

# Szwarga Family

*planting churches in New Zealand*

Prayer Letter | October 2024

After landing in New Zealand on October 11, we allowed ourselves a few days of rest before jumping back into the routine of ministry at Grace Independent Baptist Church. Both of the kids were excellent throughout the twenty-four hours of travel! After our short time of rest, we participated in the regular ministries of the church before our new church has its first service on November 17. The growth of the church members has been evident through their involvement in the soulwinning, Bible Institute, Filipino Bible study, youth group, nursing home, and more. God has blessed the faithfulness of this church and has brought many visitors in the past few months.

Our first task upon returning was beginning the search for a home in Matamata. God has brought the right home to us in a miraculous way and we will be moving on December 20. There are countless aspects that have been organized in the starting of the church. Ordering signage and materials, canvassing, rostering of families from sister churches, and visiting prospects has filled much of our time. Ninety members from two churches joined together to canvass the town and a radius of fifteen minutes on the country roads. Shortly after canvassing, I received an email expressing that after much research into our ministry and background, this new church is a direct answer to three years of praying. After a sweet visit in their home, it's evident that this church is an answer to their prayer and they are a direct answer to our prayer! Others have called in with their support and interest in the church as well.

The Gospel of John: Matamata distribution (more on that in previous letters) began late due to shipping delays but early in November we began going house to house to deliver one to each resident. God has blessed this outreach in great and specific ways. Please pray that many of those who have promised to visit will follow through and that God will work in their heart through follow up visits as well. This distribution will be a year-long project at least, as it is a purposefully slow and deliberate visit each time, and there are 3,000 homes to visit. (With 600 more on the way!)

The first portion of the nationwide John and Romans distribution has been blessed as well. Many have contacted us to give their appreciation, with a steady flow of calls and messages each week as more literature goes out. Another aspect of outreach that we touched on in our previous letter was New Zealand gospel films. Although still in a testing phase, the first week of promoting the four-minute video on Facebook resulted in 450 people watching it. (\$70 of advertisement) This was encouraging to everyone involved in the project. We will continue to evaluate the progress of this video as we look to produce several more in the coming months.

The photo on the right below is a seemingly miscellaneous group of young men, but God is at work in the hearts of the young people in New Zealand. He has been preparing laborers in increasing numbers that will be future servants in churches, and some of those churches no doubt have yet to be started.

Thank you for praying,

Josh, Alyse, Bentley and Raelynn Szwarga

