



The “harvest is plentiful” (Matt 9:37) ~ Chad

I have to admit, when doors have been shut in my face or when people act suspicious after finding out that I am a Christian, I have wondered at times whether that is true in New Zealand. However, during a recent survey that we did in our community, I also saw the other side: A mother praying that her son could find a Christian group of friends that would accept him (he now comes weekly to youth group)...a Chinese woman showing interest in learning more about Christianity...an elderly widow without friends or family. These are just a few connections we’ve made as we prepare to relaunch the church on the west side of Auckland in February.

Over the past several months, we have been focusing on strengthening the members as disciples ‘in the world’. We have a group currently going through a class on discovering and using one’s spiritual gifts (all of our new members are now involved in a ministry – go God!). The leadership team have stepped up the past couple months in developing a plans for the future and committing to a one-year discipleship training course.

We are finding new ways to reach out to the community. Diane, Danette and Alisa attended a local women’s conference and plan to have our church help in organizing the next one. Our youth have gotten involved in collecting food for impoverished families and Christmas presents for kids in third-world countries. I was able to help lead a sports outreach with a student organization at a local university (ok, so you didn’t need great athletic skills to be involved).

We have made some great connections with people who work in the community – principals, counselors, medical staff, social workers, pastors, etc. One of the best encouragements we’ve had is the openness of community leaders to work together.

Thank you for your prayers and support. They are making a difference – we had 3 people baptized this month. They and others are being discipled and growing in their faith. Continue praying for the many adults here who see Christianity as irrelevant. Pray that we will be bold as “it is the power of God for salvation” (Rom 1:16). “So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up” (Gal 6:9).

A Miracle Letter

The following is an excerpt written by a South African brother after the 8 weeks he spent with his brother in Auckland and at our church:

“At 20 years old I became a chef in one of the top 10 restaurants in South Africa. To other guys I came across as fun, reliable, cool (it was a mask)...on the inside I was depressed, lonely. [When I got promoted], I lost the plot in a hurry! I took drugs everyday for 8 months...all I could focus on was getting through the day and getting money to buy drugs. The last time I took drugs was the day before I flew to New Zealand.

I never planned to go to church or get to know God, but somehow I found myself going to church and listening to what Chad had to say. I am now building a relationship with God. I now plan to quit my job and go into Bible studying to become a

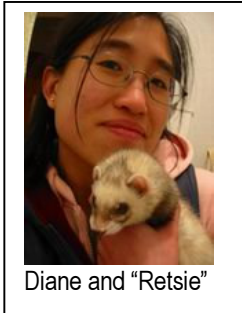


Gerard being baptized, just a few days before his return to South Africa.

pastor. He may not lead me to be a pastor, but I know it's going to lead me on the right way of pleasing God. I am so grateful for meeting all of you."

Gerard's mother and father have patiently prayed and searched for a church home for their children this year. Gerard recommitted his life to Christ, was discipled and baptized during his stay in New Zealand. He has returned to South Africa, quit his job, joined a church and small group and begun inviting friends to come along. Please pray that God will provide him a job and continued encouragement as he continues a new life in Christ.

Obedience and Training ~ Diane



For several weeks now, I have felt as if poised at the start of a race, ready to take on something huge – which was odd because I'd started off the year feeling content with taking things slow. One night, after yet another slow day, I voiced to Chad that I felt caught between wanting to do something more and yet wanting to put God first in all things. He asked what I'd learned in spending half a year with an uncluttered lifestyle. I replied that I'd come to appreciate, with surprising clarity, how much one's life fell into place when God came first. He then asked if the work I pursued was important if, first and foremost, God came first in one's life. I thought about it. No, was my reply...and suddenly my eyes flew open. Somewhere in the back of my mind, I had believed that I could only work for the church if God was first in my life. I realized then how wrong I was. My heart was racing the next day as I researched a field I'd always had a passion for and had tried (unsuccessfully) to suppress: *Animals!* I finally found a university that offered the course I had always wanted to study and sat there with Chad trying to figure out how to finance it. Right at that moment, I received a call from my old workplace (Shine TV – New Zealand's only Christian TV station) asking me to come back again for a 6-week stint. I got goosebumps: my work there for 6 weeks would finance my studies. Naturally, I agreed to it. Since then, I have applied to the university and am waiting to hear if I will be accepted. The course I am pursuing is entitled "Canine Obedience and Training". Much to my delight (and Chad's amusement), it requires each student to have access to a dog. However, our rental agreement did not allow dogs. After more prayer and consulting with our landlady, we were granted permission to own one – yet another miracle as our landlady's colleagues had been advising her against it. Meanwhile, Chad jokes about my "ferret ministry" because owning a ferret has been one of the most successful ways we've used to meet the neighborhood. My hope is that being further experienced in the Animal field will help break down more social barriers. How amazing it is when you've laid your heart's desire at God's feet and He gives it back to you three-fold!

Praises

- 1) We saw not only the baptism of Gerard in August, but also got to baptize Doug Beisley's neighbour, Nye, and Sophie, whom some of you have met and prayed for.
- 2) The youth group is doing well. If it keeps growing, they won't be able to meet at our house anymore. What a great problem to have!
- 3) AIC went through a spell in which we kept printing more programmes, but each service, we'd find that there were simply not enough for everyone because there were more people than we'd anticipated. Since then, the congregation has been steady and it is so good to see the room filled each Sunday with faces ready for worship!

Prayer Requests

We are working out the details for the church relaunch in February 2007. Please pray for God's guidance in all things (e.g. name, location, strong ministry teams). Please also pray for the church to be united in God's vision and purpose.

Ways to Help

- 1) Prayer – We would love if you would join us in praying for New Zealand, and particularly the many young unchurched adults of west Auckland. More prayer requests are also listed at www.chaddavenport.org.
- 2) Financial Support – Thank you to all our supporters. Because of you, we are able to focus on ministering 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)*