

Southern Cross Ministries

2nd Quarter
2011

NEWMAN FAMILY MISSION

Office/Library Near Completion

After many delays the library project is now in the final stages. In early May we finished painting, electrical connections, and the installation of a commercial grade vinyl floor. Computer networking will be completed by late May, library shelving has been ordered from Western Australia and should arrive by the end of May, and other furniture will be delivered in the coming weeks. The cataloging of books and materials will begin in the latter days of May and will take a several weeks to complete.

Other jobs still to be undertaken are the installation of a heating/air conditioning system, the purchase and set up of a computer to host the library catalog software and other library programs.



News

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Autumn Down Under

The last few days of autumn have brought shorter days and much cooler temperatures as we await the arrival of winter on June 1. Though not to the extremes of much of the USA, we do have four distinct seasons in the Toowoomba region of southeast Queensland. Our area has dried out after the devastating floods of January. Life for most has returned to normal, but there are those who continue to suffer after the loss of loved ones and possessions. Reconstruction of roads and bridges will take many more months.

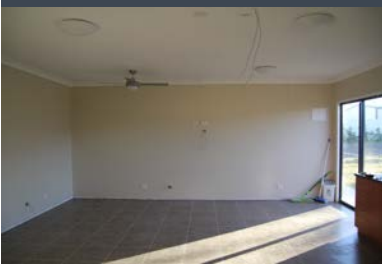
Becky is one quarter of the way through the school year. This year she has eighteen children in her second/third grade class. She has many opportunities to share her faith with students and parents.

Andrew is now working at a service station. His university course was cancelled due to low enrollment, so instead of changing to a program

that doesn't interest him, he will be transferring to another school in a few months. In the meantime, he is working and saving for school bills.

We have experienced a beehive of activity around our house the past number of weeks. Jim has done a lot of work on the new library and other workers have been here to hang the drywall, complete the electrical work, and lay the floor.

In our house we have completed a much needed kitchen remodel. One of the men who has been attending the house church in Pittsworth is an expert cabinet maker. He removed our old kitchen and installed a new one for us. Afterwards, we had new porcelain floor tiles laid. The kitchen is the hub of our house church gatherings before and after our Bible study and communion times. This upgrade gives us almost double the storage space and makes everything more accessible.





Becky in her new kitchen



*House church meeting
in Toowoomba*



*House church meeting
in Hodgson Vale*

News from Daniel and Samantha

Since our last update many great things have happened. I have received better hours at work that suit our ministry here better. Samantha has started teaching piano and has also received more hours at work than earlier this year. Our hope is that if she can get enough students she will be able to stop working at the Tea Centre so much since it is a forty minute drive to work each way.

We have a new family coming to our group! This is very exciting for us. The family is a husband and wife, with three beautiful children. They have been a blessing to us and I hope that we have also been such a blessing to them.

Three weeks ago we finished our study of Genesis. We have been doing this study for a little over a year, ever since our group started meeting independently from the other two house churches. This was a good study and it was enjoyable for everyone, but we are also excited to start new things. Two weeks ago, we started the Truth Project. I have been looking forward to these lessons immensely. We have a great group here who I think will be greatly benefitted by this series. Our first lesson was on the importance of Truth laid a Biblical framework from which we can begin to build a Christian worldview.

I believe we have a great year ahead of us, and I am very thankful for everyone who has supported us in the past. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. In the coming months, please pray for our group. Pray for growth, both spiritual and numerical, as the Lord would wish for us. Pray for Samantha's and my work situations. Pray that she can teach piano more, and that I would be able to get into the schools in whatever way the Lord would lead.

Southern Cross Bible Institute

June 3-5, Jim will be traveling to the Newcastle area in New South Wales to lead a study at the Charlestown Church of Christ. The class titled "*Preparing to Serve*" is a 12 hour study aimed at helping students develop a personal devotional life by encouraging times of prayer and Bible study. This is one of SCBI's core classes.

Jim will begin teaching an SCBI class on 1 and 2 Corinthians at home in Queensland in July. This study will span a number of months and will take a thorough look at the text of 1 and 2 Corinthians with emphasis on the themes found in these letters.

Looking ahead, Kerry Allen is scheduled to be here and to teach for SCBI in August. Jim is scheduled to repeat the 1 and 2 Corinthians study in February 2012 at the International Christian College of Manila.

The Northlakes Christian Church joins the Charlestown Church of Christ and the Eastern Downs Church of Christ as financial supporters of SCBI. It is our desire that the SCBI program be funded exclusively by Australian Churches and individuals and it is great to see three Australian congregations involved already.

Eastern Downs Church of Christ

The church continues to grow in many ways. Our numbers are up above forty on many Sundays which is a 25% increase over a year ago, financial giving is higher, and spiritual growth is evident. The Pittsworth group has grown most; starting with just five, this group now has up to thirteen.

The Westbrook group has met in Toowoomba a few times recently. This was necessary one week when the new kitchen was under construction and has been helpful at other times. A few weeks ago when one of our ladies broke her hip, we were able to meet in the home of her and her husband so that she would not have to travel to make it to the meetings. When we are away, the church also often meets in the home of one of our members in Toowoomba. One of the benefits of the house church model is that meeting times and places can be changed quickly.

We are still facing quite a bit of illness in the church. One of our members is battling metastatic melanoma and is in a trial of an experimental chemotherapy. Others in the church are struggling with severe back pain, recovery from broken bones, and other illnesses. We would ask that you would pray for improved health within the congregation. Though we would never seek illness, these trials have brought stronger faith among those who are suffering and have brought the congregation closer together. This is truly a congregation of people who love one another.

In addition to our Sunday assembly we gather for a Friday night prayer time and Bible study. For the past few weeks we have been looking at the various ways in which the New Testament church is described. These metaphors give us valuable insight into what the church is to be and to do.

In early May, the men hosted a men's breakfast at the home of one of our church families. This was a time to share in a great meal and time of fellowship followed by a message from Scripture. We have held a few of these in the past couple of years and have found them a great way to attract men who do not normally attend church assemblies.

In the past few weeks members of our congregation have been involved in helping others. Some have helped those who are hurting financially following the floods of January, another has assisted in the adoption of a baby of a single young mother in difficult circumstances, and others are helping those with limited resources. It is important for the church to be involved in helping others as Jesus would have us to do.

The Eastern Downs congregation was able to respond to an urgent request for funds from the International Christian College of Manila. The school is in great need of expansion and we were able to send \$3,000.00 to help with a building project that will enable them to accommodate additional students.

The last weekend of June, Alan Horne, minister of the Ulverstone Church of Christ in Tasmania will be coming to share with us. There are so few independent Churches of Christ/Christian Churches in Australia, spread over vast distances, that it is a rare blessing when we are able to share with those from a sister congregation.



Kids singing at Hodgson Vale



Jim preaching to combined groups in Pittsworth

The Australian Dollar



Most of you know that the U.S. dollar is declining in value. While this has many negative effects at home, it also presents a challenge to those who work overseas. For us, the rise of the Australian dollar over the past couple of years has reached troubling levels. Since we have been in Australia, we have seen one U.S. dollar buy as much as \$1.70 Australian dollars, but in May of this year the U.S. dollar was worth only 90 Australian cents. This hurts us every month with every transfer from the USA. For example: at the 10 year average of A\$1.32 per U.S. dollar a transfer of US \$6,000.00 would buy A\$8,280.00, but now we receive just A\$5,400.00. This loss of nearly \$3,000.00 per month is complicated by a decrease in mission giving due to the struggling economy at home. Since food, fuel, utilities, clothing, other goods and services, along with taxes are much higher in Australia a person needs at least 60% more in Australia to live at the same level as in the USA.

We have been able to continue working here without interruption because the Lord has blessed us greatly through many faithful supporters to whom we are extremely thankful. We have cut costs as much as possible; Becky, Daniel, Samantha, and Andrew are in the Australian workforce; and the Australian church is contributing more than ever before. We know that missions giving is a real strain on church budgets these days and we want you to know that your sacrifice is appreciated and is bearing fruit in Australia and around the world.

More Library News

We are overjoyed that we will soon be able to use the office/library to assist in the training of Christian workers Down Under. We are thankful to those of you who gave or prayed to help bring this project to fruition. A generous donation from an Australian family of A\$5,000.00 along with financial gifts from the Eastern Downs Church of Christ will insure that we can complete the project in the coming weeks. While the building is not primarily a classroom, we are outfitting it with a projector screen, ceiling speakers, whiteboard, table, and internet access. The library will be exceptional for individual research and study, will accommodate small group studies of six to eight people perfectly, will handle a dozen easily, and a class of up to twenty is doable.

We thank you for your prayers and generous support of the work in Australia.

Yours in Christ,

Jim, Becky, Daniel, Samantha, and Andrew

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