

# *Epping SDA Church Newsletter*

*No:95 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2009*

*Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2009, and a Happy New Year to all of you. The New Year is always a catalyst for change, of new direction and of new hope. It is also the time of invigoration and of renewed enthusiasm as the possibilities of 2009 lie ahead of us. May I take this opportunity to wish all of you a wonderful start to 2009, and hope that God remains the central focus of all our plans and activities.*



*If you have any news or photos to share, please send them to:*

*[ajing@eppingsda.org.au](mailto:ajing@eppingsda.org.au).*

*This newsletter can also be downloaded on our website: <http://www.eppingsda.org.au>*

## ***This Sabbath @ Epping***

*This week's service will be taken by one of our Elders, **Eva Ing**, with **Alvin** being the elder in charge. The offering this week is for our **Local Church Budget**. Eva's message is very appropriate this time of year and is entitled "Happy New Year; Making Each Day Count"*

## ***Last Sabbath @ Epping***

*Pastor Michael Worker took our service last week with a fascinating and enlightening study into the life of King Hezekiah. Most of us (actually only me, because I obviously can't speak for the reader) remember Hezekiah in relation to God's miraculous sign to the King, with the sun's shadow going BACK down the stairway of Ahaz. However the consequences of Hezekiah's last 15 years of life were explored in Isaiah, 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. The take home message for me was that God has a plan, a purpose and a reasoning which we may not always fully comprehend. It is worth studying these chapters again if you haven't done so for a while, and Isaiah 38, is a good place to start.*



*(File Photo)*

## ***Epping Church 2009***

*The draft/provisional roster is now available on our website, and will be completed over the coming weeks. I would ask that departmental leaders email me your program/rosters for 2009, and I will endeavour to incorporate them into the Church Calendar.*

<http://www.eppingsda.org.au/2009FirstQuarter.xls>

## ***Food Ministry Roster***

*The Food Ministry Roster is now available on our website, or via this link:*

[\*http://eppingsda.org.au/Epping/Food%20Ministry%202009.pdf\*](http://eppingsda.org.au/Epping/Food%20Ministry%202009.pdf)

*Serving our Lord can occur in many forms and in a myriad of activities. From leading out in the Divine Service and Evangelistic Meetings, serving in Sabbath School, initiating outreach programs and contributing to our Pathfinders or Music Ministry. However, one of Epping's most unique ministries is our Food Ministry. To be able to share Sabbath lunch together is a real blessing, and allows us to enjoy fellowship with one another and our visitors. It is a great opportunity to share not only food, but our Christian love and to witness for Christ.*

*So, thank you to everyone who is serving on our Food Ministry roster, and welcome especially to some of our younger members who are on it for the first time (maybe even without your knowledge).*

## ***Seeing Jesus***

*Thanks to Belle who sent me this article by John William Smith:*

*“In 1962 I was preaching in Indianapolis, Indiana. I was single, and it was Christmas time.*

*I was headed home to Michigan to enjoy the holidays with my family. It was an extremely cold day, and it was snowing. The wind was howling out of the North, blowing thick clouds of fine flakes across the road - it looked like a blizzard. The roads were icy in places, and there was little traffic. Somewhere near Ft. Wayne, Indiana, I saw a soldier standing under an overpass. He had a green army cap pulled as tight and low as possible over his head, his collar was pulled up around his ears, his hands were shoved down in his pockets, and he had a stuffed duffel bag standing beside him.*

*I was driving a Chevrolet Corvette, and I was going very fast - faster than I should have been, considering the road conditions. As I sped by, the soldier jerked one hand out of his pocket and raised his thumb. My Corvette had two seats - not a front and back seat, but two seats side by side - and I was in one of them. The trunk was big enough to hold three loaves of bread and a pound of lunch meat. Not only was my limited trunk space stuffed full with the clothes and boots I would need for my stay in Michigan, the front seat was stacked high as well, with the presents that I had purchased for my folks and my nieces and nephews.*

*When I saw the soldier, I was going much too fast to stop, and I was well down the highway before I gave it much thought. I told myself that I couldn't possibly get him and his duffel bag in the car - I debated about the terrible inconvenience and delay it would cause if I did, and by the time I decided that perhaps I ought to at least offer to help, I was two miles down the road and out of sight. But my Christian Conscience really went to work on me.*

*It was so cold, traffic was almost nonexistent - he was a soldier - and it was Christmas. The inner battle raged for another three miles. Finally, I decided I would never get any peace unless I offered to help, so I made a U-turn and went back. I hoped with all my heart that someone else had picked him up.*

*That way, I could satisfy my conscience and not be inconvenienced - wouldn't that be great? But he was still there, looking more forlorn, lonely, and cold than ever. I was disgusted. I pulled up and rolled down the window. He came running, stumbling on his numb feet, dragging the duffel bag. He leaned over and stuck his head in the window. His face was bluish, his teeth were chattering, his eyebrows and eyelashes were matted with frozen snow, and he could scarcely speak intelligibly.*

*"Thanks so much for stopping", he said. "I had about given up hope."*

*That was not what I wanted to hear.*

*"Where are you going?" I asked, hoping that it was in some direction that would alleviate me from further responsibility. "I live in Michigan, in Taylor Township," he said hopefully. That was really discouraging. It wasn't directly on my way, but it wasn't too much out of my way either.*

*"I'm going to Royal Oak," I said reluctantly. "Oh, " he said, "I know where that is. That's great! If I could just ride with you to Ann Arbor, it would mean a lot to me. I'm almost frozen; I can't feel my ears or feet any more," he said plaintively.*

*"I don't think I can possibly get both you and your things in," I said.*

*"If you'll let me, I'll get in - I promise you. I've been standing here for three hours."*

*I told him to try getting in, and we began rearranging things. The duffel bag was almost as big as he was, and there was only one place for it - the passenger seat. No matter how he put it in the car, he couldn't get in himself. I suggested that maybe he could hide it somewhere and come back for it later. He said he couldn't possibly do that; it had his kids' Christmas presents in it, and he wasn't going anywhere without it. I finally got out, walked around the car, and told him to sit down in the passenger seat. As he sat there, I wedged the duffel bag between his legs and between the floor and the roof of the car, I sandwiched all of my presents around him - and I slammed the door. He couldn't move, he couldn't see out either the windshield or his side window - but he was in. I still don't know how we did it.*

*Once he began to get warm, he began to talk. I found out he was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri "Didn't I see you go by about five minutes ago?" he asked. I really felt stupid.*

*"Ummm, yes," I said. "You mean you turned around and came back?!" I nodded an affirmative.*

*"Why would you do that?" I paused a long moment.*

*"Well, you see, I was raised in a home where helping people who were in need was very important. In addition, I'm a minister - actually, it's more than that - I'm a Christian, and if it weren't for that, I'd probably still be going. I have as hard a time doing the right thing as most folks. I fought with this decision for five miles - it's Jesus who makes me do things like turn around and come back. When I don't do the right thing, I have this feeling He's looking at me, and He's so disappointed that I can't stand it.*

*"Oh!" he said. "you don't know how that convicts me. I'm going to tell you something I never thought I'd tell anybody. I'm no Christian, but my wife is the best person in the whole world, and she goes to church all the time and takes the kids. Truthfully, I've done everything I could to discourage her, but she just keeps going. She's all the time trying to get me to go, telling me that someday I'm going to wish I had.*

*"Do you know why I'm here hitchhiking? Let me tell you a little story. I was turned down for holiday leave because I got drunk and caused some trouble at the base. I was sick about it. I haven't seen my wife and kids for six months. A friend of mine, who's single, found out at the last minute that his folks were coming to visit some relatives who live close to the base during the holidays. He went to our commanding officer and volunteered to take my duty, if he would let me go home.*

*He gave me permission, but I had spent all my money buying presents, which I was going to mail home, so I decided to start hitchhiking. My family doesn't even know I'm coming. I wasn't sure I'd make it, and I didn't want to disappoint them. I've been standing there for three hours, thinking. I watched folks drive by, and it occurred to me that some of them must be Christians, and it made me feel pretty bitter - until I got to thinking about what a lousy person I am, and I knew if I was them, that I probably wouldn't stop either.*

*"Let me tell you something embarrassing - I got so cold, so lonely, and so desperate that I started to pray - honest to God I did - it was so humiliating. I told God that if he would help me, I'd do better. And you know what? About that time you showed up, and you told me that you came back because of Jesus - now what do you make of that?"*

*"Well, first I'd say that maybe there's more to Christianity than either of us thought, and second, I'd say you'd better start doing better." I found out exactly where he lived, and we agreed that I could get him pretty close before I had to go in another direction. I think I knew what I was going to do long before I actually said anything. As we approached the*

*intersection where I was going to let him out, I told him that I had made up my mind to take him home.*

*About two hours later, we pulled up in his driveway. It was almost dark.*

*He was really excited. He asked me to blow my horn, and I did. A few minutes passed, and the inside door opened slowly. The glass in the outside door was frosted over, and whoever was looking out could only tell that there was a car in the driveway. The outside door opened, and a five-or six-year old, barefooted boy peeked around the door. When he saw my sports car, he came out on the porch and peered intently at us. His dad opened the door and stepped out.*

*"Hi, David, it's Daddy; I'm home for Christmas!" He started to say more, but the boy had seen the uniform and heard the voice.*

*The boy's face lit up, and he turned back into the house. I could hear him distinctly - "Mama, Daddy's home," he yelled shrilly. "Daddy's Home! Mama! Mama! Daddy's home for Christmas!"*

*The door opened again, and it didn't open slowly this time - it was thrown open. A woman dressed in a bathrobe and house slippers came running down the steps, her hair flying in the wind, oblivious to the snow and the cold, eyes and mouth opened wide with excitement, with joy etched in every line of her face. "Oh, Carl," she said, "Oh, Carl, you're home. Praise God, you're home.*

*The kids and I have been praying every day that, somehow, God would send you home."*

*She was followed by a skinny, fair-haired, ten-year-old girl and finally by a towheaded, blanket-toting, two - or three-year-old girl. They kissed and hugged and laughed and cried, and they danced in the cold and the snow until the soldier finally disentangled himself from them long enough to introduce me.*

*"This is John," he said. "He's a minister and he's also a Christian; and if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here. And I'm going to tell you something honey, right here and now. I told John that I had promised God that I was going to do better, and I am. I'm going to stop drinking, be a better husband, a better father - a better man - and we're going to start going to church together."*

*I have never witnessed such gratitude in my life. They all had to hug me and kiss me - even the two-year-old - and they told me what a blessing I was to them and that they owed me a debt they could never pay. I was so embarrassed, because I was so unworthy. I had grudged the whole thing until after we had started talking. I wanted to tell them that I didn't deserve any thanks.*

*I tried to leave, but they simply wouldn't allow it. I had to go in the house. I had to eat something and drink something; I had to accept a gift from them - yes, I had to. They would not allow me not to, and the more they did, the better and the worse I felt.*

*I was so embarrassed. You know why? I had just witnessed something private - a family thing - something I wasn't part of - something not meant for outsiders - and, yes, I was - I was embarrassed. And you know what else?*

*I envied Carl. I thought that it must be wonderful beyond description to be loved by a woman like that and missed like that and to be so unworthy - and I think Carl was just beginning to understand what he had. I have learned since then that only those who have come to know and feel the love of God can love the unworthy - and I have also learned that we are all unworthy.*

*Carl was home. I think that at that moment, home meant more to him, perhaps, than it would ever mean again. And when I got to my home and saw my folks and told them why I was late, they were so proud of me - and I was a little proud of myself. Home was somehow brighter, warmer, more dear to me than it had ever been before. Every human longing - bound up in the inherent yearning to be loved and to be "home" and to experience the peace and security that "home" signifies - has found its fulfillment in Jesus who said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Everything we ever dreamed of home being - what it was or was not - is in that place. Jesus has given purpose, even to the dream of death, because for those who know God - that is the way home.*

*"How silently, how silently,  
the wondrous gift is given.  
So God imparts to human hearts,  
the blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still,  
the dear Christ enters in."*

*Jesus comes to us in many ways. He came to me in the form of a freezing soldier trying to get home for Christmas. He came to a freezing soldier in the form of a young minister trying to find his way to God. Either one of us could have missed Him.*

*Jesus will come to you this Christmas too, and His coming will be in an unexpected way - don't miss Him.*

*Sincerely,  
John William Smith “*

## *Thank You.*

*This item was in the last newsletter, but Arthur has now contributed some photos:*

*From Michael Lee of Hurstville Church regarding the “Backyard Blitz” (see Newsletter 93) :*

*“Just a quick words of thanks for the hard work you guys put into painting the Redfern church last Sunday. I am sure the kids and adults there will appreciate the newly painted place. Your generosity in giving your time and energy to help those who needed help will not go unnoticed. I pray our heavenly father will richly bless you and your family. Finally I wish you all have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Can you please pass my thanks to everyone who came to help?”*

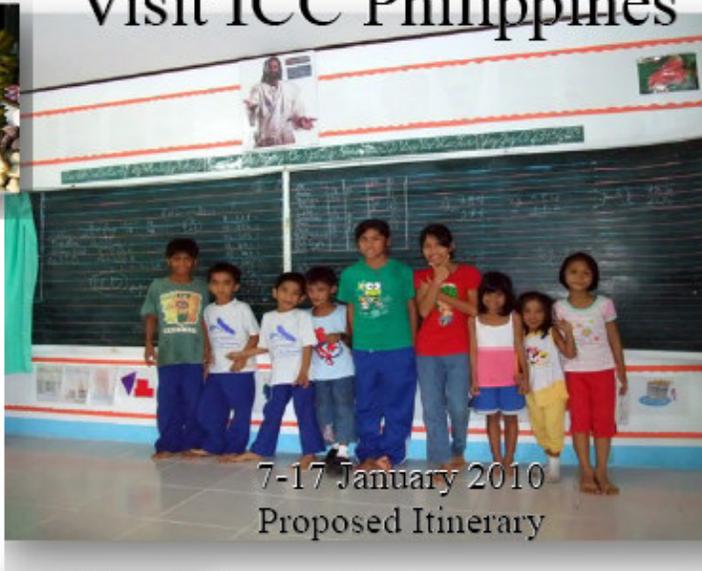


## *New Year / Holiday Activities*

*What did you get up to during these Holidays? Anything interesting to share with the rest of us? If you did, email some photos to me and share them with the Church. Here are some examples:*



# Visit ICC Philippines



Jan Days Activities

7 Day 1 Thur

Sydney – Manila (8 hours approx)  
NPUM Guesthouse, Meals own cost, choice of Vegetarian at Sanitarium Cafeteria, variety of Fastfoods, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, KFC, etc...

8 2 Fri

Travel to ICC Orphanage (Ferry or Bus)  
ICC Guesthouse  
Meals catered by ICC Staff at cost

9 3 Sat

Church at ICC  
Picnic & walk to waterfalls  
ICC Guesthouse

10 4 Sun

Outreach program at nearby villages, Health Assess,  
Activities with the children at the Orphanage  
ICC Guesthouse

11 5 Mon

Travel back to Manila  
NPUM Guesthouse

12 6 Tue

Fly to Caticlan (1 Hour)  
Transfer by boat to Boracay (15 mins)  
Boracay Hotel

13 7 Wed

Island Hopping, Snorkelling, Water sports  
Boracay Hotel

14 8 Thur

Morning flight Caticlan to Manila (1 Hour)  
Option 1: Evening Flight back to Sydney, Arrive Friday  
Option 2: Stay 2 Extra Nights  
Mall of Asia Shopping, Stay NPUM Guesthouse

15 9 Fri

Tour AIIAS, AUP, Tagaytay, Taal Volcano  
AIIAS Guesthouse

16 10 Sat

Church at AIIAS  
Evening Flight back to Sydney

17 11 Sun

Arrive Sydney Sunday morning



Approximate Costs—Based on 2008 Rates (AUD\$ Exchange)

AUD\$ 1200-1400 pp

\$20-50 pp/night

\$20-30 pp/day

\$250 pp

\$100 pp

\$50-100 pp

International Airfare (Qantas, PAL)

Accommodation (Air-con rooms, hot showers)

Food—individual choice and budget

Boracay airfare + Terminal Fee, Environmental Levy

Travel Insurance, Optional Extras

Transport, bus, ferry, taxi, etc to different places

# Epping Mission Project



<b>Fundraising Goal</b>	<b>\$50,000 (\$26,792.80 raised so far)</b>
<b>Mission Project</b>	Completion of the ICC Happy Valley Elementary School, ICC Orphanage, Dinalupihan, Floridablanca, Philippines.
<b>Target Date</b>	<b>January 2010</b>
<b>How do you make a donation?</b>	When you send in your donation, please specify "Epping Mission Project".
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Credit Card</b></li> </ul>	Credit Card Form provided and fax to ICC Office. Fax: (03) 8660 2967
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cheque</b></li> <li>• <b>Postal Address</b></li> </ul>	International Children's Care Shop 7 Riviera Plaza BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct deposit</b></li> </ul>	Commonwealth Bank BSB 063 532 Account No 1033 5881 International Children's Care
<b>How much should I give?</b>	How big is your heart? Donations over \$2 is tax deductible
<b>ICC Website</b>	<a href="http://www.iccaustralia.org.au/">http://www.iccaustralia.org.au/</a>
<b>ICC Australia</b>	Dean Beveridge, Coordinator <a href="mailto:dbeveridge@iccaustralia.org.au">dbeveridge@iccaustralia.org.au</a>
<b>For more details contact</b>	<a href="mailto:belletung@gmail.com">belletung@gmail.com</a> Mobile: 0413 453055 Home: (02) 9671-2755



# Credit Card Donation Form

## Epping Mission Project

**Note:** This donation is to support the ICC Happy Valley Elementary School building project, ICC Orphanage, Philippines.

Fax this form to	Fax No <b>(03) 8660 2967</b>		
Postal Address	International Children's Care Shop 7 Riviera Plaza BAIRNSDALE VIC 38757A		
<b>Credit Card Details</b>			
Card Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Bankcard
Name on Card		Expiry Date	
Credit Card No		Amount	\$
Signature		Date	
Telephone No		Mobile	
Address you would like the receipt sent to	Street		
	Suburb		
	State		Post Code

**THANK YOU !!!**

## ***Prayer Requests:***

<b><i>Maree Worker</i></b>	<i>Maree is recovering from recent surgery. Please remember Maree and her family in your prayers.</i>
<b><i>Allan Ing</i></b>	<i>Please continue to pray for Allan, Adelyn and their young family.</i>
<b><i>Sue Wood</i></b>	<i>It's great to hear that Sue is progressing well and I ask that you remember Sue, Ken and their family in your prayers.</i>
<b><i>Bob McIntyre</i></b>	<i>Please continue to pray for Bob and his family</i>
<b><i>All members and friends travelling during the Holiday season</i></b>	<i>We ask that you remember all those travelling in your prayers.</i>

## ***Thought for the New Year:***

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

*2 Corinthians 5:17*