



life-changing
partnerships



IN PARTNERSHIP

www.gmp.org.au | August 2017



John Gilmore, Executive Officer, with
Dr Philemon Pawar, Superintendent of
Ashwood Memorial Hospital, India

Partnership, Vulnerability and Power

For much of the history of missionary activity the focus and perspective has paralleled the colonising activities of government and national expansion. This can be seen in the dominant church denominational identity being directly related to the colonising government identity. For example, in North Sulawesi in Indonesia, older Christians prefer to pray in Dutch – reflecting the colonising impact of both the Dutch government and the Dutch Reformed Church. Many good things came about as a result of these mission initiatives. However, the cultural outcome was to make the other like us. In this process, the experience and culture of local communities is ignored or devalued.

The understanding of cross cultural mission (both Indigenous and internationally) is changing. There is a much greater appreciation of, and respect for, the local cultural understanding, meaning and insight. This means that there is an increasing sensitivity to local cultures.

One outcome of this shift is a much greater commitment to learning and valuing local insights. There is still much to learn in this regard.

When we engage in healthy mission we begin to realise that despite all our enthusiasm and confidence we are actually dependent on the other. This realisation is only possible when we accept our vulnerability, and our need of the other. This is only possible as we release our need to be in control and our desire to be the experts.

Accepting our vulnerability and letting go of our need to be in control creates a special place in which relationships grow and mutual learning can occur. Mission becomes a mutual process that we enter into.

The whole Christian journey and our relationship with God are founded on our vulnerability. We accept that we have a need, and that we have ‘fallen short’. Accepting God’s

grace and love shown in Jesus then provides the foundation we need for life. Accepting that our personal spirituality is based on receiving the gift of God’s grace and forgiveness is a rich foundation for mission.

The mission partnerships that Churches of Christ enter into are based on an appreciation that before God we are all equal and that we need each other as part of God’s kingdom. An immediate outcome of this is that the pathway into positive mission is based on mutual learning and recognising that we are invited to be students of culture and experience. This means that as we learn at least two things happen – we realise how naïve our assumptions about the other are, and how much more we still need to learn.

John Gilmore,
Executive Officer

This Month in InPartnership

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We have a brand new website! It’s designed to make it easy for you to meet our partners, and see the how we’re bringing change around the world. We’d love for you to check it out!

www.gmp.org.au

Welcome to the Team!

Matthew Hornby has joined the GMP team in Melbourne as our Marketing Manager. Matt brings a broad range of training, skills and experiences to this role, having attained a Masters Degree in Marketing and an MBA, and he has also worked professionally in church ministry, community engagement

and marketing. He is passionate about marketing and “resourcing the Kingdom,” especially in the not-for-profit sector. Outside of work, Matt and his wife, Bianca, have just become new parents to their first son, Zachariah. Matt’s other passions include music, basketball, coffee, cars, and reading. Matt says,



“I am delighted to join in the vital work being done here at GMP.” Welcome to the team, Matt!

Will You Drink Only Water in September?

Safe Water September is a challenge to drink nothing but water for the month of September in an effort to raise funds for safe water projects in rural Zimbabwe. Every September we choose to drink only water for the month. We have the chance to give up just one liberty to help us experience a small part of poverty, and to understand what it is like for people living without access to safe water. As a result, for every \$20 that is raised, one person gains access to safe water. Safe Water September has raised over \$300,000 and impacted the lives of more than 15,000 people over the last three years.

During Safe Water September, we give ourselves no choice in what we

drink – only water – to stand with people in poverty and to help us understand something of the banality and limitations of poverty. Living in poverty means lack of choices. People in poverty are limited in their ability to make choices about where to eat, whether – and for how long – they can access schooling, where to live, and how to access safe water. Without access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation are huge problems for communities. A lack of clean water makes it hard to wash yourself and your clothes, and keep things clean. People often share their water sources with animals, which is unhygienic. Diarrhoea, which can be so easily prevented, is frequently life threatening – particularly for children.

In contrast, Australians have the privilege of almost endless choices – we are generally uninhibited in our choices of what we can eat, what to buy, where we go to school and what kind of career we’ll have.

Will you join us and drink only water this coming September? Head to www.safewaterseptember.org.au to join the Safe Water September community – sign up, support a challenge-taker and donate to the cause.

One Month. Just Water. Raise Funds. Change Lives.

The embody Team





Mrs Ngensim with the women's ministry team.

New Outreach Opportunities for Women in Bangladesh

The Bandarban Hills Churches of Christ (BHCOC) Women's Ministry was formed in March 2014. The women are supporting their local ministers and Bible translation, as well as distributing songbooks from a small income they receive from handloom weaving. Women teach handicrafts to support the younger age groups in sustainable living. Most recently, the women's ministry has wanted to increase women's participation in serving the Lord, and to create new opportunities where women can minister to women (especially young women) in different facets of their lives.

Mrs Ngensim, Chairperson of the women's ministry said, "We would like to take more opportunity in reaching the unreached women of the neighbouring villages through the gospel." There are 18 local churches in the Bandarban region. Leaders of these churches, accompanied by youth and women ministry teams, travel village-to-village and individual-to-individual, aiming to visit as many people as possible. Team travel depends on the availability of transport. A variety of methods are used, including boats, walking and hiking through the mountains, and traveling on local roads. The women who are involved in creating new outreach opportunities have recently returned from the Bible College in Chennai.

They will be building up relationships with women in surrounding villages, accessible by motorbike, and will be the initial entry point for families to hear the gospel, something that usually begins with women. Starting small groups will provide a place of peace for women to retreat to from their busy lives, to have some quiet time with God or engage in fellowship with other women, helping these women to start and maintain an effective prayer life. These ministries would also include literature handouts, guest speakers and retreats to assist the women's spiritual growth, and to also increase their understanding of health issues that affect their mind, body and spirit. Teaching to uphold the sanctity of Christian marriage and family life will also be included. Once they start understanding more about the gospel and following Jesus, there will then be the opportunity to determine whether a pastor/evangelist will go to live in that village.

This women's ministry is important for building relationships, supporting and training women – young and old – for participation and leadership in the church and the community, and to encourage and provide opportunities for younger women to take an active part in all the programs of the church. Mrs Ngensim says, "In the name of



Women support local ministers with the small income they receive from handloom weaving.

Jesus Christ, I humbly request and invite your love and prayers for this ministry – that the women's group here may stand firm and stable."

Please also pray for:

- Pastor Rongak and his wife, who have dedicated their lives for ministry among the Mru. Both of them have a strong vision and zeal for the ministry among the areas where we conduct outreach programs.
- The spiritual life of each BHCOC congregation, including their children, youth and adults.

Vana Bawm,
Bangladesh

Parliamentary Inquiry into a Modern Slavery Act

Slavery is a denial and abuse of human dignity and freedom. Human trafficking is a form of slavery where individuals are treated as a commodity and exploited for their labour, commonly in agriculture and manufacturing sectors. This exploitation is achieved and sustained through threats, coercion, force, abduction or deception. Global Mission Partners engages with the work of STOP THE TRAFFIK, a coalition of organisations that work against trafficking in Australia and internationally.

Trafficking is a problem in our region, especially in India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Thailand. According to STOP THE TRAFFIK, high-risk areas for human trafficking and slavery include the production of cocoa, bricks/tiles, electronics, tea, coffee, cotton, embroidered fabrics, rice and palm oil. In Australia, we enjoy consuming many products with unknown origins and supply chains, where there is the likelihood that slavery and human trafficking were directly involved or perpetuated. These activities may be buried deep within supply chains and production. We should be concerned because as consumers we are implicated, even if indirectly. More importantly, we do have the power to make positive change in eradicating

slavery and human trafficking. The UK, USA, France and Denmark have introduced legislation that requires compulsory reporting on supply chain transparency for large companies. This legislation requires large companies to publicly disclose their efforts to eradicate slavery within the supply chains that feed into the products they create.

Recently, the Australian Government received submissions to their Inquiry into establishing a Modern Slavery Act in Australia. GMP co-signed a submission prepared by STOP THE TRAFFIK that recommends the adoption of a Modern Slavery Act requiring public, mandatory reporting for businesses that reach an appropriate financial threshold, to be overseen by an independent commissioner. Further, the submission recommended that public resources should only be used to procure goods or services from companies that demonstrate sufficient measures to minimise the risk of slavery in their supply chains.

Among younger people, there is great interest in raising awareness and becoming better informed about the issues of modern slavery, as well as responsible shopping and consumption. Keep your eyes open for GMP campaigns, news articles and Facebook posts. Our coalition partner, STOP THE TRAFFIK, run

trafficking awareness trips to India, Cambodia and Thailand during November 2017-January 2018. These trips offer a unique opportunity to gain exposure to the issues of slavery and trafficking. On the India Fashion Field Trip in November, you'll find out what really goes on behind the scenes in the global fashion industry; the January India Insight Trip will expose you to the world's epicenter of human trafficking and modern slavery, and the Eyes Wide Open Trip to Cambodia and Thailand will take you to the Mekong region – a hotspot for trafficking. You will meet victims and survivors, interact with those on the front lines of preventing trafficking, and gain insights into the reality of exploitation around the world. For more information go to their website <http://stophetraffik.com.au/awareness-trips>

Your state GMP Partnership Coordinator would love to have a conversation with you about engaging your church community with issues of slavery or trafficking. If you are interested in reading the parliamentary submission, please visit <http://stophetraffik.com.au/modern-slavery-act-in-australia>

Samuel Curkpatrick,
VIC-TAS Partnership Coordinator

Summer Youth Bible Club, Indonesia

Every summer, students from Churches of Christ Theological School Indonesia (CCTSI) help with a nearby summer Bible camp for the young people as part of their involvement within local church activities and ministry. Students take part in teaching and leading worship times and have a chance to promote our CCTSI Bible School. The annual summer camp held on June 18-20 had 186 teenagers attend from 33 of

our GJKI churches. This year's theme was 'Revival Generation'. There were three practical items on the agenda besides drawing closer to God and each other. Firstly, cleaning the nearby river, secondly, planting some trees and, thirdly, setting up an announcement board to encourage people to care about nature.

Hery Susanto,
Indonesia



Heri Sinaga and two teenagers collecting waste.



Bangladesh Floods – Pray for Us

The Bandarban Hostel was flooded after recent monsoon rains. The items most affected included books, mattresses and furniture. The toilet floor cracked, and one desktop computer was damaged. The total damage bill came to around AUD \$1,300. The reason that more damage occurred this year was that it flooded on the Ramadan holiday, when the hostel was closed. Only the hostel keeper was on guard, and the flood came in the middle of the night.

Floods in the Bandarban region have become more consistent over the past five years. Each year the rainfall has raised the water level of the river, which now frequently reaches the hostel. The rented

hostel is in a three-story building, with the hostel located on the ground floor or basement. The floods caused some damage to the building, which is currently not hygienic and full of mud.

Located in a hilly region means landslides are common and many people have lost their land and crops, houses and lives. As tenants, we have major concerns about the rented space. We are currently looking at the alternatives. There is no option for preventing flooding in the rented space. We would like to change the hostel location, if a suitable place could be found in town. Changing the hostel location would make it a bit harder for school

transportation for the children, but this could be made possible by utilising the hostel administration.

Please pray with us:

- Pray as we make decisions and trust God for the best answer.
- Pray for those affected by the monsoon, particularly people facing the danger of landslides.
- Pray for the future plans for the development of the hostel in Bandarban.

Vana Bawm,
Bangladesh



Bharti's Story, India

Bharti, a student of Saksham vocational training project is undergoing a tragic phase of her life. Last year her husband, an auto-rickshaw driver, was murdered in broad daylight when caught up in a gang war. He left behind three children, including one child with a disability. Not having any education and being unemployed made Bharti's life even more miserable, and it was difficult to look after

herself as well as her children. All of a sudden, she felt that the world had ended for her. Undergoing a six-month long tailoring course with Saksham vocational training project has renewed her confidence, and she has found courage to fight all the odds and move ahead in life. Bharti is a hardworking woman who always has a smile on her face. She is very good at stitching and designing clothes. Once she

completes the course she is keen to get a job, which will make her able to take care of her family's daily needs, school fees and medical treatment. Saksham vocational training project is working as a light and hope to many youth living in the dark slums of India. Thank you for your support.

Smita Gaiwad,
India



"There are many different changes in me about relationships with my colleagues. But the most significant changes for me are in my work skills and my character." – Kim

Changing the World Without Leaving Home: Smarter Consumption

I hope last month's article made you think about your consumption and you are now eating and generally consuming less. The reality is that we do need to eat and generally consume stuff (though not as much as we thought). So, how can we do that in a way that is good for the planet and good for the people who live in it? Here are a few ideas about consuming in a way that cares for the planet and people, and honours the God that made them.

Shop Ethically

This has to be consumption 101 for Christians. We are called to do everything in a way that reflects the character of the God we follow (Matt 5:48) and that means following the highest ethical standard in all that we do. See my previous article on Fair Trade for consuming goods from developing countries in an ethical way. Here are a few ideas for shopping in general:

1. Ethical Groceries

www.ethical.org.au tells you the story behind the products in the supermarket. Your weekly shop can be a way to favour companies that treat people and the planet well. Just take the Shop Ethical! booklet or app with you. WARNING: It may cost you – but following Jesus always does.

2. Ethical Fashion

The Baptist World Aid Ethical Fashion Guide has done the homework for you for identifying ethical clothing, so when you next change your wardrobe it can be a step forward for an ethical society as well as for looking good. Download the guide from

<https://baptistworldaid.org.au/resources/2017-ethical-fashion-guide>

3. Ethical Electronics

Another area rife with exploitation is electronics, so use the Baptist World Aid Ethical Electronics Guide to guide your purchases. Download the guide from <https://baptistworldaid.org.au/resources/ethical-electronics-guide>

4. Ethical Investment

There is now an ethical investment industry offering products like Ethical Super and Managed Funds. There are many ethical investments. Some avoid arms productions, others tobacco, and still others focus on environmentally friendly ventures. Using these guides will leverage your spending dollar to shift the mix of products that companies provide and the way that they provide them. There is no perfectly ethical product. The CEO of the most eco-friendly, fair trade company may be acting unethically in private and the guides mentioned above will not tell you that, but changing your consumption will definitely

swing things in the right direction. Have a look online <https://www.australianethical.com.au>

Donate as you consume

Not for profit companies like Thank You water and Who Gives a Crap toilet paper give a large part of their profit to international projects that their products align with (clean water and toilets respectively). So, while you use the product you are reminded of other people who don't have the same level of convenience as you do and your purchase helps them in a practical way.

Gifts that empower

There is a big variety of products produced by companies and projects, which are working to empower poor people with employment and other skills. Our favourite is Bright Solutions (a COCOA project in Vietnam!), which works with marginalised women to produce the most exquisite sewn products. You can purchase gifts via their website brightsolutionsvietnam.com. When you are looking for a gift that gives in multiple ways you can do no better.

Colin Scott,
COCOA Director



Bayswater Prayer Team – thank you Alf for praying for each of the GMP staff and partners!

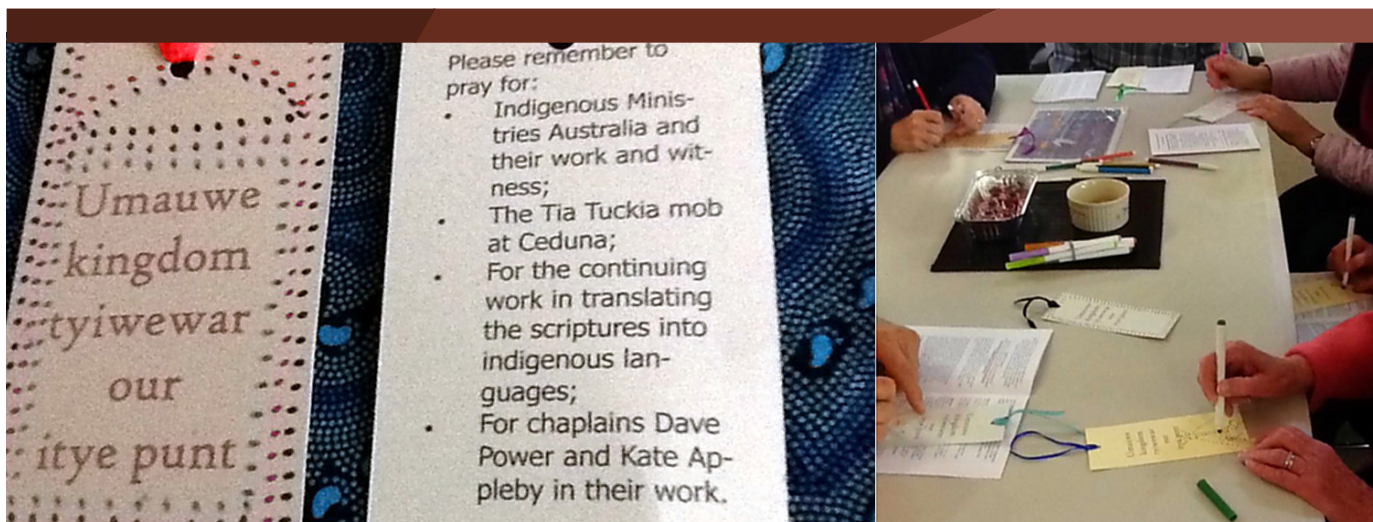
Prayer Reaching Across the Nations

On the second and fourth Tuesday mornings of each month, the Bayswater Church of Christ Mission Focus Group meets to share emails, reports and news of mission partners including GMP, and pray for these mission organisations and their personnel. Some of the team also pray daily for these partners, and many mission prayer points are

included in the Sunday prayers of the church. Although the church may not know the people we pray for personally, we know that God hears our prayers and makes them effective for the Kingdom. Each year the church focuses on a different mission project to raise awareness and pray for those involved, as well as supporting it financially. This

year Khayelihle Children’s Village in Zimbabwe is our mission focus. I am the oldest Mission Focus Group member at 97 years of age, and am rejoicing to still have a clear mind and to be able to partner with God in this way.

Alf Knee,
VIC



Mount Barker ‘Have a Go’ for NAIDOC Week

Mount Barker Church of Christ (SA) had a special Indigenous focus on Sunday July 9 for NAIDOC week. The service was set up differently as we all sat at tables with communion on each table. A number of people were involved in the service, reading good news stories about some of our Indigenous communities, with slides being shown to complement the readings. Following each reading there was prayer for that particular mission area. Each person received a handout consisting of the Lord’s

Prayer in the Ngarrindjeri language, the five prayer reflections from Prayer Matters, and a bookmark with a line from the Ngarrindjeri translation. After hearing about the Aboriginal dot art culture, the congregation was invited to ‘have a go’ at some dot art on the bookmarks. They used textas instead of paint to make it easier. Those who chose not to do that were invited to spend time in prayer using prayer points on the back of the bookmarks, the prayer reflections and their own prayer points. For

morning tea, I made some bush bread, which was delicious spread with butter and jam. The recipe was as close as I could get to the original recipe used 50,000 years ago by the Indigenous peoples. They ground their flour from seeds and nuts, but I just got mine from the supermarket! Everyone said it was a lovely morning tea and most people wanted the recipe.

Una Hodgson,
SA



The group of 12 consisted of members from Epping Church of Christ, C3 Church Ryde, Restore Church (Castle Hill), Thornleigh Community Baptist Church, and C3 Church Bathurst in NSW.

United Together to Visit Vanuatu

A team of 12 from five different churches experienced Vanuatu from June 30-July 15. The team provided spiritual support and guidance to students and staff at Londua Technical College through their leadership of devotions and worship programs twice a day, teaching religious education classes, and encouraging various staff and students. The team also provided additional classes in English, training for staff in teaching strategies, and individual tutoring to students in all subject areas. An understanding of how to decide on future careers was another focus

given by the team to the senior students. Christian perspectives on relationships and health were also well received by the students. These were organised in conjunction with special activity nights for the boys and girls to reinforce the message that "we are all special in God's sight." Spouses of staff were also present. The introduction of new sports games made for an enjoyable afternoon for all students. For the local communities of West Ambae, the long-term connections between some team members and the community here meant this visit was a time to celebrate

friendships, extend relationships and further understand a different culture, reminding us that we are not alone when faced with difficult circumstances. I thank each of you for your extremely generous support towards the development of our young people and the school in general, as well as to the local communities. I commend this team for their expression of God's love as displayed through their actions.

Peter Bryant,
Principal,
Londua Technical College



Called and Chosen, PNG

Masters student, Steven Yamok, from the Melanesian Evangelical Churches of Christ (MECOC) was invited to present a paper to the Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS) Annual Conference in Port Moresby during July. Various representatives

of several theological schools gathered in fellowship, discussed theological papers, and shared curriculum strategies. It is wonderful that Steven was chosen for this opportunity. He will graduate this year in December with his Masters Degree. He hasn't found it easy, but

has persevered. We are planning to be at the graduation to encourage and support his achievement.

David Hammer,
PNG



Australian Churches of Christ Global Mission Partners Inc.

PO Box 341 Torrensville Plaza SA 5031 Ph: 08 8352 3466 Freecall: 1800 467 222

Fax: 08 8234 5373 Email: info@gmp.org.au ABN 30 455 408 814

