

The Bankstons in New Zealand

April 2005

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Youth Leaders At Arahina



Troubled Youth at Arahina (Alicia)



Men's Retreat 2005



I can't believe that one third of the year is almost gone. We have so much that we want to do. Two years have passed and we are looking at just two more years before we should come back on furlough. To be honest it will be hard to leave the church for a whole year. We have already seen the effects of leaving the field for a year and it is very, very hard on both the people and the missionaries. It seems like two years are lost, one from being gone from the field and one from repairing the damage from being gone. I would love to put together a PowerPoint presentation, complete with audio, and send it to all our churches in place of us returning on furlough. However, I know that is not acceptable; so please pray with us that God will provide someone to over see the new work we started last year.



The church is doing great! We are seeing new people come every week and presently we are averaging 20-22 in Sunday school and 23-25 in the morning worship service. Wednesday night Bible study we have between 10-12 that regularly attend. We are so grateful for the core people God has blessed us with. Several of those attending our morning services are traveling about 45 minutes, one way, every Sunday. They have been searching for a church that preaches the Gospel, and is not just a social club. Unfortunately there are heaps (lots) of churches that are not interested in the souls of the people. They are teaching other ways to eternal life, and are providing a great social environment to meet the physical needs of the people, while ignoring the spiritual.

The top picture are the people traveling 45 minutes to be with us every Sunday. They are presently working in a center for troubled youth (Arahina). For many of the youth this is their last chance before they are sent to prison. These leaders are each assigned one troubled youth that they must stay with twenty-four hours a day. Alicia, age 11 (middle picture), is one of the youth and she just recently received Christ as her Savior. We are discipling her while at church, and have sent materials with the leader to disciple her at Arahina. Please pray for her, as well as all the leaders there.

This past month we had our first men's retreat and there was 24 of us present (Yahoo!). Though only four of those were from Harvest Baptist Church, I was extremely excited to see our men commit to go to the retreat. The focus of the message was how we as men need to take the spiritual lead in our homes and our churches. It was a great time of fellowship and our men are already looking forward to next years'.

Thank you for your prayers and support. We are forever grateful and praying that God blesses you richly. Your missionaries in New Zealand, Guy, Debbie, Logan, an Erin Bankston...

Praises

- One of our ladies gave birth to a healthy baby girl (Jasmine)
- Alicia received Christ as her Savior

Prayers

- Souls to be saved
- Physical and spiritual growth at HBC
- Permanent residence approval (should hear in July)