



chad and diane davenport
SAMS TO NEW ZEALAND: SEP/OCT 06 NEWSLETTER

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

“Reach Out”

Well, things are heating up on our end...and we're not just referring to the weather! Our key words for the past few months have been "reach out", especially as we prepare to relaunch the church in February 2007. It has been encouraging to see our church pull together to show the love of Christ to people in our community. It is true that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35b), but so often we receive a great blessing in return!

Local Outreach

At the beginning of the year, we shared that our prayer for a youth leader had been answered in a young man named Kris. Many of our original youth had graduated, and there was a real need for leadership. Since then, Kris has helped this group blossom into a steady core of teens that can't wait to get together each Friday. Many of these kids come from non-Christian backgrounds. Lately they have been showing a greater interest in coming to church. For instance, one Saturday we heard one of the boys grumbling that his parents slept in on Sundays and couldn't wake up in time for church. The next morning we were surprised to see this teen bringing his mother into church for the very first time! Please pray that this continues.

The youth group was recently involved in a local project called "Auckland City Mission" to help the poor and homeless in Auckland. This involved walking around the neighborhood and collecting canned food items. Although Auckland does not have a large homeless population, our teens learned that there are still a number of families who need help.

This was the first year that both youth group and the adult congregation were involved in "Operation Christmas Child" (started by Franklin Graham). This provides a great opportunity to give Christmas presents to children in impoverished areas. Not only did we have a large number of gifts donated, but approximately 25 members were involved in packing the final crates for shipment at the local OCC Warehouse (see photo, right). Many said they couldn't wait to do this again next year!



Some kids in the Solomon Islands are going to be very happy this Christmas!

Upcoming outreach – We have two exciting events coming up in the next couple weeks. Building upon our last "Kids in Action" program, we have invited the community to our "Family Day" at the local primary school. Our aim is to create a fun, relaxed atmosphere (bouncy castle, games, BBQ) where people can hang out, get to know each other better and learn about our church launch. The following weekend, we have entered a float in the Te Atatu Christmas parade and will hand out candy canes (attached to a story about Jesus and a little info about our church). Several people will be involved with face painting and balloon animals at the event as well. Please pray that these outreach opportunities will provide opportunities to share Christ and help create interest in our church launch.

Kids in Action

Even our kids are involved in "reaching out". During the school holidays, many of the kids in the West Auckland community are left, sometimes unattended, with little to do. Danette Beisley, Alisa Wolsey and approximately



12 volunteers helped to pull together a 2-day program that shared the good news of Jesus in a creative, fun atmosphere. It included puppet shows, skits, Bible stories, memory verses, games, dancing centered around Jesus' miracle of feeding the 5000. We had 20 kids showed up on the first day and around 25 the second. One new boy came on the second day, but did not want to participate. After a couple hours, he decided to join in a bit. When the kids broke into groups to clean up garbage in the community, this boy ended up with the garbage bag. Someone said, "You're the leader!" His whole demeanor changed in that moment. Suddenly he was grabbing every piece of trash he could find and helping other kids work together. By the time we finished, he didn't want to go home. Although it took a lot of work, we all agreed this had given us a great opportunity to touch some new families in our community.

The Future of AIC (AKA Westside Christian Fellowship)

We have adopted a new name, a slogan, set goals for the future, but the question remains...where will we meet? For several months, the team has had their eyes peeled for potential sites. One of the most promising sites has been an old factory that we could rent throughout the week, but further research has yielded a very long list of costs and renovations to bring it up to city council standards. We have two other options at this point, but neither is ideal. We are continually reminded that God is faithful as we step out believing Him. Please pray that God will make the way clear. We trust we will see him overcome the obstacles.

In October, we also ran a garage sale and sausage sizzle fundraiser in the Te Atatu community center. This gave us an opportunity to generate some funds for a future church building while meeting more people in the community. One of the ladies in the church used her business expertise to pull off a great event. Many of the people showed interest in the church relaunch and were invited to the upcoming Family Day event.

Missy

We are happy to announce: we have a new family member (sorry, it's not a baby). She is an Australian Kelpie cross named Missy. Both Missy and Diane have been for an "interview" for a dog-training course and have been accepted. The hope is that Diane (and Missy) would be able to find yet another way to minister to people, either through animal therapy, setting up a "doggy play group", or even doing mini dog shows for kids. Missy has already proven her potential by tirelessly playing "fetch" with the neighborhood children!



Missy and Isabelle playing in the park. You would never know that Isabelle was afraid of dogs!

Praises and Prayer Requests

1. We have received positive feedback from the congregation as they have gotten involved in reaching out to the community. Please pray that God will continue to protect and encourage this congregation as they make this transition to a new location and direction.
2. Please pray for God's guidance and intervention as we search for a place to meet next year.
3. One of the kids in our church, Ben, accepted Christ a couple of weeks ago. Several others are still considering.
4. Pray for relationships and momentum to be built through the Family Day and Te Atatu Christmas festival over the next few weeks. Pray that we will have opportunities to share the good news with others and that God would continue drawing people to Himself.

Ways to Help

- 1) Prayer – If you would like to know more about how to pray for New Zealand, please check out 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. CURRENTLY, THERE IS A SHORTFALL IN OUR ACCOUNT. WOULD YOU CONSIDER HELPING US FINANCIALLY BY SENDING YOUR SUPPORT TO: Church of God Ministry, P.O. Box 2420, Anderson, IN 46018 (Memo: Chad Davenport, Project #42.11235)