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Working for Love, Hope & Justice

On a mission...



Having just returned from Manila, where I attended the installation of the fourth Prime Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the Philippines (The Most Revd Edward Malecda), I give thanks to God for the work of our Partners and the relationships we have built over the years. Over the last six months the impact that the global economic crisis has had on our programs has weighed heavily on the minds of ABM's Staff and Board. The significant fall in the value of the Aussie dollar meant that we needed to negotiate reductions in support for some programs. So it was with a somewhat heavy heart that I made this journey.

At our meeting the first concern of our Filipino colleagues was for the bushfire victims and the devastation in Victoria. Several of the bishops had visited these areas in happier times and had strong memories of the people and the land. They told me that they had launched an appeal and raised funds for us as an expression of their solidarity and sorrow.

When we finally got round to talking about the economic crisis they said, "We have had the good years, but now we have some famine. We know that the funding will be reduced but we want to keep the same targets – it's important for our people. We think that we can cut some costs and it spurs us to be innovative so we make the funds go further. Don't worry, John, we travel through this together."

I felt a burden lifted and also inspired to try our hardest to maintain our current levels of funding.

To help us do this I am pleased that we will be blessed by Lent visitors from two partner churches. The Rt Revd Danilo Bustamante who comes from the Episcopal Diocese of the Southern Philippines and the Revd Nael Abu Rahmoun who comes from Ramallah in the Palestinian Territories. Both visitors come from situations of conflict and inter-faith rivalry.

Although a minority the Anglican Church still plays a significant role in living out its witness to Christ and building peace and understanding.

Sadly, these are not the only places where conflict and other disasters increase the impoverishment of our Partners. Zimbabwe remains constantly in our prayers. The recent flooding in Fiji and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands received scant coverage in our press but has impacted severely on the local people. Also, let us not forget the people of Myanmar (Burma) who are still trying to rebuild almost a year after the catastrophic cyclone. In each case, our partners struggle to make scant resources go even further.

I know that the next few years will not be easy for our Partners, nor for many Australians. However, the season of Lent is a time that reminds us that, even through deprivation and despair, God is never far away.

I wish you a holy Lent and all joy at Easter.



The Revd John Deane

Partners in Autumn

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Travelling up the east coast from the cold weather of Canberra to the warmth of Cairns where the rolling hills meet the coast – it had begun. The cold weather seemed to be a distant memory and I was overwhelmed by the story of this place, with the rich diversity of its landscape

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online at www.abmission.org



Front cover photo: Surami Dakati, based in Honiara, teaches literacy in the Solomon Islands.
© Don Brice/ABM 2008.

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People Power Channels Water in the Philippines

By Julianne Stewart, Programs Coordinator

If you want to know the secret of success – why some development projects work when others fail – Basilio and Alma think they have the answer.

Basilio Bati-el and Alma Mindanao belong to the Capintalan People's Primary Services Co-operative, in Nueva Ecija, the Philippines, where the ABM has just funded and installed two water tanks. The tanks provide drinkable water to 300 households in a mountainous community about four hours drive from Manila.

The community is one of many Indigenous groups in the Philippines which obtained rights over their traditional lands from the Government in 1997. Formerly owned by the Philippines Government, the land is now owned by the community. It cannot be sold, but it can be inhabited, used and developed so that the people benefit. Under the Indigenous People's Rights Act, the government has to obtain the community's consent before they use the land.

"People's Co-operatives are essential to the success of the water system. On three occasions



Although water is abundant, clean water is scarce in the mountainous provinces in the Philippines. © Laura Ocampo/ABM 2005.

in the past, the local council put in water systems here. They all failed because there was no people's organisation. No-one paid for fuel and to maintain the pumping system," said Basilio.

To ensure it is sustainable, these projects

asked the community to pay for the water. People did not want to, as they had always used it for free when they collected it direct from the creek. When this project came along, the community formed a co-operative to own and manage the project. People pay 50 pesos (about \$1.50) to join the co-op, and only co-op members can access the water. Each member then pays a further 25 pesos a month to access water from the communal taps, or 50 pesos a month to get it piped to their houses. If someone doesn't pay, we cut off the supply – after some warnings.

"After we formed the co-op, we put in our first water system. There were fewer households



Basilio Bati-el is the auditor of this project in the Philippines. © Julianne Stewart/ABM 2009.

here then and the tank provided potable water for around 160 households. Some people missed out because they were too far from the pipes and the community has grown since then," said Basilio.

Funding from Episcopal Church of the Philippines (ECP) and ABM means two new tanks provide drinking water for another 130 households. Some people refuse to pay for the new system because they say they can get water from the creek. But that water is unsafe for drinking. The new project will inform people about what water is safe and unsafe and what kinds of pipe are best to use. There will also be training on sanitation and health matters to keep water sources clean. In addition, community members will be trained in how to manage the water system.

"Our projects are owned by us, not by the government, or by the donors. This is what makes them successful. We have a strong sense of purpose that it is for the good of the community. We also have good leadership," said Alma.

In the Philippines, ABM and the ECP do most of their development work in partnership with Indigenous communities. During Lent, the Bishop of the Southern Philippines, Danilo Bustamante will be visiting Australia and talking to people about the work of ECP, his church. For more details about our programs there, see www.abmission.org or call 1300 302 663.



Our Partner's Ally

Julianne Stewart, Program Coordinator, ABM

When Julianne Stewart walked into her office at ABM in 2008, she brought twenty years experience in academia with her. Her career change was motivated by an increasing interest in development. While conducting research she became fascinated as to why some countries develop and others remain poor.

Julianne's dedication to her work has increased during her short time at ABM. A theological understanding of God's mission and how central this is to development gives her a deep sense of commitment that is brought to life when she travels. During a recent trip to the Philippines she was reminded how people can fulfill the five marks of mission.

"The dedication and professionalism of the Episcopal Church of the Philippines is inspiring as they try to eradicate poverty and in sharing in the good news of Christ, supporters enter into an exciting partnership which enables individuals to participate to a high degree in God's mission to live and work for 'love, hope and justice' for all," she said. Reducing the distance between these people and those that support them is one of her goals.

Inspiration and intention is not enough and Julianne aims to gain as much knowledge about Australian and international aid as she can, as well increase our links with faith-based aid agencies in Sydney and international agencies.

St Andrew's makes a place for Indigenous Australians



An Indigenous student at Gawura, St Andrew's in Sydney. © SACS 2008.

By John Algar, Indigenous Program Manager

In Sydney, Anglicans are leading the way in Indigenous education at St Andrew's School in Sydney.

A generous bequest to ABM is making it possible for an Indigenous student to attend the prestigious St Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney.

St Andrew's recently opened Gawura – a campus exclusively for Indigenous Students. A 'school within a school', Gawura is for primary students who come from the Redfern/Waterloo area in Sydney. The vision of the school is to provide a quality education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in a caring, Christian environment emphasising standards of literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The concept for the school arose from a visit the principal made to South Africa in 2005. Phillip Heath said he was "deeply moved to observe the efforts of a small group of people offering educational support to the children of Soweto."

ABM has pledged our support for a student in primary school to continue onto secondary school. The bequest provides for a full scholarship for three years and will allow the student to continue acquiring a high standard of education. Further funding will allow the scholarship to continue.

The vision of the school is to provide a quality education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in a caring, Christian environment emphasising standards of literacy, numeracy and social skills.

Across Australia an average of 79% of Indigenous youth attend high school. Indigenous students in very remote regions achieve literacy and numeracy benchmarks at significantly lower rates than other students in all year levels (Department Education Employment and Workplace Relations: 2006)

HOW TO CURE EMERGENCIES – PREPARE AND RESPOND

By Brad Chapman, Emergency Officer

Often local churches are the first place that people turn for help when events like floods, famines and conflicts occur. In some parts of the world it can take days for government and international assistance to arrive – if it comes at all. In this environment ABM maintains systems that allow us to respond quickly to emergencies when they happen; transferring relief funds and deploying specialist personnel as they are requested by our partners.

WEATHER ALERT – DISASTERS ON THE INCREASE

At the same time as climate hazards are growing in number, more people are being affected by them because of poverty, powerlessness, population growth, and the movement and displacement of people to marginal areas. **The total number of natural disasters has quadrupled in the last two decades – most of them floods, cyclones, and storms.** Over the same period the number of people affected by disasters has increased from around 174 million to an average of over 250 million a year. Small- and medium-scale disasters are occurring more frequently than the kind of large-scale disasters that hit the headlines.

However, dramatic weather events do not in themselves necessarily constitute disasters; that depends on the level of human vulnerability – the capacity to resist impacts. Poor people and countries are far more vulnerable because of their poverty. Disasters, in turn, undermine development that can provide greater resilience.

Oxfam International; 2007



The aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar (Burma). © ACT 2008.

For ABM, management of disasters and emergencies begins well before these events actually occur. Proactively working with our partners and their local communities to prepare for emergencies and reduce risks may save many lives and prevent needless suffering.

ABM and our partners are always grateful for the generous and heartfelt response of prayer and donations when we bring the suffering of disaster-affected communities to the attention of our supporters. However, this support alone often fails to reach our partners in the critical first days of an emergency response and it can be subject to the variability of media attention.

To overcome these obstacles, ABM manages a central Rapid Emergency Response Fund which enables us to respond immediately to sudden-onset

emergencies. People concerned about reducing the impact of disasters on the poorest and most vulnerable are also encouraged to contribute to ABM's Disaster Risk Reduction work; a project that enables ABM to conduct training, planning and simulation with our partners, building preparedness and reducing risk in communities that can ill afford the impact of a disaster.

Are you interested knowing what ABM is doing in response to emergencies around the world? If so, then subscribe to updates through our website.



A woman carries emergency food supplies in Zimbabwe. ©ACT International 2008.

humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe. Many people gave generously to ABM's December 2008 appeal, which is assisting church agencies to distribute food and rehabilitate water points in some provinces, and provide support to a counseling program established by the Diocese of Harare. As cholera is spread through water, this will undoubtedly help combat the epidemic.

During his visit to Sydney in December last year, the Bishop of Harare, Dr Sebastian Bakare thanked Australians for their concern and their prayers and urged the international community to continue shining a spotlight on human rights abuses in his country.

LETTER TO ZIMBABWE

In February, the Anglican Primates meeting in Egypt heard firsthand accounts of the systematic kidnapping, torture and killing of Zimbabwean people. Beyond this, the breakdown of the rule of law and the collapse of Zimbabwe's economy has extracted an appalling toll in human suffering. The World Health Organisation reported in the same month that over 3,000 people had so far died in the cholera epidemic.

The Primates called attention to the horrific situation in Zimbabwe and urged that 25 February, Ash Wednesday, be observed as a day of prayer and solidarity with the Zimbabwean People.

ABM has been working with the Anglican Diocese of Harare and Action by Churches Together to address

Sebastian Bakare Bishop of Harare

On 10 November 2008 in Stockholm, Sweden, Dr Sebastian Bakare was presented with the Per Anger Award for his fight against oppression.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has described Bishop Bakare as a "deeply respected and courageous leader who has spoken out not only against injustices in his community but also against corruption within his own Anglican church."

Since 2004, the Swedish government has awarded the prize in the spirit of ambassador Per Anger who, during the Second World War, took the initiative to write a series of protection letters which saved the lives of thousands of Jews in Budapest.

"...having given voice to the fight against oppression and for the freedom of speech and of opinion in a difficult political situation, with courage and personal sacrifice," the Bishop was presented with the award.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FLOODS

Changes in the earth's climate threaten to bring an increasing number of extreme weather events. Australians need no one to tell them just how devastating extreme weather events can be. During the summer, while parts of Australia were experiencing the repercussions of new extremes in temperature, our Pacific Islands neighbours were also experiencing an extreme weather season.

In November and December, exceptionally high tides in the Bismarck Sea caused flooding of coastal communities in PNG and many of its island neighbours. More than 50,000 people were displaced. Later, in January, many Australian holiday-makers became intimately aware of the challenges facing communities in Fiji when they were caught in severe floods.

At the end of January, floods in the Solomon Islands killed eleven people and left around 10,000 people hungry when their food-gardens were destroyed. The Anglican Church has a very strong presence in the flooded areas of Western Guadalcanal and has played a leading role in relief efforts. Anglican Church of Melanesia General Secretary, George Kiriau took part in the evacuation of vulnerable communities as the flood waters rose. He says: "the Solomon Islands have not seen floods like what we are currently experiencing."

Throughout all the distress in the Pacific, ABM was supporting our partners as they reached out to assist their local communities. ABM launched appeals to help Anglican churches in the Solomon Islands and Fiji responding to the immediate and longer term needs of communities who were suffering. We also worked closely with Anglican agencies in New Zealand, the UK, the US and Canada to ensure our response was coordinated and efficient.

Throughout all distress in the Pacific, ABM was supporting our partners as they reached out to assist their local communities.



Flooded rivers cut off roads and isolated villages in January. © ABM 2009.

Revd Keith Joseph of Bishop Patteson Theological College in the Solomon Islands predicts that it will be more than six months until gardens in the affected villages and institutions are able to return to normal food production. Many of these communities will rely on external support until this happens.



Dr Suhaila Tarazi, director of Al Ahli Arab Hospital, talks to shrapnel victim. © Sarah Malian/ACT 2009.

GAZA STRIP – SITUATION UPDATE

In Gaza there were no fireworks to see in the New Year. Instead, bombs and bullets pummeled the troubled territory where hundreds of civilians have been killed in the recent fighting. Anglican institution, Al Ahli Arab Hospital, has served the people of Gaza through many traumatic events but the fury of the recent attacks has shocked and frightened the war weary hospital staff.

For the healing professionals at Al Ahli the cost of the war has been very personal. Several staff have had family members die. The fifteen year old niece of hospital director, Dr Suhaila Tarazi died from fear. During the bombardment she had an asthma attack and couldn't breathe. She died on the way to her aunt's hospital.

Another nurse could not get home to her wounded children. One of them died. "It is very, very scary here, now. I wonder if I will survive this," Dr Suhaila Tarazi said in a dispatch during the conflict.

ABM has been a long-time supporter of the work in Gaza of the Anglican Diocese in Jerusalem and the Middle East. Funds raised for the Gaza appeal have helped to procure and transport essential supplies to the hospital and will continue to help with recovery and rehabilitation work.

Bushfire Messages from Partners

As bushfires destroyed hectares of forest, land and entire homes and communities, our Partners, many of whom are all too familiar with disasters, sent messages of sympathy and support to Victoria.

We prayed together for those who had died, for all those who mourn or who are still in shock or without homes, for the emergency services and for the bishops and clergy of the Victorian dioceses in their pastoral response to the disaster... We offer our prayer in your hour of need and for the months ahead.

Bishop Peter Ramsden, Papua New Guinea

The loss of life and home is something many of our people in the western region of Ethiopia are very familiar with. We grieve the possibility that any of these fires may have been caused by your fellow Australians. Please be assured of our prayers for those who have lost family, home or livelihood at this time.

Bishop Andrew Proud, Ethiopia

Please be assured that we are praying for all those who have died, all those who have lost loved ones or property at this time, for the fire fighters who continue to struggle against raging fires, and for the medical staff who look after the injured. We stand with you in sorrow as you mourn your losses.

Saw Kenneth, General Secretary of the Church of the Province of Myanmar

Into God's loving mercy we commend those in the Solomon Islands and Australia who have lost their lives in flood and fire; we pray for those who mourn and suffer; we gave thanks for the dedication and courage of those who help and protect us; and we hope for a better future as we rebuild from the mud and from the ash...

George Kiriaua, General Secretary, the Church of Melanesia



Messages of support to the bushfire victims came from Vanuatu and further afield. © Chris Peters/ABM 2008.

While we stand in solidarity with you in this moment of deep grief, we also bring encouragement that with God's grace and mercy, the people of Australia will transcend this moment, will find comfort in God's love and in the solidarity of people from across the continents.

Atty. Floyd P Lalvert
Episcopal Church of the Philippines

A Second Chance – Literacy in Vanuatu

By Melany Markham,
Communications Coordinator

Education is not compulsory in Vanuatu. Less than fifty percent of students who start school make it to high school. (UNESCO: 2008)

As the country's population is dispersed throughout eighty islands, efficient delivery of health care, education and other social services is difficult (UNICEF: 2008). Poverty forces many children to drop out of school because their parents can't afford school fees. Providing even the most basic education is made even more difficult by Vanuatu's linguistic diversity. English or French are the languages used in schools, yet over 109 living languages are spoken throughout Vanuatu.

The obstacles to education in Vanuatu are those that ABM's National Auxiliary are willing to tackle. Literacy in Vanuatu has been adopted as their project for 2009.

The coordinator of the project is a dignified and intelligent woman called Anna Blessing. In Vanuatu, girls are most often disadvantaged by a lack of education. As the Mothers Union is one of the key providers of education in the



Salome Haridi teaches a literacy class in Vanuatu. © Don Brice/ABM 2008.

Less than 50 percent of students who start school make it to high school. (UNESCO: 2008)

country, women are undoubtedly the key to the success in this program.

"I think education is power, and if women are not given that opportunity... people will always make decisions for them," the most Revd Sir Ellison Pogo, KBE, recently retired as Archbishop of Melanesia.

Some of the funds for this project will pay

for literacy teachers who will work in remote areas, teaching some of the people who have missed out on education so far.

'A Second Chance' is also the name of a DVD about literacy in Vanuatu. Copies of the DVD and brochures about the project can be obtained by contacting the ABM office on 1300 302 663 (Sydney 9264 1021).

The Red Ribbon Church – HIV in Papua New Guinea

By Melany Markham, Communications Coordinator

“In Papua New Guinea, clergy talk about HIV during sermons,” Tagolyn Kabekabe told us on a recent visit to Australia. Faced with a pandemic, the people of Papua New Guinea (PNG) need to do all they can.

It was Peter Fox who, in 2004, had the notion that the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea should take ownership of HIV&AIDS.

“This was because one of our parishoners died from AIDS. It was more of a wake up call for the church. The question was, “Who is the Church?” and the answer was, “It is the people”. And if the church was not going to take ownership of the problem means that there would be no church,” said Tagolyn Kabekabe, coordinator of the Church’s HIV education program in schools.

After Anglican services, people who have been trained talk to small groups, answer questions and talk about HIV and AIDS. There are also people who have been trained in voluntary counseling and testing, as well as home-based care. Some parishes distribute leaflets.

A lot of young people, who have been trained as peer educators, carry out the programs in their meetings. Most of it is done during their youth rallies – at Easter and during the independence weekend.



A banner publicising HIV prevention in Papua New Guinea. © Kirsty Robertson/ ABM 2007.

The clergy have their own program on HIV and they do attend some of the programs so they are very well trained in these issues. Meeting every Monday with Peter Ramsden (the Bishop of Port Moresby), they discuss issues which they then incorporate this into their sermons. They also participate in home based care. One retired priest works with Anglicare StopAIDS and he does the awareness with the other priests.

“We hope that, in time, the program of the red ribbon will go out to all parishes,” said Tagolyn.

Goodbye Kirsty

After over two years of extraordinary commitment Kirsty Roberston left ABM in February. As the Program Manager for Papua New Guinea, Kirsty has managed our largest overseas program. Over the past two years, she has helped our brothers and sisters in PNG assume more responsibility for the program.

To Wontulp and Back – A Pilgrim’s Story

By the Revd Jazz Dron

The last essay was in the box, semester had finished. It was time for the long-awaited journey to Wontulp-Bi-Buya Indigenous Theological College to begin.

Travelling up the east coast from the cold weather of Canberra to the warmth of Cairns where the rolling hills meet the coast – it had begun. The cold weather seemed to be a distant memory and I was overwhelmed by the story of this place, with the rich diversity of its landscape.

The next day the course began. I was introduced to the students that I would travel with in community for the next two weeks. These students knew the rich diversity of this land well, for they were here first. While at Wontulp I learnt much about this ancient land we call Australia. I glimpsed a fragment of how God is understood by this culture and belief system that has walked the land for ages upon ages.

Being at Wontulp was a significant time of learning for me. During our study sessions I would try my best to assist with any questions the students had. Around the table and in study-free sessions it was my turn to be the student. I heard the devastating stories of the continuing effects of colonisation. I heard stories of life as it is lived day to day in various communities.



The Revd Jazz Dron spent two weeks with students at Wontulp. © Brad Chapman/ABM 2008.

I was taught about joy and hope, how to sing and dance in worship. I was taught how

important it is to treasure one another and the ‘other’.

Despite the tragedies that a lot of these people had experienced in their lifetime and the trying circumstances that are still endured, the people I met at Wontulp shared with me deep hope.

As I prepared for my ordination last November, I was challenged to look at the structure of worship in the Anglican Church of Australia and how our worship might continue to become authentically ‘Australian’.

The geographic location of the course seemed to be an apt reflection of the community



The road to Yarrabah Indigenous Community outside Wontulp College. © Steve Daughtry/ABM 2007.

gathered. The diversity of the landscape, the rainforest, the mountains, the sea, meeting together, so too people from non-Indigenous, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait cultures came together, ‘gathered from the ends of the earth’ to form one body.

Opportunities are available for theological students and ordinands to visit Indigenous theological colleges. Please contact ABM's Pilgrimages Program Manager (bac@abm.asn.au) for more information.

In the past six months we have welcomed a number of staff onto the team at ABM.



Vivienne For

Vivienne has been a parishioner at St Lukes Concord for four years and volunteers at their church office every Friday. Originally from South Africa, Vivienne has lived in Sydney for almost all of her life. It is her voice that supporters hear when they call the office requesting

information about our programs and her work that you see on the website.



Robert McLean

Having worked for the church for almost all of his adult life, Robert seemed to be the ideal choice to manage our Church to Church Program. Robert grew up in New Zealand and, since moving to Australia in 1998, has worked for the National Council of Churches and St

James King St. In his short time at ABM, Robert is reinvigorating the Church to Church program with his enthusiasm for mission and belief in the Church's capability around the world.



Melany Markham

As a media coordinator for Oxfam during emergencies, Melany worked long days during the disasters in Myanmar (Burma) and China last year. She moved to Sydney in October 2008 to take up the position with ABM, bringing twelve years of public relationship

experience with her. In the past four months she has put her experience to good use, strengthening ABM's response to emergencies and developing our capacity in electronic communication.

If the stories you have read in this magazine have inspired you – you may like to give a gift to ABM for the ongoing work of our Partners – please complete the following form or give online at www.abmission.org

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- **Witness to Christ's saving, forgiving and reconciling love for all people**
- **Build welcoming, transforming communities of faith**
- **Stand in solidarity with the poor and needy**
- **Challenge injustice and oppression**
- **Protect, care for and renew life on our planet**

Adapted from the Anglican Consultative Council

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