

Partnership

the newsletter of Mission Partners

The Australian Presbyterian World Mission

www.missionpartners.org.au

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Welcome to the first edition of *Partnership* — the new name for what used to be called 'the Mini Mag'.

Why call this publication *Partnership*?

It's because partnership stands at the very heart of what we do together — working with people in Australia and all around the world to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. A quick glance through the letters of the apostle Paul shows that for him partnership was essential. When you get a moment, skim through the list of names that are mentioned in the opening and closing paragraphs of his letters. It's a long list!

Consider Tychicus. His name is not as well known as Luke or Barnabas or Peter but he was essential to Paul's mission to the Gentiles.

In Acts 20:4 we find him accompanying Paul on his journey toward Jerusalem.

In Ephesians 6:21 we find Paul sending him to update the Ephesian church on his progress.

In Colossians 4:7 we find Paul sending him to update the

Colossian church on his progress.

In 2 Timothy 4:12 we find him being sent by Paul to Ephesus once more.

In Titus 3:12 we find him being sent by Paul to Titus in Crete.

Tychicus was given a lot of responsibility. He may even have carried the letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians that we have today. But what would Paul have achieved without Tychicus? What would he have been able to do without Timothy, Epaphras, Aquila and Priscilla, Apollos, Titus, Epaphroditos, Onesimus, Silas and so on?

It's easy to imagine that Paul was a 'one-man-band' but without each of these brothers and sisters he would not have achieved all that he did under the good hand of God. Partnership was vital for Paul and it is no less vital for us.

Kevin Murray, Director



New Testaments for Vanuatu

Imagine if there were only 50-80 Bibles available for sale in Australia? That's something of the current situation in Vanuatu. Vanuatu is a nation that has been profoundly touched by the gospel and for many years we have been partners with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu.

In recent times it has become clear that there is an urgent need to reprint the Bible in Bislama, the national language.

Vanuatu has about 60,000 Presbyterians but not all have a Bible. A coalition of Christians in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu and the Assemblies of God are looking to print 30,000 New Testaments for just over \$1.00 each.

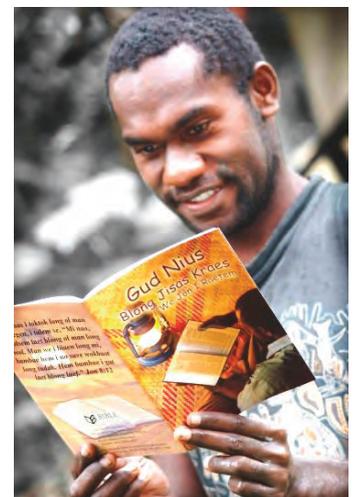
Why is this so important? As a church we have long recognised the strategic role that the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu plays in the life of the nation of Vanuatu. A full Bible (Old and New Testaments) costs about \$24, which in a subsistence economy is out of reach for many people. There are no New Testaments for sale.

One observer writes "I have lived here for 9 years and did not realise the urgency and lack of God's Word

throughout the Churches of Vanuatu in rural areas. A couple of years ago I started to hear of outreaches to the outer islands and how few copies of the Word of God there were. I started to ask and continued asking those that went to outer islands whether this information was true, and time and time again I was told similar stories."

Will you partner with us in supplying the Word of God to our brothers and sisters in Vanuatu?

Each New Testament costs just over \$1.00 to print. Please send your donation to us at Mission Partners, 8 Sylvan Grove, Picnic Point NSW 2213 and mark it 'New Testaments for Vanuatu'.



After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:9)

10 Reasons Why Mission in Japan is Critical

In the light of the recent earthquake and tsunami, Japan is a country with great physical need. However, Japan's spiritual need is even greater. In 2012, John and Rose Evans and family will move to Japan to serve with the Mission to the World team.

1. Less than 0.2% of the population of Japan are Christian, making it the largest unreached nation in the developed world.

2. The Japanese do not understand what grace is; it's not a part of their culture. Every seemingly generous act comes with a corresponding obligation.

3. Forgiveness is one of the most difficult things for the Japanese to do, because they rarely if ever experience it for themselves.

4. Japan as a nation is experiencing challenging social issues: it has the highest rate of suicide in the developed world (almost 100 a day), marital breakdown and depression are rife, possession of child pornography is legal.

5. Japan has among the highest rates of literacy in the world, yet 98% of Japanese have never read or heard the gospel.

6. Most churches are dying because they are no longer relevant to the culture; many are syncretistic or liberal.

7. The Presbyterian Church of Japan currently has only two trainee ministers; the majority of those currently ministering are aged 60 or older.

8. The amount of missionaries to Japan is markedly decreasing because it is the most expensive mission field in the world.

9. Church planting is the most effective strategy for reaching people with the gospel; there is a desperate need for church planters.

10. The effects of globalism and the economic recession and the breakdown of traditional culture have created an increasing sense of emptiness in the Japanese heart: now, more than ever before, the Japanese are looking for hope.

And yet, amidst all this, God has promised that He will build his church, and the Australian church is well placed to be able to work with the Japanese church at this time of great need.

We (the Evans family) are currently planning to head to Japan towards the end of this year to join the Mission to the World (MTW) church planting project in Chiba prefecture, East of Tokyo. Their strategy is



to plant churches in areas with new housing estates that are within commuting distance of Tokyo. The churches planted as part of this project are among the few churches in Japan that are actually growing rather than dying.

So, in June last year, we went to visit the project (which began 20 years ago with one church: there are now seven churches). In August, we were officially invited to join them in their endeavours to see the Japanese won for Christ. The role they have earmarked for us is to lead a team who will plant a church in the Chiba CBD.

Will you work shoulder to shoulder with us in this endeavour? It costs a minimum of \$120 000 a year for a family to live and minister in Japan. It seems a formidable sum ... and yet, we are the body of Christ. We cannot plant a church in Japan without your financial resources, and you cannot plant a church in Japan without our human resources! Please partner with us in our journey to see the Japanese people saved by our merciful Lord and Saviour – to the praise of his glorious grace!

John Evans is currently ministering at NorthLinks Presbyterian Church on the Gold Coast, along with his wife, Rose, and their children Asher, Isabelle, Lily, Ivy and Jairus.

If you would like to find out how you can support the Evans family then please contact the Mission Partners office phone (02) 9792 1373 or email <national@missionpartners.org.au>

Please Note

You can receive *Partnership* as a pdf file to save postage. Please email the office <national@missionpartners.org.au> and ask to be put on the *Partnership* pdf list. The pdf edition is searchable which means that if you want to put parts of *Partnership* in your church news sheet or magazine then you only have to copy and paste the text.

Noticeboard...

Wycliffe Training Courses

Bible Storytelling

Over half the people of the world are oral learners. One of the most effective ways of communicating the Word of God to them has been found to be by telling Bible stories.

Where: Maleny, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

When: Thursday evening 24th November to Sunday afternoon 27th November

Cost: \$100 (includes full board)

Details: Peter O'Loghlin 07 3411 2356

Cross cultural ministry and Bible translation (PROBE)

In 5 days you will learn some of the skills needed to be a Bible translator... or to work in any form of cross-cultural ministry where a second language is required.

Where: Maleny, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

When: Thursday evening 27th November to Friday afternoon 2nd December

Cost: \$190 (includes full board)

Details: Peter O'Loghlin 07 3411 2356

Proshikkon Prep

Proshikkhon is a four week ministry trip held each January where a multi-national team of Christians travels to South Asia to facilitate seminars for tribal Christian leaders.

Where: Maleny, Sunshine Coast, Queensland

When: Friday afternoon 2 December to Sunday afternoon 4 December

Cost: For Proshikkhon team members the cost of this course, and of the two preceding courses is included in the Proshikkhon team fees.

For more details contact www.wycliffe.org.au

Reachout — NSW

Reachout is an annual missions conference held in Katoomba NSW. It features representatives from many mission organisations and is an excellent gathering for those who want to serve in mission or those wanting to better understand mission.

This year's Reachout Conference will be 13th - 14th August 2011 at Katoomba. More details at www.reachoutmissions.com.au



Youthpartners 2012

Each December-January Mission Partners sends a team of 18-25 year olds to Vanuatu to do building and maintenance work. This runs for a fortnight and is a rich experience. This is for committed young Christians who want to serve and learn more about fellow Christians in another culture.

At the moment we don't have all the details for the location of Youthpartners 2012. We are waiting for advice from the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu.

Cost is \$2,000-\$2,500

For more details, email:

<national@missionpartners.org.au> and we can send you details as soon as they are available.



How can you partner with Mission Partners? By praying

Prayer is vital. Without it we would have to stop our ministries. Email <national@missionpartners.org.au> and ask to be put on our Email Update list.

By supporting

You can help our missionaries by writing, sending a short email and taking an interest in them when they are on the field or in Australia on home assignment.

By encouraging your church

Encourage your minister, elders and other congregational members to take a greater interest in global mission. Ask the Committee of Management to put it in the church budget.

By giving

We rely upon gifts from churches and individuals. We thank God for your partnership. Your gifts enable the gospel to go out to the ends of the earth.

World Mission and the Church

It is significant that the major New Testament motivation for evangelism is not concern for the lost, but obedience to Jesus. We do not need to wait for a 'call' to be involved in the work of making Christ known, since the Great Commission, 'Go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you' remains unrescinded 'to the very end of the age' (Mt. 29:19-20). It is obedience to the dominical authority of Jesus that justifies Christian mission and must ultimately motivate us, not merely response to the needs of the world.

Of course those needs stir us, even overwhelm us, but we do not let the world write the agenda, either for the church, or in our stewardship of the individual lives God has given us. We are Christ's servants first. As Paul expressed it, 'We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake' (2 Cor. 4:5). In serving the needs of the dying world we are primarily serving the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:23-24).

That being so, the whole church is the serving body, different members being differently gifted and fulfilling different functions, but all under the authority of the Head, whose will is sovereign. While some may be 'sent out', others will be required to support them. Christian workers are not to be vagrants, since this brings dishonour on the Name in which they go. Their Lord is the most gracious and generous of givers and it brings no credit to him if his ambassadors are impoverished because of the lack of generosity among their 'supporters'.

It is not for nothing that the joke was made about the deacons' prayer for the minister, 'Lord, you keep him humble; we'll keep him poor.' Sadly, that attitude has



often prevailed in the churches, where attention has centred on the minimum needed to get by, rather than on supporting the full-time servant in a manner worthy of God [3 John 6]. There are encouraging signs that biblical realism is beginning to prevail, and some of us in ministry are privileged to be on the receiving end of very generous material provisions.

But it still remains true that very few churches have cause for satisfaction when they look at their level of support for world mission, or even for their own missionaries. One still hears of missionaries who are able to stay on location abroad only with the financial support of their fellow missionaries. If local church leaders are to be held 'in the highest regard in love because of their work' (1 Thessalonians 5:13), surely that applies even more strongly in the case of those who have left home and family for the sake of the Lord and the gospel. Providing for the financial needs of those who have been sent out for the sake of the Name is a spiritual work in itself. Those who represent the Lord should be supported worthily, not in luxury but adequately. Some churches need to take these principles much more seriously.

As we remember that God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Cor. 9:7), let us also realize the great part that hospitality can play in forwarding the cause of the truth. In my own church, I can think of numerous people who have been integrated into the family because Christians gladly opened their home to them, welcomed them, strengthened their faith and showed them genuine love. The descendants of Gaius [read 3 John for context and background] are still with us, but we need many more who will work together for the truth. [3 John 8]

David Jackman *The Message of John's Letters* pp195-196

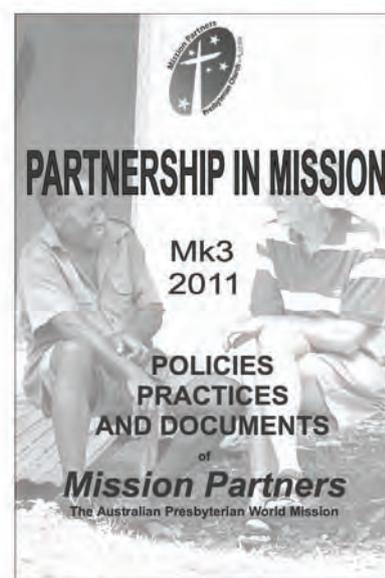
Partnership in Mission 3

It's here! After many many months of writing, editing, re-drafting and proofreading, **Partnership in Mission 3** has finally arrived from the printers.

In 'Partnership in Mission 3', we've outlined how we partner with churches overseas, Mission Agencies, local churches and those who serve as missionaries. It explains how someone can apply to be a missionary, how their local church can support them, together with all the forms needed for an application.

Each parish should have a copy by now, so if you are responsible for the missions group within your church then please look out for it. If you would like a pdf copy then please send an email to

<national@missionpartners.org.au>



The Great North-Eastern Japanese Earthquake

In Japan, Mission Partners and our missionaries work in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Japan and Mission to the World (MTW), our sister organisation from the Presbyterian Church of America.

Tom and Teresa Wilson from MTW write:

Dear friends,

Your prayers are so appreciated and needed during this crisis time in Japan.

Tom made the trip safely driving to deliver disaster relief supplies to Fukushima Prefecture. They were able to deliver a 2-ton truck full of desperately needed supplies to a partnering church there who is serving the community (while they are disaster survivors themselves). The LORD protected them and blessed their trip.

They struck out carrying about 700 liters of diesel fuel to enable trucks with no fuel in that area to carry supplies to people (including milk from a nearby milk factory). They also had hundreds and hundreds of liters of water and other drinks, food, warm clothing and blankets, diapers, formula, etc. They took these to Iwaki City in Fukushima Prefecture, a city just on the border of the official evacuation zone from the nuclear power plant explosions. When our fellow MTW teams in Chiba and Tokyo took their first two shipments there, no other relief had yet come. Since then relief has been coming to the larger evacuation shelters, but for places with fewer than 100 people, almost no relief has come from the "official" relief sources, because there is just too much devastation to get to. Furthermore, the hospitals, nursing homes and such facilities are not receiving supplies because they are not evacuation sites.

Grocery stores in the area are not being replenished because truck drivers are refusing to come there because of radiation threat, and people cannot get out because of lack of fuel. So they have been in a crisis situation, to say the least, and the deliveries made so far have been met with many tears of thankfulness for needed food and water, etc. Our partnering church there is delivering the goods "in the name of Jesus" to shocked, devastated people around them who have no other resource to find their next meal. Praise be to God for the opportunity to be Jesus' hands and feet in this time of crisis.

On the way there Tom and the other two drivers stopped and rested at a rest area a couple of hours from their destination, in order not to arrive in the middle of the night. They slept on the ground in

sleeping bags at the rest area and then traveled on. But they received a call from our MTW country director, Dan Iverson, saying that in light of the U.S. declaring a larger radius of the evacuation zone for U.S. citizens (50 miles instead of around 20), Mission to the World could not allow MTW missionaries to go beyond that 50 mile radius from the nuclear plant. They talked about what to do, and while they could have found another place to deliver the supplies, the Japanese pastor driving with them, [pastor Otake- about 30 years old-married with a baby-] volunteered to go on and take the supplies to the partnering church as planned. So Pastor Otake took the truck on the last leg of the trip and made the delivery safely while Tom and Wayne waited in a nearby city. Praise God the supplies are now in the hands of the suffering people there "in the name of Jesus."

Other people from our church have volunteered to drive as well, and we sent out another truck a few hours ago. Our team leader Wayne is driving again on this trip, along with two Japanese men in our church. We have other trucks lined up for deliveries over the next several days. Our fellow MTW missionaries and sister churches in Chiba and Tokyo have also been continuing trips. Church members, missionaries, and people from the community have been working diligently on these efforts.

The LORD is bringing more and more people to cooperate with this effort. Since we have a truck and some drivers, we are cooperating with people/groups who want to send things but have no way to send them. After a couple more deliveries to the same place Tom went, we are planning to send trucks to Sendai as well.

Please continue to pray for God's blessing on these relief efforts. It is a crucial time for the church in Japan to rise up and be the hands and feet of Jesus.

You can see a brief video of pictures taken by one of our fellow MTW missionaries in Tokyo from relief efforts so far at <<http://vimeo.com/21221181>>.

In Christ, our unshakeable rock and firm foundation,

Tom, Teresa Wilson

MTW Missionaries to Japan



Youth Partners 2011 Tanna Island, Vanuatu

In January 2011, a Youthpartners team travelled to Tanna Island in Vanuatu. Team leader Len Newton writes:

When we arrived at Tanna, we were met at the airport by Ps Iaruel with two trucks as usual to carry us and our baggage north to the college. Because it was a public holiday and no stores would be open, we went directly to the college where we were given the customary warm welcome and provided with lunch before settling into our accommodation. Later on that day we inspected the work of the building and formulated a plan of action for the start of work on Monday morning.

Because our first full day was a Sunday, we spent it on site at the college and worshipped with the Pastor and family in one of the small bamboo and palm leaf huts. This was a real blessing for our group members and an appropriate introduction to Ni-Vanuatu life and culture. After the worship service, we would have lunch and a quiet day resting for the days work ahead.

In our absence since January, the Principal had had made, around 650 concrete blocks. This would not be enough to complete the block work but it would get us up to the level of the ring beam at the top of the side walls. With only 8 days of actual work time, this would be the pattern of the work and would occupy us for our entire time. The last thing that was achieved was to make a start on the ring beam and corner columns which would tie the whole building together.



One of the highlights of this trip was the constant interaction with the students, some very quiet and others more outgoing, but it was a pleasure to get to know them. We also had good opportunities to visit the volcano and the 'blue cave' and on this occasion, we made a trip to visit the new 'Discipleship School', which has been started on the other side of the island. Seeing the Discipleship School really confirmed that the Presbyterian Church has a very practical and energized plan to reach the communities on Tanna who don't know about Christ. Another demonstration of this is that they have sent four SIPBC students to Vila to do a six months nursing training course. They are now back on Tanna ready to go to the villages with their new



medical skills which will be invaluable to the people, but also to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is an incredibly insightful and practical strategy which will help make them a valuable asset to the villagers.

Once again, we have seen the wonderful provision of our Lord in the way that he answered our prayers. Just one example of this was when we got to the airport all had bags of various weights, a large electric timber saw, a number of boxes of solar lights and two power drills. We weren't sure how we would go because we only had a 23kg weight allowance each. When everything including all of our extra boxes were added up and divided by 12 (our number) it came to exactly 23kg per person, with no excess baggage to pay for. Praise God!

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