

IN PARTNERSHIP

May 2023



Three Goats Give Madelina Hope

Meeting of caretakers receiving goats

Madelina's husband died in the South Sudan conflict. She felt helpless. She was unable to provide for her young son. Madelina desperately needed assistance – she had lost hope for her son's future.

GMP Relief and Development partner, Christian Mercy International (CMI), assists mothers like Madelina through their Goat Project. CMI's Goat Project provides resources to improve the lives and futures of the most vulnerable.

CMI has distributed goats to 150 children's caregivers in all community schools in Aweil West. This includes a nursery and primary school where most children are from homes with single mothers. These families are vulnerable in the community, often with children who have lost one or both parents, or come from the poorest families.

Three goats were gifted to Madelina. When she received the goats, her confidence soared. "This makes us feel proud, positive and confident," she said.

CMI Director, Paulino Malou, explains, "Each child's caregiver in

the community receives one male goat and two female goats". The caregivers breed the goats to earn a small income. CMI provides training and the necessary support to care for the goats. Madelina said, "They have linked us to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation for mass vaccination of our goats".

Through the assistance of the Goat Project, Madelina can provide her 12-year-old son with uniforms, school fees, and medical care. "I have gained hope," Madelina shared. "Receiving goats is one of the greatest investments to keep disadvantaged children at school."

Madelina attends Chelkou Church of Christ, where she finds social and spiritual support for herself and her son. And at Emmanuel School, her son receives additional food assistance from CMI.

Madelina is encouraged that this support helps her situation and children in the community, specifically "in the absence of their biological fathers".

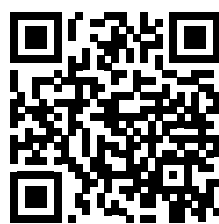
Paulino believes in the Goat Project. "It is one of the best mechanisms to

assist us to break through the extreme cycles of poverty here in South Sudan," he shared.

CMI enables children to access education, regardless of their family background, so that they can succeed in life.

Give mothers like Madelina a second chance.

Your gift to the COCOA Mid-Year Appeal can provide people like Madelina and her son with a second chance at life. You can give people access to education, a sustainable income and hope to break the poverty cycle. Give before June 30 at www.gmp.org.au/secondchance



News & Events

Mother's Day

This Mother's Day, the GMP staff and partners sincerely appreciate and honour all devoted mothers and mother figures. We thank you for your endless love, sacrifices, and incredible efforts that truly make a difference in our lives!

National Sorry Day, May 26

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance day to acknowledge the strength of Stolen Generations Survivors and reflect on how we can all share in the healing process. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

Reconciliation Week: Be a Voice for Generations, May 27 – June 3

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

SYG 2023: RISE, June 9-12

Come join embody at State Youth Games in Victoria! One huge weekend of faith, sport, community and fun. Register online today at <https://stateyouthgames.com/vic/>

Walk for Hope Easter Appeal - Thank You!

Thank you for your gift this Easter. So far \$20,544 has been raised to help GMP international church partners around the world share Jesus' blessing. Thank you for your generosity and partnership in sharing the gospel.

Vanuatu Cyclone Response

Thank you for your support of the Vanuatu Cyclone Response. GMP Relief and Development partner, Conference of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu (CCCV), have been assessing local community needs and have started to distribute supplies including seeds, mosquito nets, and tarpaulins. Find out more at www.gmp.org.au/VanuatuCycloneResponse or Free Call 1800 467 222.

In the Face of Despair

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the challenges throughout the world, the need for Christians to be active in faith and generous in sharing God's love is greater than ever.

The war in Ukraine continues to weigh heavily on us all and is an example of the increasing conflicts throughout the world. While not making news headlines, there is also a noticeable increase in disasters over recent months. Earthquakes in Tajikistan and Ecuador/Peru. Wide-spread flooding in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia - places already devastated by famine. Over 2.6 million people in Türkiye and Syria displaced by the February earthquakes live in tents. Then floods hit them in recent weeks.

The Vanuatu cyclones last month - Judy and Kevin - left many villages with long term recovery projects with many homes, churches and other buildings damaged. I wish to thank all those who gave to the Vanuatu Cyclone Response to date, we gratefully appreciate your support and invite others to contribute also. The need is great.

As we at Global Mission Partners navigate these types of challenges and carry on in the important work of supporting partners overseas and within Australian Indigenous communities, I've been taking inspiration from the story of Nehemiah.

What did Nehemiah do when he heard the despair of the survivors in devastated Jerusalem? The Bible reads, "I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven". Nehemiah's earnest prayer in the face of despair spurred him to action. As a result of his discernment before God, he sought permission to return and help rebuild Jerusalem. His story goes on and tells how he assessed the damage, organised

the resources, coordinated those committed to the cause, overcame opposition and celebrated the accomplishments.

In fact, because of their community development efforts, a spiritual renewal takes place. Nehemiah 8:6 describes that "all the people lifted their hands and responded, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground".

This is happening today. When a community receives access to clean water for the first time, no longer needing to walk long distances, they praise God. When people receive an education and they are the first in their family to graduate, they praise God. When groups of people pool their resources and are no longer enslaved to high-interest loans, they praise God.

It reminds me of the moment Jesus taught us to be salt and light and said, "let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven".

What is our response to the despair of our day?

Is it prayer and fasting?

Will our prayers lead to action?

Will our action lead to God being glorified?

As we approach Pentecost (Sunday May 28) may our efforts to bring hope and restoration in the world be fuelled by prayer and may God bring renewal in all the places of despair.

John Lamerton,
Executive Officer





SPOTLIGHT

Damage from Tropical Cyclones Judy and Kevin, Efate, Vanuatu

Assistance in the Aftermath

Lily-Rose lives in Yekar, an isolated village in Vanuatu. She cooks in her outdoor kitchen under a roof made of palm leaves. When Tropical Cyclone Judy hit her village, it damaged her kitchen roof. It made cooking difficult, exposing it to the rain. The wind also blew down the plants and crops in her garden.

Peter Bryant visited Lily-Rose in Yekar post-cyclone to check the damages. He travelled to represent the Conference of Churches of Christ in Vanuatu (CCCV). “This area has suffered a roll of earth tremors (up to 7.2 intensity) since the start of the year,” Peter explained. Thus, “It felt the direct effects of Cyclone Judy and indirectly Cyclone Kevin,” he said.

Lily-Rose lives alone and doesn’t own a vehicle. Her nearest neighbour lives one kilometre away. It is also a two-kilometre walk to the nearest road. So, facing the difficult circumstances post cyclones, Lily-Rose might have waited a long time for help. When Peter arrived with supplies, it was a relief.

Peter and Lily-Rose stood outside the small Church of Christ in Yekar village. This is where Lily-Rose would seek refuge during the earth tremors in her village. Peter had brought her a strong tarpaulin for the kitchen roof! He also brought

some seeds to grow vegetables. Peter explained that Lily-Rose should plant the seeds to re-establish her garden. “The blown-down banana, taro and manioc would soon be used up, and no further crops available to eat.”

Peter has travelled to many of the villages across Vanuatu to survey the damages with the help of CCCV. Most of the damage has been to people’s gardens and livelihoods. Peter also mentioned roofing, toilets, and kitchens. Many people are now living in semi-permanent structures with tarpaulins. Above-ground water pipes also suffered damages. This has caused challenges with water supply in various places. Peter reports they are continuing to provide seeds and assessing needs for the future. Timely aid from GMP partner CCCV has given these communities much-needed comfort.

Thank you for your support of the Vanuatu Cyclone Response. Your generosity has enabled timely support for people like Lily-Rose, who are re-building their lives after the cyclones.

Find out more or donate at www.gmp.org.au/VanuatuCycloneResponse or Free Call 1800 467 222.



Lily-Rose, Peter Bryant & Aileen (Lily-Rose’s sister)



Yekar Church of Christ



Left: Nick Wight leading a Melbourne Songlines Tour, Right: Visiting the original Indigenous Church of Christ started and led by Sir Doug and Lady Gladys Nicholls, 258 Gore Street, Fitzroy, VIC.

Ringwood Church Participates in the Melbourne Songlines Tour

We are grateful to Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) Coordinator East, Nick Wight and two Indigenous guests, Lonny and Brian, who took several Ringwood Church of Christ people on a tour of some of Melbourne’s significant Indigenous history and cultural landmarks.

The tour helped us grow our understanding of First Nations peoples and culture. It helped to broaden and deepen our compassion and response to God’s call to love our neighbour. The names and places of Christian

Indigenous cultural leaders and activists that we learnt about on Aboriginal Sunday (the Sunday before January 26) came alive as Nick, Brian and Lonny shared stories of Pastor Sir Douglas, Lady Gladys Nicholls and William Cooper, among many.

We were blessed by the presence and contributions of Lonny, who is studying pastoral ministry, and Brian, who is a soon-to-be-published poet. Nick is a gifted storyteller and enthusiastically shared the breadth, depth, beauty and challenges faced by our First Nations peoples.

We were introduced to and reflected on five key aspects of Aboriginal culture: land, family, law, language and ceremony.

Tiffany Gilmour,
Community Engagement
Coordinator,
Ringwood Church of Christ.

You can participate in a Songlines Tour with IMA in Victoria or South Australia. Contact Nick Wight for more information. To book a tour please email nick@gmp.org.au

Planting Seeds for the Future in Dareton

Things are growing in Dareton – literally! The Dareton Youth and Community Centre, NSW, has established a community garden. There is excitement around building a shade house soon for the vegetable garden with Parkdale Church of Christ partnering to fund its construction. Ilker, the youth centre Director, is determined to make full use of the garden’s produce. The cooking sessions and eating from the Turkish-style BBQ are a highlight! The Centre is also seeing strong ongoing attendance with around 15-18 young people coming each of the four days it’s open.



Some of the Dareton Youth and Community Centre youth getting stuck into helping grow their own food for cooking lessons.

National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week

National Sorry Day is May 26 and National Reconciliation Week takes place May 27- June 3. This is a chance for each of us to learn how we can contribute to reconciliation in Australia. It is a valuable opportunity to learn from Australia’s First Peoples. Indigenous Elders and Christian leaders who can provide wisdom and guidance. Let’s discover our shared histories and cultures together. Find Indigenous Ministries Australia (IMA) on Facebook. This is where we will explore this year’s theme: **Be a Voice for the Generations.**