

IN PARTNERSHIP

April 2021



Bekithemba and Trymore, Zimbabwe

Learning to Lead in a Challenging World

It has been a year of incredible difficulty for Zimbabwe, and for the church there. The number of congregations greatly outnumbers the number of trained pastors. This means that pastors are spread thin trying to serve their community, and typically have six or more local churches to look after. The pandemic conditions have made travelling to these congregations even harder.

Despite these challenges, a new generation of young leaders are emerging, and creating a hopeful future for the church in Zimbabwe.

Three years ago, we introduced you to Bekithemba and Trymore, two students starting their course at the Zimbabwe Christian Bible College. When they were just starting out, Bekithemba and Trymore were full of hope for their education. They told us how excited they were to learn, and shared why they wanted to become pastors.

“It’s a calling,” they said. “A calling from God. He needs us to serve him, to serve his gospel.”

“To work in the ministry of God, you need to keep on learning,” Bekithemba said.

But, as we well know, in 2020 the world changed. The COVID-19 pandemic struck, and Zimbabwe has been severely impacted. The lockdown and increased border control led to shortages of food, water and other essentials. Medical institutions are struggling to keep up with the number of people needing to be tested. With the new strains that have developed, numbers started rising again at the start of 2021.

Zimbabwe is in need of hope — and young pastors like Bekithemba and Trymore are sharing that hope through Jesus! In September, both men began their work ministering to people in Zimbabwe.

Trymore is now married, and has two children. He and his family are living in Zvishavane, and he is preaching at Maglas Church.

Bekithemba is being mentored by Pastor Madzore, an experienced

preacher who works in the Palawani Circuit. He is now ministering to three churches in the circuit.

“To work in the ministry of God, you need to keep on learning.”

Bekithemba’s words from three years ago seem even more true now. As he and Trymore start their service, they are learning and adapting to brand new challenges. They are learning to serve a community in crisis, and give them hope.

They aren’t able to do this without the support of people like you. Supporters of GMP helped Trymore and Bekithemba to attend Bible college. It’s the gifts given by people like you that help them, and their classmates, share hope in Zimbabwe despite the challenging year.

When you give to Walk for Hope this year, you’re helping the next generation of pastors like Trymore and Bekithemba to learn and grow. You’re enabling them to go out into their country and spread the hope of Jesus to others.

To give to Walk for Hope visit www.walkforhope.com.au

News & Events

Walk for Hope 2021

This Easter you can support evangelism, church planting and leadership training across the world when you give to Walk for Hope. Give online today at

www.walkforhope.com.au



Thank you

A big 'Thank You' to the wonderful volunteers in Adelaide who assisted with the mailout for Walk for Hope!



 *Resources Available*

Did you know?

You can still use the Walk for Hope devotional resources, stories and videos after Easter to enrich your church small group, family or as an individual, to go deeper in prayer, and connect meaningfully with our partners and God.

www.walkforhope.com.au



Image sourced from unsplash.com

Lived Empathy

There is a connection between empathy and how we act. Empathy is the capacity to appreciate, value and affirm the experience of another person. Feelings, reactions and struggles are appreciated and, at some level, understood. Empathy cultivates a relationship where one attends to the reality of the other, without judgement or blame.

Hebrews 13:1-3 captures this and illustrates it clearly. The words "Let mutual love (agape) continue" are an exhortation to be deeply connected to others in unconditional relationships of compassion, forgiveness, grace and strength. It takes us into a deep, loving commitment of solidarity and will.

Three illustrations are given: show hospitality to strangers, remember those in prison and those being tortured. In each we are led beyond agreeing that something is important and are to directly demonstrate our care in action.

With hospitality – you never know who you are hosting (Abraham and Sarah – unaware that the strangers were angels). Care for the other as though you were in prison or being tortured. The conclusion is 13:6 is "So we can say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?'" What deep confidence this is.

These three examples of empathy in action are at the heart of ministry and mission. There are many ways where people do not experience hospitality

because of discrimination, racism or rejection. Many are imprisoned by life, injustice, past events, the actions of others or fears of what people may think or say. Torture also happens in many ways – never being free of the past, being controlled by the actions or decisions of others, the impact of abuse, political control and other forms of violence.

The way each of these realities are evidenced, changes according to particular contexts. The ministry of the church finds its focus according to its own cultural reality. There is no option – ministry and activity must address such reality.

In Australia this includes our relationship with Australia's First Peoples, the ways that refugees and asylum seekers are treated and the recent uncovering of the ways that abuse in our communities is tolerated and not acted on.

We are called to a prophetic life of lived empathy; led by Jesus who in his humanity was – "in every respect tested as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He has sown the seeds of hope and courage in us. God's lived empathy with humanity is expressed in Jesus, crucified, buried and risen to new life.

John Gilmore,
Executive Officer

Walk for Hope



"Part of God's purpose is to produce true perseverance and character in us, His children. Leading to a hope that is in Jesus. This hope is the blessed assurance of our future destiny based on God's love, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. As it is demonstrated in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope and pray that everybody will set our focus on God and God alone."

- Ricardo Garcia, President, International Christian College Manila (ICCM).



SPOTLIGHT



Preparing the slab for the water tank at Torlie Kindergarten, Pentecost.

Clean Water for Kids after the Cyclone

Torlie is a small kindergarten serving the Wutsummwel community in Central Pentecost. Without a source of clean, safe water at the school, children are unable to wash their hands properly. The water they have access to at home can also be very limited. So, everyone was excited to hear that a new water tank was coming to the kindergarten.

The water tank bound for Torlie Kindergarten arrived in Vanuatu before Cyclone Harold struck the coast in April of last year. Linda Vusi, Community Development Co-ordinator, went along with representatives from the school to pick the tank up from Luganville, on Espiritu Santo. Between the two towns is a 100km journey across the ocean.

“The tanks came in before Cyclone Harold,” Linda tells us, “And had been in the Churches of Christ Church Board area. We collected the tank, three gutters, and other parts, on the ship to Central Pentecost.”

But sadly, the destruction caused by the cyclone pushed community development back significantly. It wasn't until August that the water tank could finally make its way to the community that desperately needed it.

On August 10 the people from Wutsummwel broke ground at the project. Men and women worked together clearing land, carrying water and laying bricks to build a slab for the water tank to sit on.

Two days later, the guttering was attached to the side of the school building. A long pipe connected the gutters to the tank, to fill it with clean rainwater.

Finally, the tank was ready to be installed! It was carried up to the slab and connected to a brand-new pipe stand with a tap — so that the kids can easily get clean water!

Torlie Kindergarten had their end of term break up and decided to hold a dedication for the new water tank! The kids decorated the tank and tap with balloons and flowers.

“There was also the dedication prayer over the tank before the children can use it,” Linda says. “A letter was made to the President of the Central Pentecost Church Board, Pastor Edwin Tabi, to come and officially dedicate the water tank.”

Pastor Edwin did come down to the school to offer a prayer of blessing, and cut the ribbon on the water tank. That's how excited the community were for Torlie kindergarten to receive water!

“We are fortunate to have the water tank,” says Linda. “It will be used for children's learning activities...and for health and sanitation practices.”

Your support of Safe Water September has helped to ensure people like the children at Torlie Kindergarten are able to receive access to safe water! Your gifts enable these projects to continue, and will help more communities just like Wutsummwel provide safe, clean water for their children.

“I would like to acknowledge the inclusion of Torlie Kindy and Primary School in this year's project, and convey our appreciation to the donors of the project,” Linda says.

You can read more stories like this online at www.safewaterseptember.org.au



The new water tank decorated by the Kindergarten children.



Ruth Gates, from Brooklyn Park Church of Christ (Left), with Val Zerna on the World Day of Prayer.

Standing Together in Prayer with Vanuatu

On Friday March 5, people around the world gathered for the World Day of Prayer to celebrate and remember in prayer Vanuatu. Vanuatu is a beautiful country of picturesque beaches, coral reefs and tropical fish, waterfalls and lush foliage. The greatest privilege, however, is in getting to know its people.

The program for this event was beautifully written by the women of Vanuatu, collaborating across the Christian denominations. It was a privilege to be invited to share at one of these World Day of Prayer events in Adelaide as the guest speaker, reflecting on the theme, 'Building on a Strong Foundation'

based on Matthew 7:24-27. Having been part of several team visits to Vanuatu, we experienced how important both a spiritual and physical foundation is. When Vanuatu became an independent nation in 1980, they took the motto 'Long God Yumi Stanap' - 'In God We Stand'. Christianity put an end to many tribal wars under a centralised government, and today it is predominantly a peaceful Christian nation. Then, in terms of physical foundations, this was represented by cyclone strapping, which is important for any building to stay standing in the face of the many cyclones, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions that are also part of life in Vanuatu.

It was also a joy to share the news and pictures of Londua Technical College reopening in February on Ambae after the eruption of the Manaro Voui volcano in 2018, that forced the entire population to flee the island.

Decorating the church for the prayer event, with the many baskets, fans, mats, feathers, dresses and material we had been so generously given over the years, including wearing an 'aelan' dress, brought back many happy memories of partnering together with God's people in Vanuatu. Together, as one family in God, we stand strong.

Val Zerna,
SA/NT Partnership Coordinator



RICE Movement participating in a Songlines tour, March 2021.

Melbourne Songlines Walking Tour

The **Songlines walking tour** of inner-city sites in Melbourne is designed to offer an insight into local Indigenous history and culture with a view to increasing awareness and sensitivity to the social, political, physical and spiritual forces affecting many Indigenous Australians both in the past and today. Tours are for church groups, leadership teams, study groups or anyone looking to learn more about the Indigenous and Christian history of the Melbourne area. **Book your tour** with IMA Coordinator Nick@gmp.org.au

"I really enjoyed learning more about all of the forces affecting Indigenous Australians in Melbourne and I felt that I had enough time to digest it. I loved the history and you spoke about it with such passion, we couldn't help but be drawn in."

— Carly (past tour attendee)