

IN PARTNERSHIP

MARCH 2018



Bring
HOPE
this Easter



In life many things happen that can have a discouraging impact on us. We look forward to new opportunities that do not come to pass. Our dreams do not come true! These experiences can be deeply discouraging, and we can lose hope.

One of the foundational elements to Christian faith is hope. Hope in God, hope in life and hope as we look to the future. Such hope enables us to live through the disappointments of life and to discover that there is something more to be anticipated.

Death for Jesus was real and not what he hoped for. His death was a suffering death – without compassion, mercy or dignity. His burial in a borrowed grave seemed to be the end of the story for his followers. However, the empty tomb told a different story – a resurrection story of rich hope and of wonderful new life.

In life our disappointments remain, and in the grace of God we find that rising above them is the power of love and a grace that renews hope – hope beyond what we can imagine. This is the Easter truth made real for us. Death is not the end – hope is triumphant in resurrection.

Paul sums up the human journey and the discovery of hope as he writes: “endurance produces character, character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts though the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.” (Romans 5:4-5). This Easter we will be people of hope, who live in the confidence of our hope and who seek to bring hope to others.

John Gilmore,
GMP Executive Officer

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For even more of the latest news, check out our website or follow us on facebook.

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News & Events



SURRENDER:18 Saints & Citizens

23-25 March 2018

Belgrave Heights Convention
Centre, Belgrave, VIC

Consumerism and conflict, politics and power, fear and injustice mark the narrative of our world and our streets. Humanity was created from the dust of the land, yet God breathed His life into us - but have we lost connection to both? As we follow Jesus how do we understand and balance our call to seek His kingdom coming in the now of our neighbourhoods and world, yet have faith and find hope in the promise of a creation made whole. Can we embody the way of Jesus now as citizens in our places and world, yet hold an eternal identity as saints?

www.surrender.org.au



Thank You to the volunteers who helped with the Walk for Hope Easter mail out in February!



The Children's Ministry at Agnes' new church

Walk for Hope this Good Friday

Agnes is a faithful, Christian woman from Zimbabwe. Every Sunday, she would walk an exhausting 15km to get to the nearest church to her home.

For people like Agnes living in rural Zimbabwe, walking to church is the only option. There is little public transport. The few small vans that do run are packed full and don't travel to remote communities. Most people walk around 5km to get to their local churches, but it can be an arduous walk of up to 25km. This distance isolates people from their church communities and limits their involvement in church life.

Unfortunately, lack of access to churches is a challenge in more places than just Zimbabwe. Many people around the world still don't have access to the hope brought by Christian ministries. But there is hope, and you can be a part of it.

Thanks to your support of Christian ministries through GMP, you have helped establish a new church plant closer to Agnes. It's cut the distance she has to walk in half! She attends faithfully. Agnes even helped to make the bricks and lay the foundations for the church building. She is a leader in the women's



Agnes

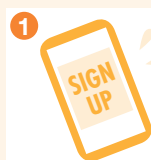
fellowship, and visits many people around her community. Imagine the possibilities if more people could contribute to their churches like Agnes!

You can help bring hope, and give people like Agnes better access to Christian ministries. And it's as easy as walking to church. This Good Friday, walk to church, and raise money to help give people hope through access to Christian ministries. The money you raise helps plant new churches, train pastors, and send evangelists to share Jesus' message of hope to more people.

Find out how you can Walk for Hope this Easter, and help people like Agnes!

Sign up, donate and find out more information at WalkforHope.com.au or contact the GMP office to make a donation.

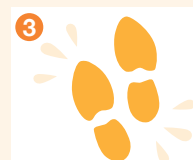
How can I walk for Hope?



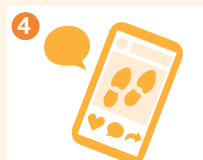
1 Sign up, join a walk, or create your own.



2 Raise money from your friends and family.



3 Walk to church this Good Friday.



4 Share your walk #GMPWalkforHope.



Students of Londua

Remain True to Your Faith and Hold Fast

Ps Rexford Bani began as the School Chaplain at Londua Technical College (LTC) in 2015. This appointment has been an asset, aiding a youthful community whose foundation is formed upon building lives, growing success through education, and providing leaders to many parts of Vanuatu.

Rex loves to work with the youth on a daily basis. “Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, as well as every evening, I share devotions with all the students.” The motto of the school – ‘Hold Fast’ – encourages all members of its community to remain true to their faith, and build a stronger commitment to Christ in all aspects of their lives. “We look together into God’s Word, to encourage the physical and spiritual development of the young people, and to see its relevance for life today.” Rex teaches Religious Education classes, “encouraging more disciplined and Christ-centered lives, to build spirituality, especially for those kids who have come to the school from less disciplined backgrounds.”

Rex also works with the 13 staff members, encouraging teamwork and application of spirituality in the school community where they all live together. Rex would like to see further development in the young people, “a growing and expressive spiritual life where they experience God for themselves, and express their faith in practical ways to each other and in ministry to the wider community.”

Rex is a blessing to the community. “I did not think I would get this job when I applied for it, but all things are in God’s hands and I am excited to be working here at Londua. I can see God’s calling in this position now and for the future. Over the past two years I feel that I have matured as a teacher, and learnt more about the meaning and application of Scripture. It has confirmed that this is the place where I am called to represent Christ.”

Londua Technical College is one of the oldest Churches of Christ institutions in Vanuatu, based near NduiNdui on West Ambae. Having



Rexford the LTC Chaplain

commenced at the end of World War II as a girl’s school, Londua is now a thriving boarding community of 120 high school students (boys and girls), and some 30 vocational students studying automotive, joinery, hospitality and tourism. Thank you to Churches of Christ in Australia for your support of Rex in this ministry!

Peter Bryant,
Principal LTC

Welcome to the Team, Katrina!

Katrina Davidson has come from a finance background to join the GMP team in Adelaide as Bookkeeper. Katrina says, “This is a fantastic environment to work in as the people are so genuine. The work that GMP does is inspirational. It gives me

great pleasure to work in such an environment that fits with my values and morals. I look forward to meeting many of the team when they visit the Adelaide office.”

Welcome to the Team, Katrina!





Shrigonda Primary School Celebrates 100 Years

Saturday 10 February marked the centenary celebrations of the Shrigonda Primary School, India. GMP Executive Officer, John Gilmore, and COCOA Program Officer, Suzanne Hayes, were present for the event. John says of the celebrations: "It was such a tribute to the resilience of people, both local and Australian missionaries – a fine heritage." Suzanne was also encouraged: "We met a number of previous students who, since leaving Shrigonda, pursued further education in nursing, teaching and science and now are in good jobs. It was a real credit that the girls, many from disadvantaged families, had been given not just the academic skills but also the confidence to pursue a career. They were very

happy to return and be part of the celebrations, along with past teachers and principals – all wanting to give thanks and to encourage the continuation of the fine tradition."

Sherley's Story

Sherley, a former student at Shrigonda, attended the centenary celebrations and declared: "I am a witness to this day because it was my primary school. It was precious for me to see. I enjoyed being a speaker on the day and writing for the school magazine." Sherley studied at both primary and high school at Shrigonda. After school she studied nursing. Now, Sherley is living in Mumbai with her husband and adult son, working as a centre

Left: Suzanne and John celebrated the school's centenary at Shrigonda, India
Right: Sherley Fernandes

manager and volunteering as a social worker, as well as being president of the local Church of Christ. Sherley has a heart for the local church, social issues and encouraging various initiatives within the slum community. "I am very happy to say I am working with the poor people – working in the slum area so that people are knowing God." Sherley is very thankful for the Churches of Christ in Western India, GMP and the opportunity to receive an education through boarding at Shrigonda, which has given her "a good position in life."

Rachel McIlgorm,
GMP Communications



Sunnybank (QLD) visits Fiji

In 2016 a connection was established between Sunnybank Church of Christ (QLD) and Sigatoka Church in Fiji. A team of 12 from Sunnybank returned to Fiji in late 2017 to spend 10 days with Pastor Muneshwar and the church. The team participated in house-to-house visitation, midweek Bible study, and a children's outreach activity, as well as Sunday services. Craft, games and puppets helped connect the

team with around 40 local children, several of whom have had little contact with the Christian faith. It was a meaningful experience for both partners, and we look forward to this partnership growing over the years. Please pray for the local church in Fiji as they follow up with families and nourish the connections made.

Bruce Edwards,
Fiji

Church-to-Church Partnerships are opportunities for churches in Australia to adopt particular projects through partnering with international churches, knowing that they will make a real and ongoing difference. If you would like to start a partnership please contact us or check out the 'Get Involved' section on our GMP website!