



life-changing partnerships



## IN PARTNERSHIP

[www.gmp.org.au](http://www.gmp.org.au) | December 2017



## Humble Joy

Expectations are high at this time of year. Many of us look forward and plan special times with family, friends and our church community. At times, we over plan! For some, Christmas brings sad memories or reminders of disappointments. These contrasting experiences reflect our personal journey and feelings associated with Christmas.

The Christmas narratives in the Gospels include highs and lows, certainty and uncertainty. They are not narratives of 'smooth sailing'. No accommodation, the celebrations of angels, wise men and shepherds all mixed together with a background threat to the life of the Christ child and the need to flee.

In these narratives, we see God's direct entry into human experience in the vulnerability of the baby. In this environment of uncertainty, and in the most unlikely place, God enters the world. Here, in the place where animals live, is God. Not in

majestic grandeur, but in humble joy. What risky and generous love this is.

God takes the initiative, and invites us to experience life in new ways. Forgiveness, grace and unconditional, vulnerable love are the signs of God's presence in Jesus. Mary's song celebrates this and helps us see the beauty of the gift of new life in God's Kingdom.

Over the past weeks I travelled to South Sudan. I saw so many good things – where people are being resourced and equipped to be able to take responsibility for themselves. Midwives are serving in communities, children are being educated, and local rural people have growing incomes. The need, though, is still great.

We were given gifts of embroidered sheets that, in the terms of the economic resources available to local people who gave them, are costly. We were embarrassed and

quietly offered to contribute to the cost. Our offer was politely and respectfully rejected. We were informed that the gifts were symbols of joy and relationship and so the cost did not matter! How humbling this was for us.

In another setting, a widowed mother spoke with joy about the change a simple plough had made in her ability to generate income – an increase of 300% in produce that means she now earned \$30US a year from farming instead of \$10!

Christmas celebrates the generosity of God and we give thanks for all the ways we experience this love. Here is a challenge to us: to be generous so that others experience new life and new opportunities. Please include those in need this Christmas in your planning and giving.

*John Gilmore,*  
Executive Officer

# This Month in InPartnership

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[www.greatgifts.org.au](http://www.greatgifts.org.au)



### Jessie Joins the GMP Team

Jessie Skelly has just joined the GMP team in NSW as Mission Catalyst. This is a shared role between GMP and Fresh Hope, NSW Churches of Christ. We look forward to the contribution Jessie will make to the life and ministry of GMP, particularly as he engages with young adults in NSW and the wider embody team!



### Meet Ntando

Showers of Blessing Zimbabwe welcomes Ntando as their new Field Officer. He will be working with Boniface Mpfu in communities, assessing and implementing the best way of utilising water. They will also be conducting training programs when necessary. Ntando assists at Khayelihle Children's Village and has a Social Science degree. Welcome to the team, Ntando!

## Ashwood Memorial Hospital Celebrates 90 Years

Ashwood Memorial Hospital (AMH) celebrated their 90th anniversary during November! Virginia Curkpatrick, Edda Thomas and Joanna Johnson were in India for the celebration. Edda's husband, Dr. Thornley Thomas, worked at the AMH for six years, one of the last Australian doctors to serve there.

Pictured: Dr. Philemon Pawar (right) AMH Superintendent for close to three decades, presented with flowers by Ps Robert Gaikwad (Baramati Boys' Home).



# Welcome to Dareton!

The Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) program of GMP, together with Churches of Christ and the Wentworth and Dareton Cooperating Parish, are pleased to welcome Brendon and Amy Garlett, along with their four children, into the role of Indigenous Ministry Outreach Workers. They will be based in the Sunraysia District, living in Dareton (NSW). The Garletts have arrived in Dareton and will be focusing on settling in to the community for the remainder of 2017, starting school, and getting to know some new friends. Brendon will be looking to pioneer culturally relevant and



relational outreach opportunities among the local Indigenous community, as well as working closely with Ilker, Jacqui, Josh and the team at the Dareton Youth and Community Centre. Please join me in praying for the Garletts in this new stage of life and ministry and

for their compassion, experience and humility to be used by God to continue to bring about His Kingdom in that beautiful but hurting part of His creation.

*Nick Wight,*  
IMA Coordinator East

## Dareton Youth and Community Centre Cook Some Snags

Ilker and Jacqui from the Dareton Youth and Community Centre, along with members from Dareton Church of Christ, provided a BBQ for a local community event in November. Local support agencies united together to provide entertainment, music and fun for the kids, as well as tents with information on how

to access support services. The Youth and Community Centre is open daily providing a safe space for Indigenous youth. The centre's activities include art, cooking, playing pool, and hanging out! They are creating an environment for young people to find positive role models and to have encouraging conversations. For more news make sure to like their page on Facebook!



## embody to visit IMA Communities

I had a great time visiting Dareton for two days in November! It was insightful to meet different members of the community and to hear about some the issues they face. It was wonderful to see the impact of the youth centre and how it provides a safe space for the youth of Dareton

to hang out. A highlight for me was chatting to the Aboriginal Liaison Officer from the police. He said that the youth centre has been an important addition to the community, that the children and youth are the future of the community and that we should be investing in them. embody is planning a trip to Dareton next year, and it would be amazing if

you could join us! If you are youth or young adult and would like to learn more about Indigenous Australians, then email me about the trip! [nat@gmp.org.au](mailto:nat@gmp.org.au)

*Natalie Oakes,*  
embody National Coordinator

Visit the Great Gifts website to support IMA projects in Australia this Christmas:



### Dreamtime Canvas

Art supplies equip Indigenous young people from outback New South Wales to explore and develop their creativity, self-esteem and cultural identity  
**IN NEW SOUTH WALES**



### Fishing Rod

Cultural excursions, like fishing, help build relationships and affirm the identity and faith of at-risk Indigenous youth from western Sydney  
**IN NEW SOUTH WALES**



### Audio Visual Gear

Port Hedland Aboriginal Church desperately needs a projector, laptop, mixer and microphone to help them create a relevant space for worship  
**IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

## Bravery in the Middle

Stories of mission are full of bravery, of individuals going out on an edge, seeking to touch the untouched with the love of God, setting out on an adventure. These stories often seem far from our comfortable, everyday lives. Does this image of bravery fit with the Christian call to mission?

Recall Jesus' words: "Then Jesus sent the twelve out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic ... Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them'. They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere" (Luke 9:1-6). When the going gets tough, the tough get going! Is Jesus saying that mission needs a hardened face of bravery, heading off down a dusty track as the toughened, gritty faces of villagers stare back?

Overseas mission within the Churches of Christ began with Mary Thompson, a single woman travelling by bullock cart through dusty, rural India in the late 1800s, an adventurer who must have been as tough as nails. But is a brave face enough to keep you going day after day, when home and family are far away? When there just isn't enough food or medicine? When

governments push back against your every move? When war, famine and disease loom constantly on the horizon? In the end, a brave face just doesn't cut it. Bravery that is only skin-deep melts away. A deeper sort of confidence is needed: bravery that doesn't begin with a hardened edge, but with a softened, vulnerable heart. Jesus, the man of the edge, with nowhere to lay his head, trudging down dusty streets, and eating with the outcasts of society—Jesus, the softened, vulnerable heart of God.

So what of Jesus' instructions: "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money"? Are these words about hardened bravery, doing everything by yourself? Or are they about dependence? Take nothing with you but the humble confession on your lips: "This is my body, broken for you."

A huge storm was smashing the disciples' boat. Suddenly, a figure appeared, walking on the water. They were afraid. Peter, putting on a brave face, stood up. "Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you on the water." He stepped off the side of the boat. Pushing out into a new frontier—one giant leap for mankind!

But then he saw the wind and heard the almighty breath of God

racing all around. He felt weak, a speck of dust in a stormy world of destruction. Beginning to sink, Peter cried out: "Lord, save me."

When war, famine, hatred, loss, hardship and hopelessness threaten, real courage begins in vulnerability – confident not in human strength but in a loving God who gives life in abundance. Mission begins here, right in the middle of everyday life, in the courage to pursue dignity, compassion and hope.

Tucked into the middle of the GMP Annual Report, we find a photo that conveys this image of Christian bravery. Behind our headline projects, the caption, "Recipient of a new toilet," identifies a lady with a disability in the muddy back blocks of Vietnam. This toilet project isn't your typical front-page news. It is not glamorous. It is not about an exciting adventure. But it is really at the heart of why we exist, as a mission organisation and as a church.

The bravery to know God's love in the middle of life, to discover a living God who meets us and renews us as we give ourselves in love. If we are brave enough to begin here, the adventure will take care of itself.

*Samuel Curkpatrick,*  
Partnership Coordinator Vic/Tas

## Vanuatu Emergency Update

Unfortunately, the news isn't good. Most of the crops and gardens in Ambae have been destroyed. The volcanic ash has continued to fall and, along with the acid rain, has ruined not only the vegetation, but also the supplies of clean drinking water. There is an alarming shortage of food and clean water so we invite you to join with us in praying for the people of Ambae. GMP will be responding by providing vouchers, which will allow communities to

access essential clean water, food and household supplies from local shops. You can donate via our website (link below) and join with us in providing emergency relief for thousands of people whose livelihoods have been devastated. The appeal has raised over \$70,000 so far. Thank you for your generosity!

[www.gmp.org.au/what-we-do/projects/vanuatu/vanuatu-emergency-appeal](http://www.gmp.org.au/what-we-do/projects/vanuatu/vanuatu-emergency-appeal)





# Sixteen Intrepid Travellers Set Out to Tanna

Sixteen intrepid travellers set out from a variety of South Australian churches headed for Tanna, Vanuatu

In September a team of 16 intrepid travellers set out to Tanna, Vanuatu, from a variety of South Australian churches. It was Rosie's first time visiting Vanuatu: "I loved working with the children at Isla Primary School and building relationships with the teachers, Mary from the Aid Post, and others at various churches. Even though they don't have many resources, many have a love for God and make do with what they have." The Elizabeth Church of Christ connection with Tanna first began in 2006 when we came across one small school building in need of repair. Over the ensuing years of partnership, several other double classroom buildings were added. The Vanuatu Government began to view the school as a significant point of gathering for the community and an evacuation centre was built on the grounds following Cyclone Pam. Suz was interested to see the

developments of the school: "Isla School has a greatly increased capacity thanks to international aid and the hard work of the dedicated staff there. Families are interested in sending their children to that school, and there is potential for more students from more remote villages." Andrew enjoyed staying at the school, saying: "We camped in the grounds of Isla Primary School, which draws its pupils from Kustom, John Fromm and Baha'i villages up the mountain in the surrounding jungle. Living in close community has its ups and downs. Everyone looks out for everyone else."

The team visit included installing solar panels to provide power, which proved an ideal opportunity to work with locals and provide electrician training. Jan was involved in the training: "I loved seeing the look on the men's faces that

Clive and myself were teaching, when an electrical exercise that they had done worked and the penny dropped!" The team also participated in church activities and an evangelistic crusade, professional development for the teachers of several local schools, setting up the school library, some upgrades to the Aid Post and working on the foundations for the Ikuningen Church. Seeing the growth in the local churches and deepening relationships with our partners in Vanuatu was a great privilege. Chief Charlie sent through the following message, "The community is very happy and appreciates the work you do – and we're still seeing your shadows when the lights are on in the night."

*Val Zerna,*  
Partnership Coordinator SA/NT

## Ted and Joy in Papua New Guinea

Ted and Joy Gray visited the Yamen and Gandep Bible Colleges in PNG. Ted ran mechanical awareness courses and Joy facilitated some training for teachers and children's ministry, visiting local schools and sharing resources like books.

"What a privilege to arrive at Yamen late afternoon (after a four-hour truck ride and a three-hour speedboat shuttle from Angoram on the Sepik River) to a welcome song from many village children and students from the Yamen Bible School. Our four-night stay turned into nine days as I ran a mechanical awareness course with the village men bringing in their 'dead' outboard motors. Joy's approach to training teachers for young children's ministry hit the

mark with many hugs and tears. A twelve-hour trip up the Keram River, with an overnight stop at Bunam on the way, brought us to Gandep Bible College. Once again, no rest, and straight into Sunday School teacher training and working with motor mechanics as everything had broken down. Amazing things happened. Even just talking with Johannes, one of the college lecturers who dropped in, about how his team had run a crusade the previous weekend at a village up river to Chungribu with over 2000 people coming along. So many stories to tell! We saw firsthand our living Jesus growing his church."

*Ted and Joy Gray,*  
VIC



### Heavy-duty Equipment

Heavy-duty equipment will help compact soil and restore a road that provides seven isolated villages with access to health services, schooling and trade **IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

# Shopping For The Poor

Identifying the sponsor child you want to support or finding the organisation with an approach to alleviating poverty that resonates with your own can make you feel like you are at the supermarket trying to decide which brand of dishwashing liquid to buy—too many choices and not many differences between them! The scary part is that it may be the dishwashing liquid decision, not the sponsor child one, that most affects those without adequate access to resources across the globe.

Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder and CEO of Facebook, announced that he will give away 99% of his wealth, some \$45 billion dollars ([businessinsider.com.au/mark-zuckerberg-giving-away-99-of-his-facebook-shares-2015-12](http://businessinsider.com.au/mark-zuckerberg-giving-away-99-of-his-facebook-shares-2015-12)). This could have an amazing impact for good, but a better first step to helping the poor might be making sure that Facebook is paying tax in all countries—especially the developing countries—in which it operates. Travis Kalanick, the former CEO of Uber, allowed drivers to offer the option of adding a \$5 donation to a kid's charity to a passenger's bill ([mashable.com/2014/12/09/uber-giving-campaign](http://mashable.com/2014/12/09/uber-giving-campaign)). This too is a great initiative, but a better first step might be to allow drivers to join a union if they so choose.

Globalisation means that we are all intimately connected to people across the world. The tuna in your lunch could be from Thailand, the cashews you snack on from Vietnam, and the football in your backyard from India. The way you exercise your consumption choices is the single most powerful avenue for you to make an impact on poverty. The good news is that this means you can be part of changing things for the poor without leaving home. The bad news is that this will be much more painful than giving a big donation, because it means changing the system that you – and all of us in the Western world – have grown accustomed to.

Imagine, for a minute, that you were sending money to help educate a child at Gnyan Sampada Residential

School in India (a partner of Global Mission Partners). Imagine that at the same time you were buying footballs stitched by that child's friend, who couldn't go to school because an impossible number of footballs had to be stitched each day to help support the family. You would be promoting education with one dollar and denying it with the very next dollar!

Giving while maintaining an unfair system keeps us in a position of power. We determine how much we give to the poor, we expect lots of guarantees with our gift (no corruption, lots of reports in good English etc.), and we expect the poor to be thankful. Paying tax, allowing unionisation, and refusing to buy something that has taken a child out of school instead starts to treat the poor as peers, as people worthy of equal dignity and respect as ourselves—people also made in the image of God (Gen 1:27). The country we grow up in or our own achievements do not determine our worth but rather the reality that we are made by and belong to the loving God who created the universe.

So how does this understanding of the intrinsic equality and value of all people translate into economics? What does it mean for my shopping? The prophet Amos brings economic issues to the surface in a time not unlike our own—a time where consumption was the dominant paradigm ordering society. People worked at getting ahead, and whatever got them ahead became their moral compass. Amos makes the point that economics is a moral issue, not a pragmatic one. Pursuing more stuff for ourselves (which is the basis of current economic neoliberalism) does not result in more and better stuff for everyone.

Amos first makes this point by setting economic oppression of the poor alongside sexual promiscuity and worshipping other gods (Am 2:6-8). Then, and now, we quickly identify sexuality and worship as key areas for spiritual purity. Amos is clear that our economics are just as important.



Children from Gnyan Sampada Residential School on their bunkbeds

Amos points out a long list of practices that still exist today. Inferior quality products were sold to unknowing customers who didn't have the social recognition to complain (Amos 8:6). Those who gave their labour in production were treated with disdain, sometimes as slaves, by the owners of the enterprise (Amos 2:7). They were so keen to make money that holidays, particularly religious holidays, got in their way (Amos 8:5). They used their influence to bend the system to benefit themselves (Amos 2:8). Economics is a moral activity. The way we distribute resources is part of our discipleship, just like our sexual behaviour and our worship.

Shopping for the poor doesn't mean sending them some clothes or making a donation, though these things have their place as gap fillers as we infuse the economic system with Kingdom values. Shopping for the poor means consuming and advocating with them in mind—making decisions that are good for everyone, not just ourselves; loving our neighbour as we love ourselves (Matthew 19:19).

Colin Scott,  
COCOA Director

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[churchesofchrist.org.au/yvq](http://churchesofchrist.org.au/yvq)



# Community Conversations Changing Lives

Linda (CCCV Community Development Coordinator) introducing the consultation session at Imarap, Tanna

The Vanuatu Community Development project started in July 2016, with support from DFAT. The project is about empowering local community members to assess their own needs. When needs are raised, GMP can figure out how best to assist, and we encourage community members to suggest how they can also support the project.

Linda, the CCCV Community Development Coordinator, has conducted the community consultations sessions in various communities. These consultations take a number of hours as the community meets together to identify and voice some of their needs. When Linda facilitates a consultation, she also provides the community some training on gender inclusiveness, disability awareness, child protection and disaster risk reduction.

One example is the community of Imarap on Tanna, where there is a need for a community hall. The

consultation at Imarap included the village leader, the President of Tanna Churches of Christ Council, and elders from other Churches of Christ churches. The session was considered a success and it was noted that representatives from nearby villages also attended which showed the improvement in relationships with the villages. Two other communities where consultations have taken place have requested a market house – a place for women to meet and make handicrafts as well as a place to sell produce (food and handicrafts). It would also provide a meeting place for the community. Another community asked for water pipes to replace pipes between the water source and their tanks. Linda is getting quotes for these buildings, which include water tanks and solar power and the pipes.

Currently four communities are receiving assistance and there is the possibility for a further eight villages

that can receive help too, dependent on funding. In general, the donations received are being used to fund the community consultation and then the small community development projects that arise from the conversations.

*Suzanne Hayes,*  
COCOA Program Officer



TD

\$70

## Community Consultation

A community consultation with orphaned children, widows and people living with disabilities provides a safe space for meeting needs and putting ideas into action **IN VANUATU**

# Liana and Her Three Boys

Khayelihle Children's Village (KCV) in Zimbabwe has been a special and important place to me for many years. I was lucky enough to visit about 15 years ago when it was much smaller and there were only 19 children living in the one house. At the time, I met a young boy that my parents were sponsoring and it really made a lasting impact on me. Years later, my husband Darren and I are sponsoring a young child similar in age to our sons, Hudson and Toby. The boys know all they can about Kwanele, like his age and birth date, they know he loves soccer, the Bible, and must do his maths, like his teacher says! They can see

that even though he is far away in another country he is still doing similar things and wanting a happy life just like them. But they also know he doesn't have life like them, and it helps them to appreciate their lives and health. Hudson often mentions Kwanele and wonders how life is for him. We have Kwanele's photos and report cards and the boys talk about him often. It's such a simple thing to sponsor a child and donate to such an important cause. We love having Kwanele in our life!

*Liana Zanker,*  
SA



TD

\$55

## Support a Child for a Month

Monthly support for a child means greater opportunities in education and helps connect them into a family situation. COCOA cares for orphaned, abused or abandoned children through programs in **ZIMBABWE** and **SOUTH SUDAN**



NSW team that visited India

## Navigate Team Visit India

I would like to thank the talented and dedicated team who visited our children's home. The team leaders Abby, Jessie and Laura did an amazing job. The team took morning devotions for about 80 children and staff. Then they taught English, computing, arts and even some new Australian sports to the primary school children. The team did a great job communicating with our children even though there was a language barrier. In the afternoons, they helped children with their chores, and the girls loved cooking chapati (Indian bread). They ate all the spicy food

that we provided, and even though it was hot and smoky in our kitchen they never complained! During the evening devotion time, the team sang along with our children, taught them new action songs and then one member would share a testimony and encourage our children to grow more in their faith in Jesus Christ. We learnt from all the team about dedication. All the children and staff were really blessed by this team!

*Danny Gaikwad,*  
India



## Wyoming Team Inspire Indonesian Students

In September, Peter Shaw and a team from Wyoming Church of Christ, NSW, helped to run the Kairos Missions course along with five Indonesian facilitators and 50 participants including students from the Church of Christ Theological School Indonesia (CCTSI).

The course was excellent and students were given a bigger view of God's heart. Students engaged with this really well, with many testifying of how God worked to give them new conviction and courage to take the gospel to unreached peoples

throughout Indonesia. Hery Susanto, the CCTSI Academic Dean, took us to see examples of the weekend ministry that all students undertake every week in local villages. It was tremendous to see examples of practical ministry being done. The students work to build good relationships in the villages and run activities that both help the community and give opportunity to naturally share God's word. We met Petrius, who is running an organic farming group, another student teaching children English, Maths, cooking, and showing films about



Moses and Jesus which the children then ask questions about. We loved the vision and mission of the college to train the students for effective ministry throughout Indonesia.

*Peter Shaw,*  
NSW



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