

IN PARTNERSHIP

April 2020



The Life-Changing Light in Zimbabwe

Motorbike Evangelists, Zimbabwe

When BJ Mpofu visited Churches of Christ in Australia late last year, he told us about a village in rural Zimbabwe. They had no schools, and no community buildings. They wanted somebody to reach out to them.

That's when a local village councillor heard about the work the Motorbike Evangelists were doing. They weren't just coming to preach and convert — they were coming to help build up communities. They helped fill the needs of the people, spiritually and physically.

BJ says that this councillor reached out to him, asking for them to send somebody to the village.

“He had heard a story of what we were doing, and he invited us to go and open a new preaching point there,” BJ explains.

“So our guys went to see him, they saw the top men, and the chief of the area, and they said ‘We are going to open a church.’”

“The councillor said, ‘Set a date, and we will encourage our people to go there.’ I'm told there was a very big crowd on the day and, when the preaching was done, 50 people offered their lives to the Lord.”

BJ grins a bit as he continues. “But going to baptise 50 was a tall order. You'd spend a whole day waiting for one man to do it. So we had three people in the water, baptising at the same time. Once again what a special, special occasion it was, to welcome 50 people into the body of Christ at the same time.”

How incredible! For one new church to change the lives of 50 people, just like that! The light that the motorbike evangelists brought has not stopped spreading. The spiritual needs of the village were being filled, and their lives changed through that.

The church shared the good news of Jesus, and the evangelists are also showing the light of Jesus by caring for the community, and helping connect them to other services.

“That's possible because Australia is assisting us reach out to our people, preach to them, and offer the message of the living Christ in each community,” BJ explains. “The motorcycle is one of the most important instruments that you can give for evangelists.”

“When you give an evangelist a motorcycle, you know, an evangelist

does not deal with one preaching point. He will operate a preaching point here, then move to the next one. So when he has that bike, he is able to conduct a service here, and then ride his bike to go to three churches, three communities, in one day. So when you provide that bike, it makes such a vast difference.”

When you support Walk For Hope, you are helping equip the evangelists in Zimbabwe reach more communities. You are helping spread the word of God to more communities who want to know about God. You are also enabling the church reach out and help people in need, by connecting them with ways to access resources that change lives.

Imagine how many more people can have their lives changed by the light of Christ.

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News & Events



IMA Pathways Program

The IMA Pathways program helps emerging Indigenous Leaders access much needed leadership development and ministry training opportunities.

You can donate to support the program online at www.gmp.org.au/about-us/more-about-ima

To apply for the IMA Pathways program email your interest to:

Nick Wight:
nick@gmp.org.au or

Colin Battersby:
colinb@gmp.org.au




Keep Connected

With so many events being postponed or cancelled, we know many people may have missed out on a chance to connect with us at GMP. But there are a lot of places where you can still contact us, and keep up with the latest from our partners!

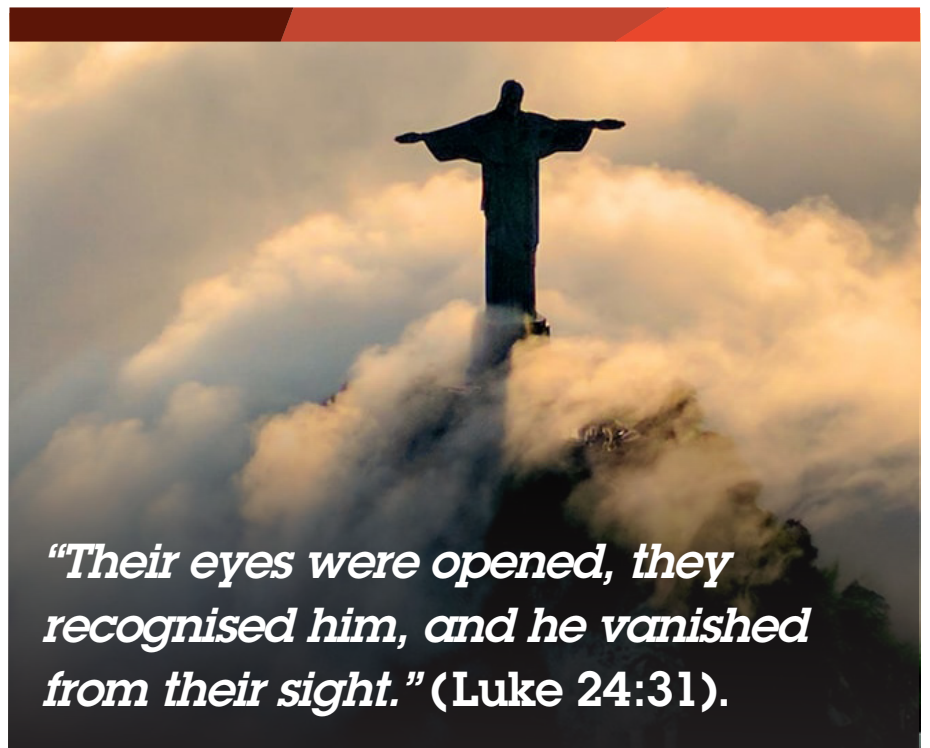
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“Their eyes were opened, they recognised him, and he vanished from their sight.” (Luke 24:31).

Walking with Jesus

Each Easter Sunday we tell the story of two people walking with Jesus. At the end of the day walking to Emmaus they meet Jesus and have no idea it is the Risen Lord. In the story, set over a period of hours, their realisation about the true nature of their companion in their journey is relatively fleeting. “Their eyes were opened, they recognised him, and he vanished from their sight.” (Luke 24:31).

The two followers of Jesus did not realise who they were walking with. On reflection, they understood the change that they were experiencing in their walk. (24:32). Deeply motivated by their experience they run back to Jerusalem and share the news of their discovery.

The dramatic circumstances of these first few months of 2020 will stay with us. What was certain is no longer so. An invisible virus is changing our realities. It is easy to be captivated by fear and unease, and to lose sight of one of the greatest truths of our faith. Jesus is with us. The chorus of the Easter hymn sums it up “Jesus walks with us, talks with us along life’s narrow way.” The promise of the love, grace and presence of Jesus is for us all.

It is the reality of this experience that becomes foundational in our desire to tell and share the Easter news. We run with a message. A message that crosses geographic and human boundaries. It results in people discovering afresh the goodness and grace of Jesus. This sees churches planted, more lives transformed and more churches commence – and on it goes.

This year Easter in Australia is going to be different. We won’t be gathering in worship as anticipated. Regardless of these changed circumstances Jesus is walking with us. It is our walk of hope. As we reach out and give we open doors for more people to discover this reality for themselves. Jesus is risen.

John Gilmore,
Executive Officer



SPOTLIGHT

Above: Students taking part in tailoring and computer courses at Lasina Vocational School

Below: Suvarna with her mother

Empowering Young Women through Education in India

When Suvarna was still a young girl, her father tragically passed away. Her mother didn't make enough money to take care of her and her two younger sisters. So Suvarna made a hard decision. She had to sacrifice her schooling to earn money to help her family.

Thanks to the financial support from COCOA, Suvarna was able to undertake the tailoring course. She applied and was selected, and was able to complete the course — giving her the skills she needs to set up her own business in sewing clothes!

She started working with her mother, but it wasn't easy to find stable work. They took short-term work whenever they could find it. In the monsoon season, they worked pulling weeds. In the autumn, they harvested soybeans and cotton. This work is physically demanding, especially for a young woman like Suvarna.

Suvarna says, "I had never imagined that a Tailoring Training would be available in my own village and that I would get any chance of admission due to poverty and casteism. But I thank the Lord and GMP for this wonderful gift of Tailoring classes to our village."

She still dreamed of being able to go to school, but she knew that they could not afford it. So, she worked hard, wanting to make sure that her sisters could go to school instead.

The Vocational Training programs in Lasina and Ambernath are helping lots of young people just like Suvarna. Over the last year, 40 young women have completed a tailoring course, and now have the skills to work and earn a dignified income. A total of 25 young people have completed the government accredited computer course, creating a pathway to better jobs or higher education.

Then Lasina Vocational School brought their tailoring course to their little village. Thanks to supporters like you, Hosanna Ministries have been able to mobilise their vocational training, taking equipment to small villages to train people like Suvarna!

The support people like you give COCOA helps empower young people like Suvarna. Without your



help, the Vocational Training program would not be able to provide underprivileged youth and women the opportunity to gain skills, confidence, self-respect, and the ability to earn a better income.

Now Suvarna has completed her classes, she is planning on opening her own tailoring business. She will be able to make more money, easing the workload of her mother. Her sisters will be able to remain in school.



Supporting the IMA Pathways Program in 2020

The IMA Pathways program helps emerging Indigenous leaders access much needed leadership development and ministry training opportunities.

IMA Pathways offers 12-month cycles of culturally appropriate support through community mentors and elders, financial subsidies and access to a range

of training opportunities provided by accredited partners.

If you'd like to get behind emerging Indigenous Christian leaders through the IMA Pathways program we'd value your support.

Indigenous ministry training needs community and cultural resources and supports in place. Your financial

support helps give relevant ministry training to emerging Indigenous leaders as well as facilitating support from elders and mentors.

You can donate online at:
www.gmp.org.au/about-us/more-about-ima

Responding to COVID-19

What a lot of change in a short space of time, with such a direct and personal impact on us all!

What GMP is doing in response to COVID-19:

- Facing this uncertainty with the strong foundation of our faith in Jesus Christ, and the solid rock that it is.
- Continuing to make our partners our priority. We are seeking to ensure that our partners know that they are supported with prayer and encouragement. The GMP Board has written to each one.
- Thanking you for the loyal and consistent support for our partners. It is so encouraging to be receiving gifts in response to the Walk for Hope Easter offering. (www.gmp.org.au)
- Monitoring the impact of COVID-19 in each partner setting. We are acutely aware that our international partners and many Indigenous communities do not have good and easy access to health care for testing or support.
- Most GMP staff are now working from home. A reduced number of staff are keeping the finances and admin side of things operating in Adelaide, while sitting more than 2m apart! We are putting in place measures for them to work from home should that become necessary.



- Reviewing our budget and costs in light of the fall in investments and the decline in the value of the Australian Dollar. We have a Business Continuity Team in place to provide guidance as we navigate this difficult time.
- Adjusting our plans. Our strategic planning process is still under way – albeit with a different reality than anticipated.

Our Board and staff seek your continued prayers and encouragement for our partners and our work.

Above image sourced: health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources