

———— **TAMAKI REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH, AUCKLAND** ————

We enjoyed wonderful blessing at our recent market day with 400 *Gospels of John* and 400 of Blanchards' *Where is God When Things Go Wrong* booklets, numerous other Gospels, Bibles and tracts distributed before lunch time (the scheduled closing time was 2:00 pm). The openness of people and their willingness (mostly!) to take "The Story of Jesus" or a book "about God in times of trouble" was remarkable. One woman in her late teens/early 20s approached the stall and when offered a book said, "No. I want one of those John things please." and went on to explain her friends had been given one and were sitting nearby reading it and she wanted to be able to read it too. During the morning dozens of people were seen to be carrying Gospel material with them around the market and not one item was found discarded on the street or in rubbish. We were also encouraged by fruitful discussions with numbers of people, including some who recognised literature distributed on other occasions over the last couple of years and commented they still had it at home.

Our monthly Rest Home service had suffered from shrinking numbers until we spoke to the staff at the home who promised to make sure residents knew the service was on - they did this, and last month we again had a full congregation of 30+. Although some are severely disabled there is always a warm response to our singing and message. This service takes place on the first Sunday of each month, and we covet your prayer for it.

A Mullah who is interested in the gospel recently asked the missionary we support in Asia for a New Testament which he was given and received with great joy. Both need prayer: the missionary for wisdom and safety, and the Mullah for grace!

Sunday morning services continue to include studies in John's Gospel, with our regular Sunday evening Bible studies continuing in 1 Peter and the monthly Youth Bible Study following a variety of topics. We continue to enjoy contacts with a variety of people of all ages, with a number of children in particular coming to services and home Bible studies.

———— **TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH, HAMILTON** ————

Trinity cohosted another Hamilton Easter Convention in March. Our speaker was Rev. Andrew Stewart, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Geelong, Victoria. Andrew gave some very interesting messages on the topic, "The Gospel in Deuteronomy." We have always had a bookstall at Easter Convention, but this year we had record sales. Just under \$1,150 worth of books were sold.



FELLOWSHIP NEWS

'Bringing Believers Together'

The Newsletter of Reformed Baptists of New Zealand

April 2005

———— **GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH** ————

Last time we reported that a number of university students had attended a service. Since then some of them have come intermittently and we hope that this will be the beginning of a more regular ministry to students within the life of the church. Most of our regular meetings have now started again since Dafydd and Maria have settled into their new home, and the remaining meetings should recommence from early in May. We were greatly encouraged with the baptism of two of our teenagers in March, but then they, with the rest of their family, left for a six month overseas trip which has left a big hole in our congregation, albeit temporarily.

— **GRACE REFORMED BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP, PALMERSTON NORTH** —

We thank God for recent encouragements in the work since the inauguration in February and praise Him for answered prayer. Most Sundays we have been joined by visitors, who have included folk in the neighbourhood where we meet, students from Massey, visiting family members, as well as brothers and sisters in the Wellington region for monthly WRRBF meetings (led recently by Grant Phillips, Masterton). We have also been joined by an Iranian brother who arrived in NZ following 7 years in Liverpool where he was converted under Stuart Olyott's ministry. His family (wife and two children) are as yet unconverted. He now worships with us regularly on Sunday mornings.

Alan Lloyd and Ian Fuller have been sharing the preaching in the Sunday mornings. Alan is going through John's gospel and Ian through Ephesians. This provides a degree of regularity in the systematic exposition of the word. In the evenings we have been listening to Stuart Olyott's "This we believe" series on CD, which has been most helpful. The one departure from this was on Easter Sunday when both Ian and Alan preached evangelistic messages to take advantage of the occasion. Both services were attended by visitors, including 4 students in the evening (an American, German, Singaporean and Kiwi – we rejoice that we're being given the opportunity to take the gospel to so many nations!).

We continue to distribute tracts and leaflets in the town square on alternate Friday nights and plan to move this to alternate Thursday nights to make the most of late-night shopping in town. We thank God for numerous opportunities

to share the gospel with needy people on these occasions. We are planning to start an evangelistic Sunday School in June or July. Some children in the neighbourhood have already been contacted informally (they received tracts and Ultimate Questions in response to stones thrown onto the hall roof during our meeting) and responded positively to the idea.

———— **MANUKAU CENTRAL BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH** ————

As a church we thank the Lord for His many mercies and many small encouragements as we continue to see His faithfulness and His graciousness in our midst in the following areas:

- Wednesday night Bible studies have been a special time studying through “The Farewell discourse” in John 13-17. This has provoked some good discussion and some sincere challenging questions to our own hearts and our walk with Christ.
- Monday evening evangelistic prayer evenings – the focus of these evenings have been primarily in pleading with the Lord to give us boldness to share the gospel with as many people that He brings in to our contact in one day. Secondly, that the Lord would move in revealing Himself to the hearts of all these people who we have stepped out by faith and shared the gospel with. This is the blood-line for our church – it reveals our total dependency upon God in every aspect as He continues to build His church.
- Ladies Bible study – this group meets bi-weekly and continues to be inspired and awed as they study the “Attributes of God”.
- Mercy Mission – At times of deepest need, the church has been able to reach out with an act of mercy and real joy in helping needy families with non-perishable food hampers.

The 2005 Grace and Truth Youth Camp at, Camp Bentzon, Kawau Island held over the Anzac weekend was a great success where we had 41 children. This is a wonderful camp site for our young people. The children had lots of fun in all the activities learning to encourage one another and work as a team. This camp gives an opportunity to meet new friends from different denominations, Baptist Union, Presbyterian churches and different Reformed denominations. This is encouraging to us to draw children from such a wide perspective breaking down denominational barriers and encouraging our unity in Christ. Likewise, much encouragement through the preaching, our camp theme was Wisely Choose to be Vigilant Warriors bringing Glory to Christ. Flowing out of the preaching was the fleshing out of two basic questions in the evening Bible studies which enabled the campers to discuss obstacles and difficulties and helpful, practical ideas from one another in the application of the truth of Gods Word to their own lives. Thank you very much to a wonderful leadership team and a thank you to all the campers who attended. A special thank you to Fred Schaumkel for all his hard work.

———— **MARCHWIEL REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH, TIMARU** ————

We very seldom have a visiting preacher so we greatly enjoyed the ministry of Alfie Orr recently during his and Elsie’s latest visit to New Zealand. Otherwise we have continued to profit by the study of our Lord Jesus as John preaches through Mark’s Gospel and on Sunday evenings we have started on Revelation. This has tied in well with our Wednesday evening studies in early church history. We have enjoyed a series of videos on the early days of the church too. We plan some monthly “Tea and Video” evenings at times when we can include the families to watch full length films on John Huss, Martin Luther, Tyndale, etc.

Our Sunday services are being videoed at present for a couple in Queenstown and also for the small group meeting in Dunedin. Tony Hewson is away in France for six months.

We are hoping to hold another Kids Holiday Bible programme in the July holidays but this is not yet finalised.

Recently two families left us. With our small congregation we feel the loss but are very grateful for the peace. May the great Shepherd of His sheep preserve and build up His flock here in Marchwiel.

John has been battling with his sinus problem of late and is waiting for the specialists to decide on the best treatment.

———— **NORTH SHORE BAPTIST REFORMED CHURCH** ————

Stephen is due to resume full pastoral and preaching responsibilities when his four month sabbatical concludes at the end of April. It has been a time of refreshment for Stephen after 21 years of ministry at North Shore and provided him with an opportunity to review and look forward to his continued ministry amongst us.

A number of our youth and adults have just returned from the fifth Grace & Truth Youth Camp which, this year, was held on Kawau Island. We thank God for so wonderfully answering the prayers of many and for the camp being such a happy and successful event. There were 41 campers, drawn from all our sister fellowships in the northern region (including 2 girls from New Plymouth) and 14 leaders. The challenge of the gospel and living to serve and follow Christ was powerfully brought to these young hearts and minds by Dawie Malan.

Stephen Turner and Fred Schaumkel are due to leave for India in mid May. This will be Stephen’s 11th visit and a high number of pre registrations have already been received. Entry visas for this trip have been granted.

As term 2 approaches we look forward to a full resumption of Sunday School and Bible studies. Our next church fellowship event, apart from our lunches together, will be our church concert. This is scheduled for July 9th at the school hall where we meet. We hope a number of our brethren from the other churches will join us and perform items also. More details to follow.