

# GRACE DIRECTORY

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND

## NORTHERN

### MANUREWA

Covenant Presbyterian Church  
77 Rogers Road, Manurewa, Auckland  
Service Times: 10:00am & 6:00pm  
Pastors: Peter Boyd & Peter Reynolds  
P: (09) 269-1046  
E: covenantchurch@ihug.co.nz

### TAKANINI

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
Takanini School Hall, Old Park Place  
Service Times: 10:00am & 6:00pm  
Contact: Rob  
P: (09) 267-2847  
E: trinitychurch@orcon.net.nz  
www.trinitychurch.org.nz

### FLAT BUSH

Redeemer Grace Presbyterian Church  
30 Hilltop Road, Flat Bush  
(entrance off Arrowsmith Drive)  
Service Times: 10:45am and 6pm  
Pastor: Wally Rakete  
P: (09) 267-5584  
www.redeemer.org.nz

### MANGERE EAST / PAPATOETOE

Providence Presbyterian Church  
26-28 Rosella Road, Mangere, Auckland  
Service Time: 10:00am  
Pastor: Uaita Levi  
P: (09) 267-9440

### CENTRAL AUCKLAND

City Presbyterian Church  
283 Karangahape Road, Newton  
Service Time: 10:30am  
Pastor: Travis Scott  
P: (09) 550 5415 / 021 628 041  
Email: tscott@citypres.org.nz  
www.citypres.org.nz

### GISBORNE

Grace Church Gisborne  
481 Gladstone Road  
(opposite Carpet Court)  
Service Time: 10:30am  
Pastor: Geoff Macpherson  
P: (06) 868-1411 / 027-7276711  
www.gracechurchnz.org

### ROTORUA

Grace Church Rotorua  
Lynmore Primary School  
Iles Rd Lynmore (Opposite Gull Service Station  
Te Ngae Rd)  
Service time: 10.00am  
P:(07) 345 7881/ 022-0129-615  
E.stevenfuieva@gmail.com

## CENTRAL

### NEW PLYMOUTH

Grace Community Church  
Fred Tucker Memorial Hall, Bell Block  
Service Times: 10:00am & 6:30pm  
Pastor: David Farr  
P: (06) 759 9378  
www.gracenp.co.nz

### WHANGANUI

Whanganui Evangelical Church  
Meets Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Service Time: 6pm Sunday  
Pastor: Graeme Jones  
P: (06) 347-1257  
E.ashtonjones@slingshot.co.nz

### PALMERSTON NORTH

Grace Presbyterian Church  
25 Nikau Street.  
Service Time: 10:30 a.m.  
Pastor: Andrew Macpherson  
P: (06) 358-0132/ 022-0608-634

### WELLINGTON

Grace@Wellington  
Thistle Hall Community Centre,  
293 Cuba St, Wellington.  
Service Times: 10:30am & 5:30pm  
Pastor: Ian Bayne  
P: (04) 976-5093

### HUTT VALLEY

Pastor: Richard Eyre  
P: 027-559-5044

### ASHBURTON

Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
63 Princes Street, Ashburton  
Service Time: 10:30am  
Pastor: David Bayne  
P: (03) 307-7355

### FAIRLIE

Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
McKenzie Centre, Fairlie (preaching station)  
Service Time: 4:00pm  
Contact: Andrew Johnson  
P: (03) 685 8222

### CHRISTCHURCH

Grace Presbyterian Church  
Middleton Grange School,  
50 Acacia Ave  
Service Times: 11.00am  
Pastor: Rusty Milton  
P: (03) 354 4443  
www.gracechristchurch.co.nz

### Lamp Presbyterian Church (Korean)

Riccarton Baptist Church,  
cnr Rattray & Peverel St.  
Service Time: 1:00pm  
Pastor: John Oh  
P: (03) 960-6879 / 021-855-267  
P: (03) 357-1059 / 021-1893886

## SOUTHERN

### DUNEDIN

Grace Bible Church  
Leith Bowling Club, 2 Duke Street, Dunedin  
Service Time: 10:00am & 7:00pm  
Pastor: Mark Smith  
P: (03) 473-8100  
E: admin@gracedunedin.org.nz  
www.gracedunedin.org.nz

### WAIHOLA

Tokomairiro Grace Bible Church  
Service Time: 10:00am  
Contact: Grant Bullin  
P: (03) 417-7120

### OWAKA

Catlins Evangelical Church  
Gospel Hall  
2 Campbell Street, Owaka  
Service Time: 11:00am  
Contact: Gavin Landreth  
E: landrethgw@farmside.co.nz  
P: (03) 415 8117

### GORE

Grace Presbyterian Church  
30 Hamilton Street, East Gore  
Service Times: 10:30am & 6:30pm  
Student Pastor: Sam Duthie  
P: (03) 208-8027

### WYNDHAM

Wyndham Evangelical Church  
Corner of Balacava and Redan Street  
Service Times: 10:30am & 6:30pm  
Pastor: Andrew Young  
P: (03) 206 4147  
www.wyndhamevangelical.org.nz

### INVERCARGILL

Grace Presbyterian Church  
Cnr. Centre and Morton Streets, Georgetown,  
Invercargill  
Service Times: 10:30am & 6:30pm  
Pastors: Barry Swann (03) 218 9990  
& Peter van den Brink (03) 216 7746

# growing in GRACE

A HEART FOR THE NATIONS

PUSHING BACK THE DARKNESS IN **Vanuatu**

the truth FOR TONGA

THE CHURCH IN JAPAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND  
NOV 2011, VOLUME 10 ISSUE 2

# GRACE

# A HEART FOR THE NATIONS



## MARK SMITH - NOV 2011

This issue of Growing in Grace is about missions. It is about Grace Presbyterian Church fulfilling a vital aspect of its calling; that followers of Jesus are to take his message in word and deed to every person on the planet. As a church we want to have a heart like God's for the nations, and to work alongside God in his global plan.

Psalm 86:9-10 declares; All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvellous deeds; you alone are God.

God is in the business of gathering people, that is, drawing people to himself from every nation to be his worshippers. John Piper says; 'Missions exists because worship doesn't.'

God shows he has a heart for the nations all through Scripture. His intentions are clear in his call to Abraham, that through him the families of the earth would be blessed, right through to the call of Jesus for his disciples to bear witness to him from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. We in Aotearoa New Zealand are at the end of the earth, 15,900 odd Kilometres from Jerusalem. And the call of Jesus still rests on the disciples

of Jesus to be taking the gospel message in word in deed, and to see the church of Jesus grow, deepen and glorify Him.

It is an exciting time to be involved in missions as the earth increasingly becomes a global community. Even some of our provincial towns are becoming more and more ethnically diverse. As a Southern hemisphere nation, New Zealand is also closer to the current great moves of God in Asia, Africa & South America.

In this edition we will look at a variety of overseas mission contexts that people from Grace Presbyterian Church are involved in, and the diverse ways God has them serving. This also raises the debate as to whether we should send missionaries when we could send resources instead to support locals.

Our prayer from the Overseas Mission Committee is that they, the people of Grace Presbyterian Church, will have a heart for the nations. That the nations would be glad because the Saviour of the world has come. Under God we all have a role to play and hopefully this edition will help you in yours.



Mark and Jessica Smith with their children (from left) Joel, Elsie, Kyla and Georgia

## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PAKISTAN



After this we distributed food to the widows in the church. Then a large queue formed of sick and needy people who wanted prayer. Since I had preached this was for me to do. Never before had I done anything like this and I prayed the Lord would give me wisdom and the people would know that only God does miracles. A whole range of needs were presented; poor eyesight, fevers, miscarriages, requests for children, sore ankles and knees, attacks from spirits and people requesting wisdom. After about 30 minutes, I felt totally inadequate but confident that God would do what He willed and I was challenged by the very simple help these Christians needed.



The Shadra Congregation

The next day, we travelled to the border of India and Pakistan. In this area there are no government police and it is quite a dangerous area, but Amjad said that God would be our protector. These villages were clearly much poorer, mostly mud houses made from bullock dung with very polluted water due to poor sanitation.

As we approached the first church, the local pastor talked to the border patrol guards and we were let through and able to hold a worship service. After this I again was required to pray for a number of needs.

We then proceeded to next church where about 100 mainly women and children were gathered. Amjad said that Christians in these two villages are very poor and humanly speaking they have no hope. Amjad's vision is to get the children to come to a Christian school and be educated so they can learn the gospel and break the poverty cycle.

Our third church for the day was with Pastor W. The church there does not have a building, so we met on the concrete roof of the pastor's house, around 150 people in all.

The next day was Sunday and we worshipped in the morning at the church in Amjad's house. After lunch we journeyed to another church. They usually met in the pastor's house, but due to the number of people we met in the courtyard. There were about 100 there, and as I was preaching one of the ladies cried out.

**It became obvious she had at least one demon in her**

Once I finished preaching, two pastors went to her and were praying for her. The battle raged in her body with much twisting and shaking, but eventually with four pastors

and two other ladies praying and holding her the demon left her. Wow! I have never seen spiritual warfare like this before.

After the service there was again a range of prayer needs and a number of people said they had demons entering them. I prayed especially for the Pastor because he is truly in the midst of spiritual warfare and his congregation needs his leadership and the power of the Holy Spirit.

On my fourth and last day in Pakistan we visited a final church and were greeted by a wonderful group of flower throwing girls. This village was very poor with mud huts, although they did have electricity. The church building was packed with over a 100 people and there were a lot who sat outside as well. We left for the airport at midnight with much to think and pray about and to act on upon my return to NZ.



Translator and Pastors

### TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The tenth Assembly of the Grace Presbyterian Church of NZ was held in Christchurch from Wednesday 12 - Friday 14th October. It was opened by current Moderator Rod Peek on the theme of overseas missions, and attended by almost 35 commissioners plus observers and guests from other churches.

Pastor Tom Cheely, missions pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church in America, was the guest speaker. Pastor Cheely challenged attendees with messages from 1 Kings 19:9-18. He noted Elijah's despair at how bad things were in Israel, but also God's fresh challenge to return to the path of faithful and obedient service. On Friday afternoon Tom also shared some revealing insights into current developments in the world of overseas missions.

The 2012 General Assembly is scheduled for Auckland, 16th - 19th October. A big 'thank you' to the Grace Presbyterian Church, Christchurch, for billeting and feeding all their visitors.



# GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PAKISTAN

## BY TONY BRACEFIELD

In November last year, Amjad and Nasira Khan believed the Lord was calling them to start a new ministry in Pakistan after being in NZ for 12 years. Amjad (a teaching elder in Redeemer GPC) knew it must be established on and distinguished by sound teaching. In January 2011 he asked his sister and brother-in-law to start a church in the house he still owns in Pakistan and he began a teaching ministry via internet and telephone. Since then the church has grown from three families to over 100 people.

In February, he contacted a number of Presbyterian pastors who wanted their village congregations to join him. Amjad approached me about a book of order for the new denomination and we basically modified the GPCNZ document to fit Pakistan. In March, Amjad flew to Pakistan and inaugurated Grace Presbyterian Church of Pakistan (GPCP) with 15 congregations, representing 2,000 to 3,000 people. Construction was also commenced on two rooms attached to Amjad's house to establish Grace Bible College. This new college is critical because the most important work is to teach all the new pastors and elders of the church sound doctrine so they can correctly teach their people.

In April, I visited Pakistan and preach at six of these churches in four days. Here is what I learnt about the church in Pakistan and some of what happened during that trip.



Grace Bible College - Pakistan

## CHRISTIANITY IN PAKISTAN

There are approximately 10 million Christians in Pakistan of a total population of 180 million. Everyone I spoke with said the same thing: in general Pakistani Christians do not have a clear doctrinal understanding of the faith. This is mainly because the large majority of Christians are very poor, with low or non-existent education. They

are Christian because they were born into a Christian home and so their culture declares them Christian.

There is one main protestant church in Pakistan, formed in 1970, called the Church of Pakistan. This is a merger of Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Methodist denominations. With such a mixture, it does not have a reformed doctrinal statement and is inclined to liberal theology and a social gospel. In a country where 60% of the population lives on less than US\$2 a day, many churches are not interested in working with poor Christians. Such are sometimes seen as a drain on the churches resources. They also live in areas that are considered dangerous to enter.

Christians are heavily discriminated against in Pakistan. Those who are educated are often unable to find employment.

*In the villages, Christians tend not to own any gardening land and are basically slaves to their Muslim masters.*

In the cities, Christians are typically concentrated into communities where Muslims may own the shops but will not live.

While these factors create many challenges there are also many opportunities. Although there are many 'cultural' Christians, they are still willing to come to church, so opportunities to grow and strengthen the Christian church with sound teaching are vast. Furthermore, the existing Christian communities provide a useful platform for work to strengthen these communities and break the poverty and discrimination cycle.

## A KIWI IN PAKISTAN

On the first day, after arriving at Amjad's house, we set off for the first church and to meet Pastor 'A', who pastors three churches in the area and lives 100km from this one.

The church is red brick (as are most buildings in Pakistan) but it had no roof. This is fine in summer but not good during winter and the wet season. The church was packed - women on the right, men on the left, and children at the front - and we were seated at the front on the only chairs in the church.

The service began with about one hour of beautiful singing. It took a bit of getting used to preaching through an interpreter, but by the end we were in a real flow. Pastor Amjad then was introduced and preached for a few minutes and then after another couple of songs the service of was closed - a total of two hours.

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Pastor John and Sarah Oh with their children (from left) Sungmin, Gloria and Grace. They recently had a baby girl (not pictured) - Esther



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# PUSHING BACK THE DARKNESS IN Vanuatu



BY TONY BRACEFIELD AND STEVE WILLIAMS

Steve Williams and Tony Bracefield from Redeemer Church in Auckland joined David Kiewiet (Regional director of Mission to the World, Presbyterian Church in America) and his wife Jan on a mission trip to Vanuatu. The purpose was to visit 20 missionaries on the island of Tanna. In 2010 MTW began supporting Tanna nationals serving as missionaries who are involved in reaching people coming out of the John Frum cargo cult. The John Frum cult once had a following of approximately 7,000 to 10,000 people. In 2001 after an amazing work of God a large group came left the cult and went to the Presbyterian Church to ask for help to learn about Jesus. As a result, the John Frum cult has less than 500 followers, and the Tanna missionaries are working actively in most of the villages where the cult is still strong.

After a 3-hour flight from New Zealand the team gathered at the Tanna airport by Pastor David Iou, Tanna Missions Director, who was to be our trusted guide on our four days at Tanna. Chauffeured by our skillful driver, Johnny - who navigated the Tanna dirt roads (all the pot holes, rivers, and short cuts) like the back of his hand - we set off.

The team's first visit was to the South Island Presbyterian Bible College in Enafa - North Tanna. Pastor Yarwell is principal of the college with approximately 20 students. All the students live at the college and in very simple accommodation. The Bible College programme is a 2-year course where students are trained to become missionaries. Once these students have completed this programme those seeking to become pastors transfer to the Talua Ministry Training Centre on the Island of Espiritu Santo.

In the afternoon the team was scheduled to visit the Discipleship Centre located on the East coast but due to very heavy rain, the road was not passable. However, Pastor Johnson (Principal of the Centre) was very keen to show the team the Centre. He said it was only a short walk of one and a half hours each way through the bush. So Tony and Pastor Johnson walked into the Discipleship Centre. Pastor Johnson explained that currently there were no students at the Centre because it is on sea level and the villages were told of a Tsunami warning and fled to the hills and were unlikely to come back for two months. In addition to the Tsunami warning;

**A village leader, Prophet Fred, said that there would be a week of darkness so that the sun would not rise and there would be no moon**

Interestingly the moon did shine the first night so he sent a text message to all his followers to say if they put a piece of white cloth over the door of their house then the darkness would not come. The next day the sun did rise and we saw many houses with the white sheet present!

The next day was our first day teaching at the local village of Laul. The twenty missionaries were all asked to gather there from around the island, and all but two were able to make it. After the first lecture in the morning, we broke off the class to go to open a medical centre and then to open a church building at the nearby village of Lamanien where missionary Jimmy was working. The team received a traditional village welcome. It is a lengthy process where a formal delegation is formed and presented with flowers, then the chief gives a speech and then each team member would give greetings. After this the team opened the facility along with more speeches and gift presentations.

After opening the medical clinic we moved to the church opening that also had another chief so all the opening procedure occurred again.

**It was a real blessing to see the church filled with the local tribe and see their delight at having white people open it.**

By the time the team finished the two openings, the afternoon was gone and the afternoon teaching sessions were delayed as the team began the hour-long journey back to the base. God's timing is best!



Tony Bracefield, Steve and Rita Williams, David Kewiet in Vanuatu



## NATIONAL NORTH ISLAND SUMMER YOUTH CAMP

**"During camp week God was gracious in the way His Spirit worked in the hearts of the youth through the leaders, through Dave's talks and more importantly through his Word the Bible."**

James Cunningham Jnr, 2011 camper.

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Join us for three fun filled action packed radical awesome stupendous summer days of crystal clear Bible teaching with a bunch of other teenage young people from North, South, East and West!

From Monday 23 till Friday 27 January 2012 at CYC Ngaruawahia, Hamilton.

Get your registration form from your youth leader now or go to: [summeryouthcamp.org.nz](http://summeryouthcamp.org.nz)



**PASSING THE BATON**

# ISLAM and Christianity on the Fatherhood of God



## PUSHING BACK THE DARKNESS IN Vanuatu

BY PETER VAN DEN BRINK

A few years ago, the Caleb Project published "Encountering the World of Islam," the text book for a twelve lesson course on reaching Muslims with the love of Christ. One of the articles, written by R.C. Sproul and Abdul Saleeb reflects on the similarities and differences between the Islamic and Christian views of God as Father.

Saleeb, a Christian with a Muslim background, explains how **the familiar use of the term 'Father' in many Christian prayers and conversations sounds deeply offensive in a Muslim's ear.**

To call God 'Father' is considered blasphemous. While there is common ground between Christianity and Islam with regard to the justice, supremacy, power and kingship of God, the Qur'an emphatically rejects that God can be considered our Father.

"Sura 112 of the Qur'an [is] recited in prayer every day by millions of Muslims around the world. It is an essential part of the daily prayers of a Muslim: 'Say: he is Allah, the one and only; Allah the eternal, absolute; he begetteth not, nor is he begotten; and there is none like unto him.'"

"Islam heavily emphasizes the absolute sovereignty of God: 'It is not befitting (to the majesty of) Allah that he should beget a son. Glory be to him! When he determines a matter, he only says to it, 'Be,' and it is' (Sura 19:35) In the footnote to this verse, Yusuf Ali, translator of the version of the Qur'an to which this article refers, writes: 'Begetting a son is a physical act depending on the needs of man's animal nature. Allah Most High is independent of all needs, and it is derogatory to him to attribute such an act to him. It is merely a relic of pagan and anthropomorphic materialistic superstitions.'"

Christians have never understood the fatherhood of God as having any reference to sexual relations, either with respect to Jesus Christ, or us as his children. Most Muslims, however, like Yusuf Ali, consider that the Qur'an emphatically repudiates Christian doctrine on this point. "The dominant Qur'anic image of God is that of a master, and our relationship with him is that of a servant to a master. Islam does not allow for any intimacy between humanity and God, or for us to call God 'our heavenly Father.' As Christians we need to be informed about the Muslim mindset and what they hear when they hear phrases like 'heavenly Father,' or 'Son of God.'"

R.C. Sproul then briefly considers the true Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. Despite the rise of certain cults in history,

**Christians have always rejected that God's fatherhood communicates the idea of physical, biological propagation.**

Rather, it describes a relationship of both intimacy and authority. That element of loving intimacy expresses one

of the great privileges that Christians enjoy through God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Old Testament and Rabbinic Judaism, similar to Islam, avoided the use of 'Father' in relation to God except indirectly in reference to Him as Creator. However, Jesus Christ addressed God as Father in all but one of his recorded prayers and also taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father...." This represents a radical departure from the accepted culture of the day, and it infuriated Jesus' enemies that he would have the audacity to suggest that he had this kind of intimate relationship with God. What's more, God is also heard speaking from heaven declaring, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Mt 17:5) and Jesus is often referred to as the Son of God.

From the fall of mankind into sin, there has always been a dividing wall between God and man, but that estrangement has ended and the wall removed through the work of Jesus Christ. John 1:12 says that those who believe have the right to be called children of God. Romans 8:15 says that the Spirit of God in believers cries out, "Abba, Father!" "God has been so gracious that he has not only forgiven us of our sins, but has invited us into the intimate fellowship of being family members. Even though we are not his children by nature, we are his children by adoption; by virtue of our relationship to Christ, we are now included in the family of God."

This filial relationship between us and God marks one of the great privileges of Christianity. It is a concept that is vital to our whole understanding of redemption and should never be taken for granted. The absence of God's fatherly relationship to us greatly impoverishes Islam (and Judaism).

Saleem concludes the article with a challenge that when Christians speak to Muslims about their relationship with God, they must emphasise that our understanding of the fatherhood of God has nothing to do with physical procreation. Rather,

**it conveys the concepts of love between God and us and our willing obedience to him.**

In a survey of six hundred former Muslims who had become Christians, God's love and the intimacy of our relationship to him was seen to be one of the important factors that drew many of them to Christ. Christians should boldly proclaim and humbly rejoice in the privilege of adoption. "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God!" (1Jn 3:1).

The substance of this article and various quotes were taken from Islam and Christianity on the Fatherhood of God by R.C. Sproul and Abdul Saleem, taken from "Encountering the World of Islam," Authentic Media, GA, USA, 2005, p296-301.

The next day the team visited a remote village in the middle of Tanna at Mitmit where one of the missionaries John Naurwaiyag was working. This involved a one-hour drive over bumpy terrain where it didn't look like any road existed, but driver Johnny found one! To the team's surprise the village had been preparing for the whole day before so there was a huge programme of singing, dancing, food and a full church teaching time where Tony also helped missionary John (who translated into the local Bislama language) with an illustration of how the Christian life requires a total transformation, like a caterpillar to a butterfly. This village was like it would have been 1,000 years ago and many people there had never seen a white person let alone a small silver square box that had their picture on the screen! **One lady reached out to the digital camera to try and touch the person in the picture.** The children all thought it was amazing.



Chapel under construction in Vanuatu

We returned to the teaching programme at 1pm and Tony taught on the 'Assurance of Salvation' from 1 John, David Kiewiet taught on the 'Trinity' and Steve Williams taught on the 'Holy Spirit and other spirits' The day ended with a farewell from the twenty missionaries who shared how encouraged they were to receive our teaching. The next day the team farewelled the island of Tanna and some wonderful friends in Christ!

Steve and Tony then flew to the largest of the Islands on Vanuatu to visit the theological college on Santo called Talua Ministry Training Centre and were taken for a tour of the college by the Principal Pastor Fiama Rakau. This is a very large residential college with 60 male students

and 20 wives and 40 children together with 10 full time teaching staff.

Talua offers a three-year pastoral diploma programme and has just begun a BMin programme. They are in the midst of a large growth plan with the need to build eight more accommodation units and they have started work on a new chapel.

After an overnight visit to the college in which Steve and Tony both melted in the high evening temperatures, they departed for the capital of Port Vila and then flew home on Saturday afternoon.

### JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR VANUATU:

1. Pray for the 20 missionaries on Tanna who are taking the word of the Lord Jesus to the lost.
2. Pray that the remaining members of the John Frum cult will seek the Lord.
3. Pray for additional funding for supporting the missionary work – one missionary can be supported at a cost of \$75 per month and the mission director has asked that we seek to support 2 new pastors into Tanna as the church is growing so rapidly. The cost of this is \$150 for a single pastor and \$200 per month for a married pastor.
4. Pray for the Talua Ministry Training Centre that they may be able to supply more accommodation for the extra students who are coming.

# CAMBODIA

A land prepared for the gospel...

BY TREVOR WEBB

Over the last six years, Mary and I have visited Cambodia three times: once to teach English to theological students and twice to work with Cambodian Hope Organisation on the Thai border.

To the outward eye Cambodia looks like one of the most hopeless countries in the world. It is a country (almost) on the first rung of the social and economic ladder. It is a Buddhist country (statistics say over 95%) and Buddhism exerts a significant drag on social and economic progress. Cambodia has a long history of disputes with its neighbours and a recent traumatic history of 25 years of varying degrees of civil war ending around the year 2000. Then there is the ever-present, debilitating effect of corruption - economic and social progress is crippled by corruption at all levels of society.

However, to the eye of faith, Cambodia is a country with bright prospects for a great and prosperous future. Everywhere you go in Cambodia you find dedicated, zealous, loving Christian communities reaching out with the gospel. We met them in bookshops, on buses and in the street. Cambodia is a land open to the gospel and is a picture of God's eternal plan - He 'chooses what is nonsense in the world to make the wise feel ashamed. God chooses what is weak in the world to make the strong feel ashamed.' Jesus said 'People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick.'



Soldiers Waiting for Baptism

We saw great hope for Cambodia in little villages. Let me describe a village I visited. The pastor is the headmaster at the school. He is not only a headmaster and a pastor to his flock of 80 souls but is also the mentor for five other untaught pastors around him. Over half of his congregation are under 15 years of age. They have few Bibles and they meet in his house. There are simple, rustic surroundings but there is a great difference between this gathering and the groups of men who gather in tents and houses to avidly watch their kick boxing stars perform on TV. This group sing songs of worship, they have peace and hope. Hope is the thing most lacking in Cambodia and it is what the gospel brings.

Here we find pastors and Christian people in the villages everywhere who have a hunger for the word of God, and a simplicity of faith that moves mountains. There is still the ever present shadow of suffering, sin and death, but here you will find those who have peace and confidence in the presence of God and hope for the world to come.



A Christian Cambodian Village

The gospel is spreading like the leaven within the loaf - from house to house and village to village. There are no great preachers and no great worship teams - but there are hearts that have been transformed - there are people who know what it means to be loved unconditionally for the first time in their lives. The church of course is still populated by sinners like us, so there are conflicts and errors in teaching and old habits that await renewal. But there is a freshness evident in earnest prayer and the desire for spiritual growth.

Have western Christians anything to offer this growing, 'simple-gospel' community? Yes we have. Our visits there (including short-term trips) are an encouragement - the destitute and the untaught learn that they have the same faith and drink the same spiritual water that rich and 'learned' folks in the West do. Then we can help them to build strong biblical foundations - we have access to hundreds of years of Christian knowledge and church history - they have access to none. We can also help by assisting in benevolent aid - among other things this includes health care, work-skill training and agricultural development.

GPC churches have been helping Cambodian Hope Organisation with Bible teaching, English teaching, children's ministries, welding skills, and advice in fish and pig farming. If you would like to learn what is happening in Cambodia take a look on Cambodian Hope Organisation website: <http://www.cambodianhopeorganization.org>.

# MUMBAI MISSION



Understanding the issues Churches face is the first step to helping them.

Ash will be serving some of the small church groups in the slums, talking with them and learning more effective ways to 'do church' that is culturally relevant, practical, and God-glorifying.

"We want to help them 'do church' in a way that is culturally relevant, practical, and God-glorifying."

In our last visit this led to meeting with particular groups in the city's slums on a regular basis, discussing the problems they face, and attempting to come up with practical solutions.

One such solution is 'rabbit church' or 'house church'. Instead of having larger church groups it is often more practical to have smaller groups - but more of them. This ensures all members know and relate to each other and share their lives together. It also removes distractions like property purchase and maintenance. A big emphasis is placed on discipleship - walking alongside a new believer and growing together with them. This takes advantage of the relationships that can be developed in small groups as opposed to larger ones. This means more engaged, active and effective disciples of Jesus.

Ash's day to day work is more focused on long term church planting and growth whereas Jess' day to day is more focused on poverty alleviation and education. The two are very much interlinked and our daily roles overlap and complement each other.

## HOW DO WE FIND THE MONEY?

There are four ways that we keep curry in our bellies and train tickets in our pockets:

We save what we can when back in NZ and Ash has an internet based design business that he works on 1-2 days per week. We also have generous people and churches that support the work on a regular basis, and we get specific

funding for some of the projects that we work on from various places Above all, we try to keep things simple and cheap.

We want to continue our focus on sharing the long term and short term love of Jesus. In order to be more strategic some small changes will be happening.

\* Ash will be working on his web based business 1-2 days per week to supplement income (we also use this to show people a way of making an income of their own while continuing their Gospel work).

\* Ash is also preparing to study a theology paper (via correspondence) each term. Dedicating one day per week to this.

Jess will continue her health data collection and health education work and Ash will continue to work alongside local churches to aid the establishment of indigenous, self replicating groups of Jesus freaks.

## WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?

Some things you might want to pray for in regards to the work we do:

1. Pray for open hearts throughout India. It is a diverse place with many different people. Pray that they might get the opportunity to hear about Jesus.
2. India can be a dangerous place and we stand out like a sore thumb. Please pray for our safety.
3. We don't have specific plans for the future, just specific goals. Pray that God will guide us.

We want to help others experience the work we are involved in. If you would like to come and see what we do, drop us an email or give us a call. (ash.jess.scott@gmail.com Phone: 027 303 9030)

Alternatively, you can follow our blog at [www.ajibaparadesi.blogspot.com](http://www.ajibaparadesi.blogspot.com) email us to receive updates.

# MUMBAI MISSION

BY ASH SCOTT



After three months in Mumbai (population 20 million), over 2010/2011 we are about to head back for a longer stay to continue the work we began. We fly out on the 12th of November, 2011.

Ash is 25 and Jess is 24. She is a qualified nurse and I am a ginger! To fill you in on our Mumbai plans I will answer a couple of obvious questions.

## WHAT DO WE REALLY CARE ABOUT?

First and foremost – we're passionate about sharing the great news about Jesus. For us this is not a religious superiority that we force on people, but a genuine hope that we have in the saving work of Jesus Christ when he came and died for our sins on the cross. We want to share this good news in the most effective ways possible.

“...not a religious superiority that we force on people, but a genuine hope that we have in the saving work of Jesus Christ...”

We call this long term love – it's showing the love of Christ in such a way that will impact people permanently, that is, eternal life.

We also care about the short term love that Jesus commands – helping people with their immediate needs, this doesn't help people for eternity but it can help point people and their communities to the reason we're doing the work – Jesus. All of it is God's work and we merely hope to be used by him, as tools, in this process.

## HOW DO WE INTEND TO DO THAT?

We try to be as strategic as we can. Any work that relies on our ongoing presence hasn't really empowered the people to have a relationship with Christ of their own. We ought to share our lives with people, conform to their culture (not make them conform to ours), and help to build disciples of Jesus Christ that are well prepared to make more disciples. The end goal is groups of believers that are well prepared to go out and make more disciples. We also emphasize independence so that they look to God and within their own communities (not to foreigners or overseas) for the things they need.

We'll be working alongside a Christian NGO (Non-governmental organization) in Mumbai. Jess has been doing health assessments on children that attend slum preschools managed by the local NGO.

The purpose of these assessments is fourfold:

1. To develop a broad database of health information and issues affecting the urban poor in India (particularly children)

2. To identify trends, limitations and environmental factors that affect the health of children amongst the urban poor.

3. To respond to the trends, limitations and environmental factors in a way that other people can do it too and is a best attempt at a long term solution to the problems.

4. To make Christ known by showing his love in the world through Jess' health skills

Responding to this health information has already led to an education day for teachers in the slums last time we were there. About 40 people attended and Jess discussed with them many of the problems facing the children and presented practical solutions. They were very engaged and found the education day very beneficial.

There was also an opportunity to secure funding for a group of children that were identified, through the data collection as severely malnourished. Having the data allowed the food to be secured quickly and supplied to the children. They were re-assessed after two months and massive improvements had been made from a little extra protein.



Checking a little boy's height and weight progress

# the truth FOR TONGA

TRAINING LEADERS IN THE KINGDOM OF TONGA



During the last two weeks of June 2010, Dr. Steve Williams (Lecturer at Grace Theological College) was supported through the Grace Care Community of the Northern Presbytery to hold a course at Faith Evangelical Seminary in Tonga. His wife, Rita, accompanied him and had a chance to encourage the women attending the course. Dr. Williams taught a course entitled “Christ and Culture” using The Truth Project (TTP) as the main resource. To their knowledge it is the first time teaching from TTP has been done on location in the Pacific Islands. TTP is an in-depth Christian worldview study sponsored by Focus on the Family. Dr. Dell Tackett, an elder in the Presbyterian Church of America, leads most of the discussions while welcoming comments from theologians like Dr. R.C. Sproul, Dr. Os Guinness, Dr. Ravi Zacharias, among others ([www.thetruthproject.org](http://www.thetruthproject.org)).

There were 17 different church leaders from various denominations represented for the 12 lesson series. Most of the participants were men with a few women also attending the course. It was great to see some younger adults in the group. One young man asked many of the questions. He is a recent convert to Christianity after sitting in on a Theology course at this seminary.

The course was entitled “Christ and Culture.” Dr. Williams felt The Truth Project would be a good resource to use for this course. He was correct because the students really found the information helpful. One student remarked, “there are heaps of good things,” while another said, “this course is helping me believe and trust God more.”

Dr. and Mrs. Williams were concerned that the students might find the information too difficult to understand since English is their second language. However, they attentively sat and listened to the 50-60 minute teaching from Dr. Tackett. One student commented, “It's great how it holds our attention with various speakers and their comments.” After a short break from the DVD, Dr. Williams discussed the material with them and answered their questions. The students ended the evening by gathering in a small group for prayer by which they prayed in their own language.

Some of the most encouraging comments the Williams received were from both the administrator and chairman of Faith Evangelical Seminary. The administrator, Toni Tongiajr, said, “I praise God for The Truth Project. I can't say enough about how thankful I am that you brought it to our Kingdom. Since you gave me a copy I, along with my wife and another seminary student, have not stopped watching it even late into the night. All it has to say about God and truth is so meaningful. We want to

summarize some of the main points and translate it into Tongan. Our people could really benefit from these Truth concepts.”

The Faith Evangelical Seminary Chairman of the Board, Dr. Uiliami Fukofuka, is also the Director of Education for this island kingdom. He was very impressed with the two-part lesson on science. He said, “Creation is taught in our schools since we are a Christian nation. However, the students also learn about evolution because this is in our science books. Unfortunately, neither teachers nor student can seem to see a difference between creation and evolution. I think a resource like The Truth Project will be so helpful for our educational system. I plan to train our teachers using this resource.” This Bible-believing Christian plans to broadcast TTP on Tongan television so all the people will have an opportunity to see and hear Scripture and the valuable truths presented through this project.

Focus on the Family New Zealand gifted the seminary with two copies of The Truth Project in order to loan these out to interested Christian leaders. One copy of TTP was also gifted to the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Tonga.

Give thanks to God for the opportunity the Williams' had in taking this resource to Tonga and the excitement these church leaders felt from being exposed to such a resource. Also, pray that these leaders can present the teachings from The Truth Project to their congregations and especially for Dr. Fukofuka as he seeks to integrate it into the curriculum for teacher training in the educational system and as he makes plans to broadcast it on national television.



Steve Williams leading the Truth Project in Tonga



# The Church in Japan

BY JENNIFER THOMPSON

## What roles can 'gaijin' foreign Christians play in the church in Japan?

This question presupposes that non-Japanese Christians can play a part in the church in Japan. I certainly believe they can because I lived in Japan for more than 13 years, worked in two churches, visited several others and was also part of a team that opened a Friendship Centre with the aim of evangelising the local neighbourhood of a large Japanese city.

Foreign Christians are welcomed in Japanese churches; in my case I went to Japan at the invitation of the Home Mission Department of the Evangelical Free Church of Japan to assist them in their outreach ministry by reaching English.

There are many ways in which non-Japanese Christians can serve and support churches in Japan including the following.

1. Many Japanese churches recruit native English speakers to teach English classes because, although English is taught in Japanese schools from elementary to high school level many Japanese people struggle to communicate in English and welcome opportunities to meet and study with native English speakers. In my time in Japan I taught children from kindergarten level to high school as well as adults up to their early 70s. Bible times were always part of the classes and in some churches the Bible is used as the 'textbook' for teaching English. Japanese people who have no interest in studying the Bible in Japanese may be willing to do so in English. Church members are encouraged to be part of the English classes so they can develop friendships and share their faith with their classmates.

English classes lead to questions about the culture, holidays, and food in the teacher's home country which can result in classes for cooking western food and making crafts as well as special events for Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas etc. which can bring church members and students together along with their families and friends.

2. Because most Japanese churches are small numerically, averaging about 30 members, and morale is often low, they warmly welcome new people to their services including foreign Christians who are often mature believers with a sound knowledge of the Bible.

Non-Japanese Christians usually have a much broader experience of Christian life having been part of larger churches with more varied outreach ministries. The foreign Christians are likely to have attended various Christian camps and conferences, been part of age-related Christian groups, groups at their high schools or universities and may have been on mission trips within their countries or overseas. They can share what they have learned and experienced with the pastors and leaders of the Japanese churches they attend and in this way churches in Japan are helped to start new ministries or outreaches in their communities or given new ideas for worship services and programmes.

For example, I wrote several scripts/dramas which were used in services and children's programmes and games, puzzles and discussion/question sheets I designed were adapted by Japanese Christian friends to use in their events.

3. Because Christians comprise about 1% of the population in Japan and are very much a minority group in a country where the majority of the population are followers of Buddhism and Shintoism (often both) many Japanese Christians struggle with being 'outsiders'; not an easy role in a 'group society' like Japan. Having foreign Christians in their churches to make friends with and tell them about the world can be a great encouragement to them. The Japanese are great travellers and welcome contact with Christians and churches in foreign countries where they may do Christian home-stays and attend services in much bigger churches than any they have seen in Japan. Such experiences are treasured by Japanese Christians.

The church in Japan needs a lot of prayer and encouragement and foreign Christians can act as links between their home churches and Japanese churches and in this way promote more prayer for Japan and highlight the need for more Christian workers in that country. Foreign Christians can encourage short-term teams to visit from their home churches to help with children's holiday programmes, prayer-walking, practical ministries such as building and painting etc. as well as ministering through music and dance.

These are just some of the ways in which 'gaijin' Christians can fellowship with and serve alongside Christian brothers and sisters in Japan as they live for Jesus and make the gospel known to their own people.

## NEW PLYMOUTH REPORT

Star Wars in the Bible?

From the 22-24 July the New Plymouth Grace Community gathered at the idyllic TSB TOPEC campsite for our first (but hopefully annual) Mid-Winters Retreat.

All who attended had a fantastic time of great food (provided by our Korean Chef, Nicolas), great fun and great Bible teaching by Peter Collier of Christchurch.



Peter, over four sessions, spoke on the theme: 'Looking for a Leader' from First Samuel. Amazingly we learned that Star Wars appears in Samuel in the following three places:

1 Samuel 9 – the way Saul is introduced matches the way Luke Skywalker is introduced. After a big battle scene, we come down to a tall (blonde blue eyed farmer) who goes off chasing lost donkeys/droids and happens to bump into the prophet (Jedi) who tells him his destiny.

1 Samuel 17 – On seeing Goliath (Death Star), the rebel forces think they can't possibly defeat it. David says he used to slay bears and lions and so will be able to slay Goliath. (Luke says he used to be able to shoot targets like that on his farm.)

1 Samuel 28 – Saul's last night is a party at Endor where he sees the ghost of the prophet Samuel (Return of the Jedi finishes with a party at Endor, watched by the ghosts of three Jedi.)

In other words George Lucas stole ideas from the Bible (what's new?)....

But besides this fascinating Bible trivia we learned, more importantly, that Jesus is the leader we need - He is the Luke Skywalker that rescues us from the 'dark side'. The weather co-operated and while we enjoyed some cozy log fires and board games in the evenings we also had a chance to 'strut our stuff' on the sports field and climbing ropes providing for some sore legs and bruises. Good times.

May the force be with you!



## NEWS FROM TRINITY

God is at work especially amongst the youth. Lots of seeds have been sown in the past (thanks to Pastor Andrew Macpherson), and it is exciting to see these seeds grow. We have a very active young peoples bible study group called 'PHATT' (Praise Him All The Time). Around 25 enthusiastic girls and boys from 14-23 years of age attend each Wednesday night for dinner, study, and discussion. They ask lots of important (and sometimes tricky!) questions. Many are now believers and some were baptized last month.



Trinity Girls Group in Rotorua

Give thanks for the many youth. Pray for the girls and boys and junior youth groups - for more workers to help run these groups and disciple our youth. For the new believers, that they would grow strong in their faith

Pray also for wisdom and guidance as we search for a new pastor. For Rob Allan (Assistant Pastor) – for strength, courage, time and wisdom as he leads Trinity



Some of the Youth from Trinity at the Greg Laurie concert