

# IN PARTNERSHIP

August 2021



## The Bigger Picture of 'Safe Water'

Since 2014, supporters like you have worked with us to provide access to safe water for people in Zimbabwe and Vanuatu. 'Safe Water' is more than just clean water to drink – and the whole picture is even bigger than just water tanks and boreholes.

Safe Water September has always been about more than drinking water. Our partners work with communities to address many issues that come with a lack of clean water. This includes improving the quality of water. It also includes making it safe to access and collect, and managing water well to benefit the whole community. We've seen a school reopen, small businesses start and, of course, people's health improved. Clean drinking water has always been a crucial part of our partners' work, but there's so much more that 'Safe Water' can achieve.

The even bigger picture of Safe Water includes hygiene and sanitation. This means good hygiene resources and education, like proper handwashing. It also means access to proper sanitation facilities, which helps keep water from being contaminated. Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene go hand in hand.

This "bigger picture" is referred to as WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene). And it's so important to people's wellbeing, that it's one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Safe Water September has always supported WASH projects. Our local partners have been working to bring effective water solutions to communities in need. Thanks to your support, Safe Water September has grown, and so has our capacity to support more projects that focus on the Hygiene and Sanitation aspects of WASH.

There is a great need for effective hygiene and sanitation. Many people around the world have no choice but to go to the toilet in the open – this is known as 'open defecation'. This puts them at great risk that could otherwise be prevented.

For example, open defecation leads to exposed waste and it often occurs alongside a lack of proper handwashing. This increases the risk of bacterial and surface contamination. This can be very dangerous, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Waste from open defecation can also end up in rivers and catchments. This often contaminates the supply of drinking water. Drinking contaminated water leads to diseases like diarrhoea and cholera. These preventable illnesses can be fatal to people who already lack medical care. Children are especially at risk. Open defecation has been linked to increases in malnutrition and stunted growth.

Women and girls are also placed at risk of gender-based violence. The lack of enclosed space and privacy increases vulnerability. They may face violent attacks and sexual assault.

These are critical issues. That's why Safe Water September is now contributing to WASH projects that focus on these needs. We are now partnering in Bangladesh, to help give people in need improved sanitation, good hygiene and, of course, access to water. We'll be sharing more information about this project very soon on the Safe Water September blog and in next month's In Partnership.

Safe Water makes a critical difference to people's lives. Every person deserves to have safe drinking water. Every person deserves proper hygiene education. And every person deserves safe, clean sanitation facilities. Safe Water September aims to turn that ideal into reality.

Drink Water. Give Water. It's that simple! You can take part in the Safe Water September challenge! For every \$25 raised, one person gains access to safe water in Bangladesh, Vanuatu or Zimbabwe.

To find out more and sign-up for Safe Water September, visit our website at [www.safewaterseptember.org.au](http://www.safewaterseptember.org.au).

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## News & Events



### Farewell and welcome

GMP would like to thank Sam Curkpatrick for his energy and investment in the work of GMP as he concludes in his role of Partnership Coordinator VIC/TAS. We wish him all the best as he goes on to undertake an exciting research project about Indigenous music and theology through the University of Divinity.

We would also like to thank Audrey Lim from the Adelaide Administration Team, who finished at the end of June. We welcome Sheree Crouch to the the GMP team in the role of Adelaide Administration Assistant.

### Digital Content Manager Ad

Are you skilled in digital content creation, and want to be part of transforming lives? This new position could be for you. GMP is seeking a Digital Content Manager with a passion for global mission to support the life-changing outcomes of our partners, both in Australia and internationally.

The Digital Content Manager will be responsible for managing GMP's public presence over a variety of digital channels. You will help improve GMP's digital presence and be a key part of growing our digital marketing strategy. You will create exceptional written and visual content, creating and implementing digital campaigns, and connect with existing and new supporters.

If you'd like to use your creativity, strategic thinking, and effective communications to help grow life-changing ministry and development programs, we'd love to hear from you!

For more information and how to apply, download the full Position Description from [www.gmp.org.au/about-us/employment](http://www.gmp.org.au/about-us/employment).



*Mary Thompson the first Churches of Christ missionary sent to India*

## Working Together Across Generations

Some years ago, the GMP Board decided to be more intentional in the way we engaged with younger people. This was a shift in strategy and is still a point of focus.

The results of this change in direction are noticeable. embody was established as an experiment and it is now core to GMP. Out of embody came Safe Water September which has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for clean water projects (and is coming next month). We have younger Board members – even though sometimes being on the Board is not the most exciting thing to be involved in! We have a mix in our staff of older and younger and, yes, I am one of the oldest!

When some heard about our strategy shift, a comment was made that it's like older people no longer matter. This is not the case. We did not – and do not – want to set up a younger vs older dynamic! We do celebrate what happens when we are all drawn into the same commitment to be part of a ministry of compassion, advocacy and Christian mission such as GMP. We all have a place in God's mission enterprise.

In Acts, the prophet Joel is quoted: "I will pour out my Spirit on all people; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young will see visions, your old will dream dreams..." (Acts 2:17 adapted). Luke is clear – all ages, and women and men are called to be a people of the future, a people of hope and expectation.

Together we are a future people who, with God's Spirit, are part of an evolving future. What we all bring is vitally important. This year marks 130 years since the sending of the first Churches of Christ missionary to India. Her name was Mary Thompson and she was young – 30 years of age – when she sailed in 1891. She was a young pioneer!

There are ways whereby we can affirm and value each other. Perhaps taking time to carefully listen to each other can help. Asking the other about their experiences in mission, and valuing the legacy of the past. Celebrating that we learn by attempting to do something new, while recognising that it may not work. Taking a risk and asking for help!

It is clear that we are all members of the one body – where the only hierarchical element is the place Jesus Christ has in the body – the head.

*John Gilmore,*  
Executive Officer



## How Your Generosity Blesses People during the Pandemic

*The team at Ashwood Memorial Hospital pictured with vital supply kits*

With the impact of COVID getting worse in many of our partner countries, we launched an emergency ministry appeal. This was to help our local Churches of Christ partners provide care and support at a grassroots level. Your response to this appeal was overwhelming! Over \$150,000 has been given to provide this care. And it is making a difference in the lives of people.

Our early focus was providing relief through our partners in India. We connected with our partners Hosanna Ministries (Mumbai and Yavatmal), Reaching Hand Society (Orissa), Ashwood Memorial Hospital (Daund), and the Churches of Christ in Western India (Mumbai, Baramati, Shrigonda and surrounding areas). Each is well placed to provide support to affected people. Thanks to the funds raised from the appeal, our partners could quickly support their community. This care will be ongoing as the effect of COVID continues to be felt.

Hosanna Ministries has provided essential medical assistance, food kits and vital supplies to families. Our partner, Daniel Gaikward, reports:

“So far we were able to provide medical help towards a community of people affected by leprosy. About 35 people with leprosy have lost work due to the COVID

pandemic and the shutdown of many businesses. We were able to provide medical help that will last for one month’s time.

“We were also able to bless about 30 transgender people, living in a community in the Ambernath area. The members of this community live by begging for food on local trains or singing at weddings or birthday functions of rich people. Due to lockdown their income has stopped. Through GMP we provided them with food kits that will help support their family of six members for at least one month.”

The Churches of Christ in Western India have also been distributing essential supplies. They have given 350 supply kits to people in need through local churches and institutions, such as the Baramati and Shrigonda children’s homes. Your gifts to the COVID-19 Ministry Appeal have made this vital outreach possible. Our partners are so grateful.

“Many are jobless and had no food to eat but the help came from GMP at the proper time,” Dr Robert Gaikwad says. “Kindly convey our gratitude and regards to all the churches who have made this possible.”

Because of you, our partners can keep reaching out. We continue to work with our partners in India, and also with partners in other countries

that are experiencing extreme spikes in COVID cases. Your generous giving will help plan new support initiatives as needed.

We have recently worked with our partners in Fiji to provide critical support. Our three partner churches are situated in minority Indo-Fijian communities and are experiencing a rapidly-growing COVID outbreak. Most people in their communities have insecure work and many are unable to work due to the local travel restrictions that help stop the virus spread. With few resources and threatened income, people in these communities need vital supplies.

With your support through the COVID-19 Ministry Appeal, the three local churches have distributed 150 food hampers to people in need. Each food hamper is worth about 50 FJD and has been distributed equally between the church community and those outside the church.

Thank you for your continued support of GMP and our partners. Your support enables us to work with our partners to respond to the needs in their communities. We are so grateful for your compassion and care for those in need.

You can still give to the COVID-19 Ministry Appeal. We anticipate that, as the effects of COVID-19 develop, we will be able to offer further support to our partners in need. Head online to [www.gmp.org.au](http://www.gmp.org.au).



Young people at Khayelihle Children's Village (KCV), Zimbabwe

## Equipping Young People to Build a Better Future

August 12 is International Youth Day. This year, the UN has set the focus on youth engagement at a local, national and global level. The involvement of young people in politics and development enriches these processes. It gives them the ability to help build a future that is fair for them, and for their children.

For this to happen, young people need support. They need access to education and training. They need to build social skills and connections. Despite setbacks because of the pandemic, Khayelihle Children's Village (KCV) in Zimbabwe is helping young people build these skills for their future.

There are currently 48 children residing at KCV, living in small family groups with house parents. This provides a supportive and loving home for children while they move through a reconnecting process with relatives. COVID-19 has brought some restrictions to the village over the past year and Vimbai Vuma, Director of KCV, says, "Our lives have been changed."

One of the many changes the children faced during lockdown was the cancellation of social activities such as school sports gala days, trips into town and social visits with friends. They are instead spending more time learning practical skills by helping at the KCV farm. The children divided themselves

into groups, where the girls help in the farm garden and the boys at the dairy.

"Our cattle are doing fairly well. They have been getting extra nutrition from feeding on the grass," Vimbai says. "We have managed to plant tomatoes, butternuts and green beans. We are currently enjoying the fresh mealie cobs from the garden."

With the closure of local schools, students moved to online learning. They are encouraged to attend their studies at the KCV library at set times. A benefactor, Higherlife Foundation, installed the internet. It is further aiding the children in their studies by providing a platform where the children are taught about various things such as the word of God, gender discrimination and violence, and how to protect themselves from the coronavirus.

Despite the challenges of school closures, Grade 7 and 11 students were able to complete their examinations last year in December. One Grade 13 student, Blessing, completed her examinations in January this year. Vimbai reports, "We await her results to see if she qualifies to do further study in her dream field of Social Work."

When you give support through GMP, you enable KCV to help young people like Blessing equip themselves to build a better future.

## Safe Water September 2021 has begun!



Safe Water September is on for another year! After last year's record-breaking fundraising challenge, we're looking forward to continuing the amazing impact that our national community of challenge takers has on communities around the world! Safe water remains a vital part of community development and breaking cycles of poverty, especially as COVID-19 continues to affect the world. We are excited to continue supporting the work of Showers of Blessing in Zimbabwe, CCCV (Conference of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu) and, for the first time, we'll be supporting sanitation projects through the Community Advancement Forum (CAF) in Bangladesh!

CAF helps remote communities install latrines, so that waste can be properly disposed of, and nothing contaminates existing safe water sources. It's not glamorous – just a simple latrine, which alongside education on good sanitation and hygiene to stop the spread of disease, can have a massive affect on the community.

You're invited to take the Safe Water September challenge, and give up your coffee, tea, soft drinks and all other non-water drinks, to stand in solidarity with people around the world who experience a lack of choice caused by poverty. If you sign up and are one of the first 100 people to raise \$50 to your profile, you'll also secure a very limited-edition metal travel cup; perfect for tea, coffee, chai, or just hot water!

Sign up today at [safewaterseptember.org.au](https://safewaterseptember.org.au) and have a massive impact on communities in Zimbabwe, Vanuatu and Bangladesh. Because every person deserves safe water.

