

Church Army NZ report to Christchurch Synod 2021

I do not need to mention Covid19 and its incredible impact on the world, our country, our communities and us individually!

We live in a time and culture that wrestles with change at an ever-increasing pace. For some change is unsettling, for others it can even be threatening, while others relish the excitement of new things and ask for more! It can be difficult to remain focussed and faithful as ministers of the gospel but with challenges also come opportunities. We all know that the only constant in life is change, as Heraclitus so wisely pointed out. It's a good thing!

For Church Army NZ (CANZ), the cloud of Covid19 had a big silver lining: Everyone got used to working online, which increased our training capacity exponentially, especially seeing that we were able to employ a new central staff member, our new training officer Rev Brian Bullen!

Through online training and mentoring/coaching he is reaching individuals, groups and churches from all over NZ, and places as far away as Quebec, and far more time efficiently. The zoom groups (believers and non believers) are based on various commonalities. We also managed to do some face to face training events, as the pandemic restrictions allowed.

Ongoing training and leadership coaching/mentoring/peer learning is the key here to paradigm shift and application. Multiplication, training trainers, is the aim.

Brian and Stephanie have recently moved from Kerikeri to Katikati, to be better positioned for touring the North Island, such is their commitment to equipping the Church to fulfill the Great Commission!

Our ministries up and down the country experienced similar changes: a lot of the work was forced into cyberspace, and they are now continuing with that work, as it is effective! Canterbury Kids Coach (CKC) is doing online training with families as far away as China! The National Director had the privilege of being one of the online speakers at the Auckland Prayer Breakfast.

If it is women leadership development, Children's ministry, working with the broken and neglected or developing catalysts and movement leaders, it's all about equipping and empowering the next generation and expanding capacity to be obedient to God in growing His Kingdom. 2020 as any other year. It's just the format that changed. If anything, we were busier than ever, as people realised their need for hope and power from outside their own abilities. There was a surge of interest in faith related conversations. We need to be equipped and ready to engage!

For that purpose CANZ is more and more working with other evangelistic organisations, like OAC, NZCMS, Hope Project, etc to work more efficiently and effectively... Church with a capital 'C'!

As we now have Rev Brian covering the North Island, National Director Capt Monika Clark has moved home and CANZ HQ to Christchurch, for greater impact on the South Island! Changes are all around, as CKC as well as our Seedstone Ministry are 'under new management', while our prison ministry in Akl is expanding fast into post prison community reintegration and wider whanau care, our involvement in Tikanga Maori Church Planting work saw geographical moves, as the circumstances demanded.... to mention but a few.

Our hope for the future is that CANZ will become even more effective as a catalyst for the whole Church in NZ to work together more closely and more effectively in reaching the laden and lost, to be the christlike beacon for God's hope and love we are meant to be.

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