

Partnership

the newsletter of Mission Partners SUMMER 2012

The Australian Presbyterian World Mission

www.missionpartners.org.au

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Who is Mission Partners?

Welcome to our Summer 2012 edition of Partnership. Some of you will be reading this newsletter for the very first time as it is now more widely distributed throughout the church.

The name 'Mission Partners' is the operating name of the Federal body of the Australian Presbyterian World Mission. In each State we work through our State Committees who are all volunteers.

That's the formal structure but who is Mission Partners? It's actually you and I and the rest of the church. We are all partners in mission as together we take the gospel to the Indigenous people of Australia and people overseas who so desperately need to hear the gospel.

We do this in obedience to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who commands us to take His gospel to the ends of the earth. But we don't do it alone. We are God's fellow-

workers. We are partners together in the task of making known the great name of God.

Some of us play our part by serving in another culture while others remain in Australia and pray and give to support those who have gone overseas. It's all about partnership. I love Paul's words to the Philippian believers who partnered with him .

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:3-6)

Kevin Murray, Director



Partnering with the Presbyterian Church in India

God-willing, by the time you read this, the Rev Vijai Tagore, his wife and young son will be living, above our office in Sydney.

Vijai lectures at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehra Dun in India. This is the seminary where John and Lynette Eillis from Victoria have served since 2001. Vijai will be in Australia for two years as he studies for a Master of

Theology degree at the Presbyterian Theological Centre, Sydney.

Why are we partnering in this way? It's our attempt to serve our brothers and sisters in India by training Vijai so that he can be better equipped to teach the men and women in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in India.

PTC Sydney has agreed to provide a scholarship for Vijai to cover all his internal tuition fees. Mission Partners has agreed to cover the costs of travel to and from Australia and to provide housing.

However, there are many other costs involved in his coming to study in Australia such as:

- Transport to and from college
- Study – books and other materials
- Day to day living

Can you help meet these needs? If so please contact us:

Mission Partners, 8 Sylvan Grove, Picnic Point, NSW 2213

Phone: (02) 9792 1373

Email: national@missionpartners.org.au



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)

Rev Dr Thang Bwee of Myanmar



God-willing, from early March until May 2012, the Rev Dr Thang Bwee, Principal of the Reformed Bible Institute, Myanmar, will be visiting Australia together with his wife and daughter. Please pray that he will receive the necessary visa from the Australian government to make this possible. On this trip he will be accompanied by the former Director of Mission Partners, the Rev Bill Lutton.

Youthpartners and Tradepartners Vanuatu

Each year we send to Vanuatu work parties for building projects.

Youthpartners (January) is designed for 18-25 year olds who are accompanied by some experienced adults.

Tradepartners (July) is for a variety of age groups and is usually made up of tradesmen, handymen and ladies with many skills.

The cost for each participant is approximately \$2,000 and we suggest that the participant contribute 1/3, their church's Committee of Management contribute 1/3 and the participant fundraise 1/3.

In July 2012 there will be two Tradepartners teams:

- a) Tradepartners Paama Island
- b) Tradepartners Talua Ministry Training Centre

The dates for these teams are 6-22 July 2012.

In January 2013 Youthpartners there will be two Youthpartners teams:

- a) Youthpartners Paama Island
- b) Youthpartners Talua Ministry Training Centre

If you are interested in joining any of these teams then please email us at national@missionpartners.org.au or phone (02) 9792 1373.

Email Update

Every two months we publish 'Email Update' a prayer newsletter for our missionaries. Why pray? Jesus said 'Apart from me you can do nothing' (John 15:5) therefore we must depend on Him in prayer. If you would like to receive 'Email Update' then please email national@missionpartners.org.au with your email address & phone number, together with the name of your minister together with their phone number – this is so that we can verify that you attend a Presbyterian Church.

New Missionaries

We recently received the following as Partner Agency Missionaries in Dual Membership with Mission Partners:

Debra Chen (Drummoyne NSW) Pioneers, Thailand

'R' (East Blacktown, NSW) AIM International, Africa.

David and Georgina Newmarch, (Tregear, NSW) CMS South Asia.

In 2011 Jenna Richard married John Armstrong and so we welcome John as one of our missionaries. John and Jenna are serving at Ngukurr, Northern Territory, with Wycliffe Bible Translators.

We have received Andrew and Marilyn Schache as Partner Church Missionaries serving at the Talua Ministry Training Centre, Vanuatu.

Praise God that we have more people applying! Thank you for your prayers.

John and Rose Evans



We would like to thank the many individuals and congregations who are partnering with John and Rose Evans as they head to Japan in 2012. To date they have raised 40% of the support needed before they can leave Australia. If you would like to find out more about how you can partner with the Evans family then please contact us.

Prayer Directory 2012-2013

In early 2012 we will be issuing a new prayer directory to cover 2012-2013. It will be divided into the days of the month so that you can pray for 3-4 of our missionaries each day.

Free at Last!

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1

On 9th July, 2011. Sudan was separated into North Sudan and South Sudan. Many Christians were praying for a peaceful separation. Motor Isaac Yat from Mission Partners serves with the Presbyterian Church of Sudan and was there on Independence Day Isaac Yat serves with Missin Partners in Sudan. Here is his October 2011 Prayerletter.



Motor reports “Many people have sacrificed their lives for others to have freedom; they have chosen to fight for the freedom of the nation of South Sudan. I visited many orphanages of children who lost their parents in the war; widows who have lost their husbands too; disabled who have been wounded in the liberation movement. All this for freedom of the Nation of South Sudan. Many lost their lives so that others may have a good life, freedom, justice and prosperity. When I think about Christ, He died for us to have freedom from bondage of sin; it’s amazing. He left the throne and laid aside His Divine right and came down to us on earth and took the form of a servant. He humbled himself to the point where He was led to death on the cross and this was a supreme sacrifice.

By the grace of God, we celebrated the Independence Day of the Republic of South Sudan and many people cried for joy and gave thanks and glory to Jehovah. God answered the prayers of His people. South Sudan became a country and separated peacefully and not with bullets. Many people prayed for a peaceful separation and it happened.



During the celebration, a lot of people were taken to hospital by ambulance, because we stood up in the field for long hours and I nearly fell down, but I found a place to put my handkerchief and sat for some minutes on the ground. I was really prepared. When I started walking to the field, I had had my tea in the early morning, and I had my bottle of water with me, which helped me during the celebrations. Many people were waiting to see the flag rising in the sky, despite the sun.

God did a mighty deed for me that day, and I gave thanks to Him, to have reached that day and it was amazing. I was born during the first war between the South and the North which ended in 1972 and I grew up during the second war which lasted for twenty years and ended in 2005.

In the last five years we have had a lot of ups and downs in the South. Many predicted war between the North and the South but it didn’t happen. God has his own way, and His way is not our way. What He ordains no one will alter. We celebrated July 9, 2011 as the Day of Independence, the

day of the Republic of South Sudan, in peace.

Now that South Sudan has become a country, the big task is development. The roads are rough and the price of everything in the market has gone up. There are many challenges ahead and some people have started thinking of going back to Northern Sudan. This is like Israel in the desert of Sinai, when they experienced a lack of food and they complained to Moses and Aaron their leaders. At the moment we are facing some challenges in South Sudan. The price of food has gone through the roof in upper Nile State (Malakal) and in many places in South Sudan. Trucks are prevented by the North Sudan government, to come to South Sudan and we have shortages of basic needs but I believe this will be a window of opportunity for people to turn back to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rain Season

We have had showers of blessing in Malakal almost every Friday, Saturday or Sunday. It rained in our area those three days and it became like a timetable for the rain and many people are complaining about the rain and the mud. We wear gumboots all the time, some people are missing out on some Sundays. I started to complain about the rain because I’m not able to do some of my activities when it rains. One of the mornings during my devotions, I felt convicted and asked God for forgiveness. Rain is a blessing and Jehovah controls the heaven and the earth. I should give thanks and not murmur. We have a lot of sickness because of the mosquitoes and unclean water, but the problem was not God’s. We need to pray that God will raise up good leaders who will have a heart to develop this newborn country. Build the roads and drainage systems and they will work well and the basic things we need will be provided.

Prayers for the Land

South Sudan has become an independent country on July 9, 2011 and we still pray for peace among the tribes as there are many challenges along the way. People are still carrying guns to fight among themselves. In our small Church we pray for peace and we encourage believers and pastors to pray and not join their tribes. There is a call for repentance to begin in the Church and then to outsiders. All believers are encouraged to join in prayers. We need to turn back to God so that our nation will be blessed. This is not one man’s work. We need all to be involved. 2 Chronicles 7:14 ‘If my people who are called by My name, humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin and will heal their land.’”

The Village at the End of the Road...

by John Wilson, Victoria

It's a village church off the beaten track. I had asked Rev Colin M'Bawa, minister of Zomba Church of Central Africa Presbyterian: "Where does this road lead? What's at the end of the track?"

Mulirankhwazi, a Church of Central Africa Presbyterian congregation, commenced in 1922 and has been faithful to the Gospel ever since. Access to it is via a series of rough tracks barely used by cars. The car was well hidden in the tall grass, but even so, they spotted us coming – 60 women on the move ... coming toward us swaying and singing "you are welcome, you are welcome". Dear faithful men and women of God: humble, devoted to God and ... so very poor. So poor they do not know where their next meal is coming from.

We sat with them, hugged them, encouraged them. Then we conducted a short but dignified service with 60 women from the village, 20 men, 30 children, the session clerk and the village chief. I preached a message from John 6 and they gave rapt attention to the Word of God, they were so delighted to hear the message. Then they provided fresh muffins & Coke for refreshments. I spoke to the village chief after the service and he said that his village totals 156 persons. I think I counted 110 of them at church!

I spoke to the women and asked them their greatest need. Thinking the reply was to be "to repair the roof", "food" or "money". Can you guess? One by one these faithful women told me of their greatest need: BIBLES. None of these men and women has a Bible. They are too poor to own a book! They can read, or, at least sufficient of them can read to share the knowledge around.

What of the rest of Malawi? Known to the Presbyterians at least ... there would be 1000 villages in rural communities like this one. 1000 churches without Bibles – with at least 100 people in each. And for \$10 we can buy a Chichewa Bible.

That's 10 X 100 X 1000 = \$1 million dollars – that's all it would take to give the most precious book in the world into the hands of every known church goer in rural Malawi. There's a challenge!

Courtesy of Darwin PC, together with Eltham and Reservoir,



Colin returned a month later to Mulirankhwazi CCAP with a Bible for every attendee at the village church at the end of the road.

In September we returned to Malawi and I asked Colin again to take me to a village at the end of the road ... but another road. We drove to a "far off" village where, in a very run down church building, we gave ourselves to a worship service and Bible distribution to this very poor congregation. We gave them a Bible and a hymnbook each (courtesy of Warburton PC). The rejoicing and singing was memorable. We have it easy back home – on this remote road: the pastor (who has 3 congregations) pedals on a push bike for half an hour through very rough terrain to reach the congregation.

I ask the PCA to help us reach yet more remote congregations and Christians with God's Word.

As we were leaving, the Session Clerk took me outside and pointed high up the rugged mountain and said: "See that rock up there? Christians live there. Will you come?" I said: "Yes, after my hernia repair!" There are so many Christians in Malawi too poor to own a Bible. Who will come with me?

So, we have a mountain to climb ... to the Christians who "live beyond the rock". Will I have Bibles with me? Can you help?

Postal method:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Mezzanine Level
156 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000
and identify the gift with a letter saying that this is for "Malawi – Bibles"

Or electronic giving:

Presbyterian Church of Victoria
BSB 083 004 a/c no 015016531
Description: "Malawi Bibles, 'your church' or 'surname'"

With warm regards,
John Wilson (0418 537 209)

How to End a Missionary's Ministry

A high proportion of our missionaries work in what are known as "creative access nations". These are countries where missionary work is either unwelcome or illegal. This means that we all have to take great care in how we publicise the work of a missionary within our congregations.

Consider four cases that I have encountered this week alone.

Church Web Site

A missionary family preparing to serve in a creative access nation speak at a church. A well-meaning member of the congregation is very impressed with what is said and writes all about the family and their ministry in the parish monthly newsletter. What was said in confidence is now made more widely known. But then it gets worse. That same newsletter is then put on the congregation's web site which is open for the whole world to look at and scan. The missionary is then very reluctant to return to that congregation. It can also affect the return of the missionary to the field.

Photos on the Internet

A missionary speaks in a church. Someone from the congregation takes a series of photographs and posts them on the internet to Picasa or Flickr.

Prayer Calendar

A well meaning prayer co-ordinator in a church decides to put the church's prayer calendar on the web and includes specific details about a missionary and his area of ministry.

Print

A missionary on home assignment speaks in a church and someone enthusiastically takes their photograph. The photograph then appears in the local newspaper complete with the fact that they are a missionary, along with the country where they work and the sort of work that they are doing. When they are shown the article the missionary is very disappointed.

All of these situations, and others like them, could easily lead to the missionary being denied a visa to return to the country where they serve or even their expulsion from the country if they are living there.

Missionaries working in creative access situations are very careful to not draw attention to themselves. That applies to the work they do within the creative access country and even back in Australia itself when they speak in churches.



Australia has a lot of visitors and migrants from overseas and such publicity could easily lead to the missionary's work and location being easily identified by a visitor. A more recent challenge is the development of sophisticated facial recognition software so please don't put any photos of such missionaries on your web site.

What can we do to help such missionaries?

1) Ask for permission before printing any information about them. If you don't hear from them then don't print it. It's better to share sensitive information by word of mouth.

2) If you contact such missionaries by email or by letter remember to follow these basic guidelines

(a) don't mention anything political or anything to do with religious freedom;

(b) don't refer to them as missionaries;

(c) don't write to them with envelopes, letterheads or email addresses that connect you or them to a Christian organisation;

(d) don't ask them about Christian activity where they are serving;

(e) don't mention Christian nationals by name — a letter is enough. For example instead of writing about someone named 'Samuel' just use the letter 'S';

(f) don't use obvious Christian words e.g. instead of writing the word 'God' but write instead about 'father' or instead of talking about 'the Bible' write about 'the good book'.

3) If you have any doubts contact the Mission Partners office or refer to the Mission Partners Prayer Directory which will be available in early 2012.

Kevin Murray

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. Please supply your minister's email address.

By staying informed

Go to our web site www.missionpartners.org.au

Like us on Facebook

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.



Reflections on Japan

I served as a church planting assistant in Makuhari, East Tokyo from 2003-2010. My vision as a missionary was to see Japanese people come to know Christ and then as Christians reach out with the good news about Jesus to their family, friends, the community, Japan and to the world. I wanted to work myself out of a job. I prayed that people would come to know Jesus, grow in their faith, be equipped to do the good works God had prepared for them and actively share the gospel. It was a great privilege to be serving in Japan when God was working in such a visible way.

In the English Bible study, I saw people who denied the truth of the Bible and Jesus' resurrection having their eyes opened to Jesus by the Holy Spirit and accepting Him as their Saviour. One lady, Mrs S, studied the Bible with me for over 2 years. Every time she answered a question she started with, "I'm not a Christian but ..." and showed that she was learning about who God is. I believed that God could really use this lady as she was a gatherer of people.

I prayed for her and asked the Australian church to pray and God answered our prayers and she accepted Christ as her Saviour. God gave her a great passion to share the gospel and soon she led one of her close friends to Christ. After a couple of years she moved about 20 minutes away and was disappointed to be leaving her new Christian family, but God had a great plan for her. She moved into a new town of 40,000 people where there was no church. She started going to the closest available church and soon had a Bible study in her home and was inviting her new non-Christian friends to join her.

As it turned out, our team decided to start a new church plant in that town. God has called her to work as a lay member of that team and she provides an amazing advantage to the team as she already has many friends and contacts after living there for 3 years. She has joined a local dance club with the purpose of making new friends that she can share the gospel with. She has held a welcome party for the missionaries so that her friends can meet them. She is participating in an outreach Bible study. Of course all of this hasn't happened without opposition, there is great spiritual warfare going on. She has experienced opposition from within her family as the only Christian, she has faced many doubts, but she has learnt that God is faithful and true. Through Mrs S. and God working in and through her, I have seen my vision fulfilled to some degree.

There were many other ways in which I saw that God was working. Many cell groups have formed and Japanese Christians are studying the Bible together and inviting their non-Christian friends to join them. Outreach activities are occurring such as bead making groups and mums and kids groups, which have been initiated and run by new believers who want to reach out to their friends with the gospel. Japanese Christians are attending the outreach English classes so that they can share their faith with the students, most of whom are not believers. God is working in people's personal lives and they are growing in their faith and becoming more like Jesus.

God has definitely been working in Japan but there is still so much need there. Japanese people remain the second



largest unreached group in the world (Joshua Project) and there are less than 0.4% of people who are Christians. The church planting team that I worked with has a need for Outreach English teachers, teachers and headmaster (for the small Christian school), church planters, relief workers and Japanese workers. Please pray that God would raise up more workers so that more Japanese people can hear the good news about Jesus.

I am very thankful for the partnership through prayer and financial support of many churches and individuals in this ministry.

Nerida served with Mission Partners from 2003 until August 2011. We give thanks to God for the way in which He used Nerida to further the work of the gospel in Japan.

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