



AIC Relaunching in 2007

Albert Einstein once said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Sometimes we enjoy looking back at the ways God has been faithful. However, we recognize that in order for things to significantly change, we must do some things significantly different. With this in mind, we are trusting and stepping forward.

For several years, the church has been meeting in the central part of town as a compromise between the people who live in the east and the west. We have had limited success in reaching people in the community where we meet, probably because none of our members actually live there. Our east and west-side neighbours may be interested in our church, but most consider it too far to drive. We also recognize that our Sunday attendance has stayed around 35 over the past 3 years, due to a roughly equal number of immigrant families moving away and adding on. Since Christ has called us to proclaim the good news (Luke 24:47) and impact the community around us, we are excited to make changes in order to join Him in His work. It's time to make a new start.

In the past few months, our church has met together and agreed to move to the west side of Auckland, particularly to the suburbs of Te Atatu or Henderson. It has become clear that focusing our energy in the community where most of our core families live would allow us to make a much bigger impact. This is also where we have been making the most contacts. Our activities over the next three months are based on the following goals:

FOCUS: Training our current members in the areas of ministry and evangelism. Also reconsidering our current vision, name, ministry approach, etc.

REACH OUT: Building intentional relationships with unchurched people particularly around the West side. Running evangelistic home groups for unchurched people.

CONNECT: Conducting surveys and developing networks with key community members to understand the "heart" and "felt needs" of West Auckland.

Bustin' the Da Vinci Code

We recently heard about a woman who shared that she was very much into Christianity because she had just read "The Da Vinci Code". Because of the number of questions that were raised, we decided to use the release of the new movie as an opportunity to prepare our church family for conversations about Christianity with unchurched people. Diane proceeded to delve into the book while Chad brushed up on his knowledge of historical and biblical facts. We then held three small groups, including one in a Chinese church in town. We were amazed at the interest shown by so many people. The meetings sparked great discussions in all three groups. Indeed, the harvest is ripe! Sometimes we just need to get our "tools" ready and use them. In his research, Chad came across this description of



the Bible summarizing 2 Peter 1:16-21: "It is a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses that report supernatural events which took place in fulfilment of specific prophecies and claim to be divine rather than human in origin." (Voddie Baucham) It has also been said, "[The Bible] is like a lion. You do not defend the lion. You let it loose for it is perfectly capable of defending itself."

Life and Ministry

Since coming back to New Zealand, Diane has developed several new hobbies. During the summer, she joined a women's soccer team and is now keeping warm in the winter months playing netball (a sport that



Several women enjoying hot tea and getting to know each other better at the Ladies' Tea Party at our house. Chad was not invited ☹.

she'd tell you is the "non-wimpy" version of basketball). She is thoroughly enjoying it, and praying that it will provide openings to share Christ. She is also developing in the "culinary arts" and recently ventured to host a "Ladies' Tea Party". This was a surprisingly successful event that allowed the ladies from the church and community to form deeper friendships with each other (minus the distractions of kids and husbands) over a world-renown icebreaker...Food!

Chad has been exploring ways to connect with people in our community. Recreational activities like bowling and street soccer have provided great opportunities to build relationships with people who would not typically go to church. He has also begun conducting surveys as a way to meet people and learn more about them.

In our free time together, we have enjoyed going out to play tennis, reading together by the heater (our house has been in the 40's at night), and playing music. Over the past few weeks, we have found a few couples our own age who are also married and without kids (this is something we have been praying for). We recently had an enjoyable time of refreshing and "geocaching" with another couple (who coincidentally fit all the requirements).

Prayer requests

1. Focus - Clarifying and embracing strategies to reach the unchurched young families around Te Atatu.
2. Reach out - Developing relationships and sharing Christ with unchurched people in our community.
3. Connect - Networking and researching to gain a better understanding of the "felt" needs of our community.
4. Boldness to share Christ with others and to lead by example.
5. We are hoping to do a couple activities during the Christmas season to reach out to the unchurched in our community. We hope that this will aid in generating interest for our relaunch in west Auckland. Please pray that God will bring together the plans, resources and team members to make this great.

Praises

We have been getting to know several refugee families in West Auckland. One young woman was only days away from having her first baby, but unable to purchase clothes or a crib for the child. Several women from our church quickly went out to purchase these things before the birth. When an offering was taken the following Sunday to cover the purchases, it matched the exact cost of the purchases!

Last Sunday, we celebrated 4 new members who have taken our membership class and committed themselves to Auckland International Church.

Ways to Help

- 1) 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*