

SOUTH CITY CHURCH, AUCKLAND

We thank God for His goodness. We were greatly encouraged at our Church Camp. Pastor Jim Savastio preached on the subject of 'Assurance' from 1 John, which was a blessing to many. One of our girls was married at the end of February, this too was encouraging and joyful. Two young ladies joined the church in January. A husband and wife have now requested baptism and church membership. Market ministry continues with a special outreach planned for the Clendon area. Alfie and Elsie will be away visiting family in the UK during June and July.

TRINITY REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH, HAMILTON

Following David Marshall's retirement at the end of January the search for a new pastor has stepped up a notch. We have had two preaching visits from an applicant for the position and have listened to a number of his sermons on audio at evening services. We will be holding a church meeting to vote on his application on Sunday 19 March.

We have welcomed two of our missionaries, Alan and Sara Collins, to the church during March. Alan was with us for a number of years, but he and Sara were only married last year and so we had not met Sara, who is from the United States, before. They will be in New Zealand for three months and we are looking forward to deepening our fellowship with them.

In February we had a visit from Pastor David Zadok from Grace and Truth Congregation in Israel. Our Easter Convention speaker this year is Rev. John de Hoog from the Reformed Theological College in Geelong. He will be preaching from the book of Exodus.

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

The newsletter of the Fellowship of Reformed Baptist Churches in New Zealand

March 2017

COVENANT GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, TIMARU

Lord's Day services at Covenant Grace are characterised by lively singing, loving fellowship, and Christ-centred preaching. We continue to grow and be blessed by the Lord. We have welcomed two new members recently, and have also been blessed by the baptism of James Ben-Canaan, an ex-Gloriavale community member who has a wonderful testimony of the Lord's goodness and faithfulness in his life. Three additional members will be added in the next month or so. Praise the Lord!

This year we are planning to celebrate the 500-year Reformation anniversary by organising a conference with two local non-reformed Baptist churches. Under Nick's guidance, he and the other two pastors will be preaching on the 5 Solas and how the culture of the modern evangelical church can be changed for the better, based on the book *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace?* by James Montgomery Boice. This is a great opportunity for inter-church relationships to be deepened, and for the local church to be built up and encouraged.

There is an opportunity for Covenant Grace to move to a more modern building, which could easily be renovated and extended to make it suitable to sustain our continued growth in the future. This is a big decision for any church, and requires much prayer and consideration.

CROSSPOINT CHURCH, PALMERSTON NORTH

We continue to be encouraged as a church through unity in fellowship and faithfulness in ministry: the Lord is strengthening the work of our hands as we live out the routines of life in dependence upon him and for his glory and honour.

In April Dafydd will once again accompany Stephen Turner from the West Church Plant of SBC as they return to Pune in India to teach about thirty young men at the annual Theological Studies Camp (25-28 April). Stephen will be teaching from Romans 4-6, while Dafydd hopes to lead the men in a consideration of the topic "Ministering with Grace" using as a basis sections from Jerry Bridge's book, *The Discipline of Grace*.

Our Annual School of Theology will be held again in July (10-14). We expect that Dr Fred Malone will be teaching on "The Pastoral Ministry". Details will be available on our church website in due course (see crosspoint.org.nz).

EMMANUEL CHURCH, AUCKLAND

We are encouraged that several people are seeking baptism. Kishore Mani plans to return to Fiji for Christian ministry. Anticipated departure July 2017. (If any member churches would like a visit from Kishore please contact David Yan.) Our young men continue to give short sermons. It was refreshing to have folk from Bays Baptist Church join our Sunday morning service while their venue was being renovated. Through Bays Baptist Church we heard from David Zadok of HaGefen Publishing. Through South City Church we heard from Jim Savastio of Louisville, Kentucky.

Friends are welcome to attend our Good Friday service at 10am. Speaker Hanli Liu from West Church. David Yan plans to visit Singapore and Malaysia in April and May to speak at a camp and several churches. He hopes to attend the Shalom Church leaders' conference in Singapore where Jim Renihen is speaking.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, CHRISTCHURCH

We give thanks to the Lord for an encouraging and challenging combined church camp with our brothers and sisters from Covenant Grace Baptist in Timaru and Rolleston Baptist. Troy Cane from the Berean Bible Church in Queensland spoke on the theme of 'Spiritual Warfare' from Ephesians 6.

In our regular preaching we are working through 1 Peter. Pray that we will be equipped to proclaim God's praises and live to His glory where He has placed us.

We have recently recommenced our occasional ministry for couples, 'Home Maintenance', as we seek to give helpful, biblical input to the married couples in the church. Pray that we might be encouraged to build godly Christian life that would speak clearly of the gospel.

GRACENET COMMUNITY CHURCH, WELLINGTON

We have come to the end of a very significant season in terms of our efforts to train a man for the ministry. In the final phase of Ryan's training and assessment, we are happy to report that our prayers for guidance and direction are starting to be answered clearly and concretely. Thank you to everyone in the fellowship who continues to pray with us in this. Our hope and prayer is also for a continued clarity and focus, as we move forward in training men for gospel-advance in New Zealand. Then, in thinking beyond the borders of our country, our attention once again begins to fall on the next mission trip to India. In our partnership with Covenant Grace in Timaru, we are hoping to financially support the Annual Coonoor Theological Studies, while also sending pastors Mike and Nick to teach the students there for that week. While it grows increasingly difficult for Mike to get a visa to India, we are praying that this process is allowed for yet another year.

ROLLESTON BAPTIST CHURCH, ROLLESTON

We are very thankful for the provision of a new Sunday AM venue. We've been meeting in Rolleston Christian School since the last Sunday in January as we out-grew our previous venue. We enjoyed a wonderful camp in February, our third, combined with Grace Baptist of Christchurch and Covenant Grace of Timaru. This is always a highlight to our year as we enjoy great fellowship, food, and teaching from God's Word. We give praise to the Lord for an encouraging start to 2017 with more than half our Sunday morning congregation involved in one of four of our mid-week Bible Studies.

We are anticipating a Baptism service in the near future as we have had a few folks indicate a desire to follow the Lord in Baptism. Those who will be baptised along with several others will also enter into covenant membership. We are planning our 2nd Annual Good Friday Service. We hold this at an outdoor venue in the centre of Rolleston. It is widely advertised and evangelistically focused.

SHORE BAPTIST CHURCH, AUCKLAND

We are very grateful for the ongoing prayer from and fellowship we have with the FRBCNZ. We are always happy to see familiar faces from our fellowship churches visit us when in Auckland.

The main focus for us this year is to show our links to the Reformation and emphasising our need to always be looking out for false doctrine and guard against drifting away from our strong anchor in Christ and His Word. The Reformation Conference we are hosting on behalf of the FRBCNZ is gaining momentum now and with our two speakers secured (with the help of South City Church) we are now finalising the marketing aspects of the conference. We are praying for this to be a truly FRBCNZ conference with members from all our churches involved. The Conference will be called "Reformation 500" "It still matters"

Our intern, Jeremy Kendall, is doing very well in his ongoing service in the church while learning the distinct aspects of ministry in a Reformed Baptist Church. We are also grateful for the other churches in our fellowship who have extended opportunities for him to preach in the next couple of months. Please make use of this opportunity to give input in his life when he visits. We see him, Hanli in the West Church plant and men in other Fellowship Churches as an answer to our prayers for men to be raised up for the ministry.

With all this, we are very much aware of the ongoing needs in pastoral ministry in our church. It is so encouraging to see people grow in their faith and serving with so much joy; but we also recognise our weakness in so many areas - but how precious to know that the Lord Jesus builds His church!