

Szwarga Family

planting churches in New Zealand

Prayer Letter | April 2025

On April 27, Heritage Baptist Church held its first baptism service. Five individuals were baptized and added to the church! There are several others who have recently accepted Christ and are looking forward to being baptized next month as well. Two of those are young adults who began attending church in early February. Their mother accepted Christ after several weeks but they were not ready at that time to accept Christ. They were given Hebrews 2:3 to dwell on after first hearing the gospel, but a spiritual wall was present. Prior to visiting them on April 19, several men in the church dedicated extra time in prayer for them, and also for others who are attending regularly but knowingly have not trusted Christ. Limuel and I arrived at the visit, sat down, and simply inquired, "Where are you at with salvation?" To which one immediately replied, "I am ready today!" while his brother recalled Hebrews 2:3 and agreed that he was ready to accept Christ as well. Praise God for orchestrating several circumstances (including the effects of a cyclone earlier that week) that provided the opportunity for these two men to be saved.

At the end of the month, we visited two ladies who attended the church on Resurrection Sunday. They both have Buddhist backgrounds and recently moved here from Auckland, but they are searching for the truth. We had the privilege to show them the gospel, using the Matamata Gospel of John. **Pray for Jade and Kris to accept Christ.**

Others this month have clearly realized their need to be saved, several of which have attended Christian churches for years, but had never been confronted with the gospel. For sake of their privacy, we won't share their names here, but **please pray for the salvation of these individuals as they continue to attend church.**

One particular family who has been a part of the church since its inception has seen six co-workers and neighbors accept Christ since February, many of them continuing in discipleship. The gospel ministry is a team effort, and we are blessed to be part of an active, engaged team!

Two unique opportunities were given in April. The first was managing the kitchen for our annual teen camp. Through (once again) a team effort of Limuel and Caitlin, and one other couple, Dan and Abby Fitch, we provided food for 150 people for the week. Praise the Lord for many decisions made by the young people, including the three teens attending from Heritage Baptist Church. The second opportunity was an invitation to speak at our community's annual ANZAC services (similar to the U.S. Memorial Day). It was a humbling invitation considering we are not natively Kiwi, but it was an honor to speak from Philippians 2 on Christ's humility balanced with His greatness, as demonstrated in an ANZAC hero, Charles Upham.

Please pray for the additional following requests this month:

- Charter Service on May 24 (May 23 in U.S. Timezones).
- A few financial hurdles for Grace Independent Baptist Church's building purchase.
- The need for a future church plant in Napier, NZ. Several families have recently trusted Christ there.

Thank you for praying and sacrificing for the gospel's sake,

Josh, Alyse, Bentlee and Raelynn Szwarga

