

"KIA ORA!"

Monthly Report of Next Step New Zealand
- Alyssa Carrico

- THE PLACE + THE PEOPLE + THE CHURCH -

THE PLACE

Region:
Pacific

Country:
New Zealand

Country Pop:
4.7 million

Cities Visited:
Hamilton
Auckland
Tauranga



HAMILTON

The beautiful and multicultural city of Hamilton is where I have been based out of the majority of my first month in New Zealand. Hamilton is the main agricultural city of New Zealand, but also includes the 3rd fastest growing urban area. I might be a tad biased, but Hamilton is definitely my favorite city so far and has completely captivated my heart! However, I did not come to this conclusion because of the city itself, but it was the people of Hamilton that grew my love for this area. I've treasured every connection I've made with these people from baristas at different coffee shops, cashiers at our local grocery stores, and the saints at Grace Fellowship Church.



AUCKLAND

Auckland in a whole is absolutely breathtaking! It is the most populous urban area in New Zealand and is home to the tallest building in the Southern Hemisphere. Auckland is also located right on the coast and contains over dozens of dormant volcanoes. In the one week I stayed in Auckland and in a recent weekend trip, I had the privilege of meeting and ministering to Southside Church and also at a local youth rally. The people here were absolutely incredible, and I have been beyond blessed to see God's hand working in this city!



TAURANGA

Tauranga is definitely a city I've held close to my heart over the last month. This smaller city is located on the coast of the New Zealand, about a hour and a half away from Hamilton. The city of of Tauranga currently does not have a church, but there is a preaching point in this city containing three souls. When I visited Tauranga during my third week, it had been storming on the drive up there. However, before we left the city, the skies cleared up and an enormous, full rainbow covered this city from the East to the West! (as pictured above) I know only starting with three souls in a city of thousands seems daunting, but I know my God keeps His promises and He is more than able to save the people of Tauranga!

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THE PEOPLE

Cultures:

*Fijians
Columbians
Filipinos
Maoris
Nivans
Europeans
& More*

Languages:

*Fijian
Spanish
Filipino
Maori
Bislama
English
& More*



The thing I love most about New Zealand is by far the people! I've heard it said multiple times that New Zealand is a "melting pot." However, that saying doesn't even begin to describe the cultural diversity in this country! The cultures and languages in New Zealand are close to uncountable, but I have listed some prominent ones to the column to the left. It is truly amazing to see so many different backgrounds mixing together to form one country!



I've especially enjoyed my time with all the members of Grace Fellowship Church in Hamilton! Every moment I've shared with the kids, young people, adults, missionaries, and ministers have been one to remember! From the moment I walked through the doors of their church, there was no question in my head whether I felt welcomed or not! They have taken me in as one of their own, and I have expressed on several occasions how every single one of them have made me feel apart of the church family! It was also incredible to reconnect with Sis. Lynette! (photo in the middle) I met this wonderful Nivan a year ago on my first missions trip to Vanuatu. Since we live on opposite sides of the world, we thought we would have never seen each other again, but by the grace of God, we were both placed in Hamilton, New Zealand for this divine time!



Please continue praying for the people of New Zealand with me! God truly is doing a work in them and through them at this very moment!



Now that I've covered some background information about New Zealand, I'm going to get into what exactly has taken place during my first month here!



TRAINING

My first three weeks in New Zealand consisted of training classes. These three weeks were jam packed with lessons dealing with ministering to cross cultures, information about our location in New Zealand, spiritual disciplines, missions information, spiritual warfare, and so much more! Not only did I learn vital information for missions and ministry in a whole, but I was extremely blessed by the incredible ministers that taught us. We got to hear from several current and retired missionaries, phenomenal ministers, Next Step administrators, and the director of education for short-term missions. I've truly been blessed beyond measure by all the teaching, prayers, and words of wisdom from all of these amazing men and women of God, and I cannot express enough how much they have personally impacted my life and encouraged me on this two month journey!



One of my favorite things about training is the fact that we are able to put the majority of what we learned into practice right away! Just a short story, Bro. Shalm, the current missionary in Malaysia, taught us about spiritual warfare during the second week in New Zealand, and this was actually my favorite material we covered! As soon as he taught us about taking authority in the spirit and binding & loosing things in the spiritual realm, we actually encountered several spiritual attacks from the enemy, so we were able to immediately put his teaching into action! His teaching, as well as many others, have been extremely beneficial in things we have encountered while in New Zealand.

THE CHURCH

UPCI Churches:
8 churches

Preaching Points:
3 points

Constituents:
350-500 const.

Training:
1st 3 Weeks

Apprenticeship:
Next 5 Weeks

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APPRENTICESHIP

My last week of this month started my five weeks apprenticeship that I will be involved in for the rest of my stay in New Zealand. During this time, I will be working under the current missionaries of New Zealand, Bro. and Sis. Borders. Before diving straight into information, I would just like to honor this amazing host missionary couple! The Borders truly are some of the most genuine and passionate saints I have ever met! They have given and continue to give all of their time and energy in order to advance the kingdom of God, and they do it with such a cheerful heart and humble spirit! I genuinely could not have been placed with better missionaries to work for in these two months!



So, what exactly do I do while on apprenticeship? The main goal of apprenticeship while on Next Steps is to free up the hands of the missionaries. This can be done in several capacities such as teaching Sunday school, being involved in music ministry, teaching at the church's GATS bible school, doing church cleaning, home schooling the missionary kids, intentional evangelism, and so much more. However, the number one thing that truly makes the apprenticeship beneficial to both ends is simple being willing and available for whatever the missionaries might need you to do!

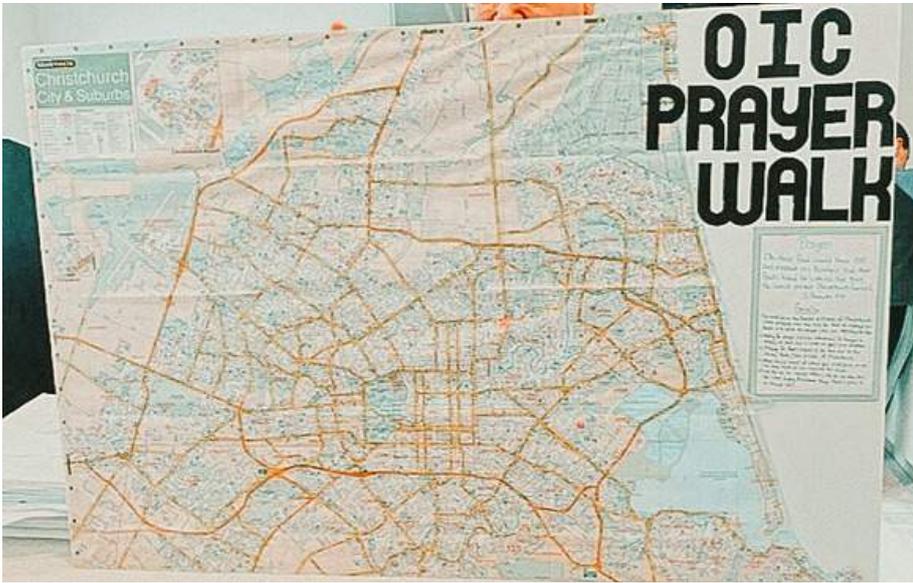


Just to be very transparent, you get out whatever you put into the apprenticeship. There are some days that are jam packed with things that need to get done, but there are several days with open schedules as well. In the cases where there are very few plans and a lot of free time, it really is up to the Next Stepper where they chose to spend their time and efforts on. This is where personal evangelism has come to be a huge role while in New Zealand. Some personal evangelism efforts that have been put into place are prayer walks, passing out church invitations, and consistent open bible studies at coffee shops. These endeavors have further led to bible studies and being able to pray openly in public with hungry souls!



THE CHURCH

In closing, I would just like to shed some light on the church in New Zealand. In 2013, 59% of New Zealand's population claimed to be Christian. 6 years later, in 2019, 48% of New Zealand's populations claims the be Christian. That is a 11% decline in the last 6 years... The UPCI, as of today, has 8 churches and 3 preaching points in this country. The total population of New Zealand is 4.7 million, and of those people, there are 350-500 constituents... 350-500 souls that know and follow truth out of 4.7 million...



Now, I don't share that information to shine a negative attitude on the country or bring an uneasy feeling to others, but I share it to bring awareness to the matter. The fact is, there are millions of lost souls yet to be reached in New Zealand. Millions of people yet to experience the precious presence of Jesus. Millions of people yet to know and understand truth. Millions of people WAITING for LABORERS to come to the HARVEST... So what are we waiting for? We must GO and bet the laborers God has called us to be! And if we can't go, we must GIVE in prayers to these people and cities that need the powerful name of JESUS!

So I challenge you to join me in praying for the cities of New Zealand. Hamilton, Auckland, Tauranga, Christchurch, Whangarei, Dunedin, Invercargill, and so many more! Through the power of Jesus, we can make a difference!

Also a huge thank you to everyone that has supported me through funds and prayers for this trip! I honestly would not be here without any of y'all, and every single one of you have truly impacted my life and this trip! I am in continual prayer for everyone back home, thank y'all so much! God bless!

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