

Szwarga Family

planting churches in New Zealand

Prayer Letter | May 2026

Bentlee and I traveled to a sister church forty-five minutes away that is currently without a pastor. While walking in to preach, a visiting man introduced himself and informed me that he had been given a Matamata Gospel of John by his boss several weeks prior. She had received it at her door as a result of our regular outreach. Now, here I was in a church I had never been to and in a town I had never visited where the distributed Word of God had made an impact. Keep distributing those gospel tracts, Bibles and videos!

On that note, we transitioned the prayer stand to a Bible stand and moved it to a high-traffic intersection in town. In our first several weeks, we have given out thirty Bibles and have had one family and one individual visit church after stopping to talk and receive a Bible. **We are praying for witnessing opportunities and visitors to church from the Bible stand ministry as we seek to expand it within our church and to other churches as well.** As mentioned previously, keep distributing and every now and then God gives a glimpse of what He's doing in the background!

After preaching on the topic of *Why Many Do Not Win Souls*, we ran a Witnessing Workshop through May for those interested in overcoming the obstacle of feeling incapable to witness. The first Sunday of June will be the first Sunday of practicum as we step out of the classroom and begin putting it into practice at the Bible stand and house to house. **One of our requests is for four faithful trainers** who will get into the discipline of training one to the point of that one launching out to train another.

Bro. Austin Reed from Global Baptist Church Planters preached the annual missions conference at Fellowship Baptist Church in Hamilton. This year's focus was on local church planting. During the conference, forty men representing thirteen or so churches met for a roundtable to discuss how we can work together more effectively to scale the church planting efforts among our churches. With the abundance of men surrendering to serve God, there is a need for more churches to be planted for them to serve in full-time. **Currently, our prayer request is wisdom in bridging the gap in the training and funding of this group.** The online institute program we are developing for early 2027 appears to be one of the methods which will be used to fill training needs. The preaching was pointed to pastors to grow by division instead of addition. It was focused on those recently called to rise up and build a work. It called church members to consider their role of giving but also of moving to another city for the sake of the gospel.

Pointing our attention locally once again, it has been a joy to see the growth in two young adult brothers, one of whom was saved two months ago. He began praying for more young men his age to start attending. Several weeks later, a young man came from an invite at the prayer stand around one year ago. He had recently gotten saved by a man handing out tracts in Auckland. He has now started discipleship. This was encouraging to the original young man! He then began inviting workmates and on Sunday a Mormon young man attended with him as well as a family of five. **Pray for his visitor, Jayden, who has become skeptical of Mormonism and is close to accepting Christ. Pray also for this small nucleus of young adults, for faithfulness, character, and stability.**

It was a blessing to end the month having a small part in the wedding of a couple in our church. They both accepted Christ last year and had a desire to make their relationship right with the Lord. They have now been baptised, joined the church, and have been excited to learn how to witness, to God's glory!

Pray for our June church services as we seek to "lengthen the cords" by preaching on topics of church membership and serving within the church. We have assembled several materials to assist in showing the vision of a church fully engaged. Lord willing we will end this month with a greater stability of serving as a church.

Thank you for praying and sacrificing for the gospel's sake,

Josh, Alyse, Bentlee,
Raelynn and Ellie Szwarga



Church Planting Roundtable



Bible Stand



Visit with the Reeds

