

Austmove 15 years on

The new CRC of Australind

It was about 15 years ago that the Reformed Church of Brunswick Junction laid before the denomination our plans to move our church and the Unity Christian School from the small farming community of Brunswick Junction to the growing town of Australind.

Many churches and individuals at that time came to our assistance with gifts and prayers to help make our plan a reality. The purpose of this article is to give an update on how the Lord has blessed us these last fifteen years.

The move to Australind involved the church selling its assets to purchase a ten acre block of land in Australind. The church agreed with Unity Christian School to sell seven acres to the school, retaining three acres for church use. The plan was to build a new church when the school finished purchasing its seven acres.

The area

The plans to move to Australind were based on planning projections that the Australind area would grow quickly over the next decades. The land we purchased was at that time a farming block two kilometres from the centre of Australind. Since that time however, the new suburb of Kingston has grown up across from the church with hundreds of houses being built. The church will soon be surrounded by new housing estates. A new state primary school also opened in Kingston with over 300 children, and our church runs the World Vision “Kid’s Hope” mentoring programme in that school. Our church will soon be at the centre of this developing community.

The School

The Parent Controlled Unity Christian School was able to begin building the new school on its seven acres in 1998.

It underwent a name change in 2007 to the Australind Christian School. The school has been a rich blessing to many in the years of its existence, however it continues to struggle with low numbers. The smallness of the school however, while financially difficult, has helped the school maintain a close knit family atmosphere. The school succeeded in paying off its seven acres some two years ago, and since then, the land has been subdivided.

The church

When we first moved to Australind we began worshipping at the local Leisure centre. After two years, we moved into a classroom at the school. A year later, we purchased that classroom from the school, moved it onto the church block and redeveloped it into a small chapel. For about \$15,000 we built a church with seating for about 100! This was a short term measure while we saved for a proper church building. Our existing building has been a great blessing to us, but also has many limitations. It is very ‘cosy’ when we pack 140 into the building at special events. It is too small for weddings and funerals. It is also a hindrance to visitors.

The planning for the new church building began ten years ago. Lack of finance however kept us from realising these plans. The more urgent the new building became, the more expensive and elusive it also became. Eighteen months ago I suggested to the church council that we think outside the square to free up church finances. I have been involved in Prison Fellowship for the last ten years, and suggested that I begin a “Tent Making ministry”, working in the prison (or whatever other doors opened up). To facilitate this, the congregation would need to “pull together” to do more of the less core tasks of ministry, freeing me to focus on the central tasks of ministry. The congregation embraced this direction. For the last year I have been working in the Bunbury Prison as an officer. Most

weeks I work three days, some weeks four, still giving me quality ministry time for preaching, teaching and pastoral work. We have formed nine pastoral care groups in the church so that the church pastors one another. I aim to preach on average once every week. We have a roster of ten men who lead the second service. And as can be seen from the photos, the new church is taking shape. The old ‘chapel’ will be our new youth hall.

The future

Where to from here? When finances permit, the Lord willing we will expand the ministry of the church, calling a second pastor. If the Lord gives me strength, I hope to continue in the dual role of Pastor and Prison Officer. The work in the prison has added a new dimension to the work of ministry.

We are grateful to the Lord for our new building. We are also thankful to the churches of classis WA and the denomination for the support they have given us on the way. Sola Deo Gloria.

Pastor Peter Kossen

