

# A PAGE OR TWO (or 4) FROM PALMERSTON NORTH (NEW ZEALAND)



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A message from:

**Kent & Rachael  
O'Donnell**



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## Greetings brethren, family, and friends.

The second half of the year is coming to a close. Here are the highlights of our work during this time.

### OUTREACH

#### BAPTISMS

Did you notice the plural? It is always great to report a single conversion, but being able to report on two is really exciting.

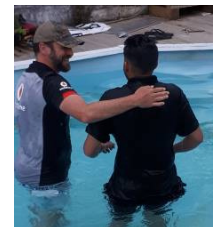
The first is clearly close to my heart. On the 9th of Sept. our oldest daughter CHLOE made the biggest decision of her life to take on the Christian walk. This might be considered a natural progression for one who has grown up in a church environment, and in some ways that is true. Chloe had heard the gospel preached numerous times, had attended lots of Bible classes, and even came with me on several studies with non-Christians; so the knowledge and belief was certainly present. Yet often what is "naturally expected" can be challenging to bring into reality, not to mention the transition into a new level of scrutiny. All that said, we are glad Chloe waited to make sure she was ready and that it was her choice. We are very happy parents.

The immersion itself was unique in that it took Chloe about 20 mins to psyche herself up to go under the cold water, and she is the first person I know to be baptized while wearing thick woollen socks ☺.



A young man named ROHAN is our newest brother in Christ. The Neall family provide accommodation for overseas students and this is how they met Rohan who is

from India and is going to university here in Palmy. He was happy to come along to various church activities, and during one of those I was able to initiate a religious discussion with him. Rohan said he was very interested in looking into the Bible, so we started having regular studies together. He had lots of good questions throughout, and though his family background is steeped in Hinduism, he was soon willing to accept that Christianity is the superior authority for his life. When he learned what he needed to do to obey the gospel he wanted to take some time to think over the commitment. After a week of "counting the cost" Rohan stated that he couldn't get it out of his mind and that he "had to go through with it." On the 19th of Nov. we got the job done.



#### STUDIES

Though somewhat sporadic, the Bible studies with the former Mormon, Leon, continue. We have covered a wide variety of topics, and while challenging for both of us, the discussion has been very cordial.

Sophie de Thierry & I completed our studies with Tai in Masterton. Despite assurances that perfection and full understanding of all things biblical aren't required, she still felt she wasn't ready to take the final step into Christ. The ball is in Tai's court, so unless I hear anything sooner I'll contact her again in a few months.

Our oldest son Ethan also expressed his interest to start studying. We have begun at square one by looking at evidences for God, Jesus, the Bible's inspiration, etc. It's not that he disbelieves in these things, but we both agreed that building a solid platform of foundational things would be the best way to progress.



An exciting outreach instruction initiative has been developed by Lance Mosher & John Jones called the *Making Disciples Training Program*. It really stresses the importance of every day evangelism and creating & making use of opportunities for sharing our faith through the means of employing a simple but effective conversational approach. Eight members of our congregation and one from the Foxton congregation took part in the 10 week course running from October to early December. During this period the class engaged in 116 religious conversations, set Bible studies with 18 individuals, and conducted 18 Bible study appointments.

I am hoping the new found confidence developed within these fine brothers & sisters will truly pay future dividends in the form of continued "seed sowing," other brethren being motivated by their example, and the church increasing in number.

If you or your congregation could use an evangelistic boost, then I strongly recommend this course. We all have a responsibility to try and win others to Christ and the *Making Disciples Training Program* will provide the kick-start and skills to do so.

**CAMPAIGN**

On the topic of opportunities for evangelism, please consider taking part in our door-knocking campaign next year. You may help the population of heaven to grow, our Christian camaraderie will grow, and you'll definitely grow. We're especially seeking workers for the first week. Contact me for more information and start making plans now!

**CAMPAIGN 2019**

**PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND**

Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> - Mar. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019

A city of 86,000+ souls, within a district of 117,000+ souls.

**WILL YOU SOW THE SEED WITH US?**

"Come over...and help us."  
(cf. Acts 16:9)

**CONGREGATION NEWS / CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

In August it was great to welcome another new addition to the congregation when little baby Aven was born. She is the 3rd child of Jared & Rachel Kyle.



An amusing church get-together was a Fall Festival TRAVEL AND TREAT ACTIVITY. We all got into fancy dress costumes and then convoyed to the homes of different brethren where we participated in various games & competitions and enjoyed good party food & snacks. Below are some of the costumes & cakes that were on show:



Later in Nov. we had a FAMILY FUN DAY at a park near Foxton Beach. We had a picnic lunch, kicked & threw footballs, rode bikes, played tennis, etc., and then went to Jeremy & Kylie Bason's house for smores and lemonade.



## YOUTH



This pic kind of sums up the crazy may-hem that has characterized many of the youth group nights we've had in the last six months. Perhaps surprisingly, not one limb, eye, or life was lost; but I'm pretty sure a measure of dignity was sacrificed along the way.

The highlight was our second annual MOUNTAIN TRIP in Oct. where we stayed two nights at the foot of Mt. Ruapehu. Young ones from at least six congregations joined in team competitions, chair lift rides to play up in the snow, a hike to a waterfall, a soak in a hot geo-thermo pool, and scrumptious meals. Bad weather prevented us from having our planned Sunday praise at the beach, so we worshipped together before departing the lodge. As a memento of the weekend everyone got a uniquely designed hoody.



## LADIES CHALLENGE



This year the ladies set up a carnival theme, and as usual they expertly planned and decorated the event. Celine Sparks, from Huntsville, AL presented the lessons and laid down the great challenge of controlling the tongue. Reportedly she did an excellent job of conveying a

serious topic with humour and family stories. More than 60 ladies attended the retreat, including some non-Christians, and others from as far as Australia.



## YEAR END TOTALS

**TOTAL CONGREGATION:** 58

**Male** 29; **Female** 29

**Children** 17; **Teens** 12; **20+** 14; **40+** 11; **60+** 4

**Baptisms:** 3; **Births:** 2.

**Individuals moved to congregation:** 0

**Individuals moved away from congregation:** 8

## TEACHING / WORSHIP



It was blessing to have Vinay Kumar come our way on Jul. 3rd from India. He took a 10 hr bus journey from Auckland arriving here at 4:00am. He stayed with us for a few days and spoke at Tues. night class about his labours primarily with the Hyderabad & Naidupet congregations. Among other good works, he buys bicycles for preachers. A few of us were glad to contribute toward this.


James Cammock, who works with the Hamilton COC, came down in Sept. to share his Pre-suppositional Apologetics Seminar. 4 members of his family who live locally also attended and spoke positively of the church here.

The first 3 students of the B.V.B.I.N.Z., have graduated. Jay Pahetongia is now preaching with the Porirua congregation; Dora Lavea is also using her talents for the church there. Daniel Jensen has moved to the city of Wanganui and is working as a builder while also assisting the local brethren. I'm glad to have been involved in a small way with their schooling.



Following the sermon series on 1Tim. I did another based upon 1Cor.13:13. The Sun. am adult class nears the end of Acts, and the teens requested I teach on the biblical view of alcohol. Our Tues. pm class has finished going through Mike Winkler's God's Blueprint for a Growing Church and we have just done the introduction for a study of Revelation.


## FAMILY NEWS

 Chloe completed her first year at hairdressing college. She maintained a high standard throughout and was nominated as student body president by her school peers. A notable achievement was becoming the NZ editorial stylist novice champion for a hairstyle she designed. This caught the attention of several salons and she has picked up some part-time work already.



\* Chloe decided to get her learner's driver's licence. Some time in the New Year she will do a practical test and hopefully obtain a restricted licence which will allow her to drive by herself.

\* Chloe: "Dad did you notice that my eye lashes are longer?"  
Kent: "Well, no; but they look nice. How did you do it?"  
Chloe: "Caster oil, mascara with bamboo extract, and prayer."

 Ethan turned 16 at the end of Aug. Within the next few days he also sat the theory test for a learner's driver's licence. It might have been suggested that the roads would never be safe again, but he is very conscientious behind the wheel.

\* In a joint decision between Rachael, myself, and Ethan, he has ended his schooling at home and is now doing a construction course. This will increase his skills in a field of work he's keen to pursue, and line him up for better apprenticeship opportunities.

\* Ethan was listening to music in the bathroom when Chloe walked pass the door.

*Chloe:* "Hey, what's the name of that song?"

*Ethan:* "I don't know why."


*Chloe:* "Because I like it, and want to get it. What's its name?"

*Ethan:* "I don't know why."

*Chloe:* "Just tell me the name of the song!!!"

*Ethan:* "It's 'I Don't Know Why'!!!!!"

*Chloe:* "Oohhhh..."

 Michael co-purchased his own set of bagpipes. He put them to good use by performing at a local rest-home where one of our members stayed. The residents loved it. He's also now part of a piping band which came 2nd in a recent competition.

\* We were watching the *Lord of the Rings*. A glowing elf princess on a shining steed came on screen. I said Rachael looked just like that when I first saw her. Mike said, "What, just like the horse?"


\* *Mike:* "Mum, where's the mustard?"

*Rach:* "In the fridge."

*Mike:* "It's not in the fridge, I've looked already."

*Rach:* "How about taking out your boy eyes and using girl eyes?"


*Mike* [in an overly exaggerated feminine voice]: *"Here I am with my girl eyes, looking in the fridge with my stupid little gir.... Oh, there it is..."*


 Phoebe overcame her nerves and joined a brand new netball team for a nearby school. They finished 3rd for the season which was quite the accomplishment since some of them were learning to play for the first time.




\* T.v. Game show question: "When one initiates a bunch of problems it said to be opening up a can of what?"

Correct answer: "Worms". Phoebe's answer: "Beans!"

 Rachael receiving a call from Ethan's wood working teacher after having him at his home for nearly 5 hours: *"I feel it's only right to tell you that none of the machinery in my workshop has any safety features... but I still have all my fingers so far."*

 Kent: The frame of my prescription sunglasses broke. In an effort to put off buying a new pair I have employed a couple of rubber bands to keep the lens from falling out. Admittedly it does look kind of goofy, but despite regular mocking, I am cheered by the fact that I actually can still see, and, as the photo shows, Rach loves me regardless.



 Rocky, our loyal cat of 9 years, had to be put down. To limit the sadness (esp. Phoebe), we thought it best to get another cat quickly. As it turns out "another cat" became "two cats": Welcome Bonzo & Coco.



### **End of Year Picture of the Kids.**

Ethan - 16 yrs; Phoebe - 12 yrs; Chloe - 17 yrs; Mike - 14 yrs



Another year has gone by, and we've had many opportunities to serve.

Of course, we don't want to lose sight of those who have worked alongside us - our job was made easier and more enjoyable as a result.

Much appreciation also goes out to everyone who has prayed for our labours, sent encouraging messages, and kept up with our newsletters - your interest is a help and a compliment.

To the congregations, families, and individuals who have supported us financially, we are grateful for your generosity and your confidence in us.

Should God give us another year, we hope He sees fit to use us effectively, grant the increase, and be well-pleased with our efforts.

Until next time, all the best in Christ,

*Kent, Rachael, Chloe, Ethan, Michael & Phoebe O'D.*

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