

tending its local facilities and its reach to an international community, the City Impact Church has broken new ground in Auckland. **Tim Goodyer** reports



City Impact Church Sanctuary

THE CITY IMPACT

City Impact Church began life as the Bays Fellowship in 1982 and has grown to reflect the multicultural character of the city. 'From its roots in New Zealand' with members from 40 nationalities making up its diverse congregation. As its mission expands, part of its aim is to have an impact on the city's life not simply through a Sunday service each week, but through a range of facilities including a school, kindergarten, academy and community centres such as its childcare and after-school facilities. Peter and Bev Mortlock, senior pastors of the church, serve a congregation of over 2,500 in Auckland, and have established satellite churches in Queenstown, Invercargill

and Balclutha. Their two sons – Mark and Tarry – also serve on the church staff. As executive director, Mark Mortlock's principal role is to oversee the church production team, but he has recently been kept busy with the construction of a new sanctuary – a 2,000-seat, state-of-the-art facility that is intended to set a new benchmark for worship venues. 'Our goal for this project was to create the best listener experience possible while providing technical excellence for the spoken word, theatrical productions, large-scale events, concerts and performing arts,' he says. 'We needed flexibility and reliability, and all within a moderate budget.' Now complete, the new sanctuary and re-equipped auditorium sit alongside the church's 11

classrooms, school, kindergarten, fitness and dance studios, and a lecture theatre, as well as three newly furnished Avid/Pro Tools broadcast suites, including digital graphics and effects facilities. These take the feeds from the church's Ikegami TV cameras and Broadcast Pix vision mixers, recording to Edit-Share in DV format via STI. The Online studio is equipped with Avid Express Pro, while the Offline and Audio studio uses an Avid Studio Suite (Pro Tools, Avid and 002 console) and the Offline and Graphics studio has Avid Express Pro & Combustion. Their purpose is to serve Impact For Life, a contemporary half-hour Christian television programme produced by the City Impact Church. Featuring Peter and Bev Mortlock, each episode cuts between preaching clips and includes explanations of their key points, in addition to real-life stories from people whose lives have been changed by God. 'Our goal for Impact For Life is to impart



The Sanctuary stage and layout

key life principles from the Bible that will encourage people to live life to its fullest and to grow into all they can be,' says Peter Mortlock. Impact For Life is aired through several New Zealand TV channels, as well as the Australian Christian Channel, Power Vision in India, Cook Islands TV in Rarotonga, the Daavo Christian Bible Channel in the Philippines and United Christian Broadcast in the UK. Back in Auckland, the new facilities have given Canadian loudspeaker company Adamson Systems Engineering its first placement in New Zealand. 'City Impact Church holds to a philosophy of 'excellence without extravagance', says Mark Mortlock. 'This means that we do not compromise on quality or functionality while ensuring a cost efficient outcome. In order to make this a reality, we partner with companies that we know will not only uphold our values and objectives, but will also reinforce our methodology and play their part in making our

project a success. To this end we engaged Ian Anderson of Mitech Design as our primary technical and production consultant for the job and, under his direction, we worked with Scott Willsallen of Auditoria for the audio design and Mark Hansen of Hansen and Associates for the architectural and acoustic design of the performance space.' The first part of the process was to create a comprehensive technical 'wish list'. 'From there we spent endless hours looking at equipment and options to finally get us to a shortlist of products that would meet our requirements,' Mark Mortlock continues. 'The most important part of the technical install was the audio system. During the selection process we considered Meyer Sound, Nexo, L-Acoustics, JBL, Electro-Voice and Adamson for the speaker systems. After a shootout between L-Acoustics and Adamson we were left in a quandary, as we could not fault either system. Both the Adamson and the L-Acoustics produced an extremely powerful sound with excellent clarity and accurate musical reproduction, while maintaining exceptional vocal and speech definition. 'At the end of the day, Adamson was chosen and we have not regretted this selection for one moment. Coupling the Adamson Spektrix array components with their Y-Axis T21 subs gave us an immensely strong and punchy bottom end, providing consistent levels throughout the space.'

Following a rigorous tender process, Oceania Audio, based in





Aerial view of the City Impact Church

the audio system. Oceania also supplied the theatrical lighting for the new venue. 'From the acceptance of Oceania's tender to the church's first service was only six weeks,' says Auditoria's Scott Willsallen. 'The Adamson speakers were made to order and air freighted from Canada to meet the deadline.'

Everything was ordered immediately and, when the necessary parts to start the install arrived, we were left with exactly three weeks to take the onsite work from start to finish.'

The front-of-house loudspeaker system that was specified and installed in the sanctuary comprises Adamson SpekTrix Line Array (11 elements per side) with a single Wave cabinet for down fill per side, along with three Adamson Y-Axis T21 subwoofers, two of which are ground-stacked with the other flown. In addition, there are four Yamaha IF2112AS loudspeakers for front and side fill. The system is driven by six Lab.gruppen 10000Q amplifiers (providing four channels at 2.5kW) and one Lab.gruppen 6000Q (four channels at 1.5kW), and controlled by Dolby Lake Processors.

'Because of the way the system was configured, we had to engineer and fabricate custom flying frames for the Yamaha fill speakers and the huge Adamson subwoofer flown in the centre,' Mr Willsallen says.

At front-of-house and on monitors are Yamaha M7CL digital mixing consoles. 'We made a decision early in the project that a digital audio console was to be installed,' Mart Mortlock explains. 'Budget was a significant consideration in this regard, and after playing on some very cool toys - courtesy of Soundcraft and Yamaha - we settled on two Yamaha M7CL consoles.'

The Sanctuary monitor system also uses an Aviom 16/0-Y1MY card for supplying input audio to the Aviom monitoring system, and five Aviom mixers for the performers. On stage, there are six Yamaha IF2112AS driven by Lab.gruppen C-Series amplifiers for monitor loudspeakers, and eight in-ear monitoring systems from Shure and Sennheiser.

In the Auditorium, a Soundcraft MH4 42:8:2 console serves front-of-house and monitors, with an Electro-Voice PA and 18-inch subwoofers driven by Electro-Voice amps. Onstage monitoring is via six Tannoy V10 passive monitors mixed from FOH console.

The entire venue has also been equipped with new TV cameras, multimedia and the TV production facilities needed for the Impact For Life operation, as well as video projection and theatrical lighting systems.

Sanctuary FOH System

Yamaha M7CL console
 Adamson SpekTrix line array (11 elements)
 Adamson SpekTrix Wave (1 per side)
 Adamson Y-Axis T21 subs (2 floor, 1 flown)
 Yamaha IF2112AS loudspeakers (4)
 Dolby Lake Processors (2)
 Lab.gruppen Amps

Sanctuary Monitor System

Yamaha M7CL console
 Aviom monitoring system (5 mixers)
 Yamaha IF2112AS loudspeakers (6)
 Lab.gruppen C-Series amplifiers
 Shure and Sennheiser IEM (8)

other opportunities to extend the church's facilities not just for its present needs but also for future development. 'We installed 17.78km of Belden cable for the audio and comms systems,' Scott Willsallen explains.

'This includes the main auditorium, but also tie lines into every other major room to create an audio and video network that has flexibility to route signals anywhere in the building. About 40 stunning laser etched anodised panels throughout the facility will be the only evidence left of our extensive cable work. In our spare time we also installed the 500m-long Ampetronic hearing loop that covers every seat in the auditorium, and ran the on-stage lighting data cabling.'

The end result is a system that is professional and easy to use, and it has already been put to the test by a number of international world-class artists and speakers, and has performed beautifully and earned high praise. 'While we have not used the most expensive products available on the market, a significant effort was put into the design of the system, so that in the end it delivers a comprehensive and purposeful solution in an environment that demands flexibility and ease-of-use,' Mark Mortlock concludes.

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