceful nature, and in response to the cares and concerns 'cast on Him' by others. This time was one of them. People all over the world were praying for me, some I knew and many I didn't. The fever eventually broke, and my condition stabilised. I woke feeling much better and very hungry one afternoon. There was an orderly standing by – getting ready to move me to another hospital. I don't remember exactly what he said when I asked when I could eat, but I remember very clearly what he said when I then asked when I would walk again. He said in a very matter of fact tone, "you will never walk again!", and went back to his clip board or some papers.

I was in hospital for four months, beginning with 7 ½ weeks solid bed rest. It was bed rest in the extreme. I was on a bed of selected pillows, head to foot. The only thing that moved was the bed that they tilted side to side about 30 degrees every two hours to stop bed sores. I could do nothing for myself except eventually eating.

Around week eight they started to lift the head of the bed. Interesting things happen to your body when you lie flat for that long. Your heart gets so lazy that just a couple of minutes with the bed head up 20 degrees will make you pass out literally, with all the nausea that comes first. After a few days of adjusting with longer and steeper stints, I was lifted into a wheelchair, unprepared for the shock and disappointment it would be.

With no feeling or muscle control from my chest down, it was like I'd been separated from my lower body and re-attached to a beach ball. I was unstable, and uncomfortable in every way. I received the standard procedure - a nurse-guided 15 minute whisk around the ward, tipping the foot of the chair up and the head down every few minutes when I was passing out or looking ready to fall out the front of the chair.

Those days, the subsequent arm muscle rebuilding work in the gym and the slow learning to cope with basic household and personal routines was hard work and at times could seem hopelessly discouraging. It became clear at an early stage that life would not be the same for me. Everything I knew would change. Most of the things I had lived for were gone. Some guys in the unit with me began to slip into anger, depression, or drug abuse. I could have ended up that way, I faced the same struggles, but somehow remained positive.

I don't know exactly when it started, but somewhere along the line a deep hope was seeded in me. I got dozens of cards from family and friends, many from people I barely knew – many with a rich faith and the power of prayer. My mother and sister read from Psalms, Job and other books of the Bible at my bedside. And there was the answer to prayer.

Normal signs of recovery from spinal injuries happen in the first two weeks as the swelling subsides. Any damage after that is generally permanent – as the nervous system that the spinal cord belongs to does not heal in the way bones, muscle, and tissue do. And here I was, in my sixth week, with little hope of recovery, when this entry was put in my sister's diary :

*"The Lord has already answered prayer. Though it has not been confirmed by the doctors, the physio is quite sure - Loren has moved his leg today! I witnessed it! It was amazing and beautiful. He wanted to show me what he told me about so he asked me to push his right leg back, and it spasmed, then he pushed it to me! I saw this amazing sight, after crying to the Lord last night that he had such beautiful legs that wouldn't move, I saw him moving it!"*



We cried and held each other – that added to my hope. The more hope I had for the future, the more I saw to hope for. It was then that I began to look to God for a future, I began to “cast my cares on Him”, to see what sort of life He could offer me in spite of this. I began believing that He cared for me and that good legs weren't necessary in His plans, or that He would restore them if I needed them. I began to change slowly on the inside. That in turn began changes on the outside, reflected in my interest and behaviour. I became more determined in learning, and enrolled and did well at engineering studies. I wanted a life that would honour God, whatever that meant.

Some time in my second year of study I was invited to a church and youth group where I made good friends. During that time I remember going home one night determined to sort things out with God. Remembering the words I had heard at the service, I hopped out of my wheelchair and lay face down on my bed. I told God that I believed in His son Jesus and what He did on the cross for me. I said that I was sorry for the many wrong things that I knew I had done in my life. I said that I would follow Him from now on, and invited Him into my heart to guide me in that. It was pretty short and simple, but I knew that that was all I had to do to be forgiven and accepted by God, and that I would be with Him forever.

Later that year I went flatting with some church friends, and the flat became a hub of social activity. God kept working on my legs. The unusually late and slow recovery of function in my legs continued for some years. This allowed me to begin walking after about two years in a wheelchair, and after four years I was walking confidently with the use of elbow crutches and doing much more. Up until that time,

they were the best years of my life – something that was quite hard for some people to understand given my severe and permanent disability.

I still had huge limitations and questions about my health and the future. Could I get a job, would I find the woman I was looking for and marry? In spite of this, I was very happy, and more positive every day about God's plans for my life.

*to be concluded in the August Encourager edition*

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## LIVING WITH A SUBTLE DISABILITY

by Annette Perkins

At first glance you wouldn't look at me and think I have a problem. Some people who get to know me might not even realise I have a disability. Some people think that this is always a good thing, but there's good and bad to it. Living with a mild disability is a lot harder than many people would think it could be. I have a disability called Asperger's Syndrome, which is a milder form of autism. Things such as spontaneous changes, having to make quick decisions, and being given too many instructions at once are some of the many challenges I face.

My disability also affects me socially, which I find upsetting. If I do things that aren't socially right, people can just think I'm weird or rude, when in fact it is part of my disability. Sometimes when I do things like that, I wish I was normal, so that I didn't have to do them. Sometimes I can't control it at all. Sometimes I might be able to change those things, but it will often be very hard to change.

Some of my friends have disabilities too, which can often make it a whole lot easier to cope with – I don't feel 'alone' about having a disability.

I love to socialize, and I like to do things with my friends. My friends come from a variety of different age groups.

My relationship with God helps me a lot. With all the struggles I face. I am from a Christian family and gave my life to the Lord when I was six.

I have gone to church all my life, and in 2004 I started going to Elim Christian Centre in Botany Downs, and I do some activities that are at or associated with the church during the week. Another thing I enjoy is helping out at East Auckland Joy Ministries and I have been going there for four years.

Even though it is hard to live with, I try not to let my disability hold me back.

Philippians 4 vs 13 is very special to me:

*I can do everything through Him who gives me the strength I need.*



# “Who I Am Makes A Difference”

A teacher in New York decided to honour each of her seniors in High School by telling them the difference each of them had made. She called each student to the front of the class, one at a time.

First, she told each of them how they had made a difference to her, and the class. Then she presented each of them with a blue ribbon, imprinted with gold letters, which read, “Who I Am Makes a Difference.”



Afterwards, the teacher decided to do a class project, to see what kind of impact recognition would have on a community. She gave each of the students three more blue ribbons, and instructed them to go out and spread this acknowledgment ceremony. Then they were to follow up on the results, see who honoured whom, and report back to the class in about a week.

One of the boys in the class went to a junior executive in a nearby company, and honoured him for helping him with his career planning. He gave him a blue ribbon, and put it on his shirt. Then he gave him two extra ribbons and said, “We’re doing a class project on recognition, and we’d like for you to go out, find somebody to honour, give them a blue ribbon, then give them the extra blue ribbon so they can acknowledge a third person, to keep this acknowledgment ceremony going. Then please report back to me and tell me what happened.” Later that day, the junior executive went in to see his boss, who had been noted, by the way, as being kind of a grouchy fellow. He sat his boss down, and he told him that he deeply admired him for being a creative genius.

The boss seemed very surprised. The junior executive asked him if he would accept the gift of the blue ribbon, and would he give him permission to put it on him. His surprised boss said, “Well, sure.” The junior executive took the blue ribbon and placed it right on his boss’s jacket, above his heart. As he gave him the last extra ribbon, he said, “Would you take this extra ribbon, and pass it on by honouring somebody else. The young boy who first gave me the ribbons is doing a project in school, and we want to keep this recognition ceremony going and find out how it affects people.”

That night, the boss came home to his 14-year-old son, and sat him down. He said, “The most incredible thing happened to me today. I was in my office, and one of the junior executives came in and told me he admired me, and gave me a blue ribbon for being a creative genius. Imagine! He thinks I’m a creative genius! Then he put this



blue ribbon that says, "Who I Am Makes a difference", on my jacket above my heart. He gave me an extra ribbon and asked me to find somebody else to honour. As I was driving home tonight, I started thinking about whom I would honour with this ribbon, and I thought about you.

"I want to honour you. My days are really hectic, and when I come home I don't pay a lot of attention to you. I scream at you for not getting good enough grades in school, and for your bedroom being a mess. But somehow tonight, I just wanted to sit here and, well, just let you know that you do make a difference to me. Besides your mother, you are the most important person in my life. You're a great kid, and I love you!"

The startled boy started to sob and sob, and he couldn't stop crying. His whole body shook. He looked up at his father and said through his tears, "Dad, earlier tonight I sat in my room and wrote a letter to you and Mum, explaining why I had killed myself, and I asked you to forgive me. I was going to commit suicide tonight after you were asleep. I just didn't think that you cared at all. The letter is upstairs. I don't think I need it after all."

His father walked upstairs and found a heart-felt letter full of anguish and pain. The boss went back to work a changed man. He was no longer a grouch, but made sure to let all of his employees know that they made a difference.

The junior executive helped several other young people with career planning, and never forgot to let them know that they made a difference in his life..... one being the boss' son.

And the young boy and his classmates learned a valuable lesson, "Who you are DOES make a difference".

I'm passing the blue ribbon to you, for who YOU are does make a difference.

*Taken from the internet*

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## **GRAHAM WAS ONE OF OUR GREAT HELPERS AT THE CENTRE**

It is with great sadness we received the news of the untimely death of Graham Arcus, who did not survive a brutal attack as he walked home from a prayer meeting near his home in Auckland. A very gentle man, who was on the mission field in New Guinea for 21 years, he loved helping in the Drop-in room, in the gardens, and as a buddy at National Camps, and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

## WONDERFUL SUPPORT FROM THESE FIRMS

Each year "The Encourager" costs some \$14,000 to print and post out. This figure would be so much higher if it wasn't for the tremendous support of these three firms who give their services **without any charge at all:**

- **Spicers Paper** who supply 50,000 sheets of paper each time
- **Fintech** who fold, collate and bind the magazines
- **Poste Haste** who take the courier bags around the country

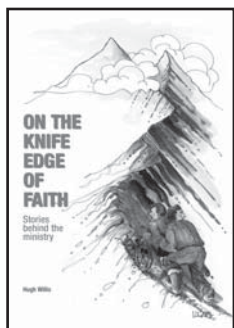
And to Panprint who print and co-ordinate production.

We are so grateful to them and to the 30 to 40 volunteers who spend a part of two days on the final collation, addressing and posting out "The Encourager".

With this magazine we are sending out an appeal letter to help meet these and all the other costs associated with the ministry. We have many very generous answers to our annual appeals, but sadly there are a considerable number of people who have been having the magazine sent to them four times a year for over 10 years, some even for 20 years, and have never once contributed to these costs. We are praying that if you are one of these, you will see the need and start playing your part.

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## WE NEED TO SELL MORE BOOKS



We've covered 70% of our costs of "On the Knife Edge of Faith" but we still need to sell many more books to cover this expenditure. Do you realize that by buying a book, reading it first and then giving it to a friend you are playing an important part not just with our costs, but with spreading the word about our outreach. And it's a great book, as Jim McNair testified after he read a copy recently:

**"This book is compelling reading, well illustrated and written in an easy style that both inspires and challenges - a fascinating and developing story of a 30 year involvement**

**with some special disabled people. They have much to teach us. The needs and challenges during their journeys are revealed, as are the ways the Lord has wonderfully cared and provided."**

As you are now no doubt painfully aware, postage charges have increased dramatically and this has necessitated some changes to the charges for sending out our recent productions.

**"On the Knife Edge of Faith"** Send \$20 per book plus \$1.50 for postage

**Graham Braddock's cards** Each packet of 10 costs \$10 plus \$1.50 postage for each pack, but if you order 3 packets the cost is \$25 but still with \$1.50 for postage

**Each Graham Braddock print** is \$15 and the charge for post and packaging is now \$10 regardless of the number of prints.

# NATIONAL CAMP 24 - 27 October 2008

TOTARA SPRINGS, MATAMATA

## "REACHING THE GOAL TOGETHER"

**Jack Oppenhuizen and his team from YWAM in Hawaii are coming!**

These camps are awesome, life-changing, faith-building, and provide a unique opportunity to act in a servant role, and are a mixture of Fun, Fellowship and Faith-building.

## Olympic theme



Pray and ask folk to come, both those with disabilities and able-bodied. Regardless of whether you have been before or never experienced such a camp, **WE NEED YOU**. If you cannot come, but would like to sponsor someone, that would be a great help. Last year through such donations we received a total of \$15,000 which just enabled us to cover costs.

**COSTS:**     **Adults** \$135, but \$125 (not refundable) if paid in full before 1st Sept  
**13-15yrs** \$100    **8-12yrs** \$80    **3-7yrs** \$60    **2yrs and under** free

**Contact:** Allan Hamilton 499a Browns Bay Rd,  
Murrays Bay, Auckland. Phone 09-479-1794

**Or contact:** your local Branch or Ministry

## URGENT NEEDS AT THE CENTRE

We are close to being **three male helpers** short at the Centre, one having taken on a job and another close to doing the same. Can anyone help out on a Tuesday, Wednesday and/or Thursday. Female helpers are always appreciated.

A person with library experience needed one day a week to oversee and work with Linda on our extensive collection of tapes, videos, talking books and Braille editions.

# MANY VARIED ACTIVITIES AT THE WELLINGTON CFFD CAMP



*Rowing*



*Horse Riding*



*Worship*



*Wanganui "Bible Friends" group*



*Walking*



# Ann Meredith

Sometimes it takes tragedies in our life to bring us back to God. Certainly that was the case with Ann Meredith. Brought up as a Roman Catholic she had a faith, but this quickly disappeared when she married. She enjoyed married life, soon there were two children, and she established a business in the Devonport area involving batik, silk screen printing and tie dying. The business took off, and the Lord became far from her thoughts, but all this came to an abrupt halt when she was just 39.

A stroke left her paralysed down her left side. In the hospital she was told she would never walk again, nor would she ever be able to drive a car again. Worse was to follow a year later when her husband started having an affair with her best friend, which ended with him leaving Ann. She was left to bring up the two children, and coupled with the stroke, life was not easy. That was when she remembered the Lord and started

going to the Anglican church in Devonport, where she enjoyed wonderful fellowship with the people there. Despite the hospital's fear that brain damage from the stroke could prevent her driving, Ann enquired about the possibility and was put in touch with a driving instructor, Graham Lindesay. This was very much in the Lord's purposes, for he was a Christian, and besides encouraging her to drive he also put her in touch with the Auckland CFFD. There she found many she could relate to. As she shared and prayed she received comfort and understanding, and as she poured out her fears there were people there in turn who poured love into her. Through all this her faith grew and her relationship with God steadily deepened.

Another crisis came last year when a doctor recommended that because of very poor blood circulation she should have both legs amputated. Talking this over with one of the congregation in her church, a doctor, he pointed out that because of her hemiplegia it would almost certainly be better to amputate just the one leg, and this they did. God brought a miraculous healing on the other – her right leg, and it now functions well, and her toes have movement again.

She is now in Selwyn Village where as a result of her experiences and her faith she can help some hurting people there. Very special to her are the Scriptures:

Romans 8:28 *"All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purposes,"* and Proverbs 3:5,6 *"Lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path."*



In an article in the English Carers newsletter Denise Grassam writes on

## **STEPPING OUT IN FAITH**

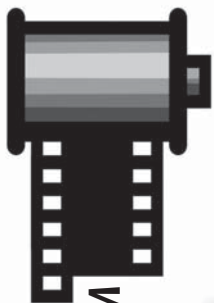
Linda is a very special person, now 53 years old and has learning disabilities. She is also my sister. Seven years ago the Sunday School Co-ordinator approached me saying, "I am sorry, but Linda is proving to be quite disruptive in the class, can we find some other way of accommodating her during the morning service?" I realized there was nothing else on offer. The only alternative was for her to stay in church, unable to concentrate or understand a fairly lengthy sermon.

For some time I had been aware of the need for a class for those with learning difficulties. There were four others in the church who would benefit. I had visited a Causeway PROSPECTS seminar at the Keswick Convention, to see whether their meetings would be suitable for Linda. Causeway Prospects is a nationwide Christian charity supporting work with people with learning difficulties. Each year I found myself being drawn back wishing, "If only there were something like this in Scarborough"; but who would run it? I had a job with irregular hours involving some weekends.

During one of the meetings the Holy Spirit was very present. I kept hearing "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". In obedience to God, and with the support of my "husband to be", I started making plans. Much prayer went into this. I presented to the church what the Lord had laid on my heart and asked people to pray whether they felt able to join me. Within a week we had ten volunteers. "Causeway" were very helpful. Through them we had an informative visit from the very encouraging leaders of an established group.

By March 2002 Mustard Seed, a group for people with learning difficulties and based at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Scarborough, as it eventually became known, held its first meeting. Seven members and seven helpers were present. The original format of a monthly Saturday two hour meeting for fellowship, worship, craft, drama, fun, a speaker and food has worked well. Often 30 or more are present together with 12 to 15 helpers. In July 2003 a Sunday morning class commenced, run on a rota basis by two helpers each week. Numbers vary from 5 to 9. Some helpers have moved on, but the Lord has always provided others to take their place. He has truly strengthened and blessed us all. In July 2006 we hosted one of the regional celebrations of 30 years of "Causeway". Approximately 150 people from the Yorkshire area came for fellowship, worship and a BBQ.

Our main aim is to teach and share the love of God with those with learning difficulties, reaching out to those who may never had the opportunity of hearing. But not only this, we have contact with carers and feel God is calling us to touch their lives too.



Worry is the darkroom in which **NEGATIVES** can

*Compassion is always difficult  
to give away because it always  
comes back to you*

Give God what's

**RIGHT**

NOT WHAT'S

**LEFT**

**Success is  
all about  
the quiet  
accumulation  
of small  
triumphs**

GOD  
doesn't CALL the  
qualified.....  
HE qualifies the  
CALLED



# JESUS IS...

The First and Last,  
The **Alpha** and the **Omega**  
The Beginning and the End!  
He is the Lilly of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon.  
He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all things.  
He is the Architect of the universe and the Manager of all times.  
He holds the keys of hell and death.  
He always was, He always is, and He always will be...  
He is Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, and never Undone!  
He was bruised and brought healing!  
He was pierced and eased pain!  
He was persecuted and brought freedom!  
He was dead and brought **life**!  
He is risen and brings power!  
He reigns and brings Peace!  
He is the **Resurrection** and the **Life**.

The world can't understand him,  
The armies can't defeat Him,  
The schools can't explain Him,  
Leaders can't ignore Him.  
Herod couldn't kill Him,  
The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him,  
The people couldn't intimidate Him.  
Nero couldn't crush Him,  
Hitler couldn't silence Him,  
The New Age can't replace Him,  
"Oprah" can't explain Him!  
The Devil couldn't and can't defeat Him.



He is light, yet love, full of mercy and truth.  
He is **Goodness, Faithfulness, Kindness, Gentleness**.  
He is **Holy, Righteous, Mighty, Powerful, and Pure**.  
His ways are right, never wrong.  
His Word is eternal,  
And His words a creative force.  
His will is unchanging,  
His mind is on me, for He cares for me.  
He is my **Saviour, my Redeemer, my Sanctification**.  
He is my **guide**, and my **peace, joy and comfort**.  
He is my **Lord**,  
He **rules my life**!  
I serve Him because our bond is love,  
His burden is light,  
His goal for me is life and life abundant.



I follow Him because  
He is the wisdom of the wise,  
He is the power of the powerful,  
He is the ancient of days,  
The ruler of rulers,  
The leader of leaders,  
The overseer of the over-comers,  
The **King of Kings** and the **Lord of Lords**.

His heart desire is a relationship with me!  
He will never leave me,  
Nor will He ever forsake me,  
He will never mislead me,  
Never forget me,  
Never overlook me,  
Never put me down.

When I fall, He lifts me up!  
When I fail, He forgives!  
When I am weak, He is strong!  
When I am lost, He is the **way**!  
When I am afraid, He is my courage!  
When I stumble, He steadies me!  
When I am hurt, He heals me!  
When I am broken, He mends me!  
When I am blind, He leads me!  
When I am hungry, He feeds me!  
When I face trials, He is with me!  
When I face persecution, He shields me!  
When I face problems, He comforts me!  
When I face loss, He provides for me!  
When I face Death, He carries me Home!



He is everything for everybody, everywhere, every time, and in every way.

He is the **Way** the **Truth** and the **Life**.  
He is the right door, the great shepherd, the true vine,  
The living water and the bread of Life.  
He is the bridegroom,  
His name is **Jesus**,  
He is God, I am His, and He is mine!

And that's about all I have to say about Him right now,  
Except to say,  
Do you know Him?

## IN SEARCH OF THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

*This article was written by Carla Cornelius and taken with permission from the English Carers Christian Fellowship newsletter*

When one's only child is afflicted with a medical condition, particularly one as mysterious as autism, one's blissful idealized view of pregnancy and motherhood, can be replaced with fear and insecurity. This is how things were at the start of Fela's life. We received the unfortunate diagnosis months before his third birthday, but had suspected it for some time. I recall asking the community paediatrician if he would ever be able to say "I love you". Her prognosis was not helpful. She no doubt did not want to give false hope, but under such circumstances hope would have been like giving much-needed oxygen to someone in the middle of an asthma attack. As a mother, this was a shattering prospect – it was as if Fela had been emotionally amputated. As if to prove her wrong, and a sign of motherly denial, I made a point of showering him with hugs and kisses and countless "I love you"s. It's a habit I continue to this day, and it has paid dividends. He's a happy, emotionally secure thirteen year old, able to share with others the love he is so confident of himself.

I recall my son, Fela, as a three-year-old – full of vitality, a keen observer and imitator except he didn't speak (though he sang in monosyllables), found difficulty relating to other children, could hardly sit still, couldn't sleep through the night or indicate when he needed to use the toilet. Quite an exhausting list! At eight years old he was an overgrown, easily excitable boy with the face of an angel and the manners of a Neanderthal. He couldn't understand that it was not acceptable to hit people in public, pull their hair, spit or defecate on the floor.

The medical establishment have placed the tag "incurable" on a syndrome which has defied their understanding since it was first identified in a report by Leo Kanner in 1943. There is only speculation as to what may cause it – birth difficulties, a virus such as through immunizations, genetic defects, food allergies – but as yet no publicized breakthrough in causation or cure.

Raising my son has forced me to flex my faith muscles. He has extracted from me patience and selflessness I never knew was possible, and in the process has made me a better human being. There's a line in a Stevie Wonder song which has always stayed with me: "If given a chance to live again, I'd change not a single thing, for that very change could sadly mean that to me you Fate wouldn't bring". Thanks to Fela I met my wonderful husband, Michael. Fela, I was told by my former pastor, scared off many an admirer who couldn't cope with his bizarre behaviour. Were it not for him, the 'Time for me' perpetual calendar\* for carers would never have come into existence. Throughout my year as a full-time carer, I chronicled many of my heartaches, and the lessons learned, and the scars were indelible. It is my prayer that this calendar will uplift and inspire carers like myself who have been battle-worn from the challenges of caring.

\* A calendar in which each page contains a notable quote and an encouraging reflection as well as an idea on how to take time out for yourself

For me, raising my son is a daily fight, but one I wouldn't exchange for the world. I have found in my son someone extremely loveable, a gentleman both helpful and patient, and living proof that the words of Romans 8:28 are indeed true – that good can always unfold beautifully from something bleak and unattractive, just as a butterfly emerges from a chrysalis. I travail in prayer for wisdom as to how to steer the life of this precious soul entrusted to me by our Heavenly Father and for a miraculous breakthrough from the limitations of autism. I fight for all his needs to be met at the specialist residential school for autism he attends, and continue to believe that "with God all things are possible."

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## GOVERNANCE BOARD REPORT



It is approaching a year since the Governance Board was first formed. This is a quick update of what has been happening since then.

The new Governance Board has spent some time getting up to speed on the historical history of CMWDT and its current situation and practices. We are now looking at the mid to long-term vision of the Trust and associated ministries. Currently we are developing some generic templates to bring in a consistency of practices within the organization. The Governance Board is reviewing and developing new policies around the operations of the organization. We are also looking at and

developing mid to long-term strategic planning. As members of the organization, do feel free to talk to your local Trustee buddy and give input about any of this development. The Governance Board would like to encourage active communication and feedback from all Branches and Ministries on a regular basis.

Yours in His service,  
David Senior  
*Chairperson*

**HAWKES BAY ARE CELEBRATING THEIR 25th ANNIVERSARY**  
**15th - 17th AUGUST 2008**

## A GRADUATION FOR THE PHILIPPINES DEAF PRE-SCHOOLERS

The big news has been the Deaf Pre-School Graduation and SPED Recognition Day 2008. We had 4 boys and 4 girls who graduated. They were so excited because they felt so very special because of their graduation dress complete with white toga. The parents and family members were so happy each time their child was called on stage to receive their certification.



We had a guest speaker who encouraged the parents and visitors by pointing out that all our SPED students are precious to God and each one of them has a bright future. He was amazed how God continues to expand and develop our Special Education Program. All our students had something to receive as their award.



The PCFFD staff had a great time on our last CBM Staff Family Retreat. We were all refreshed and had great camp speakers, fellowship and bonding with co-staff and with our own families. It was a good venue which was just the right size for our 120 people.

The Camp for Disabled was supposed to be May, but has been put off until later in the year.

We'll soon start to receive enrollees for school year 2008 - 2009. We continue to grow in the number of students. Please pray we can continue to improve our program and that God will continue to provide for our financial needs. We still need additional sponsors for our new staff like Larry and Rhida Mae. We might need to have one more teacher for deaf. Our Deaf high school classrooms need about 30

armed chairs which cost NZ\$25.00 each (so that no more big tables in a room and that students will fit inside comfortably). Pray also that our monthly allowances be sustained for this next school year.



Our School Sports Fest each year starts with a motorcade. The whole Elementary and High School's are divided into 4 team colours, each team decorates their own float, all get on and they tour the district. We sing, throw out sweets etc. It's all a good advertisement for the school! It has now grown to a whole week. We do activities like Search for the Voice of the Year, a Quiz

Bee and a Dance Contest, native games like grab the greasy coconut and get over the line (rather like rugby), and a contest (shown here) of climbing a greasy bamboo pole 20 feet high to put a flag on the top. Most of the competitors keep sliding back down the pole.

We continue to thank God for all our SPONSORS! and generous GIVERS for our needs here. God bless you all!



Sandra Crashley writes,

## **JOHN PRESCOTT – THE ABBOT’S “CHIEF ASSISTANT”**

My husband Mike and I went to stay at a Cistercian Monastery in Hawkes Bay during the week before Easter, where we enjoyed the privilege of sharing the hospitality and prayerful lifestyle of the monks. But at the Southern Star Abbey of Kopua near Takapau we had another wonderful surprise when we met another person associated with CFFD, John Prescott.



*The Abbot (left) and John Prescott (right)*

John's parents were instrumental in bringing monks from the Cistercian Monastery in Waterford, Ireland to New Zealand over fifty years ago. Cistercians are not only known for their life of prayerful devotion to God and their hospitality but also for their hard work, which included farming skills. Knowing that John had an intellectual disability his parents blessed him by taking special measures to care for his future well-being, they decided to leave their farm property and the care of their son to the monks.

Within a few years of that arrangement John's father died leaving not only his son but also his widow in the care of the community of monks; she died only a short time ago aged 104 still living in her home on the farm. For many years the monks had lovingly cared for the practical needs of mother and son, which also included providing them with daily meals.

After his mother's death John was given the option of staying in the family home or moving into the monastery to live in the monk's quarters. John chose to live with his brothers in Christ to share their monastic life and to become Abbot Brian's "Chief Assistant". The Abbot told me that he took John to Australia last year to meet other Cistercians, where he proudly introduced John as his "Chief Assistant", the only one in the worldwide Cistercian Order. Hearing that story John grinned and told me that he was training to "take over" from the Abbot – it is a huge joke between them.

Being the Abbot's Chief Assistant is a position that John takes very dutifully and seriously, this we witnessed in the special week leading up to Easter Sunday as John served the community each day in many different ways. He sometimes rang the huge bell at the correct time to call the community to worship; we noticed that every detail of every task was done in correct sequence and with holy sincerity. John mostly starts his day at 6 am as he joins his monastic brothers in Christ for morning prayer and Mass. There has been no coercion, John told me that he chose to live with the monks after the death of his mother and he loves living with them.

John has many and varied tasks in the community, but the one that touched my heart most was his assistance to the Abbot in the ceremony of the washing of feet on the

thursday evening of Easter week. I was grateful to God for the privilege of John's service to me in Christ because I knew how sincerely this special man served the God he loves. He also welcomes guests, and stops to chat with several people. It was on our last day that I discovered why John's face had seemed so familiar to me, for as well as sharing the Catholic faith John and I had been involved with CFFD, and had worshipped together at the annual camp. John told me how he liked going to camp and hoped to be going again with Joan Parker – if you meet him there remember he is the only Cistercian Abbot's "Chief Assistant" in the world and also a man who loves the simple monastic life.

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Len Thomas writes in the "New South Wales Crossroads" magazine:

### **GOD CAN DO SO MUCH WITH OUR LIVES IF WE LET HIM**

Recently I read a book titled *Warriors of Ethiopia*, written by an ex-missionary who served in Ethiopia for many years. The book is a collection of experiences about Ethiopians he knew and loved. I am sure that anyone who reads it will never be the same again. There is one particular chapter I want to tell you about:

During a district Convention among the Wolaitte people, a call was given to the young Christian men and women to become missionaries to the tribes in the furthest part of the country. This was a calling where they would be required to leave their families and live with people of a different culture. It would not be an easy life! They would have to travel long distances, learn new languages and experience strange customs.

A young man stood up who was well-known amongst the community and volunteered to go. He was shouted at to sit down and told that he was not capable of going. Why the outburst? Well; Fanta was severely crippled. He was completely paralysed down one side of his body and with the aid of a stick he dragged his useless leg after him. It took a long time for him to cover any short distance and he would have to travel hundreds of kilometers through dangerous territory.

Against all the advice of the village he went alone into the wilderness because he felt that God was calling him. It took him five days to travel a distance that an average person would take only two days, but eventually he found himself in country that nobody would go to because of the danger. Many people had been murdered over the years by a very hostile tribe who hated strangers. Strangely though, the tribe welcomed him and gave him respect by caring for him.

The Lord blessed Fanta, and many of the tribe became Christians because of his witness among them. Five churches were commenced in the area.

This is just a small example of what God can do for us. Never underestimate what God can do with our lives. No matter what our disability is, there is something we can achieve. Ask God to show you what talents you have. We all have something that we are good at. When you discover it don't be put off because of what someone may say. God can do much with our lives if we let him.

*In the "Challenge Weekly" one of their reporters, Lavinia Ngatoko, wrote,*

## **CAMP INSPIRES PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Personal Uniqueness God's gift to all

About 100 people, many of them with disabilities, were encouraged to appreciate their uniqueness, and step out of their comfort zones at a camp in West Auckland last month.

This was the message from David Burge, the main speaker at the Auckland CFFD Camp in Henderson. The Takanini Church pastor, who has cerebral palsy, told campers they were all special and had a purpose in Christ. He helped everyone to identify any issues they may be facing, and stressed that each and every person at the camp was unique. He told campers that they had all been given special gifts from God, no matter what disability they had. "We still have abilities," he said. Mr Burge's address tied in neatly with the theme of the camp, which was 'identity'.

Jean Griffiths, one of the event organizers, said Mr Burge was an appropriate speaker for the camp, because those with disabilities could better relate to him. Jean also commended the hard work of the helpers, or 'buddies', who took responsibility for caring for those with disabilities. She said many of the camp's first-time volunteers had initially been quite apprehensive about taking on such a huge responsibility. But by the end of the weekend all the helpers had graduated with flying colours. Auckland's Life Leadership College who were helping out for the first time will now do yearly internships at the camp.

Jean said, "It can look very daunting at first, as they (the helpers) are mostly people who have never worked closely with people who have severe disabilities. It can be quite 'freaky' for many of the new volunteers. "I take my hat off to them" she said. "It would not have been a camp without their assistance. As I also have a disability, it is a blessing to see there is a place for us to enjoy ourselves freely and know there are many willing hands to do the physical stuff."



The campers certainly enjoyed themselves with activities ranging from sports and games to simple crafts such as creating a scrapbook. There were also late night movies.

One of the highlights was when the Kiwistrikers turned up with a few of their custom built trikes. The group had volunteered their time to give the campers an experience of a lifetime. The looks of glee on the faces of those brave enough to hitch a ride on the backs of the trikes said it all.



Other highlights included the camp's own version of The Amazing Race, and a Fear Factor challenge, where contestants had to eat a disgusting mixture which they were told was "cat food." One of the organizers later divulged it was "chicken pate." Campers also appreciated the chance to be creative in creating a portrait of themselves from a photo pasted on A4 cardboard. The portrait was then surrounded by words of positive affirmation. Jean Griffiths said that the camp was definitely one of the best they had ever had.



# THE MEANING OF THE ATONEMENT

A number of years ago Selwyn Hughes wrote in *Every Day With Jesus*,

"Of all the illustrations I have heard of the Atonement, the one I love best is the story of Father Damien, a Belgian missionary who went to serve the Lord on the island of Honolulu. Whilst there he learned of a leper colony on the much smaller island of Molokai and obtained permission to go and minister to the 600 un-shepherded souls who lived there. He was the only healthy man on an island of lepers and confessed at times to being terribly lonely. One morning as he was pouring boiling water into a pan some of it splashed on to his bare foot. And he felt nothing. Then the truth dawned on him. One of the signs of leprosy is immunity to pain. He was a leper himself! Most men would have been devastated, but do you know what Father Damien did? He rang the church bell to summon everyone to the building. When all had gathered he leapt into the pulpit, stretched out his arms and said, "Fellow lepers." From that moment on his words gained greater credibility. The people who heard him speak all agreed, "He is one of us."

All analogies are inadequate. Jesus could never say "Fellow sinners" because He had no sin. Yet, He was made to be sin. He became what we are in order that we might become what He is."

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## GOD LOVES YOU

God wants to be your friend and wants you to live with Him forever in Heaven.

There is a problem though - we have sinned, and the wages of sin is death.  
We are responsible to pay the punishment of our sin.

But because God loves you so much,  
He sent His only son to pay the penalty of your sin.  
He died a cruel death upon the cross and shed His blood to redeem you,  
But the victory was with Jesus Christ for He rose from the dead on the third day.

Won't you thank Him and receive Him to be your Lord and Saviour!  
Your eternal destiny depends upon your acceptance and trust in Jesus.

Why not pray this prayer: *"Lord Jesus Christ, I repent of all my sins.  
I accept your sacrifice upon the cross for the forgiveness of my sins.  
I welcome You into my heart as my Lord and Saviour.  
Thank You, Lord Jesus for hearing my prayer. Amen."*



# JOY MINISTRIES NATIONAL CAMP

*Pastor John Shipman was the camp speaker  
(picture to the right)*

*The group from Taupo (below)*

*Garry and his buddy Amos (below right)*

*Four people were baptised at the camp  
(bottom)*



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