

NICK'S NEWS

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G'DAY FROM NEW ZEALAND!

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G'day once again from New Zealand. Is it just me or is it hard to believe that we're into April already! Life for us has been extremely busy over the last few months, but it's finally starting to slow down back to a more sustainable pace.

Over the summer many others were away, so I was steering the ship at the church on my own for a while. Rebecca and I are also enjoying life as parents – we are so blessed to have such a



happy, healthy, content little man. He brings us a lot of joy and we love getting to know the per-

sonality that God has given Noah.

We've also moved out of the Oasis house. As we shared last update, we feel like God has made it clear to us that it was the right time to move on from Oasis. We moved out on Janu-

ary 7 and house sat for a family from church for 2 weeks while we waited for the tenants in our own home to vacate. Finally, we moved all of our furniture again into our own house, and Bex is enjoying being a stay-at-home mum. We feel so blessed that she can invest in our children in this way!

On another positive note, my sister Shannon O'Dell and brother-in-law Ryan had a baby boy, Hudson Drake O'Dell in February! We are so grateful that they also have a happy, healthy baby boy. We're spending 2 weeks in Australia in May, and can't wait to meet the little guy!





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Bex's Bit

This is something new that is going to be included in these email updates—an update from my wife as well:

January and February have been very busy but exciting months for me. I am so glad to be back in our own house and enjoying being a stay at home Mum. Recently Noah and I started learning from Cristy Neves, a third year Bible College student. Cristy is working with Noah and I on how to teach babies holistically about God and us as his children. I am also excited about the fact that I have more time to support Nick in his ministry and to be doing my own ministries.

I felt totally honoured when a lady who comes to church but is not yet a Christian approached me and asked if I would be willing to do a Bible study with her this year. I was so excited to be able to do this and it was a confirmation that we finished up at Oasis at the right time as I was able to say yes. We have started going through the book of Luke together. This is the first one-on-one study that I have done so please be praying for me as I take on this new challenge. I have also begun walking with a friend from my antenatal class three times a week who I am hoping to share Christ with as we walk and talk.

I am also leading the women's ministry this year and we were able to kick that off recently with an Amazing Race for the women. I am excited to be working with my team mate, Veronica. We are planning on doing a range of activities this year such as women's reflection and study days, which will be fun events to relax and encourage one another, study the Bible and more. I am also excited about starting up with Veronica a young women's Bible study. We have a small group of young women, many of whom are new Christians so we are looking at doing studies to help them build up their knowledge of who God is and learning to lean on him and find our security in Him. We have a study to start on but would like to do a Beth Moore study. It is called *So Long Insecurity* and costs US\$250 for a group of 10. If anyone would be willing to donate funds to help us purchase this study please contact Nick or myself via the email address provided at the end of the newsletter. Please keep all these things in your prayers.



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Nick's News (cont'd)

Over the Summer...

In New Zealand over summer, things shut down for a while. This is also the same in the church. Most of the ministries have a break from their regular schedules, and the Sunday services become more relaxed.

Over the summer, I had the blessing of co-ordinating a series reflecting on the year that was at Otumoetai. We spent a week at a time focusing on different age groups. We looked at the children, the youth, young adults, families/middle aged, the seniors and then the shepherds. Each age group took ownership of their week and they planned lessons and interactive activities for the church to participate in together. The theme was to share how they have seen God working throughout the year so that the congregation could be encouraged and praise God together.

The final week was a morning of prayer. We as a congregation spent a considerable time in prayer for the upcoming year, giving it to God and inviting Him to take the lead in our hearts and in our congregation. I personally was very encouraged by the whole series, and based on the feedback from others, God used the series to encourage others also. Some personal highlights was seeing many of the young people get involved which encouraged the older members. It was also really powerful to see our shepherds wash the congregations feet. We are very blessed to have such humble and servant minded shepherds.

Youth for 2013

This year for the youth I am trying a different approach. Over the summer I was reflecting and praying about what the biggest need of the youth currently is. Over the summer, God revealed to me the changing dynamics of the youth. Some of the teens are getting older and moving off to university, and other younger teens are coming up.

One thing that hit me was that the youth group at the moment is made up of mostly teens who haven't yet committed their lives to the Lord. God has shown me that there is a mission field right in front of me – I don't even have to look for people to reach out to because God has brought them to me!

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Nick's News (cont'd)

My goal for this year is to really challenge those who haven't committed their lives to make a decision about their faith. I am intentionally making the teaching deeper and more challenging for them, and I am striving to be bolder and more upfront with them (in a loving way of course!).

These teens are at such a crucial time in their lives and there are so many things in their lives that Satan uses to try to pull them away from God. Please pray that God works in a mighty way in the youth this year and pray for their salvation. Please also pray for continued growth for the youth who have committed their lives to God already.

In July we are planning to run another Revive youth rally and I am excited about this. Also, in October, a number of us are planning a youth retreat where we will be taking the girls and guys on separate weekends away. During this time we aim to teach them about what it means to be godly men and women. I am also excited about this.

Please pray for the youth this year. There is so much potential for these kids!

Tanya Buddy

Tanya Buddy is a girl who until recently was in the youth. She finished school last year and is now a part of the young adults group. She has shown amazing spiritual growth over the last few months and is now working towards completing the AIM program. She is busy working to raise money and has just also been accepted into the program!

It is always encouraging to see someone who you care about and have invested in start forming their own faith and live it out. Please pray for Tanya, that this will be a time of tremendous growth for her spiritually, and that God will use it to prepare her for the future, whatever that is.

Church Visioning

The Otumoetai congregation is in a very good place right now because the church is very open to God and His leading. We as a church are seeking God's direction – what does God desire for us as a church and where does He want us to be focusing our energy and resources?

A few weeks ago we were blessed with a visit from Jay Jarboe from Missions Resource Network (MRN) in Dallas, and Charles Speer from Sunset International Biblical Institute (SIBI) in Lubbock. *Continued next page...*





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They have been a very valuable sounding board for us and have offered themselves as a resource for us to use as much as we feel necessary.

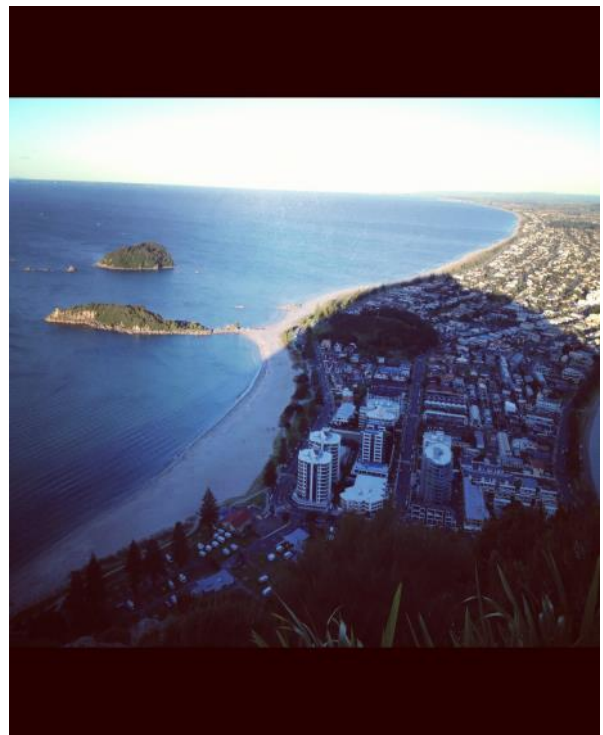
The shepherds have been very actively blessing my teammate Andrew and I to lead the church through a process of seeking God's direction. We will be spending time as a church over the next year or more studying the Scriptures and learning about who God is and what is His Mission for the church and for this world? From God's Word we will be able to apply that to our context here in New Zealand.

Please pray for this time. It is an exciting time, but it will also be a challenging time for us as a church. Pray that God uses this time to really shape Otumoetai into a church that He can really use in powerful ways in His Kingdom. I'll keep you updated throughout this process.



Prayer Requests

- For the youth who haven't committed to God to make that commitment.
- The congregation as we seek God's direction through His Word.
- Tanya Buddy as she prepares for AIM.
- Noah—and for Bex and I to be godly parents.
- My nephew Hudson—and for Shannon and Ryan to also be godly parents.
- Wisdom and strength for the ministry team at Otumoetai to continue to lead.
- Financial situation—I'm still \$400/month short of needed finances.
- My sister Jodie and her continued struggles.
- Our shepherds as they lead the congregation.



Thank you for reading. See you next time!

Because of Christ

Nick

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