

Church Matters

Keeping a link with the Sydney congregation



Living and Sharing the Gospel

July 2017

Budget

A big thank you for the overwhelming faithfulness to God in your giving. It is a pleasure to prepare a budget because of the willingness and desire to be a blessing to others. This area in so many ways fulfils its responsibility in each person's local communities which includes the household of faith, supports the national church which includes the work in PNG, and especially shares with our brothers and sisters in many countries of our abundance with those who have basic needs.

This generosity has even been included in wills. Recently **Betty Cummings'** estate has been finalised and given to the head office. We pray that it will bring thanksgiving to God who gives us all our increase.

All the plans and budgets have now been submitted to the head office.

Ulladulla Festival 2017

The Children of a Dynamic Father

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God (1 John 3a).

Jesus told the people "I tell you for certain that the Son cannot do anything on his own. He can do only what he sees the Father doing, and he does exactly what he sees the Father do" (John 5:19). Over and over again this is the pattern of their relationship, describing to us what true sonship means. In all areas of our lives we receive and then we wait upon God to show us what he is doing in our lives.



We read in Isaiah 40: 28-31:

²⁸Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

²⁹He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

³⁰Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

³¹But those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

There is an insight we gain from the in the life of Jesus. **Jean Galot** wrote:

Far from suggesting ageing, as do certain pictures of the Father, representing him as an old man, it is totally new and young. The one Jesus calls "Abba", is younger than all other fathers. The vitality of the Father's paternal dynamism is stressed every time Jesus presents his own actions as the work of the Father.

At this festival we want to learn more of and celebrate living in the dynamic, renewing relationship of the children of God. We must always remember what Paul said: "For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed" (Romans 8:19).

The first service will be at 3.00pm on Thursday 5th October, through to Thursday 12th October. We will be meeting at the Christian Highway Church as we did last year.

PNG Trip 2017

Mark and I are very aware that we are accompanied by the prayers of the church. I told the church in PNG that we do not come up here alone. So many people contribute in different ways to the trip.

A trip to PNG takes many months of preparation to maximise the time we have up there. This means that each day has its schedule which also is flexible enough to allow for the unexpected. The result is fully filled days of activities. We planned this year to be about two months earlier than normal due to the disruptions to PNG life caused by the elections. PNG elections can become very tribal and personal. One of our goals was for the church to be an election free zone - a safe, quiet place in the midst of the potential troubles.

In fact we experienced the uncertainties of the election just before we were to return to Goroka by going down the mountain and passing through Kundiawa. About seven cars of MPs from Kundiawa were stoned by locals. This meant that the locals did not want to drive down the mountain fearing payback. **Ben** tried to get us a police car to go down but that fell through when the MPs who had come

(... Cont'd on p.2)

PNG Trip 2017 (Cont'd from p.1)

up to see the PM needed an escort down the mountain.

Thankfully we found out that the local high school ute was going down to Kundiawa for supplies. So we were at the gate of the high school at 5.00am next morning ready to

ride standing on the back of the ute. Thankfully the huge downpour of the night before had stopped and it was dry. As we drove down we waved to children, men and women and called out various greetings. We had a warm reception and we passed safely through troubled areas. In fact we did the trip to Goroka in record time.



Mark with Ben and Richard

Another exciting event was a 5.9 Richter earthquake centred over the mountain range near Madang. It really shook the two-storey guest house we were in. With this in mind we are changing our approach to the building program. We are tendering out the process to professional builders and electricians.



Life Club

The biggest emphasis on this trip was to be on the youth and children. With the youth we introduced and had our first speaking club called Life clubs. 35 youth attended with 5 adults. We made it fun with tongue twisters and encouraged everyone to stand up and introduced themselves. The initial shyness gradually loosened up and at the end they wanted more clubs.

The club was part of a effort to motivate our young people to think about their future. We purchased all the PNG standard textbooks for the high school study centre to build stepping stones for the more advanced Australian text books we had also purchased. They are now fully equipped with text books.

I also gave a worship intensive with the worship team, a talk on how to approach the Bible with a Christ-centred approach and introduced the new SEP theme, *The Journey*. The worship team received a complete file of music with accompaniment.

The RI class at the high school has grown to 44. RI attendees came to our youth meetings, and even to the Life club. We need 23 Bibles for our youth group as we have 44 who attend church plus others from RI who come to activities.

The young people every three to four months run a talent show. Everyone is together and involved. Locals who have come to it are impressed how male and female, young and old all mix and cooperate together without the separation caused by the big man syndrome too common in PNG.

These leads us to a major area - the children's class and the orphanage. We have around 70 children on our rolls. We held a children's class meeting with all the coordinators and teachers. We showed our interest by bringing up a whole pile of books from Sydney. The outcome of the meeting was to find that we need better classrooms, more older teachers, a yearly planner of themes and topics. Mark and I put together a yearly planner together one evening. We also need to raise the standards - especially as children approach the age of our study centre.

So I held a middle school - grades 6-8 - with parents about the need to prepare our children for high school. This was to encourage mothers to learn English and read with their children. We want to build and stock a library in the new buildings for the church.

Prior to this meeting I had met with **Martine Tine** whose wife runs the school associated with the orphanage and at which **Richard** is vice principal. Martin and Richard share the dream of making their school a model school for the area. They at present have 150 students up to grade 3. They will be adding a new grade every year, perhaps up to grade 8. Of the 150 students 80 plus are disadvantaged with 20 orphans living on site. Mark bought a Oxford Uni Press Third Grade Guide for teaching English in PNG. We offered the whole curriculum for all grades in the future.

The orphanage now has running water for their showers and flush toilets, purchased with the Ulladulla charity appeal a couple of years ago. Martin said they had clothing needs for 80 disadvantaged children. He also said they were \$25 a day short of nutritional food. We will get a supply of clothing next visit and will make their food needs our charity appeal at the Ulladulla Festival.



Billums

Mark held working bees which required him walking over the mountain range about 5 times. He planned for drains, steps, the cook house, water tanks and other areas. I also held women's ministry meetings, men's ministry meetings. (Our women's ministry clean the Aid station and provide food for the patients). We both took a children's class while the other took the service. Letters were shared from children in Vanuatu, Wollongong and a Sydney Catholic school. We had the annual pastoral advisory council meeting in which we shared the importance of accountability. We audited the books, looked at the effectiveness of the coffee shop and encourage appropriate counting and storage of money.

There is also a lot of time spent with the pastors discussing material brought up in the past. They said it was edited to the right level for them. I did an ACCM preaching intensive with Ben and Richard. I also introduced them to more material I had brought up: The Discipleship series, Church and Ministry, The Journey, sermon notes from Sydney, Speaking of Life transcripts and videos.

We also showed them samples of the 135 6-minute videos on the Bible. We could see they were spoken too fast and Mark slowed them down and they could follow them. Mark downloaded all the material from one computer to another. They have a lot of reading material for years to come.



Farewell

The roads continue to deteriorate without any maintenance. However, the PM announced that a Chinese company will upgrade the mountain road at a cost of \$115million. They are also preparing for two dams and hydro system near our people, with equipment already gathering in Goroka. This could affect everyone's lives and the ecology of the region.

Rod Dean



Thanks to Richard Germain (See Jonah 1-4)

09-19-2008

IT JUST SAYS "DON'T"