

HeartBeat

Destruction turned to restoration

News of the super typhoon Haiyan that landed in the Philippines on 8 November 2013 captured the eyes of the whole world. The typhoon brought so much devastation and thousands of deaths, especially in Tacloban and Samar Leyte.

The unpredictable tragedy occurred so quickly even safe places for refugees became places of death as the storm surge surprised them. The infrastructures of both big and small houses were broken down and people were wandering around, looking for their lost loved ones without food and shelter. Dead bodies were lying everywhere. Rich and poor, those in authority and in politics — all were in the same situation, experiencing darkness, hunger, and thirst. It was a heart breaking tragedy that shocked the whole world.

In our earnest desire to extend help and service, the City Harvest Church Caring Network conducted a relief goods operation for different places in Negros Occidental that were affected by the typhoon. This was made possible through our generous donors from BMI churches in Australia and MPFG sponsors who have kindly shared their abundance from across the miles. Local people in the church also brought goods to add to the distribution.

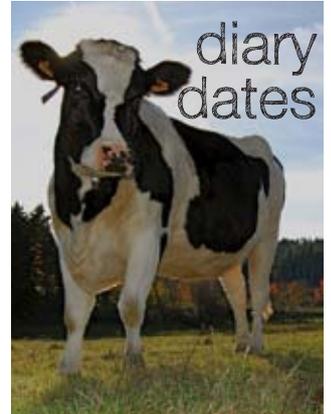
Marketing, packing, transporting, and distribution was all done through our faithful volunteers. We packed goods including rice, biscuits, sardines, beef loaf, milo, milk, matches, candles, tissues, nappies, soap, toothpaste and bottled mineral water. We also gathered used clothing to go along with

the distribution and brought with us extra food like boiled eggs, rice soup, bread, juice and lollies for children in different places.

The relief operation began with the island of **Matabas**, a small island (about 2.8 km²) with a population of about 800–900 including children. The only way to reach it is a 45 min – 1 hour boat journey. Most of the houses had collapsed during the typhoon. The newly renovated school building served as the evacuation centre where both children and adults were 'standing room only' as the school rooms were too small to accommodate them all. They had listened as the roaring winds collapsed their houses and took their belongings out to sea. Trees were hewn down, fishing boats were broken and fishing boundaries were totally devastated as big rocks were turned upside down. They experienced darkness without food and water for several days. 'We are being forgotten!' they exclaimed. They were very thankful for the relief goods and prayers. We were so touched by what we saw and heard from people and it was a blessing to be a part of the restoration. That sleepless night on Matabas has caused us to pray more for the place and consider how to extend more help in the future. We love Matabas and its people, but we know the Lord loves them more.

We continued our journey to the next island called **Molocaboc Duit**. The breeze was cool and as the strong waves tossed our boat up and down, water came splashing onto our faces and gave some of us a shower on the boat. The total population of Molocaboc Duit is about 2500–3000 including children. We

Continued on next page



2–6 June

National Leader's Gathering, Coffs Harbour NSW

12 July

Victorian State Gathering

20 September

South Australian State Gathering

18 October

New South Wales State Gathering



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were welcomed by the people waiting for us, and we prayed for them before the relief distribution.

We also left cash donations to the pastor, Jun Manate, whose native house and church building were all broken down during the typhoon. People

were very happy, blessed, and given hope as they put their trust in God. We left the place and returned to Bacolod to begin our next relief operation. To God be the glory!

The third place we went was **Daga**, Cadiz City, located near the coast. Daga is known as one of the poorest communities in Northern Negros, with a population of about 5000–7000 including children. Many of the houses were badly affected during the typhoon. The Baptist church that hosted us there during our relief operation had also served as one of the evacuation centres during the typhoon. A mother who had just delivered a baby about an hour ago was rescued just before their house collapsed. People were very happy to receive our relief goods. We also left



a cash donation to Ps Dionilo Arabis to buy some materials for some of his church members whose houses were still in need of assistance. We also fed hundreds of children along the seashore. We assigned members of our team to pray for people before

they left. Ps Dionilo and his wife Rebecca were very happy that their church had become an instrument to connect with people in their location and were privileged to extend help to the needy in their community. God is good!

The last trip took us to the towns of Mabini and Sitio Binit-agan. About three hour's drive from Bacolod, **Mabini** is located below the mountains. The population is about 500–800 people including children. Jona Mae Tanuco from MPFG

lives there with her family – they transferred to Mabini when their house at the slum in Bacolod was demolished. Houses were badly damaged here during the typhoon, but many were already restored when we came for relief distribution. People were surprised and very happy as they received the goods, saying our caring network is the very first group who had come. People were also very receptive to the word of God and received Christ Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. We love the people of Mabini and want to establish a church there, as people are hungry for the word and their children love to hear and learn more about God.

Sitio Binit-agan is about a thirty minute drive from Mabini. It is located near the coast with a population of about 500. We were able to meet the needy people there whose houses collapsed during the typhoon. We went straight to the houses and distributed the goods, prayed for people and gave them the word. Again we were told we were the first people to come and give relief. They were very happy that our caring network had reached out to them and shared with them an unexpected blessing. The unspeakable joy of sharing God's love is flowing from our hearts as we see people restored back to the hope that is in Christ alone.

Our heartfelt thanks to all for your generosity and love for our country and people. If the super typhoon

Haiyan has sown destruction, God has turned it for restoration and transformation of lives in the community. The seed we have sown now we believe will come to fruition and bring back more than what has been lost. Thank you so much again to all of you, our partners in the work of God's Kingdom. The Lord richly bless all of you.



Joe & Primrose Chavez

Abbott in Tasmania for more prime ministry

In January 2014 Pastor David Abbott held a Children's Conference at Tamar Valley Christian Church in Exeter, Tasmania. Maureen Shepherd reports.

It has once again been an amazing time with David Abbott from England ministering to the children, and may I say also to us adults. David arrived on Monday after ministering in Hobart and on Tuesday we had a BBQ tea together with the ministry team (ten children selected from last year's conference). This evening was the beginning of what has been a 'moving' time. After great fellowship over the meal we sat down to pray together and for each other. Before long it had reached 10pm and we were scrambling to get the children home so they would be ready next day. David shared in this time how he had an excitement that he could not describe for the conference, different from last year.

Wednesday

People arrived at the church to practice, get organised, prepare and to pray from 8:45am. I was amazed at the eagerness of everyone, especially the children. The children rolled in (some unexpected but we managed) with 26 in total. We began the morning with worship then handed over to David, who taught on Ruth and how she followed her heart, and not her eyes, not head understanding but what God wanted her to do. There was a great response from the children, getting their hearts in order, with the ministry team praying for the children and each other. During the next sessions the children brought lots of scriptures and prophetic vision from

the Lord. Samuel gave a testimony about music and how he has chosen to listen to worship music and how it made him feel. In the last session they prayed for Mike Webber (our intercessor who wasn't well). David taught on being obedient to God's call regardless, because we can feel afraid or odd or different — but we are different because we belong to Jesus. Everyone went home in high spirits with a great day had by all.

Thursday

We were down to 22 children on Thursday, as some couldn't get transport to the church. Nevertheless we began with worship, and spent some time with the children bringing scriptures and vision that the Lord had given them. Pastor Kevin shared about the power in the name of Jesus. David again started with Ruth and how she said to Naomi 'I'll go where you go; your God be my God' (Ruth 1:16). David related that God has to be first, and sport, electronic games, social media and education must be second. When God is put first, we will do well. He asked who wanted to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and ten children went forward and the ministry team prayed for them. We saw the evidence of the baptism with children speaking in their heavenly language.



Mike gave a testimony of his healing. God is so good and the children were encouraged even more. Then we held three workshops — Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Evangelism and Prayer. All were well attended and in the last session the children brought scriptures for David for his ministry for 2014 and also prayed for him.

The conference was an amazing time, very powerful. What a joy to see these children going for God in a big way.

Maureen Shepherd





At Moruya on NSW's beautiful Sapphire Coast, the SouthernLife community centre and the SouthernCare PantryClub extension and redevelopment are nearing completion. Pastor Marty Woodward reports.

The vision for this project began over three years ago with the drawing up of a set of extension and redevelopment concept plans by our team that heads up our PantryClub community aid program, in conjunction with several key members on our respective church and charity boards. From there a set of working drawings were put together by a local architect from which we were able to carry out a reasonably accurate costing exercise. The result was that we needed to raise \$150,000 plus to accomplish the task. However, when we submitted the plans to Council for DA approval, they insisted that approval would only be granted if we included a 24-space hard surface car park, at an extra cost of \$100–\$130,000. We had already secured half of the development costs through a grant from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation in Sydney, who thought our community-focused project was worthy of their 2013 grant funds. We praise the Lord for the favour He gave us with the Foundation members — however, that wasn't

going to resolve the now additional burden of the cost of the carpark.

Finally, after much prayer and further deliberation with our Council, we were eventually given an exemption from the carpark requirement on the basis that we would provide Council with a proposal by 28 February 2013 to have the carpark installed at the earliest possible time following the completion of our building extension and redevelopment work. Our proposal, which was based on a minimum 5 year timeline, was duly submitted to Council on 27 February with an invitation for Council to provide us with a community grant to cover the cost of said carpark.

Interestingly, since submitting our proposal to them, we have had received no formal or verbal response from them, though we rather suspect that when we apply for the certificate of completion for the building development (probably within the next month), the carpark project could very well be put back on the table by Council. However, we will 'cross that bridge' (or 'build that carpark'!) when we get to it. In the meantime, the Council has supplied us with an occupancy certificate which has allowed our PantryClub members to enjoy the newly air-conditioned surroundings. We are now able to offer a significantly expanded range of packaged food items plus fresh and frozen products.

At the time of writing, we are in the midst of having a new semi-commercial kitchen installed in the community centre half of the building. This should allow us later this year to provide a hot meal for our PantryClub members as an extended benefit of their membership. Currently, we have 50–60 families regularly represented on PantryClub day (Thursday from 10am–1pm) and over the course of a year probably serve well in excess of 300 families in a community of less than 8000 residents. Pleasingly, some of these folk are now attending church and have committed their lives to Christ, but as always, we would like to see more of them take this life-changing path. To this end we are constantly looking at ways to engage our PantryClub members in spiritually focused events such as special family services on a Sunday, as well as providing them with a monthly news bulletin that also sets out all the spiritual activities we are running throughout the year.

As a final word — the next project that we are prayerfully considering before the Lord is a Medicare approved family health and wellbeing clinic. It would be staffed by local Christian medical practitioners who may be willing to donate their time on PantryClub days to provide medical services to our members, especially those who are homeless or drug and alcohol affected. We are pleased to report that the Lord has already facilitated several 'divine appointments' with Christian medical practitioners who are advising us on the setting up of such a service. Thank you Jesus!

*Let your light so shine before men,
that they may see your good works
and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Matthew 5:16

*For we are His workmanship, created
in Christ Jesus for good works, which
God prepared beforehand that we
should walk in them.*

Ephesians 2:10

*Marty Woodward
SouthernLife Church, Moruya NSW*

Three mothers Thai



In February 2014, Kim Curry, Sally Hill and Beth Murphy from House of the Rock Church in Gisborne, Victoria, went to Chiangrai, Thailand for fifteen days. Kim reports.

We went to volunteer with Destiny Rescue, an organisation that rescues children from human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

I prayed we would be able to raise \$1000 to take with us to bless the work there, but as usual God's plans were far greater and we raised over \$4500.

We went with willing hands and open hearts, just wanting to be used and help out wherever needed.

On arrival we were shown around the Destiny Rescue centre. Here the girls are given counselling, medical care, English and health lessons and a loving home to help them reintegrate. They also receive career counselling.

Some of the girls now work in Destiny Cafe or Destiny Salon and two older girls now run their own salon. All

the staff are volunteers and do an amazing job. It can be very dangerous for the men who actually rescue these young girls.

While there we were asked to take two sessions with the eight girls currently being reintegrated. We had a lovely time doing arts and crafts, singing and just loving on those precious ones. They range from fourteen to sixteen years old.

On Valentines day we held a banquet and the girls were given gifts, flowers and words of encouragement. All the staff joined in and the girls loved it. We had T-shirts printed with 'Beloved' on the back. One girl held hers to her cheek, another looked at her gift and cried. 'Happy tears, happy tears' she assured us. It was a very special day for us, the girls and the staff. God did something deep and we are told those girls are much happier, more open and freer since that day.

With our funds we had bright new curtains made for the centre plus they bought water coolers and are looking into air conditioners.

The Destiny Rescue staff said it was great having three mums come and love them and the girls and we were so blessed too.

Kim Curry



**Destiny
Rescue**
rescuing children



got something
to contribute to
HeartBeat?

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