

# HUTCHENS FAMILY

Serving in Christchurch, New Zealand

## Family News



*It's hard to believe our third girl will be here soon!*

Today, as I write this letter, our oldest daughter, Emma, is having her fifth birthday! It's amazing to think she is five already!

Later this month, we'll add our third daughter to the mix, as Juliana is due on the 31st of October. Her pregnancy has been healthy and smooth, and we're praying for a quick and safe delivery later this month.

Overall, our family continues to be well! Juliana and the girls battled some pink eye a couple of weeks ago, but that's about the extent of any health problems over here!

## Time Flies!

October already?! Time has been moving right along, and it's amazing to think that we're in the final quarter of this turbulent 2020. There have been moments of the past couple of months that have felt quieter, even as New Zealand struggles to get back on track after the COVID lockdown, but at the same time, plenty has been happening that I'm excited to share with you!



*The girls enjoying a spring afternoon at a local park.*

## Ministry Updates

I'll start with the latest COVID news here. You might remember that New Zealand was gaining worldwide attention for eradicating COVID earlier this year. However, in the second week of August, a cluster of cases was discovered in Auckland, sending the nation into a frenzy. Auckland was immediately put into lockdown, while the rest of the nation was put on a Level 2 alert. This put the cap on gatherings at 100 people, which thankfully didn't have a massive impact on us, as we usually have around 65-70. We remained at level 2 for around a month, and just a couple of weeks ago returned back to normal life. We are thankful this didn't have an impact on our church services!

In July, we "re-started" our Chinese Sunday Worship service. We had been having this service before our English service each week, but it was more of a short Bible study than a full church service. I had it on my heart to elevate this to a fuller service for the Chinese, so in July we moved it to *after* the English service. Now we have a full time of singing, an offering, a full sermon (which usually takes in excess of an hour with translation), and an invitation. We've had now as many as 14 Chinese in a single Sunday service, and we are praying this will open doors for further growth in the Chinese ministry. I'll tell you more about some exciting things from the Chinese ministry shortly.

In August, we hosted our second annual Winter Revival with Pastor Paul Brinkman from Community Baptist Church in Auckland. Thankfully, the Brinkmans arrived just a few hours before the cluster in Auckland was discovered, otherwise they wouldn't have been able to get to Christchurch! Pastor Brinkman and his wife, Hera, are a wonderful Kiwi couple who have been tremendous friends to us since before our arrival to New Zealand. God used



*This picture is from when Fiona was saved in March. On 28 September, Tiger was saved too!*

## Praises

- Praise the Lord for continued strong attendances, even with our most recent COVID cluster and subsequent scare!
- Praise the Lord for the salvation of three of our Chinese men over the past month - John, Liam, and Tiger!
- Praise the Lord for a tremendous youth camp with an amazing group of NINE teens!
- Praise the Lord for a safe pregnancy to this point!

## Prayer Requests

- Pray for the delivery of our new daughter later this month.
- Pray for our building situation to come to a conclusion this month.
- Pray for Tiger, John, and Liam as they now begin to grow in Christ.
- Pray for the safe delivery of our new daughter!

Pastor Brinkman in a wonderful way, and we had tremendous attendances each night of the revival! We enjoyed fellowshiping and soul winning together!

In the end of September we took nine teenagers to the annual South Island youth camp. This included 42 total teens from eight different South Island Baptist churches, including from the church of fellow BIMI missionary Bob Rutta in Dunedin. We had a fantastic week, full of good preaching, fellowship, and fun. At the end of the week, we had the teens give some testimonies and sing the theme song they had learned at camp for our church. It was obvious that the Lord had spoken to many hearts in our youth group, for which I am incredibly thankful!

Finally, let me update you on our building situation, which has now been ongoing for well over a year! Lockdown and all of the delays associated therewith have certainly made things slow, but last week we finally got designs for how to bring the building up to code. We've now submitted these to our financing bank to find out if financing is still possible. At long last, it looks like the acquisition of this building *may* be just over the horizon. Continue to pray with us on this matter.

## Big Blessings

It feels as though evangelistic efforts overall have been slow going this year, I suppose primarily due to COVID fears. We continue to knock doors and reach into our community regularly, but I will admit the responses have been pretty cold. With that said, we have seen **three** Chinese men come to Christ in the past few weeks, and I wanted to finish the letter by telling you about them!

One of them, a man named John, hasn't been coming for all that long. He had heard the Gospel before, but had never accepted Christ. About a month ago, he did, and we are rejoicing with him! Then, about two weeks ago, during a Friday night Bible study, Liam was saved. Liam might be a name you recognized from previous prayer letters - we've been praying for him. What a huge answer to prayer his salvation was.

And then there's Tiger. Tiger and his wife, Fiona, have been attending the Bible studies for a very long time. I remember when they first started coming, I thought Tiger might be the most critical of the entire Chinese group. Over time, we've watched him soften, and have continued to pray for him. Back in March, Fiona trusted Christ, and we baptized her in June. Tiger was supportive of his wife in all of this, but maintained he wasn't ready himself. In August, I had lunch with him and Warren, and again he stated that he just wasn't ready yet.

Well, a couple of weeks ago as we were preparing for camp, we were considering our options for transporting the teens. Warren suggested Tiger, because he drives professionally for a tour bus company. We inquired how much it would cost to charter a bus, and Tiger gave us an unbelievably generous rate, stating that he wanted to be a help to the church. On the Monday of camp, Tiger drove the youth down along with Warren, dropped us all off, and headed back to Christchurch. As they drove, Warren again talked to him about his soul, and about an hour south of Christchurch, they pulled over as Tiger called out to Christ to save him! What an *incredible* blessing! On Friday, when Tiger returned to take the youth home, I greeted him with a big hug - along with the five or six other pastors I had told about his salvation. Thank you for praying for him!

*Thank you for your continued prayers!  
Sam, Juliana, Emma, & Alexa Hutchens*