

January 2011

Happy New Year!

Making transformation tangible is this year's theme. Transformation is God's grace landing down on a person or a situation, a people group, city or nation in such a way that everything changes to better reflect God's will and ways. It's meant to be a reality that is experienced, something pure and tangible, something extraordinary and unique, not just an ideal for someday over the rainbow. Transformational testimony seems to abound in the lives of those who walk in step with God's Spirit of adoption (not as orphans), whose lifestyle is rooted in, and expectant of, God's grace. It also seems to show up more through a path of simple obedience and walking through the doorways God opens.



Project 18 wins Probation's Vision Award



Building relationships with CALSafe students



Mentor pairs introduced at The Crossing



Survey follow up - working together for Redding youth.

A NEW SEASON DAWNS

Our trip to Harvest's International Transformation Summit in Hawaii restored and strengthened our own personal alliance with Ed Silviso and the entire Harvest team. Natalia and I now have a definite sense of covering and alignment. We met again with Ed this month and see how God is teaming us up in a greater way for Redding's transformation and that of the entire region! We see this alignment in the Spirit bringing great ripple effects to the region via a continuous string of future transformation summits and trainings right here in our town. Transformation is a lifestyle whose mindset requires certain paradigm shifts. Harvest is anointed to do that very thing. See the Transform our World website at www.transformourworld.org

THE CROSSING... 2613 Bechelli Lane Redding

Remember, this used to be the bar where indecencies of all kinds occurred, a birthplace of multiple front-page headlines that disgraced the city. Now, these centrally located 12,000 square feet are dedicated to building up lives of kids and families! This will be a hub for transformation-made-tangible in the heart of the city. See their website at www.the-crossing.org. I see the community rallying in one heart to make it happen. I see the generations connecting and sharing skills and experiences with laughter. I see HOPE and a FUTURE developing!

There's an excitement at the leadership levels in the city for this. The eyes of law enforcement, community leaders and social service agencies are looking with favor on this project. Redding Transformation is privileged to be in the middle of the action, leading with vision and relationship. With the resignation of a key individual, I was asked to head up the interim phase so things can continue gracefully. The search for a more long-term director is underway. Pray for wisdom.

(over please)

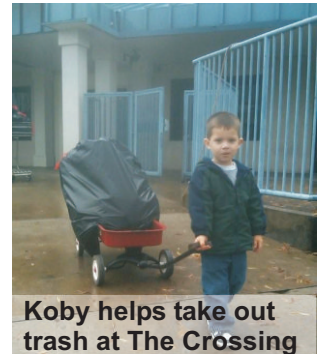
CLUES ALONG THE PATH

Sometimes, while pioneering, you wonder if you're on the right track. God used December to assure us that we are. I got an unexpected email inviting me to the year-end staff dinner for Shasta County Probation. I invited Rosanna Gowan of Project 18 and her husband, Matt, to accompany Natalia and me. Upon arrival, we were escorted to the head table and I thought, "How cool, we get to eat with the directors and chief." It didn't even dawn on me that an awards ceremony could be on the docket, so when desserts came and the chief started handing out awards, I almost choked on my pie when they announced Project 18 as the "Vision Award" winner for 2010!

"SPEECH! SPEECH!" I was unprepared for that, but mustered a, "Uh..., Wow. What an honor. We *DO* believe each of these youth have amazing destinies, and we truly want to assist them in finding theirs and walking in it. We hope to help you all look like a million bucks without getting any of us in trouble. I fully intend that we live up to this award - be patient with us! And suddenly, I feel way underdressed for the occasion!" It honestly felt like a vote of confidence, a nudge from Heaven that we are on the right path. Just days prior, I wondered aloud to Natalia about whether or not they really wanted us in their space.

After the ceremony was over, a young gal who I recognized as one of our mentees last year, came over to congratulate us and share her effervescent story. She had been in and out of the hall many times, and during her latest stay she met Brooke, who became her mentor upon exiting. Brooke was REAL, not fake. Since then, she's made good choices. "I have a job now - with benefits - an apartment and "stuff" that is mine. I'm off probation and feeling great about life overall," she beamed. Even though there is a strong atheist presence in her life, this relationship allowed her to meet God personally.

More good news for Project 18: A second mentor matching party brought us up to almost 30 youth matched with caring adults who love them and love God. Many of these youth are now attending area youth groups, and - like the gal mentioned above - are aligning with their destiny and their Creator. More mentees are coming through the CALSafe program, the pregnant and parenting minors of Shasta County. We'd heard of their need for mentoring at a community meeting in October and wanted to assist. Because these teens have trust issues with those they don't know, the staff invited us to attend their Christmas party as an initial step. The kids took a liking to us there, as did the teachers and staff. As a result, 3 applications for mentoring have come in over the past 3 weeks. PTL. We see this as a point of inception into education for mentoring. Relationship, sacrifice and patience are 3 keys to make transformation tangible. Pray for the seed to fall in good soil.



Koby helps take out trash at The Crossing

STUNNING SUPPLY

We always share our needs with you and are so grateful to all who pray and give. We thank those who gave their time to help with the gift wrapping table at Barnes and Noble this month during our low-key fundraiser. We especially thank God for this month's generous outpouring. God has seen us through 80 months of faith labor. He has again supplied all our needs and gone above and beyond. We trust Him along this road all the way and are willing to walk by faith.

Our hearts are refreshed and we feel rested, our team is healthy and ready for the next step. Pray for our protection, wisdom and success. Thanks also for giving and, please HELP US continue to pave inroads to community transformation by supporting us monthly and co-laboring with us as we fix up the Crossing, cast vision, and mentor youth in these coming weeks.

2011 *already* rocks,


Jon & Natalia Thompson