

## Eugen and Esther Dupu



Eugen and Esther Dupu serve as tentmaking missionaries and church planters in New Zealand.

Currently, we are serving in two church plants in New Zealand. The first is in Oamaru where the Church of God New Zealand is headquartered. Last year, we began a new plant in Christchurch (the second largest city) three hours from where we live. Every Sunday we travel for the morning service in Christchurch and then return for the evening service in Oamaru.

This step came after years of prayer and encouragement from COG World Missions leadership, who shared with us the vision of planting churches in a nation where the Church of God had little presence. Taking this step by faith meant leaving two full-time jobs and raising funds for ministry and living costs. We have never regretted the decision.

God first called us to the mission field in 2007, two years after graduating from the European Theological Seminary in Germany. Although we were Youth Pastors in Emmendingen, Germany, we moved with our two preschoolers. Those early years were filled with risk and uncertainty, but our focus was youth ministry—serving in our community, mentoring, chaplaincy, youth camps, and partnering with local government and agencies.

In 2023, we launched WINTERFEST NZ in Queenstown with the encouragement of COG World Missions leadership. Later that year, they also joined us in dedicating the first Church of God

building in New Zealand. To strengthen our work, we completed a Master of Arts in Christian Leadership with the Asian Seminary of Christian Ministries.

One story that shows the impact of this ministry is Lance's. He grew up in a religious home but drifted from God in his teen years, falling into depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts. In 2021, we invited him to church. That first Sunday, he experienced God's presence so strongly that it brought him to tears. Lance began attending regularly, joined Legacy Youth Group, brought friends along, and eventually brought his family with him. Today, Lance is a youth leader who is studying social work with a desire to help others find hope.

Looking ahead, we are planning a Counseling and Crisis Center to address the growing mental health needs in our communities. To complete the project, we are still short of \$200,000. This center will impact not only our community today but the generations to come by helping people like Lance find hope and reclaim their lives.

**Categories:** Missionaries, Missionaries - Asia / Pacific