

Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

July 2016

PNG Trip

Mark Latham and **Rod Dean** will be going up on August 6th and returning August 19th. As always, much needs to be accomplished in a relatively short time.

They will be taking up two laptops and a tablet and study summary books for the youths' study centre, volleyball, nit combs and a lot of doctrinal, sermon and instructional material, including Joe Tkack's *This is life*. In PNG they will need to purchase warm, second-hand clothing, medicines, exercise books and hardware material for the church building and also for the orphanage.

Each day will be busy with meetings, projects, and training.

Rod will spend time with elders and leaders covering their personal needs, doctrinal questions, social issues, counselling and marriage preparation, sharing a lot of material for future reference. All of Rod's sermon notes have been edited for them.

With the pastoral team, issues of governance, accountability and future development will be on the agenda, including relationships with the Australian church.

The young adults will be a special focus with the development of a learning centre a high priority. Mark will lead this. Also to be discussed with them will be theology of worship, camp protocols, the *Celebrate the Grip* course, public speaking and the use of the voice.

One of the long term goals is for the Mt Wilhelm church to become a really safe place for women and children. There will be women's ministry discussions on this with spiritual teaching. Men's meetings will continue from last year on the theme of *Jesus is the true Man* and how men are to contribute to making the church a safe place.

In the services, the overseas missions will be shared and how the living waters of John 7:37-38 bring healing and restoration, and understanding being baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Working bees on the church site as well as discussions with the orphanage about their water system for the toilets and showers will keep Mark busy. Mark also plans to visit the local high school to give a lesson as promised last year.

Recent unrest in the country requires extra care in travelling. Please pray for peace in the country and that Rod and Mark can respond wisely to what Jesus is doing with his people up there.

Nepal

The following information gives a more complete report on the support for Nepal Mobile Bible School.

Rod Matthews: When do you plan on conducting the Mobile Bible School this year – that is, if you are making several trips to different villages, when will you be making the first of the trips?

Deben Sam: 15th June 2016.

Rod Matthews: What is your estimate of the total costs for the Mobile Bible School this year – please give me the costs in rupees so we can make adjustments for the exchange rates if possible?

Deben Sam: Normally we used to do Mobile Bible School in 8/9 places and the cost is about NRS 262,500 but this year we have received the request from 25 places to do the Mobile Bible School in their locations and I have made a plan to do at least in **12 places** so the estimated cost for this year is about **NRS 360,000. (Sydney sent \$3,000 and the Central Mission Fund \$1,500.)**

Rod Matthews: Can you give me the names of the places you plan for the Mobile Bible School this year? The more specific information I have, the better it is for the people contributing to the funding because they feel more connected to what is happening.

Deben Sam: The following are the name of the places, and we will do more if funds are available:

- 1) Deuli Darma, in Humla : the most remote district in Nepal, and one of the poorest.
- 2) Babare, in Dolakha: 100% of houses destroyed in 2015 earthquake.
- 3) Bani, in Kanchanpur: Far Western area about 500 kms from Kathmandu (as the crow flies).
- 4) Sivghat, in Chitwan: there is an airport nearby.

(Cont'd on p. 2)



John Banda

John came to the church in 1985. If you met John, you'd sense a very physically strong man. His stamina and strength were very useful to him as he worked as a park ranger employed by the Department of Environment/ Conservation in the Mt Wilhelm National Park from 1986-1999. He supervised 5 labourers as they maintained mountain tracks, cleared away rubbish and kept a daily record of visitors. They used only approved guides: strong, healthy, young men who look after people, have good food and supplies, trained for medical response and evacuation. Mt Wilhelm's weather can change very quickly with icy paths, snow and cold winds.



John went through a very difficult period after the government stopped the operation in 1999. (They restarted just this year). He was denied his entitlements which has been a long battle to redress. He went back to subsistence farming and his shop at the junction. Unfortunately the shop was burnt down in a tribal dispute that destroyed 85 properties in 1999. He reopened in around 2009 and this is now the location of the church's coffee shop. Around 2011 he became senior tour guide for Alpine Tour Company which brings Japanese tourists to PNG. He has done more than 100 climbs of Mt Wilhelm which is the highest mountain in PNG at 4,509 metres.

John has rescued many people. One Spanish man went alone and lost the track and was up there for 7 days. A team of them had to rescue him by carrying him down the mountain. A Japanese woman got to the summit and couldn't walk back. They had to carry her one by one for nearly 2 hours at night to a hut. But he also has had to deal with a number of tragedies on the mountain. John shares the story of the local man who went alone with inadequate clothing. He died and they had to bury him on the mountain. An Australian army sergeant went alone, stubbornly refusing a guide, missed the track and lost his life.

John shares a very special spiritual lesson from his experiences. As guides they worry that people don't really know this mountain. They can easily miss the track and the weather can change suddenly. Whether they realise it or not they need a guide who has been there before. He knows the way. The guide knows ahead of time what they can't see. He has the strength to carry them when needed. Jesus is our guide on the journey to the summit - God's Kingdom. It is a life/death matter.

John loves the beauty of the mountain. In the wilderness and high altitude he feels closer to God. He always prays for the people he leads: their safety, and always gives thanks at the summit. The hike crosses different terrain: village, bush, grasslands, pristine lakes with rainbow trout, rocks, snow, ice. He always feels inspired and uplifted. Prayer feels different upon the mountain.

WW 2 invaded the serenity of this area. An American war plane crashed at night near the lakes. The Japanese, Americans, and Australians lost family members in this front line of the war. As John leads



Japanese tourists, he notices that while they don't talk about the war, now and then, they will remember their loved ones who died in PNG. With a small gesture of throwing a lolly, a cigarette or lighted match in a high place, they express sorrow for, say, a father's brother who lost his life in PNG. The mountain reminds us of our common humanity and the waste of war.

John and his wife Rose are happy in the Mt Wilhelm congregation and love how it is growing spiritually. They enjoy giving back. They see the coffee shop as belonging to God and they are happy to work for the church giving to him.

Nepal (Cont'd from p.1)

5) Kupindedaha, in Salyan: some 320 km west of Kathmandu.

6) Birendranagar, in Surkhet: a city in mid-western Nepal, 600 kms from Kathmandu.

Other places include:

7) Bhutaha, in Nawalparasi

8) Chhaide, in Khotang

9) Bhuji, in Ramechhap

10) Tipling, in Dhading

11) Ranigaun, in Panchthar

12) Harion, in Sarlahi.

The funds were sent from Sydney church before June 12th, as requested.

Service

July 30th, there will no services in Sydney and Wollongong.

THE SOUND DESK OPERATOR

RESPONSIBILITIES

MOVING THE SLIDER UP A BIT

MOVING THE SLIDER DOWN A BIT

MOVING THE SLIDER BACK UP A BIT

EVERY NOW AND THEN PRESSING THE 'SUDDEN UNEXPECTED FEEDBACK' BUTTON

PERKS OF THE JOB

BEING ABLE TO HAVE MINTS DURING THE SERMON

HAVING SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE 'WIRES AND CABLES' BOX

