

The Bankstons In New Zealand

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Christchurch Earthquake



Our Church Parking Lot



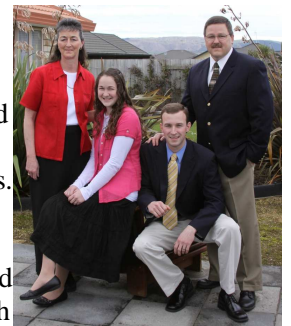
Praises

- Parking lot progress ● God's grace to endure difficult times ● Debbie's safe return ●

Prayers

- Souls to be saved ● Spiritual & physical church growth ● Money for church repairs & residing

As many of you have heard, there has been a large earthquake in Christchurch. Christchurch is located on the South Island and we are located on the North Island. We never felt the earthquake, but some on the north island did. Many who have lost their homes have been shifted up to the North Island for accommodations and provisions. They have identified 113 casualties and there are still 228 people missing and presumed dead and buried in the rubble. We know several who are ministering for the Lord in Christchurch that have lost their homes and their church buildings. We are sending support to a few churches that are going there to bring water, setup a soup kitchen, dig out homes that are buried in dirt and silt, and share the gospel message of salvation and hope. Please be in prayer for this effort to reach the lost and care for those who are suffering.



We are well underway with the City Council's requirement to pave our parking lot. I have enclosed a few photos to show you what they have been doing. As you can see they are putting in a drainage (soakhole) pit that is 65 feet long and seven feet deep. The surface water as well as the water run-off from the buildings will drain here. It looks like the total cost for everything is going to be \$42 thousand. Again, we want to thank those that have sacrificed to help us meet this requirement by the city. It should be finished by the middle of March. Our next project will be to reside and make some repairs to the existing building. We estimate this project to cost around \$25 thousand, and we presently have \$15. Please pray with us about raising these funds.

Debbie was able to be with her family and her dad before he went to be with the Lord. She said that she was so glad that she could be there and would not have traded it for anything. Her family was very grateful that she could be there and has thanked me repeatedly for sending her. I am sure that they want to thank all of you who made it possible for her to be there. Several sent the much needed financial help for this trip, as we had, only six months earlier, been home for my dad's passing to be with the Lord. Though it has been hard to lose our fathers, we know they are with the Lord and no longer suffering the pain from the cancer. Thank you for your prayers and support for us during this difficult time in our lives.

Harvest Baptist Church is doing well. We have had several visitors, as well as returning visitors. One lady, who is the daughter of one of our church members, has been very faithful to come Sunday mornings Bible study and Worship service. She just returned from Christchurch after spending four weeks being trained for her new job. She was coming home on the weekends and just finished the week before the earthquake struck. She was staying in the Grand Chancellor Hotel that is about to collapse. Another returning visitor has inquired about the church and is wanting a visit from Debbie and I. We have had several youth group activities for character building, as well as preparing them to be a blessing in the church. I took them on an overnight backpacking trip (four hours one way). We had to purify our water and sleep on rough terrain. It was very difficult but character building. I also took them to the beach for sand sculpting and devotions. Each team had to prepare a Biblical sculptor and give a devotion based on their sculptor. Each team had a part in the devotion and they were very practical and very convicting. All of the devotions stressed the fact that we need to be serving God by sharing the good news of the Gospel to those who are living without hope of where they will spend eternity. They need a Savior who will, if they repent, forgive them of their trespasses, wash them of their sins, and reconcile them back to God. Amen!

Thank you for your prayers, support, and financial giving. God bless! Your missionaries: Guy, Debbie, Logan & Erin Bankston.