



THE YOUNG FAMILY

AUSTRALIANS REACHING AUSTRALIA

Monthly Newsletter

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Issue No. 1



Dear Brethren,

We have hit the ground running with our new work in Toowoomba and already have some exciting developments. The year began with a group of 13 students and recent graduates from Freed-Hardeman university in Henderson, Tennessee arriving from the United States to work on a 2-week campaign with us here in Queensland. It was a wonderful experience to be a part of this group and to help them navigate evangelism in Australia. A large part of my arriving here at the end of last year was to help coordinate and work on this campaign, as one of my responsibilities at Gipps Street will be organizing campaigns and gospel meetings in the future.

With the start of a new year, and a new work, I thought I might begin a new newsletter with a slightly reformatted presentation. I will also be returning to the 3 sections of Church, Outreach and Family, to ensure you are all kept well informed about our work and how we are all doing. In this month's newsletter I will be dealing with the events and works that were conducted on the campaign as well as how the family is settling in here at Gipps Street.



Left to right

(Back) Samuel Haynes, Caleb Todd, Matthew Moon, Daniel Guthrie, JT Northrop.

(Front) Jeanne Seibel, Lydia Todd, Emily Seibel, Celia Allen, Kate Fitzgerald, Ana Grace Stephens, Kayley Wadlington, Brooke Schotter.

Church



After arriving in Toowoomba, I had a bit of a break from doing the regular preaching. We were very blessed to have some of the young men from America do the preaching and teaching while they were here. The young ladies also assisted in teaching the children's Bible classes. The kids loved to have exciting new teachers, even with their funny accents.

On this campaign, we wanted to focus on having the missionaries personally involved with the congregation, and not just used for outreach. This would not only serve as an encouragement for the missionaries, but it would also help the congregation be involved in the effort as well. One of the ways we did this was to have the missionaries participate in visitation with some of the older members of the church. This was a great encouragement for all involved, as the young missionaries got to hear about what the church in Australia was like back in the 60s and 70s, and our older brethren got to see the faces of young men and women excited to spread the gospel message here in this age.

As many of the missionaries were fairly young (mostly under 25), we thought this would also be a good opportunity to host a 4-day youth camp which we advertised to churches around Australia. Unfortunately, there are not many Christian youth camps in Australia at all. Fortunately for us, that means we had a great response to this event, with 29 young people (not including the 13 Americans) coming from as far as Melbourne to be a part of the camp. We had camp games, sports, bible classes and lessons all led by the missionary group. This camp was a great opportunity to speak to some of the young people in the church about spiritual things. With such a successful camp, we are hoping that there will be some interest in a possible ongoing, annual Youth Camp, which we would be very interested in hosting.



After the camp, the missionary group disbanded into different parts of Southeast Queensland, visiting congregations in Gympie, Bundaberg, Brisbane, and the Gold Coast. While they were away, I began the preaching series for this year, "Covenant: A promise-keeping God and a promise-keeping people." I am beginning this series with a 2-part introduction, Firstly, talking about covenants in general and God's faithfulness to His covenants, and secondly, deal with our covenant responsibilities

Outreach

A major portion of the campaign was spent doorknocking and letterboxing. The focus of this campaign was getting the church involved in our community, so we hosted 2 community focused events. One was a VBS, the other was a community day. We advertised these events with about 30 roadside signs, online advertising through Facebook, 2 days of letterboxing, and 3 days of doorknocking. While doorknocking, we invited people to the events as well as asked if there was anything that we could pray for them. We spent a bit of time discussing with the missionaries that doorknocking in Australia is quite different to America. We talked about and developed strategies as how to best approach this endeavour.



The result of this effort was outstanding. We had 60 kids attend the VBS, with 70% of those coming from our community outreach. The kids had a great time and almost all the parents said the whole program was brilliant. After the VBS, We had 40 visitors to our community day where we had a sausage sizzle, had a short talk introducing the church to our community and then had a prayer for our community including the requests we had from our doorknocking. On top of this, we also had 500 new visitors to our church website from the signs and the flyers we had handed out.

To put this into perspective, these kind of numbers from a campaign are absolutely unheard of in Australia for the last 30-40 years. It really has been an eye-opening experience to see how effective we can be in evangelism here in Australia, and I'm looking forward to being a part of it. Especially as I now have so many contacts to follow up on.



Family



Many of you have been praying for Hannah's health since our move, and I am pleased to report that she is doing much better. It has been a stressful time for Hannah recently, and we have really appreciated all your prayers. There is still a lot of settling left to do, for instance, we do not yet have a house, but we are very blessed to be welcomed into the home of one of the families here, who are putting us up (or putting up with us) while we find a place to call home. This family has 2 little boys, and the girls are really enjoying staying with them and having more little people to play with. As you can imagine, or some of you may know from experience, having 5 children, all 5 years and under, in one house can be quite exciting.



One development that has been very helpful in settling the girls is that we have found a school for them to attend. The school system is different in Queensland, so the half year of school that Vivien did in South Australia doesn't count. Vivien was quite happy about this because it meant that she had a whole new "first day of school." She loves her new uniform and is very happy to be going back to school.

But Vivien isn't the only one with an exciting new adventure ahead. The school that we sent Vivien to also has an attached kindergarten for Olive. Hannah and I were initially unsure about sending Olive, as she is often hesitant to try new things on her own, but she was adamant that she wanted to go to school just like her big sister. This means that for most of

the week, Evelyn gets to have all our attention to herself, which she is very much taking advantage of.



I want to apologize for such a long newsletter this month, but I do hope that this has served as an encouragement to you. There has been so much going on in these last few weeks that I was excited to share with you all, and I hope that you share my excitement for this upcoming work. I want to thank you all for bearing with me over the last few months, as I know that things didn't go according to our initial plan. I sincerely appreciate the continued support from you all as we work towards reaching Australia with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!