

IN PARTNERSHIP

May 2022



Seasons Change

A letter from John Gilmore

Dear Friends,

Seasons change, and both beginnings and endings are involved. I want to share with you some changes that are to occur in the life of GMP.

Later in the year, on November 30, I will conclude in my role as Executive Officer with GMP. After almost 15 years, it is time for me to take the step of retirement and for GMP to appoint the next Executive Officer. In some ways, making this decision is like tearing myself away from something I am deeply connected to, while in other ways, it is an easy step as I believe the time is right for GMP, my wife Meewon, and myself.

Spring cannot happen without winter. New beginnings cannot happen without endings. I have great confidence and trust in God as provider. God will provide the spring of new life for GMP and for myself.

I also want to thank you for your support of GMP. Your prayers and generosity have made the work of our partners possible over the last 15 years.

The GMP Board has commenced the process of recruiting the next Executive Officer and an

advertisement will be included in the next issue of In Partnership.

Val Zerna will also retire at the end of December after 19 years of a wonderful and positive contribution to GMP. We are very thankful for her dedication and service to GMP.

There are also other changes underway in this next season.

It gives us joy and hope to announce the full accreditation of GMP, by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). You can read more in this month's In Partnership page three.

There are some staff changes too. Colin Scott is moving to full-time in his role as Director of COCOA (Churches of Christ Overseas Aid), and we have a new member in the COCOA team – Eva Ntege-Dhizaala who, with Suzanne Hayes and Jan Bayliss, will ensure the continuing quality of the work of COCOA.

The roles of Partnership Coordinators are coming to a close. Supporting churches is still a priority for GMP and the contact with churches will be coordinated centrally by a Church Support Coordinator (churchcontact@gmp.org.au). Val Zerna will fill this role for

the remainder of 2022 and develop new ways of connecting staff and local churches.

Colin Battersby is also taking up a new role in GMP as the Director of Community Education. He will be working with the whole of GMP in the development of resources and materials for local churches and supporters.

The work of GMP is an important expression of the collective life of Churches of Christ. It is what we do together as Churches of Christ, and it shapes who we are. The future for GMP is strong and filled with many possibilities.

Seasons change, there are endings and beginnings, and our trust is in God's goodness, providence and grace. New life comes from that which ends and from what we let go of. In all of this we can say thanks be to God!

In Christ,

John Gilmore
Executive Officer

News & Events

Mother's Day May 8

Happy Mother's Day from all GMP staff and global partners. Thank you to all the mums and mother figures for all you do! You can read Thembe's story on page 4.

National Reconciliation Week May 27 – June 3.

The National Reconciliation Week 2022 theme, "Be Brave. Make Change." is a challenge to all Australians— individuals, families, communities, organisations and government—to Be Brave and tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation so we can Make Change for the benefit of all Australians.

For more information visit <https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au>

National Sorry Day May 26

Every year on May 26, National Sorry Day remembers and acknowledges the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were forcibly removed from their families and communities, which we now know as 'The Stolen Generations'.

State Youth Games

State Youth Games is a weekend sport and art event for high schoolers and young adults. State Youth Games is running in SA, WA and VIC. Look out for which events embody will be attending on their social media (@embodyau).

WA - June 3-6

<http://sygwa.com.au>

VIC – June 10-13

<http://stateyouthgames.com/vic/>

SA – June 10-13

<https://www.stateyouthgames.net>

Ukraine Emergency Appeal

The GMP Ukraine Emergency Appeal has raised \$70,319 Thank you for your generosity and compassion for those in need. You can still donate today at www.gmp.org.au/ukraineappeal

Afghanistan Appeal

Thank you for generously supporting the people of Afghanistan. Together we raised \$61,056. This appeal is now closed.



Kyle Slabb is a Gudjingburra Bundjalung descendant from the Far North Coast of NSW

Patterning Our Reconciliation in the Way of Jesus

An old man told me once, "You can't fight a battle from a place of trauma."

To go back and unravel a history that spans even a short 250 or so years is a huge task. Then to weigh the wrongs and rights in the scales of justice would keep us preoccupied for many generations to come.

The complexity and the scale of it can be understood by thinking honestly about your own personal life. If you went back through your life and tried to make recompense or retribution for every time you have wronged someone or been wronged by someone, that in itself would take a lifetime. Now multiply that by millions over multiple generations.

The process of reconciliation, or the ministry of reconciliation, has been demonstrated by Jesus in a lot less complexity – with a lot more power. First, we need to forgive – then healing can happen. Then, by the power of His Spirit, we can love one another. Through the work of the Cross, becoming the mediator that could ensure that mercy is shown and the demands of justice are met, Christ showed the true ministry of reconciliation. This ministry has become the Church's responsibility, which is actually the evidence of the working of His Spirit: "that you love one another."

Acknowledging that we don't have the ability to close the gap, forgiving those who have been part of causing the gap and closing it by loving one another: three steps that might be easy to say, but may be the most

monumental exercise we will ever attempt.

As Aboriginal Christians, we are asked to forgive acknowledged wrongs from the past that affect us even to the present. Generations of disempowerment, disenfranchisement, oppression, disadvantage and genocide.

It is massive, almost overwhelming, but in the light of Matt. 6:14, "If you forgive others their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you." Forgiveness of past wrongs is the only reason anyone belongs. The healing that this forgiveness allows brings to light the question, how do you demonstrate the love of God to your Aboriginal brother or sister?

You love them, like you love Christ that forgave you. Not just in word, but in deed. Tell me what this looks like for you. Better yet, show me.

Like Jesus said, "How you treat the least of my brethren is how you treat me."

Kyle Slabb,
NSW

National Reconciliation Week is a great opportunity for churches to engage with the truth about our history and to intentionally listen to the voices of Australia's First Peoples. Follow Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) on Facebook for updates on National Reconciliation Week and National Sorry Day.

GMP Fully Accredited by DFAT

SPOTLIGHT

In April, we received the news that Global Mission Partners (GMP) is now fully accredited by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT, responsible for managing the Australian Government's aid program). We did this affirming our Christian identity and commitment to the highest standards of operation.

Full accreditation by DFAT is a great step forward for GMP and our partners. It affirms the work of our partners and the high standards of GMP, opens new connections and extends our impact even further.

So, what is full accreditation? DFAT accreditation means that we are accredited as a full partner with the Australian Government, receiving flexible funding under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) each year to implement development and poverty alleviation programs overseas.

Seeking full accreditation has been a five-year process. GMP has been accredited at a base level for the past five years, which has meant some of our projects have already received funding through the ANCP. Now, with full accreditation, we can access a higher level of funding for more of the Churches of Christ Overseas Aid (COCOA) development projects.

Full accreditation is great news for a few reasons.

Firstly, it affirms the work of our partners and the standards of GMP. To gain accreditation, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) like GMP must demonstrate capacity and performance against a range of indicators. Accreditation ensures the Australian Government is funding professional, well-managed organisations that can deliver quality development

outcomes and are accountable to their stakeholders. It assures the Australian public that the Australian Government is working with the most effective partners.

GMP demonstrated our capacity and compliance to a high standard in applying for full accreditation. We were audited in October 2021 as part of the application process. This was a thorough audit of governance, risk management, project management and finances across GMP's activities. We will continue to have regular audits to ensure that our governance, management and financial activities meet a high standard. Such a process will enable GMP to reflect on, and improve, our performance.

Receiving full accreditation affirms that we are operating at the highest standards and also recognises that we can take on a larger program of development work.

Secondly, accreditation is great news because it aligns us with the other members of the Church Agency Network (CAN). CAN is a network of church agencies. Being aligned with CAN agencies opens new opportunities for GMP to participate in other activities such as the Church Agency Network Disaster Operations (CAN DO) program. CAN DO is involved in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response projects. This is an opportunity to be part of this work and support our partners in the face of natural disasters.

Finally, full accreditation extends the impact of our work even further! With access to further funding through ANCP, many of our partners will be able to extend their programs.

While the whole of GMP's operations is accredited, only some COCOA development programs are eligible to receive

funding through the ANCP. These programs will be marked on our website as they become approved by the ANCP. You can look for the Australian Aid Identifier on the project page. You may already notice this when reading about Showers of Blessing, one of the projects already receiving some ANCP funding.

Your support of these programs will have even more impact!

DFAT will support up to 83% of approved projects. However, we still need your help to fund the remainder. Every donation you make to funded programs will be combined with funding from the Australian Government and will reach more people. We have committed to contribute \$1 for every \$5 we receive from the Australian Government. Your donation will allow us to extend our programs.

We will continue to fund our other GMP programs through your generous donations. ANCP-funded programs will not change our budget commitment to any of our non-ANCP funded programs. These programs still need your support.

Our commitment to strong relationships with our partners will not change.

Our ethos of working alongside our local partners as equals will continue. Full accreditation means that many of our partners can increase their program capacity. GMP will also connect with new partners who align with our values.

Thank you for your support of GMP. We are excited about how full accreditation can extend the impact we have together.

Thank you for your partnership with us in this new chapter.

“God Had Better Plans for Me” Thembe’s Story

Thembelihle Mbambo (Thembe) loves working with the children at Khayelihle Children’s Village (KCV). As the Donor Child Sponsorship Relations Officer, she wants to see vulnerable children succeed in life. She helps the children at KCV communicate with their overseas sponsors and works to reconnect children with their relatives in Zimbabwe.

When you meet Thembe she will give you a big smile. “To know that I have little people who look up to me gives me all the reasons to smile all the time,” Thembe said. “I am an aunty to the children here at KCV, so I have a huge role to play as a mom.”

Thembe didn’t think she could be a mother. As a child her bones became soft and weak, a condition known as Rickets, resulting in bowlegs. Despite this challenge, she has seen God provide for her the desires of her heart. Not only is she an aunt and a mother figure to many children at KCV, but Thembe is also a biological mother of two boys.

Thembe said, “My community had misconceptions that no man will marry me because I will not be able to bear children, but God had better plans for me... God made me a mom!” Thembe explains that in her culture, “When the daughter bears children, especially male children,



for that family, she is treated like a queen.”

Women’s ministries have helped Thembe to grow and to learn more about being a Christian mum. This Mother’s Day, Thembe would like to encourage all women to be a Proverbs 31 Woman, “The one who fears the Lord,” Thembe said.

Increasing the Wellbeing of Children

The welfare of children has long been a concern in South Sudan. Due to civil unrest, children have experienced parental loss, violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. This continues to be a reality. Many South Sudanese children depend on extended family, caregivers and the wider community for their basic needs.

With holistic care for these vulnerable children, there is hope.

Thanks to our local partner Christian Mercy International (CMI), and with your support, three phases of the Children’s Education Program have now been implemented. The establishment of Emmanuel School was phase one.

At Emmanuel Primary School, 87% of the children have lost at least one of their parents. Half of the children have lost both. Emmanuel School has provided essential care for these vulnerable children and their extended families and caregivers.

The school began with children meeting for their classes under several large trees, which didn’t provide sufficient protection

or safety. Without fences or a building, the children would be disrupted by cattle or people wandering by the area. It would also leave the children exposed to the sun, wind and rain. So, the second phase was implemented with the construction of permanent school buildings and fences.

The third phase was ensuring some financial independence for the school. To achieve greater financial independence for Emmanuel School, the government and other organisations took responsibility for some ongoing costs. The World Food Program took over the running of the lunch program. The government has taken responsibility for paying the teachers’ wages. Providing goats to the caregivers was another way of increasing the local support of the school. The Goats Project means that carers can now pay for their children’s school fees and cover other education and even medical costs. Before this income support, many of the families didn’t know if the children would ever be able to go to school.

The CMI Children’s Education Program continues to build on the

successful initiatives at Emmanuel School and is working to extend the strategies learned at Emmanuel School to other schools in the area. The program will now carry through to ten other non-profit-making schools around Aweil. Emmanuel School will continue as part of this group.

With your help, we can provide income support for Grade One students. We can give goats to their caregivers, focusing on children with a disability and those without both parents. And we will also be able to increase the education level of their teachers, supporting teachers who have not completed high school. We will establish initiatives like nutrition gardens to improve children’s health.

Thanks for your ongoing support of the Children’s Education Program at Emmanuel School. Now, your help will provide more children with quality education across the Aweil state. It will also help increase many children’s wellbeing as the project reaches more schools.

This means that they will not only receive an education, but good nutrition, care, and sustainable income. Protection and holistic care.