

Prayer Concerns

**Please pray for:**

- Home schooling of our children.
- New believers being disciplined.
- Our friends who need to trust in Christ or obey Him in baptism.
- New Bible studies to begin in homes.
- Ministry staff and church planters.
- More support for training and spiritual growth seminars.
- VBS - April 25-29

**Thank God for:**

- Baby dedication of Kirby Duran, son of Bong and Nueca.
- Time at home!

Are We Growing? - by Joanna Allen

If you were to walk through my house right now, you would probably have to step over a few balloons or streamer or toys. And if you looked in my refrigerator, you would probably find some chocolate cake and red Kool-Aid. Yes, you guessed it. This week was Caleb's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Now we've been talking with Caleb a lot lately about being a "big four-year-old boy." In fact, a couple of weeks ago he informed us



that once he was four, he wouldn't disobey us anymore! Needless to say, we all had quite a laugh about that one!

I guess I'm probably like any parent in that birthdays always stir up those "I can't believe they are growing up so fast" feelings. It seems like it was just yesterday that Caleb joined us in this world and now he's four! And especially my mind took me through this last year as I reminisced over the ways he's grown. It seems like the transition from 3 to 4 takes a child from being a toddler to being a little boy (or girl.) As I sat in my rocking chair last week and Caleb crawled up into my lap, I realized how long his legs are getting and how much easier it was to hold him about 3 years ago! I asked him if he would always get into my lap to rock and he said, "Not when I'm big like Daddy."

Special points  
of interest:

- In a recent television news report, the following information was revealed about public education in the Philippines:
- 1 out of 4 students in 1st-4th grades quits school in order to support his family.
- By 6th grade, that same number increases to 1 of 3.
- By the time the students graduate from high school, 6 of 10 students quit school to be able to work!

Living in Legazpi - by Wade Allen

**WADE & ERIC** traveled to Madapdap, Pampanga, (a 16 hour drive) to celebrate the first anniversary of our mission church there.

**A REUNION** took place last month when we were able to spend a few days with Darlene Carey, Robert Murphy and family, and Bro. Jerry Kidd in Metro Manila.

**CARLY ALLEN** completed her third book in Awana Sparks Club—earning the Sparky Award!

**AN AWANA CLUBBER** shocked us all last month! We found out that one of our most faithful clubbers had been skipping school in order to attend Awana Club. Her school had scheduled make-up classes on Saturday mornings.

**JOANNA & DARLENE** enjoyed a wonderful seminar with our ladies in Hong Kong. They focused on obedience to Christ as found in the life of Mary, His mother.

**BMABC BICOL** extension school completed its first semester of study on March 2.

**CALEB ALLEN** enjoyed a great day at the beach on his 4th birthday. The weather was perfect for flying kites!

**A BITTERSWEET** goodbye was said to two missionary families this month. The Miller family and the Dumitra family, some of our closest friends here in Legazpi, left the Philippines to return to their homes for furlough. The Millers are from Michigan. The Dumitras are from Austria and Romania. Please pray for their safe return to the Philippines to continue in their ministry here.

# The Heavy Hand of Ministry Stabilized by Friends

by Wade Allen

In Exodus 17, Moses shares a story of a time when two men came to help him. The situation was intense. The children of Israel had left Egypt and been wandering around in the desert. God led them to Rephidim where the Amalekites attacked them. Moses asked God for help and was instructed to lift up the rod of God over the battle field in order for the children of Israel to prevail. As the battle drew on, Moses' task became more difficult. The weight of the rod grew heavy. The strength in his arms gave way and the Amalekites began to prevail. Moses must have felt that he could not go on, but the burning desire of his heart was to help the people who were dying on the battle field. At that moment, Aaron and Hur provided the help needed to stabilize his weary hands and arms.

carry on the ministry. Two of the very first apostles called by Christ were Peter and Andrew. Who were these men?



**Bong and Eric hanging out with Awana kids at the zoo**

Andrew was first follower of Christ. He introduced his brother, Simon Peter, to Christ. He also brought a boy and his lunch to Christ. Andrew was the first disciple called by Christ, but not part of the inner circle of disciples. This did not matter to him because he was humble. He preferred to win people for Christ through personal contact. He went about quietly doing his job—winning people one-by-one. He thought more of service than of reputation—as long as the job got done, it didn't matter who got the credit.

Bong reminds me of Andrew. He is quiet and conscientious. He brings people to know the love of Christ by letting them



**Bong leading the pledge during VBS**

In life and ministry, we all become exhausted and overwhelmed by the circumstances that surround us. God has blessed me with two friends such as these mentioned in Exodus 17—Roger “Bong” Duran and Eric Quiambao. As we struggle each day to meet the challenges that we face in church planting, it is so reassuring that we are not alone. Jesus poured His life into his special friends, the apostles. He spent the majority of His ministry preparing His friends to be able to



**Bong standing by helping in any way he can**

know how much he cares for them. Just as Andrew was most concerned for his brother, Simon, Bong has led his wife and her brother to know Christ in the past year. He is always more comfortable in the shadows, quietly serving the God he loves. God has a special ministry in store for my friend, Bong!

*If like Andrew, we're going to win people to Christ, we must open our hearts, reach out warmly, and cultivate genuine friendships with those around us.*

Simon Peter was completely different from his brother, Andrew. He was impulsive, rash, hasty, impetuous, over-enthusiastic, and swift to respond. He talked when he should have been thinking, slept when he should have been awake, and acted when he should have been still. He dared to walk on water, and then began to sink. But Christ did not see him as unstable; rather he referred to him as a rock. After denying Christ publicly, he was restored publicly in the presence of the apostles and became the driving force behind the initial expansion of the church in the book of Acts.

My friend, Eric, reminds me of Simon Peter. He's not as impulsive and rash, but he is enthusiastic and fun. He has a charisma that enables him to draw people in, much like Peter. Eric is either going 110% or not going at all! So, like Simon, sometimes he acts when he should be still; and many times he



**An essential for all ministry—prayer!**

sleeps when he should be awake! Does this make him unstable or ineffective? My answer is a resounding “NO!” Just as Christ saw the potential in the volatile personality of Simon Peter, I also see a tremendous potential for the expansion of the gospel as a direct result of this man's life!

Will you join me in praying for these two men as they continue to serve God according to the way that God created them? Will you pray for them as they support me in difficult times? It is my prayer, God, that You will “*sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me [Jesus] through their word*” John 17:17, 20.

If like Andrew, we're going to win people to Christ, we must open our hearts, reach out warmly, and cultivate genuine friendships with those around us. As Christ recognized in



**Eric captivating his audience with the Bible story book**

Simon a solid stone, so He sees the potential we have that will be developed as he transforms us! But do not forget, as a rock, Simon Peter needed a lot of chiseling during his time with Jesus!

Please pray for the church planting efforts here in the Bicol region of the Philippines! For more information please visit us at: <http://filipinomissions.org>



**Eric joining the children as they sing**

**NOTE:**

**Eric Quiambao** is a National Church Planter Trainee supported by the BMA of America.

**Roger Duran** works as a volunteer Church Planter Trainee. He works for the BMA of the Philippines as a Tagalog Language Ministry Assistant and Translator.

**As Christ recognized in Simon a solid stone, so He sees the potential we have that will be developed as he transforms us!**

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## Our Vision

In seeking God's direction, we believe that He has given us a vision to . . .

- Plant churches among un-reached peoples of the Philippines.
- Equip those churches to plant new churches.
- Encourage them to work together to reach out with the gospel beyond their national boundaries.
- Network together with other BMA fields in Asia to carry the gospel throughout Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.

To receive this newsletter monthly  
by email, contact us online:

[www.filipinomissions.org](http://www.filipinomissions.org)

## Are We Growing? (Cont'd from p. 1)

One of the major ways being a parent has affected me is that it has given me a whole new insight to our relationship with God, our heavenly Father. And I wonder, does God look at us every once in a while and think about the ways we are growing? Is God proud of us when He sees our faith grow? Is He excited to see signs of maturity in our life? Or is His heart broken when we stay the same year after year, never showing any signs of spiritual growth? You see, if I am where I should be on my "spiritual growth chart", I shouldn't be at the same place I was last year at this time. I should be more mature this year.



I've often heard stories about how people arrive on the mission field anxious to "change the world." And many times after the first few years these missionaries realize that so far, the only ones

that have changed is themselves! I am one of those missionaries too! I can't begin to tell you all the areas where God has worked in my life in the past 21/2 years.

I've realized that until I allow the Lord to mold me as He wants, I can't be a vessel to be used by others. So many people put missionaries on some sort of "spiritual platform" just because of the position they hold. And while I'll agree that some of the most spiritually mature people I know are missionaries, their maturity is not a result of their position. Missionaries are real people too! I struggle with the same struggles you do. It's a challenge everyday to spend time in prayer and Bible study. I am constantly having to re-evaluate my priorities, and many times they get out of whack. There are just some days that I don't feel very "spiritual." But the question is, "Am I growing?" "Am I closer to God than this time last year?"

You see, as much as I wish Caleb could stay little forever, it would be so tragic if that actually happened. But how much more tragic if we stay "spiritually little" forever? My prayer for this year is that I will grow in my knowledge of God's word, in my love for other people, in my faith and in my daily attitudes and actions. I realize that I will never "arrive" at a certain point and be officially "mature." I know that just like Caleb, I will sometimes make promises and not be able to keep them. I realize that just because I'm a missionary doesn't mean I will grow automatically. I just know that as long as the Lord leaves me here on this earth, He wants me to grow up in Him. As the song says, "Every day with Jesus, is sweeter than the day before. Every day with Jesus, I love Him more and more. Jesus saves and keeps me and He's the one I'm living for. Every day with Jesus, is sweeter than the day before."