

THE ENCOURAGER

Issue. 161 | November 2018

The magazine of Elevate Christian Disability Trust



**Elevate
National
Camp 2018**

Saturday Night:
Dressing up as an
inspiring Christian
leader





This photo and the others,
at the top of the following
pages, were all taken at
Elevate National Camp 2018

*'Let my people go is easier
Paul S*



A mouth on wheels

*Devotional by
Edith Morris*

Proverbs 31: 8-9 (New Living Translation)

Speak up (*open your mouth*) for those who cannot speak for themselves;
ensure justice for those being crushed.

Yes, speak up (*open your mouth*) for the poor and helpless,
and see that they get justice.

I am a mouth on wheels.

These were my opening words at the National Camp. Everyone laughed. I laughed too. It has taken me many years to accept that I am a talker, I can't stop talking, I love talking. It is so good to be using the gift I have been given by God. It doesn't mean that I always talk sense, no, it's often a lot of nonsense and chatter. Oh how released and confident I am when the Lord has given me something to say about Him, about His ways, about His love for each one of us. I used to feel quite embarrassed for being almost compelled to speak up on issues I was passionate about.

Why did I always have to "chip in" with my opinions? But it wasn't all about me. Many times I've been able to advocate for others, sensing that when I spoke publicly I wasn't standing (or sitting) alone. I was representing hundreds of people who didn't have the chance to speak.

When we lived in Japan my voice was severely restricted because I didn't speak much Japanese. I would need another mouth standing beside me as my message was only as good as my interpreter. In spite of my poor Japanese, it didn't stop me talking. I have the gift of speaking, and I sure know how to use it.

We returned to Hamilton after 25 years of missionary work in Japan, and these words from **Proverbs** set my path on what to do next. My mouth has been set free. There are no limitations (apart from common sense and common courtesy). What joy there is in whole heartedly being available for the Lord to use.

Recently at a packed conference I was manoeuvring my wheelchair through a crowd when a lady said to me, "you have a heart of a lamb and the voice of a lion." Yes, the Lord continues to confirm His purpose for me. What is His gift for you? Name it out loud and use it for His glory. ■

CAMPS 2019

Please take note and put in your diaries

Wellington CFFD	8-10 March	El Rancho, Waikanae
Kids Connect (C.B.M)	8-10 March	Moto Moana, Blockhouse Bay, Akd
Auckland CFFD	15 -17 March	Carey Park, Henderson, Akd
Emmanuel Family Camp	29-31 March	Totara Springs, Matamata
Christchurch Day Camp	13 April	
Torch Camp	11-14 April	Capernwray Bible College, Cambridge
National Camp	25-28 Oct	Totara Springs, Matamata

Marvellous Love

By Bill Bright

On a cold Christmas Eve in 1952, when Korea was in the throes of civil war, one young woman struggled along a village street, obviously soon to deliver a child.

She pleaded with passersby,
'Help me! Please. My baby.'
No one paid any attention to her.
A middle-aged couple walked by. The wife pushed away the young mother and sneered,
"Where's the father? Where's your American man now?"
The couple laughed and went on.
The young woman almost doubled up from a contraction as she watched them go.
'Please...' she begged.

She had heard of a missionary living nearby who might help her. Hurriedly, she began walking to that village. If only he would help her baby. Shivering and in pain, she struggled over the frozen countryside. But the night was so cold. Snow began to fall. Realizing that the time was near to deliver her baby, she took shelter under a bridge. There alone, her baby was born on Christmas Eve. Worried about her new born son, she took off her own clothes, wrapped them around the baby and held him close in the warm circle of her arms.

The next day, the missionary braved the new snow to deliver Christmas packages. As he walked along, he heard the cry of a baby. He followed the sound to a bridge. Under it, he found a young mother frozen to death, still clutching her crying new born son. The missionary tenderly lifted the baby out of her arms.

When the baby was 10 years old, his now adoptive father told him the story of his mother's death on Christmas Eve. The young boy cried, realizing the sacrifice his mother had made for him. The next morning, the missionary rose early to find the boy's bed empty. Seeing a fresh set of small footprints in the snow outside he bundled up warmly in a winter coat and followed the trail. It led back to the bridge where the young mother had died. As the missionary approached the bridge, he stopped, stunned. Kneeling in the snow was his son, naked and shivering

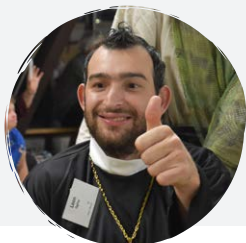
uncontrollably. His clothes lay beside him in a small pile. Moving closer, he heard the boy say through chattering teeth, "Mother, were you this cold for me?"

That story reminds me of another mother and Son who sacrificed so much. One winter night Jesus left His home, His glory and the warmth of heaven to be born in a stable to an unwelcome world. Just before He was born, Mary, His mother, was not welcome in any of the cosy inns in Bethlehem. Instead she delivered her baby in the darkness of a cold stable. The Creator of the universe, the Perfect Judge who could destroy the world with a single word, was willing to endure this inauspicious beginning for you and me. That is unconditional love!

We who have experienced God's unconditional love are commanded to share that love with others. John writes in 1 John 4:11, "Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other" (New Living Translation). God wants us to express His supernatural love to others. We become examples of God's love to the world as we love our neighbours through the enabling of His Holy Spirit. My prayer for you is the same as Paul's prayer for the believers in Ephesians 3:17,18: "May your roots go down deep in to the soil of God's marvellous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love really is."

You may confess, "I don't have that kind of love to share with anyone." To experience God's supernatural love, claim it by faith. We have the potential to love anyone God puts in our path. One of the greatest lessons I have learned in my Christian life is 'how to love by faith.' When we by faith invite God's unconditional love to flow through us, we will discover a rekindled love that is alive and well. That is true for an "unlovable" spouse, boss, employee, or anyone. Nothing breaks the hardened ground of unforgiveness and bitterness like sincere acts and words of love. Sometimes you and I, by faith, must take the first step of restoration. A positive response may not be immediate, but keep on loving and reaching out. There is no power on earth stronger than God's supernatural love.

"We who have experienced God's unconditional love are commanded to share that love with others"



*Lord give me strength in
and power in*



Elevate National Camp 2018

Comments on National Camp 2018 taken
from evaluation forms:

- I loved seeing the joy on people's faces, being part of a big family, and the great atmosphere.
- I can't really reduce to one thing why it was so special, but it was SO awesome.
- Such a privilege to be here and so encouraging to observe and experience the love and care shared in this very special community.
- The spirit over the camp was awesome.
- A slice of heaven.
- Meeting new loving Christian people brought the anointing presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Registration has never been so quick and easy. Well done Onne, and all those who worked so hard preparing all the lists.

Never before have the comments on the food been so lavish in their praise. The helpings served were so generous that few seconds were even requested.

THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME

Miriam Scott writes,

The way the children grasped the concept theme of camp and put it into action was very special. After making cards with Penny Shivas they wanted to sell them to fundraise for people in the Philippines, and they made more than \$120! Throughout they were inspired, blessed and encouraged in their walks with the Lord, and I pray they will return the blessings and give service to these people in the years to come.



A MIRACLE IN GETTING TO CAMP

I have been requiring daily hospital treatment. Camp was coming up and I really wanted to go, but the hospital was strongly against me coming because of the need for daily dressing changes.

About four weeks ago my friend was at the hospital waiting for treatment. We decided to pray, when a nurse came in and prayed with us that the doctor would allow me to go to camp. As we were praying, the doctor came in and asked if he could join us.

I said, "Yes ...if you would like to pray with us."

He then said, "What are you praying for?"

I replied, "I want to go to a Christian Camp over Labour Weekend."

He said, "I'm sure God would want you to go too." He immediately organized for me to go, including the necessary dressings etc. So here I am with my doctor and my heavenly Father's blessings!

Dawn Bakker

WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN YOU TELL OTHERS ABOUT OUR MINISTRY

On Friday morning we were minding our business at McDonalds; having just flown in on an early morning flight into Auckland Airport. It must have been because of the looks on our faces or the reactions we had as we cared for Gina, that a gentleman approached us. He had been observing from a distance. He was so touched, that he wanted to give us \$80!

We told him where we were going and that we would use the money to give to the Philippines' Disabled Camp. During our breakfast he came over a second time to talk to Gina. Another \$50 was produced to use for our dinner that night! We told him that God had used him to be a blessing to us. May God use the experience in this man's life for His glory.

Paula Couprie, Gina Taka-Ardouin, Leanne Kuipers from Christchurch CFFD

A number of years ago Di and I stayed at a Motel in Rotorua. Di, as is her way, quickly started up several conversations with the managers.

Imagine our surprise when, as the National Camp neared, we received a cheque for a thousand dollars to help those who were having difficulty finding the full camp fee to be enabled to come, and to help with the costs. In the subsequent years thousand dollar cheques have continued to come!

Hugh Willis

National Camp Speakers

Our two National Camp speakers both have disabilities: Pastor Tim Lee (Tetraplegic) shown here, and Edith Morris (polio) shown page 2.



A FIRST TIME CAMP EXPERIENCE

Elevate camp at Totara Springs is an experience that will impact my life. It has opened my eyes to see that not just my brother has difficulties, but all have difficulties in their own way.

My brother is not at this camp, but he has a number of disabilities; severe Autism, Intellectual Disability, ADHD, OCD, Echolalia and Polydipsia. This means he is an extremely difficult person to look after, and this has taught me so much about the love for disabled people. He has made me both laugh and cry, but I still love and care about him.

At this camp I've been paired up with a Down-syndrome kid (Michael Gu). This is something new to me. It has been a challenge and it has taught me that not just my brother has difficulties.

Elevate camp was a great time, not just to serve but to meet others just like myself who also serve, and it is so awesome. Elevate camp does not just give the disabled person or parents a break, it brings a family together, and it's so beautiful to see God's creation.

We may see the disability; the imperfection... the flaw, but God made them perfect in His image. They are not perfect by us, but by what He has in store for them. Let's see the ability not the disability.

Liam Tamasev

Ken Miller

Just as we were finishing this Encourager we heard that Ken Miller from Tauranga BOP had died. He so loved the Lord and the Elevate ministry, and was at National Camp regularly from the 1980s. He will be remembered for greeting and welcoming everyone on arrival, providing prizes for the dressing ups on Saturday evening, supporting the Philippines CFFD in so many ways, sponsoring folk, giving CFFD branded articles such as drinking glasses to everyone for many years, and visiting the Philippines CFFD several times. We are so grateful for his amazing contribution.





Kindness is in our power

Very sad news

Grant Allely has died

Grant and Margie Willers met in the very early days of the Fellowship, and greatly admired and appreciated one another over the next 40 years.



Grant had a book published of sermons he had thought out and typed himself, many of which he had read out for him in churches of many denominations



Graham Everton gave Grant many hours of tuition on mastering the keys on a computer. This was a life-saver for Grant, and amongst other things he used the computer to run a small business on locating and purchasing old books.



Grant translated his concern for the suffering church overseas into action when he saved the fares through his own fundraising, and then travelled to China himself to deliver Bibles.



Grant wanted to reach out to others to know Christ, and would wheel himself down to Takapuna, spread out his tracts on his tray where a sign read: YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND MY SPEECH, BUT PLEASE TAKE ONE.



Grant had a hilarious account of the difficulties he worked his way through, and this was made into a very popular skit, "Going to the dentist" that was used in church services run by the CFFD.



Grant was patient in his tribulations, and it was very rare to catch him really upset!

Memories of Grant

by Becky Skelly



Phil Skelly

Our family first came to New Zealand in 1984 to work with a church fellowship in Brown's Bay. Very soon after we arrived I met a woman who was going through a difficult time, and as we were talking she shared about an amazing young man she had met over the CB radio. She described his positive attitude, and how despite his challenges he never gave up and had a strong faith in God. This encouraged her to keep going. The young man, of course, was Grant.

Later God brought us in contact with Hugh and Di and we quickly became involved with what was then CFFD, and met Grant. We were very drawn to the ministry because I have a brother who also has Cerebral Palsy and we had been chaplains of a group for people with disabilities in the States. From the very beginning Grant became a special part of our family. He became part of our fellowship, and along with Hugh and Di and others from the group had a great impact on our church family. We often brought him home after church on Sundays and introduced him to strange American food! Phil loved being able to help Grant with taking a bath and just spending time with him. After he got Grant all cleaned up they would have quiet talks about life, and mostly scripture and preaching. He was a part of our family, and our kids loved him.

Phil's love enabled Grant to experience life at its fullest! At camp Phil got Grant up on a horseback ride, and also had a wild ride with him on the Flying Fox. It was great to see Grant's face light up, and hear him shriek with delight (or maybe sheer terror) when Phil would take him on these adventures. Phil also loved taking him on wheelchair rides which included high speed races and wheelies! One memorable time he was going a little too fast and he dumped Grant out of the chair into the sand at the beach. Fortunately, Grant was ok, and of course laughing! They were just great friends.

We took Grant with us one Sunday afternoon to an outdoor service in Auckland where Arthur Blessed was preaching. He was known for carrying a large cross in places all around the world. After the service as we were going back to the car we turned the corner and there was Arthur Blessed walking towards us carrying the cross. He stopped to talk to us, and said to Grant, "You, young man, have been called to preach the Gospel. Never quit preaching!!" What a moment that was to hear God's calling on Grant be affirmed by this unique man of God!

It was a sad day in 1988 when we left New Zealand and had to say goodbye to our dear friend Grant. A lot of tears were shed that day. But Grant, the intrepid traveller, would have more adventures with his mate Phil. He visited us when we were working with refugees in Bangkok, Thailand where Phil, of course, got him up close to an elephant! He never visited us when we were on our next assignment in Russia but he wanted to. Twice he visited us in the United States where Phil of course took him on a roller coaster at an amusement park. His last visit was in Colorado where Phil worked with the Relief and Development arm of the Christian Missionary Alliance. Phil was so proud to take Grant into the office with him, and arranged for Grant to share his testimony in chapel with all of the leaders of the CMA. Many people were moved by his story that day,

When we visited Grant in New Zealand in 2012, we all had a sense that this was the last time we would see him on earth as he was struggling so much physically. What a sweet time we had that day, and none of us would have imagined that seemingly healthy Phil would go to heaven before Grant. He died of a sudden heart attack in 2017. It gives me joy to think of Phil and Grant, both whole and healthy in heaven together, having the GREATEST adventure enjoying the presence of God!



We need to have a realistic view of our



Fighting for David

How Relentless LOVE Healed a Man

by Tonya Stoneman

I had coffee the other day, with a vegetable.

That's what the director of a local rehabilitation centre called him when he applied to her facility for a treatment, yet few people that I've met have affected so many others. During our first encounter, newspaper reporters, photographers and a camera crew gathered in his home along with 20 or so friends and acquaintances. He worked the room with charm and poise, shaking hands and greeting every single person. The man of whom I speak is David McRae, a 38-year-old from Yakima, Washington, who lives with severe brain damage.

More than a decade ago, a motorcycle accident catapulted David 39 feet through the air. He landed headfirst and skidded another 20 feet before stopping. A young woman, headed to church with her three children, was the first to come across his limp body that lay straddling the yellow line. She immediately pulled over and called the police. "I took the gloves off his hands and rubbed them," she says, "I thought, Nobody should die without their mother. I want him to know someone is here with him."

Within the week, David's mom, Leone Nunley, had to make the critical decision about whether to perform a highly invasive brain surgery or allow David to pass away naturally. Though she had no doubt heaven awaited her son after death, she chose the operation, and a neurosurgeon removed the anterior five-and-a-half centimetres of brain mass from David's temporal lobe - his speech center. "I wouldn't blame you if you discontinued life support entirely," the doctor told Leone, "His brain has been significantly deprived of oxygen."

In his summary report, the surgeon made the following observations.

EEGs showed severe cortical dysfunction and Dr Stockard felt that based on the EEG the patient was unlikely to wake up. This was reviewed with the family, and they were very uncomfortable with this statement. I discussed with them the fact that he had not made significant progress, but they felt that almost any little motion is a sign of improvement, and were still hopeful that he would awaken and participate in rehabilitation. I told them that if he did not show any signs of improvement by six to eight weeks, then I thought that he should be placed in an extended care facility, i.e a nursing home.

Despite this harsh assessment, Leone had cause for hope. Her best Christmas gift that year was given by David - she asked him to wipe his mouth with a napkin, and after several tries, he complied! In fact, there were many small victories of this nature, but Leone never was able to convince others of the progress she saw. The director of the only rehabilitation centre in Yakima rejected David as a candidate for treatment when he failed a one-minute evaluation by not responding to basic commands. "I wouldn't put one more dollar into this boy" she said, listing his condition as a "persistent vegetative state." But Leone wouldn't buy it. She'd heard him say, "Mama." She'd felt him squeeze her hand. Something was going on inside of her son's brain. During the decade that followed she fought a rigorous battle with America's health care system, insurance bureaucrats, and various medical personnel.

In the end she cleaned out her garage and set up a "budget rehab centre" for David with a huge banner proclaiming, "Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31). That's where the story gets interesting.

selves, and a generous view of others

No less than 40 volunteers from the neighbourhood showed up five days a week for four years straight to help her with a technique called "patterning." This method, which was pioneered by Glen Doman of the Philadelphia Institute for Human Potential, takes the patient back to early childhood where he relearns to crawl and then to walk. Jacqui Wooner organized the volunteer "patterners" into teams of five, and kept up with all of their busy schedules year after year. Bill and Joy Campbell showed up every week to move David's arms and legs. Chet Dire read the Bible to David once a week for seven years; he and his wife also worked on a patterning team. And there was Leone's husband Dale, who married her when she was a single mom with three little boys. Though David is not his biological child, Dale has poured out his life for him unreservedly.

Their collective tenacity, sweat, and love paid off, and David began to improve. But David wasn't the only one rewarded by their hard work. "It was finally something we could do," says Bill Campbell. "More than patterning, it was a social hour. We could be there every week, spend time with David, and get to know each other." We began to see him give us feedback," Bill says. "Three to four months into patterning he started giving us the thumbs up before anything else. That tells a lot! He began developing a whole series of behaviours. He was in there. He just needed us to help him get out."

The group grew close and their focus intensified as the years passed. "We gained strength from seeing prayers answered through camaraderie," says Gene Kimmel. "A limp dishrag began to move on its own, and we took part in that. We shared our lives. David wasn't the only getting help. I always looked forward to patterning. Cara Anderson remembers when his smile came back - a smile that he uses a lot today.

Of course, the triumphs ambled in one at a time, with much toil and impedance in the meantime. Leone is a tiny woman of about 60 years. She could be just about anyone walking by in a hardware store, but when you talk with her, you begin to see a strength and resolve not common to most people. She's simple but solid, and her humility belies wisdom. She does not condemn the events of her life. Nor does she question God for allowing them to happen! Instead, she thanks Him for the astonishing miracles that comprise her daily life, and in doing so, she helps others to see eternity in their midst.

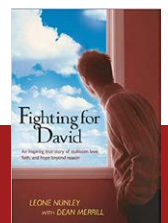


Today David lives in his own duplex, feeds himself, bathes himself, and even shaves himself. Yet, along with the commodification of almost everything in our society, medicine is becoming market-driven. The cost of rehabilitating someone like David McRae is monumental. Just how much is someone like David worth to society? In some cultures, older citizens are respected for their wisdom and given places of honour. Not so in the U.S. Our concept of usefulness has more to do with good looks and talent than what we offer altruistically. A series of ads soliciting egg donors recently ran in college newspapers across the nation.

A society preoccupied by performance has little use for the Terri Schiavos and David McRaes - neither could earn an SAT score of any kind. And yet Terri inspired people across the globe to fight for the rights of others. David mobilized his entire community to volunteer their time year after year. While unique, these two are not isolated cases. Every day, people like David and Terri impact others profoundly by receiving love as much as they give it. This is what makes right to life issues so controversial. For it is love, not productivity, that makes us human. The right to life is about relationship: the right to love and be loved. In some ways, our society upholds this principle, but too often our frantic pursuit of personal gain creates a system that rejects the weak. ■

Taken and condensed with permission from an "In Touch" magazine

Leone Nunley has published a book with the title, "Fighting for David"





Be sure you put your feet in the
-Abraham



PART TWO:

Deborah's STORY

told by her Mum, Jenny Barkley

In the last Encourager we told about Deborah, one of Jenny and Ross Barkley's daughters, whose eyes at the age of two became intermittently skewed requiring an operation two years later. She developed severe toileting troubles, wetting herself day and night, and many tests at Paediatric neurology led to a conclusion her brain was basically stuffed, and there was nothing they could do with an expected degeneration of motor skills, psychosis and a raft of dreadful outcomes. But in May 2015 at a retreat, people assured us of God's love, His care and His plan, and these words were given to us by a woman who had never done anything like this before. "Deborah is My child. I am watching over her. Her life is in My hands and I treasure her. You may not know what is happening, but I do. In your darkest moments My light shines around you and your family. My unseen presence is surrounding you all, holding all your hearts in My loving arms."

TRUSTING JESUS IN THE HIGHS AND THE LOWS

We know that God holds Deborah's life in His hands. We are confident that whether in life or death His name will be glorified. We look to Him for total healing, but even more for joy for every day of Deborah's life. Through the rest of 2016 Deborah continued to deteriorate. We knew she was still 'present' because when listening to audio books she would laugh instantly at something funny. From November we were attached to the palliative care team and had monthly visits.

Now receiving very high ORS funding we had a teacher visiting weekly, a teacher-aid for 20 hours a week, visits from speech language therapists, occupational therapists and a physiotherapist, in addition to our two morning ladies. While Deborah was now a lot more withdrawn, primarily because of her inability to communicate, she could still smile.'

On June 17, 2017 we took Deborah to a healing seminar in Christchurch run by John Fergusson. Having heard about his healing ministry we had twice previously visited John in Auckland and had him minister to Deborah. She has in fact been prayed over many times by groups and individuals over the last three years. Again this time there was no apparent change. However, one woman who helped me get the wheelchair in the door, remembered a dream from 26 years earlier when she had helped a woman in a wheelchair into church, and the woman had walked out. Having waited so long, I hated to see her disappointed, and asked her to help me walk Deborah out to the car that evening. Initially we had to move each leg for her, with two of us also holding

her up. It was a long way to the doorway where we got stuck. Finally, we moved off down the hallway and I realised Deborah was moving her legs independently. She continued to walk as far as the car with our support.

That marked a turning point. Deborah began speaking more the very next morning. We found she could recite nursery rhymes when prompted. She could read single words like voracious, surreptitiously, ubiquitous and gnome, up to twenty at a time. Her increased engagement was noticed and commented on by people in the community, as well of course with great joy by her teacher aid, and care givers.

Three months on, Deborah continued to improve, boosted by another weekend healing seminar with a different speaker but relying on the same Jesus and the continued prayers of family and friends. She now often used a walking frame with assistance around the house. We made the move back to less bulky nappies as her bladder control improved. With her teacher aid she read simple books, did crosswords, played a much wider range of games, and got out into the community by putting books away at our local library. Deborah began visiting the local gym twice a week for physio. She needed help to complete the rotations on the exercycle, but two weeks later she pedaled nonstop for five minutes unaided, and then carried on for the rest of her 20 minute session. We were dancing all the way home. The doctors had no explanation for the improvement. It is contrary to the expected outlook for MLD.

Sadly, around five months later Deborah stopped improving and began to slip downhill again. We cannot pinpoint a time or reason for this. She is now permanently in the wheelchair we had relegated to the

garage. She can still talk better than at her worst last year, but not as well as she has been. We are having to look for a wheelchair van and have a hoist to help with transfers. She continues to visit the gym twice a week, to volunteer at the library with her teacher-aid, to play cards with some elderly friends, to visit the horses at RDA, and to enjoy the new hydrotherapy pool at QE2.

Of course the unravelling has been a huge disappointment to all of us, but the story is not finished

yet. We are confident that Jesus, who began this good work in Deborah, will bring it to completion. One day when I was mourning the loss of her teenage years He told me that she will come out of this better than if she had been a normal teenager. All praise to God our Father, to Jesus our Healer, and to the Holy Spirit who comforts and encourages us.

My trust in Jesus grew and grew you all, holding all your hearts in My loving arms." ■

God said "NO"

By: Joseph J. Mazzella

"Please God let my son be normal!" I was a young Father. My first-born son had been diagnosed with Autism two years earlier. His speech wasn't developing right. He had many repetitive behaviours. Often he would cry for a long time for no reason. My daughter who had been born two years after him was developing normally, out-pacing her brother. My wife had been content with just the two of them, but I'd wanted another son. I wanted a normal son. My ego wanted a son who would be just like me and carry on the family name. The doctors at the time had assured us that the chances were one in ten thousand that we would have another child with Autism. Still, a part of me was afraid. When we discovered then that my wife was pregnant with a boy again, I remember saying the prayer above, over and over and over.

As my third born child grew up, however, it soon became clear that the doctors had been wrong. It soon became clear that he had an even more extreme form of Autism than his older brother had. While his brother had eventually learned to talk, read, and learn, my youngest son could say only a few words. His Autistic behaviours were much more severe. He had many crying fits and would hit himself. He tore things up and broke things. He had trouble relating to us, and was mainly lost in his own world. God had said, "No" to my prayer.

The journey that followed has been a long and difficult one for my sons, my daughter, their mother,

and myself. It still goes on today. It has been full of stress and pain, but also learning and growth. It forced all of us down a path of greater love, faith, and kindness. In the end my two Joys became my greatest teachers on how to live and how to love. My oldest son now is a fountain of kindness who gives out hugs easily and happily. His younger brother still doesn't speak much but has a laughter and innate joy that brightens my soul each and every day of my life. I often think that if I could one day learn my oldest son's love and my youngest son's joy that I would know how the angels feel.

I am no longer mad at God either for saying, 'No' to my prayer. If He had said "Yes" I would never have become the person I am today. I wouldn't be writing this right now. I wouldn't be trying so hard to remind my readers of just how much God loves them.

Sometimes God says 'No' to something we ask for in order to give us something much better. Sometimes we don't know why some of our prayers are answered while others aren't. All I know is that God loves us all. God has a plan for us all. And sometimes we just have to trust even if we don't know the answers.

Live your life with love then. Trust in God to lead you down the path you are meant to go. Let Him guide you through this life and into the next.



It is not my disability that is of the people towards my disability

In an article in In Touch magazine, condensed with permission, Allen Harris wrote about the life of Lewis Each. He said his was

"A Life that Won"

Throughout my youth Lew was the one person that everyone knew and loved. He transcended social cliques and determined to live his life unfettered by the teenage caste system that dominated our hometown. His was a steadfast friendship with a fantastic sense of humour and love for everyone he met

Despite his larger-than-life outlook, Lewis lived each day with the problematic symptoms of cystic fibrosis (CF), a terminal disease that attacks digestive and respiratory functions. In an autobiographical essay, Lewis once wrote, "I grew up like a regular little kid, if there is such a thing. I ran as fast as my kindergarten counterparts. I skinned my knee and tore my already torn blue jeans when I wrecked my bike. I sweated on hot summer days and I could throw a spiral better than my neighbour could. I can't recall ever stopping to catch my breath." Sadly, Lew spent the rest of his life trying to catch his breath. Symptoms began to appear early in his childhood, as he began a life-long routine of doctors' visits and check-ups.

He headed for college in the fall of 1992. With an incredible zest for life, Lew burst onto the campus scene with such excitement that people were instantly drawn to him. A fresh face, first handshake, and new smile were precious to Lew; every "mundane" aspect of life was like a piece of ripe fruit waiting to be plucked and savoured. He explained, "When you're learning to die, you have to learn to live...If you can do that, then when you die, you're ready."

A life-long sports enthusiast, Lew melted into the rich athletic heritage of the University of Alabama. Honing his writing skills, he became an award-winning collegiate sports journalist, contributing to the daily campus newspaper as well as other professional papers throughout the southeast.

As his health progressively worsened, classes and news

articles became more of a challenge. However, as with all of the other obstacles in his life, Lew overcame. When necessary, he would arrive to class early enough to haul in his elaborate breathing apparatus, all the while apologising to his professors for any disturbance he caused. He often carried his oxygen tank into the press box during sporting events so that he would not miss a football game or gymnastics meeting. And, during 2-week hospitalisations, Lew would sit up in bed with hand-scribbled notes lying about as he worked on current assignments. Any deadlines that he missed were quickly made up with material that far exceeded his teachers' and editors' expectations. While respecting and acknowledging his illness, Lewis would not allow it to master his life.

Lewis' life demonstrates that, even in the face of terminal illness, "future" does not have to be a fearful concept.

During his college days, as his illness began to take a greater toll, Lew explained, "I'm a happy person. CF will never beat me. Yes, it's uncomfortable when you have no air, but right now I'm staying ahead of the game for the most part. Life is grand. As long as I don't forget that fact, I will be fine."

I suppose that this statement, if taken out of context, might seem to betray a sense of denial about his condition. However, when viewed correctly – through the lens of his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ – Lew's outlook reflects his true character. He explained, "I know that God has a plan for me and one day I will live in Glory. The Bible says that my present sufferings will not be worth comparing to the future glory that will be revealed in me. I believe that."

my problem, but the attitude – that is my problem. - Helen Keller

Lewis' life demonstrates that, even in the face of terminal illness, "future" does not have to be a fearful concept. In a sense, Lew was like everyone else in that no one knows for certain how much time he or she will have on earth. Unlike most of us, though, he was reminded daily of his own mortality. Nonetheless, I remember him declaring, "I have 24 hours in a day just like everyone else. You can do whatever you want with yours, but I'm going to use mine." He did.

As he felt his time growing short, Lew began to make serious plans for the future. Not really his future – that was secure in Christ – but rather for his family and friends. He began to make "appointments" with the people he loved, in order to thoughtfully and carefully say his final good-byes. I will never forget

my own "appointment" with him. It was one of those rare times in life when there are simply no words left to say. I just sat beside his bed and held his hand. Weary, he kept nodding off, so I rose to leave, told him that I loved him, and said "goodbye." One week later, less than a month after his 25th birthday, he was gone.

Throughout high school and college, Lew claimed a verse that I believe captured his life perfectly: Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts." His small, thin body could not contain the enormous spirit that welled up inside. Only heaven had enough room for the life he lived: a life of joy, a life of laughter, a life of love...a life that won. ■

Does your Encourager die in
your home after you've read it

OR DO YOU PASS IT ON?



Rosemary Platt writes:

I thought I'd pass on a few comments I received by E-mail this morning, from a young Singaporean man in his twenties - I had an unexpected God meeting with him when passing through Singapore on my way to the U.K. three years ago, and we've kept in touch ever since. This young man has a top economic developmental position, but, despite his education and materialistic and financial background, was seeking much deeper things of life.

At the time we met, he had diligently studied most main world religions, in his search for the truth - but God has done amazing things in his life since then, and he's now immersed in Bible Study and uplifting church groups.

Recently I felt God wanted me to send him the last year's editions of "The Encourager", as well as a lovely book of creation paintings by Joni.

I thought I'd quote a few lines of his reply, to encourage you how far your ministry touches lives:

"Thank you so much for the package of amazing spiritually nourishing gifts!!

I am reading them through, slowly and steadily.

It is nourishing my soul. I feel less self-absorbed as I read them.

It has made me realise that life is about helping others. It is not focusing on the self.

I am really, really touched."



*We can complain because
or rejoice because thorn bushes*

Philippines CFFD



Juliet Clave
(0132Adult)

This is Juliet, she attends the CFFD Fellowship meetings in the Philippines.

Juliet lives in a desperate situation and urgently needs a sponsor.

Juliet became a paraplegic after jumping off a bridge. She lives in a squatter area with no electricity or running water. Her elderly mother cares for her and her 3 children. The only source of income that they have is by the mother scavenging from the local tip and selling what she can find. Therefore, they are subsistence living.



Dionisio Domingo
(031Staff)

This is Pastor Dioniso, he is a new Staff Worker for PCFFD in the Philippines who needs a sponsor. He lives with his wife and 4 children. He felt the Lord calling him to work with PCFFD. He has been helping with and driving

for the Camp, visitation and fellowship meetings, bringing spiritual encouragement and Biblical teaching.



Jay Paul Angelo
(032Staff)

This is Jay Paul Angelo, His profile was in the last magazine. We did have some response, but he still requires one more sponsor.



Sherwin Domingo
(0133Adult)

This is Sherwin, he is a new member of PCFFD in the Philippines who attends the PCFFD fellowship meetings. Sherwin has polio and walks by using jandels on his knees. He does earn a little money as a jeep caller, but this is

not enough to meet all his needs. He is also studying part time, and wants to work in electronics.

If you wish to sponsor Juliet, Sherwin, Dionisio or Jay Paul, the commitment is \$30.00 per month.

Please contact: Ruth Beale, PCFFD NZ Office,
6 Guildford Street, Ashhurst, Manawatu 4810.
Ph: 0274927178
E: pcffd.nzsponsorship@elevatedcdt.org.nz



Congratulations Rodelio Gutierrez!

He is one of our PCFFD member and beneficiary of our sponsorship program graduated Elementary from ALS with honor as one of the outstanding students. Because he has perseverance to continue his studies in spite of his disability.

rose bushes have thorns,
 es have roses -Abraham Lincoln

Kesa Vilisoni visits

We were so thrilled Kesa (see back page) was able to come to camp again after ten years from Fiji. She and her husband (also an above the knee amputee) were involved in starting CFFD in Suva with Seta and Ana Macanawai, and it later became a church - Horeb Disability Fellowship for and with pwds. Kesa is excited that the Wesleyan Methodist church she now attends is slowly opening to those with disabilities, - installing a ramp and accessible toilets and allowing pwds to minister! Kesa, the prime mover, is a lay preacher, and the church combines with Horeb for a service every 2 months!!



Attention - all those who have changed their email addresses PLEASE tell us your new ones

Have you been inspired and challenged in the articles by the Faith, Trust and Perseverance by these people in the midst of huge difficulties.

Do you know that God loves YOU, and Jesus died for YOU? Do contact us, a local Minister or Christian friend, so you can have that Faith too.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."



Did you know that we can email you when the latest Encourager magazine is up on our website? To sign up, scan this QR code, phone us or update your contact details on our website.

CONTACT ADDRESSES

Magazine Editor and Ministries Director
 Hugh and Di Willis
 87 Deep Creek Rd, Waiake,
 Auckland City 0630,
 New Zealand

CFFD Branches or Contacts*

Name	Email	Phone
Northland - Jacqui Gardner	jacquigardner@outlook.co.nz	09 438 4952
Auckland - Viv Riddell	cffdauckland@elevatedcdt.org.nz	0212940320
Coromandel-Hauraki* - Don Watson	musketeeer1803@hotmail.com	07 862 7174
Waikato - Heather Major	heatherjmajor@gmail.com	07 855 0681
Bay of Plenty - Deborah Dorofaeff*	debra.dorofaeff@gmail.com	021 254 7630
Hawkes Bay - Joan Parker	ej.parker@extra.co.nz	06 877 8026
Taranaki - Richard West	flourishwest@gmail.com	06 753 9466
Manawatu - Lyn Spencer	lynette.spencer@inspire.net.nz	06 357 0045
Wellington - John Hawkins	joly.hawk1790@gmail.com	04 569 9096
Christchurch - Dave Palmer	davepalmer@extra.co.nz	027 216 5743
Dunedin - Patsy Appleby-Morrison	patsyls@gmail.com	03 482 2505
P.C.F.F.D - Janet Meehan	pcffd.nz@elevatedcdt.org.nz	027 2644 172
- Ruth Beale	pcffd.nzsponsorship@elevatedcdt.org.nz	027 492 7178

Ministries under Elevate

Ministry and Contact	Email	Phone
Emmanuel Ministry Ross Sullivan	ross@aimmortgages.co.nz	09 834 4096
Torch Auckland - Leyna Coleman	leyna@actrix.co.nz	09 832 0130
Joy Ministries - National, Auckland Central, West & East Jan Bridgeman	bridgeman@extra.co.nz	027 641 2653
Hamilton - Jeni Hawker	jenihawker@gmail.com	020 401 47198
Whakatane - Wanda Hughes	bwtroop@gmail.com	07 312 3330
Hawkes Bay - Brad & Karen Spurgeon	spurgeonnz@gmail.com	06 876 1106
Taupo - Wendy Emsley	taupochaplain@gmail.com	07 378 9275
Masterton - Brenda Morgan	bpbeacgan996@gmail.com	06 377 3125
Blenheim - David Clode	clode11@slingshot.co.nz	03 578 0598
Other ministries around the country		
Able to Worship - Warkworth Methodist Church Jenny Trotter	k.jtrotter@gmail.com	09 422 7358
Kumbayah - St David's Presbyterian Church - Palmerston North Ann Bennett		06 355 2818
Bible Friends - Wanganui Louise Rostron	rostrons@extra.co.nz	06 344 5955
THRIVE - Greerton Bible Church, Tauranga Ray Harvey	ray@eol.co.nz	027 284 9433



If you would like to help with our costs you could send a donation to: ELEVATE P.O Box 13-322, Onehunga, Auckland 1643 or direct deposit ANZ 01-0142-0029706-00

I wish to give for the magazine: \$

I wish to give for general running costs: \$

Name:.....

Address:

.....



Elevate National Camp 2018



A workshop taken by Steve Pilgrim



The two Marks supported by Blair, led the communion service



Ruth Beale, Joan Parker and volunteers Penny and Turin selling cards for the Philippines



Indoor and outdoor sports



Worship



Kesa Vilisoni from Fiji seen here with Myrle Bunn