



**Great Joy For All People**

Last Christmas season provided us with a number of opportunities to reach out to the surrounding community. Several WCF families worked together to build a float, pass out candy and flyers, and create balloon animals for the local Christmas parade, which draws a crowd of more than 4000 people each year. In addition, we were encouraged to see many of our church members take part in Operation Christmas Child by purchasing gifts for children in the Solomon Islands. We were impressed with the commitment of others who helped to serve food for the local community on Christmas Day. However, the quiet generosity of one young man sticks with me more than any other. When the request went out to provide assistance for three needy families in our community, he almost single-handedly purchased everything for three nice Christmas dinners. He simply said, "I remember what it was like to be homeless. God has blessed me. I'm just giving back." What a great response to Christ's love.

Our Christmas tradition would hardly be complete without a shared meal together. Approximately 75 people, including a number of neighbours and extended family, gathered on Christmas Eve for an enjoyable time of carolling, story-telling, musical items, and of course food. Through this, we're praying that WCF's presence in the community will continue to be promoted.



A bright and colourful Niuean item from Malama's family.



Kya, Halina, Phoebe and Mia perform a Polynesian Christmas dance.

For the first time, we had a combined Christmas service with St. Paul's (the congregation from whom we're renting our current church building from), which ended up working very well. Dan Blanton, our newly-arrived missionary, got to dress up as the first Santa to appear in public in khaki shorts (in keeping with our summer season here) and shared a message not only for the children, but for the adults too about the true reason for Christmas.



Dan hosting a small group on Thursdays

**Sharing His Good News**

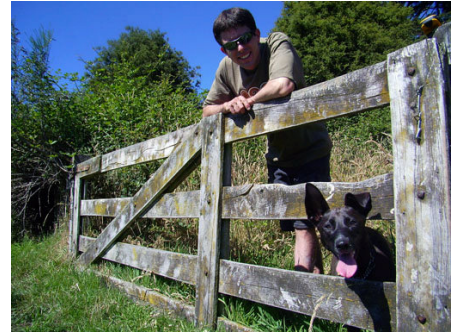
We will focus this year on building a greater concern among those at WCF for those who do not yet know Christ. Our aim is to help members to recognize where God is already working and equip them with tools to lead others closer to Him. Dan Blanton has been immensely helpful in pulling together two key groups for further training.

Through experimenting with a variety of outreach activities last year, we are better able to focus this year on those that were most effective. Because of the enthusiastic response to the Marriage Course held last year (one couple shared that they began the course at a critical moment

and that it saved their marriage), we will be starting our second workshop this February. Nathan and Tammy Neilson, from Town Center Community Church in Georgia, will be leading our second "Growing Great Kids" workshop in March. We are also thankful to be able to keep our involvement in the public schools.

### Enjoying the Holidays

After completing a busy year of school and ministry, both of us decided we needed a break. In December, we went for a short visit to Singapore to surprise Diane's father for his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was certainly a wonderful surprise for him as it took several minutes of him staring at us before he realized that his eyes weren't playing tricks on him! Things slow down here after Christmas, so we were also able to travel to Tauranga (to see an old friend, Matthew Gordon, whom some of you may remember from previous newsletters, get married) and to Wellington, the capital of New Zealand. We chose to celebrate our third anniversary there mainly to see the Police concert (Chad's favourite band of all time). However, we took the opportunity to see many of the area's parks, museums, and scenic drives. Our dog, Missy, must now be one of the best-travelled dogs around as she also came along for the holiday. And boy, did she wear a smile on her face throughout the whole journey!



Chad and Missy hanging out in Taupo, on the way to Wellington.

### Other Praises

- Two people were baptized at the end of last year.
- Dan arrived safely and started into ministry literally minutes after getting off the plane. He has been a big help to us so far. Pray for his continuing adjustment and financial support
- Diane graduated top in her class and is now working part-time at a dog day care centre.
- Chad has finished the ordination process through the state of Georgia and will be ordained in New Zealand at the end of March.

### Prayer Requests

- Non-Christian couples to participate in our second series of the "Marriage Course" beginning 27 February.
- While we are still free to do Bible studies in the public schools, there is a move to ban all religious education in public schools. Pray that God will keep the doors open for us to share the good news with students. Pray also for Dan and Tineke who will be leading Bible studies at the local elementary school this year.