



Advent Christian Conference of New Zealand Inc.

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GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY!

Dear Friends and Supporters,

For many years ACCONZ has held a prayer meeting on the first Sunday evening of every month. Over the years we have been constantly asking our Heavenly Father to raise up someone to take on the pastoral ministry at the Church of Christ in Thames.

God has answered our prayers, as you will read in the following newsletter. He has brought us Gavin and Alison McIntosh.

This is a big move for Gavin and Alison. This is also a big move for the Thames Church. **Read on...**



Gavin's Testimony



Ever since I can remember I have always been conscious of the fact there is a God. I regularly went to Sunday School—or should I say was sent but it didn't bother me I enjoyed going. It was very much part of my lifestyle.

When we moved to Thames we found out that Colin and Ethel Warner were living there, who we knew from way back when we lived in Mangorei Rd in New Plymouth. So I ended up going to their church, The Thames Church of Christ, and attending Bible class also.

Once a month after church we used to go to a young adults meeting held at the then Anglican church. The topic for discussion was "Is there life after death?" A minister who I knew from my Keri Keri days got up and said "We can't be sure" I however had certain ideas of my own about the subject and found it incredulous that a minister of the church should hold such a view.

That night Doug Campbell took me home and asked me if I was a Christian, to which I replied I wasn't sure. So he took me through "The 4 Spiritual Laws" booklet and that night I knelt by the side of my bed and prayed the prayer and accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

Since then I've been to B.C.N.Z (Bible College of New Zealand) where my wife Alison and I met. We were married in June 1976 and moved to New Plymouth. There we both threw ourselves into ministry and covered a wide range of activities. Then we moved to Hamilton when looking for a church. We settled on the Apostolic church because our youngest daughter found a friend there. We have been there ever since leading 'Life groups' being part of a Host team, welcoming new visitors.

The McIntosh '12 Steps 2 Thames'

Not to be confused with 'The 12 Days of Christmas'

1. As has been our habit over the last 9 years [our stay in Hamilton] we have gone 2 Thames for ANZAC day—Initially 2 support my Dad, but in later years his partner Belle. We met Doug Campbell at this year's service and he expressed concern about the church's viability given the age of its key personnel.

2. That inspired me to revisit the dream of 30 years plus—thinking back to “The Toatoes” (Frank & Francis Toothe), and their original invitation to work with them in Thames—an offer which came a week late for us as we had just committed ourselves to secular jobs.
3. I approached Dave Burge and Gary Schäche at the Thames 125th celebrations, asking how they felt about Alison and me coming to Thames as pastoral workers. They were excited and enthusiastic.
4. When I mentioned this to Alison she asked “Chapter and verse?”—at the precise moment I spotted the wall calendar and read to her from the month of August—Isaiah 58:10-12 “*feed the hungry and help those in trouble then your light will shine out from darkness and the darkness around you will be as midday.*” Also cross reference Luke 4:18 which commences “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.*”
5. We then met with the leadership and explained our vision to work in the community alongside doing visitation and finding out where it “itches”. Again they were excited if a little hesitant.
6. We decided we needed to do a refresher course as it was 30 years since we attended B.C.N.Z. We checked out Vision College [Apostolic training] to do a Certificate of Ministry course involving 3 block courses a year over 3 years. I spoke at Thames for the first time in years. A prophecy was given of an increase of 100 members in the first year.
7. The first block course in October was on church growth. Confirmation!
8. I had to read and summarize a book titled “The Externally Focused Church” by Rick Rusew and Eric Swanson, and what scripture cropped up in the first chapter, but Isaiah 58:10-12. The book amplified our vision—it talked about generally cooperating with the authorities, finding out the vision they have and helping them to develop it: e.g. promoting Thames as a place to live and be proud of, working with existing agencies, churches, focusing on school and community. Affirmation!
9. Our Hamilton house was sold in 3 weeks. At the time there were 6 houses for sale in our street. Ours was the only 1 that sold and the rest have since been taken off the market. Again affirmation of God's leading and guiding.
10. I spoke for the second time at Thames. We had a choice of 7 Thames houses—5 in the lower bracket and 2 in the higher. It was decision time between the 2 most expensive—God provided the finance!
11. November—time to check the calendar again: Psalms 112:1&2,5-7 “*An entire generation of Godly people will be blessed all goes well for those who are generous who lend freely and conduct their business fairly. They do not fear bad news [missed out on the most suitable house] they confidently trust the Lord to take care of them.*”
12. To top it all off our house went unconditional on the 13th—one day early [unlucky for some]. So you can visit us at 101 Hays place—off Reservoir Road, Parawai, Thames. Just up the hill overlooking the church. Praise God!

Gavin.

The Greatest Gift of All

As we celebrate the Greatest Gift of All – the gift of God's own Son at Christmas – let us also give thanks for His gift to us and to the Thames Church of Gavin and Alison. Would you also consider whether you might give a gift to them in support of this new work commencing in the New Year?

Christmas Greetings,
David Burge

Please contact myself or our treasurer:

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