

**CHILDREN'S PARTY**

EACH JULY, WE CELEBRATE
ALL OF THE CHURCH KIDS
BIRTHDAYS AT ONCE!

**SUNDAY CHURCH**

A PICTURE OF A RECENT
SUNDAY AT CHURCH

**BUILDING PROGRESS**

THE INTERIOR OF OUR
BUILDING IS NOW
COMPLETELY CARPETED!

THE HUTCHENS FAMILY



July 2025 Update

How many of you are like me, stunned to find ourselves on the doorstep of August already?! This insanely fast year continues to speed by, and we continue to enjoy seeing all that God can do and has done here in Christchurch, New Zealand. Here's an update on recent happenings.

Our biggest ministry focus in July was our 5th annual Married Couples Retreat. There was nothing like this being held in New Zealand when we arrived, and it's been a joy to begin hosting it each year. It began with just our church family a few years back, but in recent years, we've opened up to other churches across the South Island. This year was our biggest year yet, with 13 couples from 5 different churches. Our guest speaker was Pastor Tom Gonderman of the Southland Baptist Church in Sydney, Australia. He and his wife did a fantastic job of ministering to our married couples! It's a lot of work, but always so worth it!

**This year's Couples
Retreat with 13
couples from five
churches!**

We held our annual Children's Birthday Party this month as well. We do this once a year to celebrate all of the birthdays of the children of our church at one time. This year we had 21 kids come along for an afternoon of bouncy castles, cotton candy, pizza, and candy. It's a delight to spend this time with the kids of our church.

Our building situation continues to evolve over time. At our last writing, we had had to move out due to the building consent being issued. The building is not allowed to be open to the public while works are being carried out, no matter how light those works. Part of the conditions of the consent was the installation of a new fire alarm system, which we expected and has no issues with. However, shortly after the writing of our June letter, we learned that the system the city was requiring had not yet been approved for use. Yes, believe it or not, we were required to install something we were not allowed to install, and wouldn't be allowed until September or October. And we are not allowed to meet in the building again until it has been installed.

This has led to a crazy multi-week journey to figure out a solution to the problem. The city council has apparently been log jammed with several other projects in a similar situation as ours, and no one is happy. Rather than acquiesce, the council has doubled down on their requirements. Thankfully, we were informed late last week that the approval process had been fast tracked. The local fire engineer has explained our situation to the manufacturer, and they have agreed to give us their first system when it is finished on the week of 11 August. I'm told this means our building will be the first in New Zealand to have this new system, which is an answer to prayer in the midst of a confusing and irritating problem. We expect to move back in later in August.

In the meantime, we continue to meet back in our old location, with a great spirit, great attendances, and new visitors. I'm thankful for a church family who can "roll with the punches."

I want to close by asking you to pray with me for a young man I was able to witness to this past Monday. His name is Kuru. He is a Maori young man who attends a church known as Ringatū, which blends Maori culture with Christianity. As we talked, he admitted he did not completely believe that Jesus was who He said He was, but that he was open to understanding more. He listened to me very kindly for a while, and was willing to take my number at the conclusion of the conversation. Pray that God will soften his heart and help him to be saved!

Thank you for your continued support and prayer!

The Hutchens Family

Sam, Juliana, Emma, Alexa, Samantha, & Harrison

Family pictures



TOP: Harrison's third birthday was June 25! We love our boy!

MIDDLE: Juliana and I with our special speaker and his wife at the Couples Retreat.

BOTTOM: Emma & Alexa enjoy the children's birthday party.