

# Mat and Suzanne Gregory

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## Newsletter

### April 2009

*Dear friends,*

Warmest Easter greetings, in the name of our risen Lord! We have just returned from our visit to the UK for Mat's sister's wedding. Yes, Suzanne got the shoes— so all was well! The wedding was a wonderful celebration. We met our new six-month old niece for the first time, and just enjoyed this special time of being with family.



Since our last newsletter, so much has been happening and at times it has felt as though life in Lebanon has been a catalogue of 'challenges'! We have been so thankful for your prayers during this time, they have sustained through some tough days.

#### **The challenges!**

**Generator** – At the start of February during one of the storms, our generator was struck by lightning, leaving us without electricity for about eight hours every day, and a very hefty repair bill!

**Blood and bandages** – Mat slipped on wet stairs, and whilst trying to save the laptop, landed on the mug he was carrying. He nastily cut his fingers, so several trips to the hospital were needed, but thankfully no skin graft.

**Water leaks** – A water leak appeared in the main building, water was coming through the first floor into the stairwell and the ceiling of another apartment. The plumber thought he'd solved the problem only to find it continued to leak after he left!

**Electric shocks** – A man (who'd been a former boy here) came to fix the internet and whilst cutting a non-live



internet cable, got a bad electric shock! We then discovered that somehow the fence to our school playground was also electrified! The electrician came and told us there wasn't a problem. Days, hours and a different electrician later the problem was solved – a live wire had lost its plastic coating during the bad weather and was touching the metal fence and other cables!

**Emergency operation** – Before flying to the UK we got a call late at night from our residential manager. He was at the hospital with one of the small boys, who needed an emergency operation for appendicitis, but it couldn't go ahead until we paid upfront! **Praise** God that Mohammad's operation was successful and that he is now recovering well. **Praise** God that all of the above have now been fixed! **Pray** for God's continued protection and provision.

#### **A word from Jeremiah!**

*"The word of the LORD came to me: 'What do you see, Jeremiah?' 'I see the branch of an almond tree,' I replied. The LORD said to me, 'You have seen correctly for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled.'"*  
Jeremiah 1: 11,12

As the almond tree outside our house was the first tree in blossom, God spoke to us through these words. We were reminded, throughout the difficult times, God has been and will continue to be watching over us.

## The positives!

**Lego club** – Mat began ‘Lego Club’ with the younger boys. The boys (and Mat!) were wide-eyed and open-mouthed, when they began to open all the boxes of new Lego and begin to make the models. It has been really interesting to see them use the Lego; they find playing creatively very difficult as for many of them they have not had the opportunity to ‘play’ imaginatively before.



*Jad and the Lego*

**Prayer week** – In the midst of the storms we held our prayer week. Every day we organised spiritual activities for the children. The highlight was a ‘prayer puzzle hunt’. The children worked in teams to find all the pieces of their puzzle that were hidden around the room. They then had to make their puzzle and once all the puzzles were completed we prayed about the topics on them. It was such a privilege to be part of that time as each boy from the four-year olds to the 13 year olds prayed so openly.



**Special award activities** – Mat and I have also enjoyed doing special activities with the boys. Each month we hold a ‘Family Celebration’ in the residential programme. It’s a time to play games, celebrate birthdays and give out awards for things such as being ‘kind and helpful’, ‘behaving well in the unit’ etc.

Mat and I then take the boys out for a special treat. So far we’ve been to the sea and had donuts, and been for crêpes and an ‘adventure’ in the mountains.



*Above: Mountain adventure*

*Above left: Mat and Ali having crêpes*

**Gardening** – We have just begun to prepare the plot for our vegetable garden. The boys have been desperate to start work on the garden, and we’ve waited and waited for some drier days. The digging has taken longer than

expected as we found worms! Once I had explained that the worms were very good for the garden, each worm had to be removed with great care! But, whilst working together we’ve already had the opportunity for some lovely conversations. One of the boys told me that he would like to be a doctor when he is older so that he can help all the people that are suffering in Palestine – what a blessing!

**Praise** God for his faithfulness. **Praise** God that he is at work. **Pray** that God will continue to be at work in the lives of the boys.

## What’s on the horizon?

This month one of our house mothers is getting married. She will be away for two weeks, so Mat and I will be having the two older boys from her unit coming to stay with us. We are looking forward to the opportunity to spend this time with them. **Pray** that God would bring the right person as a new house parent. **Pray** that we would have a special time with the boys.

Things in Lebanon have been quiet recently, but with the elections coming up at the beginning of June, people are beginning to feel a little apprehensive about how everything will be. **Pray** that the build up to and the elections would happen peacefully and it would mark the start of a time of stability in the country.

Thank you to each one of you for your continued support. It is good to know that we are in this together!

*With love*

*Mat and Suzanne*

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