

Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

March 2015



On February 8th, the annual meeting for planning our support to the PNG church was held at the **Callaghan's**. We thank **Helen** and **Jeff** for their hospitality in providing the meeting space and lunch. Present were **Rod** and **Ruth Matthews**, **John McLean**, **Matt Gudze**, **David Jordison**, **Mark Latham** and **Rod Dean**.

PNG Annual Meeting

It was decided that Rod Dean will accompany Mark Latham this year and Rod Matthews hopefully will accompany Mark the year after. There is a recognition that we need succession planning to accompany Mark. This will be seriously acted upon in the year ahead.

Mark used a PowerPoint presentation to update everyone and open up various points for discussion. It is always encouraging to see what is being done in such a remote and difficult mission field. We deeply appreciate all Mark's voluntary efforts over many years and the financial support of the congregations. It is an exciting time to be involved with what God is doing with his people up there.

Action points:

- Respond to pastoral visit requests in remote areas from different groups.
- Look at supporting scattered member with a local newsletter.
- Use of hardware store in Kundiawa for communications using their broadband connection.
- Involve local school and orphanage in church activities.
- Support toilet and bedding needs of the oprhanage.
- Evaluate progress on the cobblestone road.
- Work on kitchen, hot water system, toilet and showers at church site.
- Investigate repairing Catholic Vocational Training Centre's hydro power and training of our young people.
- Investigate banking and registration, governance issues.
- Follow up to previous pastor, youth leaders training.
- Support pastors with local issues.
- Take up suitable literature and sermon material.
- Evaluate local fund raising and the development of the coffee shop.
- Plan the production of vents to protect lungs from smoke.



There many other details that will need to be done before going up. Please pray for the leadership up there as they take on more responsibility for their future.

Special Services

The annual *Lord's Supper* will take place on Thursday evening, 2nd April at our normal venue. Starting time is 7.30 pm. Please be aware that the *Sydney Royal Easter Show* will be on and this can affect traffic.

Unleavened Bread is from 4th April to 10th April. On Friday April 10th, we will be having a service at 10.30am at our normal venue.

The themes this year are:

In Christ, we are a new creation, and yet we still sin. Are we sinners or saints?

God is more committed to you than you could ever be to him. To believe this requires a true knowledge of Jesus.



Bibles for Bangladesh and Nepal

The Wollongong congregation budgeted \$3,000 for their Bible Fund. This year it will be split between Bangladesh and Nepal.

The cost of a Bengali Bible and a Nepali Bible is around \$5.

Deben Sam commenced the Bible School on February 13th. He will send some Bibles back with the students when they return home in early June. He can then have the rest in stock and use as needed in the year ahead for the students, and for his upcoming summer pastoral/mission trips to the rural areas.

In Bangladesh the Bible is in great demand. One of the Bible recipients, **Labone Halder**, an organizer for fellowship groups said:

Since the Bible is in my own language, it is easy for all of us to understand and find deep meaning and hope in this Bible. Now we are sharing this truth with our fellow man and woman. Thanks to the kind donors who helped us to own this life saving Holy Book. I know there are many people waiting to receive Bibles in our own Bengali language.

Thanks again to Wollongong for their generosity.



Vocational Training Buduburam

The Bathurst congregation again has supported the vocational training scholarships for the Buduburam refugee church with a donation of \$2,450.

Theo Okai:

From January 2011, the GCI Church in Ghana mainly with your support and that of GCI members in Australia started a sponsorship program to train some young adults of the GCI Buduburam Congregation in various vocational skill areas to make it possible for them to have gainful employment through self-employment as well as benefit from opportunities on the job market. A few have completed whilst the majority are in various stages of completion. They do understand that they are required to pay back the support they have received when they gain full employment.

We are looking at proposing a setup package that will enable recipients to start out on their own businesses upon completion. This would be on a case by case basis as required. We will get back to you on that later. Currently, only one (**Mr. Flah Jackson**) has completed and searching for formal employment as an Electrical Technician that will enable him gain satisfactory experience to be able to start out later on his own.

Five of the early recipients who started in 2011 did not finish due to repatriation. However, **Vivian Tarley** who started her beauty training in 2011 and completed in 2013, left for Liberia the same year. She is now self-employed in Liberia. This is real success story.

Nine will either finish this year or next. Thank you Bathurst congregation.

