



chad and diane davenport
SAMS TO NEW ZEALAND: JAN/FEB 06 NEWSLETTER

The Vision: to significantly impact Auckland and beyond by partnering with the Holy Spirit and transforming people into committed followers of Christ.



On to Something New

While we enjoyed our travels in the States and the opportunity to see friends and family, we were ready to get back to "normal" life in New Zealand. Pastor David and Doug Beisley handled much of the preparation for Christmas celebrations at church, allowing Diane and I to plug back into life in New Zealand. As Diane organized many of the details to find a flat and furniture, I worked with David to "learn the ropes" of leading the church.

We quickly saw evidence that God had been at work at AIC while we were away. My prayer while we travelled in the States had been that God would protect our church from spiritual stagnation and disillusionment. I had also been praying that the Holy Spirit would lead us to common ground so that we could work well together. On our first Sunday back, we were able to join in a baptism service of one of our youths and a father, followed by another baptism service two weeks later. Rather than disillusionment, our conversations with church members often indicated spiritual growth, an acceptance of the transition and an anticipation of what God was about to do in the coming year. I became most encouraged as I heard several people relating the same ideas that had been rattling around in my head for the past few months. Again God confirmed that He is the leader of this.



Baptism at the Beach: Enid (Diane's mom) offers refuge in the form of a towel to Vera, one of the baptised.



Set up of a sermon allegory: Chad interviews kids to find out what they love about their parents (without bribes).

After Christmas, we went on a leadership retreat for several days with the Beisleys. We spent much of our time searching Scripture, praying and discussing God's ideals for the church. We quickly agreed that we did not want to attempt this on our own. We could only accomplish what God intended if we joined Him in what He is doing. The bonds that were built and the refreshment we received from that time were just what we needed. Since then, we have continued meeting weekly to build upon that foundation.

God said, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:14). We have formed two weekly Bible studies with the hopes that, through prayer and discussion, we will connect with what God is doing around us. The groups have started off small, but we are trusting

that more will become involved as they see God working among us.

The church services each week have been encouraging. Attendance has been steady as many of the families decided to stay around Auckland for the summer holidays. Several people have stepped up in their involvement.

Jesus said that every branch that bears fruit is pruned so that it will be more fruitful (John 15:2). We are recognizing that, while it does not feel good at the moment, God's pruning brings the best results. Already we hear good reports of God working through the ministry of the Ravells in Australia. As Janice left New Zealand to take a ministry assignment in Pennsylvania, we sensed God's pruning yet again. Yet we look forward to the great things God will do. We also trust that God is somehow preparing us for a time of growth and fruitful ministry. ~Chad

An Unexpected Change

"God is up to something," was what I thought at Chad's installation as the new Lead Pastor. And He is. This transition has led me to question where I fit. I have been debating for a good few months on whether to work this year. And then at some point, I felt God drawing me to Matthew 25:34. DO NOT WORRY. It was as plain as the flat Asian nose on my face. This was closely followed by Ecclesiastes 3:11: He has set eternity in the hearts of men. And how well I knew it! I had lost count of the number of times I had prayed that God would use me – not just in any way, but in the way that He had shaped me. If I felt anything this year, it was that strong ache that soon, God would reveal the place that He had specifically designed for me to be. I didn't want to just be the "Pastor's Wife" – instead I yearned to be a part of His ministry, not by default, but by choice.

I have decided not to work for as long as God has asked me to wait. In the month that I have spent working at home and for AIC, I have realized small changes in me that I never thought possible, in the way that I have started to care for people and love when they seek my company, in the way that I look forward to spending time in God's word rather than seeing it as a duty, and even in the way that I'm venturing to feed Chad with the help of new recipes!

It's not what I'd think of as my ideal ministry yet, but I can't help but be reassured that God has not forgotten my heart. ~Diane

Prayer requests

Janice – as she settles into her new ministry assignment in Pennsylvania
Youth – we have no youth leader at the moment. Please pray that they will join the small groups and continue to grow there

Church location – Our church members live on the east and west sides of town, but we meet in the middle. In order to impact the community, we must live where we are doing ministry. We sense a change is needed, but are not sure yet where that will take us.

Praises

Our house – God has given us a wonderful place to live and entertain company.

Alisa has felt God calling her to lead the worship at church. This is a great step for her! Please pray for her growth and confidence in Christ.

4 baptisms since we have been back

A smooth transition so far



A new threshold:
Alisa Wolsey being commissioned as the new worship leader.

Ways to Help

- 1) Prayer – There never can be enough prayer! We would love if you would join us in praying for New Zealand so that we would be able to discern what God is already doing here and partner with Him in that. Specific prayer requests are also listed above.
- 2) Financial Support – Thank you to all our supporters. Because of you, we are able to just focus on God's work in New Zealand full-time. If you would like to help us financially, please send support to:

Church of God Ministry, P.O. Box 2420

Anderson, IN 46018

Memo: Chad Davenport, Project #42.11235