

This update is intended to give the members of our churches a broad overview of what has been happening in Global Mission. The rapid escalation of the Covid-19 pandemic dramatically affected our plans for 2020, but despite that I hope you enjoy catching up on our recent news; and prayerfully consider how you can join us in serving our global neighbours in a changing world. Phil King Global Mission Coordinator



First, the Good News

The past few years have been very active for Global Mission. Many congregations have been actively involved in a variety of mission projects and several have hosted representatives from our mission partners. Hundreds of PCANZ members have served in short-term engagements and 120 youth have taken part in programmes in India, Myanmar, Vanuatu and Taiwan. One hundred and fifty students, staff and parents have served on Church school service programmes in Vanuatu. Twenty three PCANZ personnel have served in a medium to longer term capacity, many in voluntary roles covering project management, education, theology, finance, health tuition and pastoral ministry. Since 2015 \$900,000 has been distributed in donations for Global Mission partners, including \$200,000 raised for Vanuatu's Cyclone Pam relief. In 2020, we have had two couples serving in mission; Wayne and Helen Harray in Myanmar, and Brian and Ally Mackay in Vanuatu. You can read their stories inside.

2019 saw a significant reconnection with St Thomas School in India, with an invitation for more possible involvement. Partnerships with the Presbyterian churches in Korea and Taiwan remain active, with both ongoing and new programmes. Members of our congregations continue to give generously, both in terms of finance and service.

Despite the challenges forced on us this year by the Covid-19 pandemic, PCANZ Global Mission remains a key partner in our global mission relationships. I hope you enjoy catching up on our news in this 2020 Update.

Impact of Covid-19

See inside for the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Global Mission activity for 2020



⌆ Young adult members of the Presbyterian churches from Taiwan and Vanuatu attended Connect at Ohope marae in 2019.



⌆ Rev Go Khan Suan of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar with a grateful microfinance client.

SERVING OUR GLOBAL NEIGHBOURS IN VANUATU

Brian and Ally Mackay began the year teaching at Talua Theological Training Institute in Vanuatu. They were loving their time there, until the Covid-19 Pandemic hit. Here is their story, written shortly before the difficult decision was made to return to New Zealand.

“They are our neighbours and they need us”

Those were the words that helped us to see the call to travel, for 2020, from Knox Presbyterian Church, Dannevirke, to Talua Theological Training Institute, Santo, Vanuatu. We had always had an interest in mission work. Our prayers for God’s guidance, discussions with others, and our family situation, led us to the point where we were ready to take the leap. We arrived in late January and intended to remain until December.

We settled in very well and were coping with the heat most of the time. We loved the relaxed, friendly, generous environment there and were constantly amazed by the beauty in our surroundings. We moved into Heniko House on the campus, which is funded and maintained by PCANZ Global Mission.

Our teaching and administration work there was quite varied and drew us out of our comfort zones. We found it an exciting challenge and relished the chance to develop new skills. Our experience as high school teachers helped us in course design, policy and procedure writing, and of course, working with the students.

Ally taught English and study skills to the foundation students, preparing them for their start on a Bachelor of Theology degree next year. Brian had a stronger administration focus with policy updating (he spent a week at a Vanuatu Qualifications Authority course). He also taught computing skills to students and staff.

We loved living in a God-centred community. The gong and the roosters competed to wake us at 5am. There were many opportunities for personal and corporate devotions during the week. The generator shutting down at 9pm signalled that it was bedtime (very radical for us night-owls!).



Brian and Ally outside their staff house, and Brian pictured with local children on the Talua campus.



Community life also involved working around the campus, trips on the back of the “truck” (ute) to town one hour away (20km... a very bumpy road!). We enjoyed building relationships with our student and staff neighbours in the buildings surrounding us. They welcomed us and showed us how to make a garden, how to harvest and eat the many tropical fruits available. It was not unusual for someone to arrive on our doorstep with butter fruit (avocado) laplap (a Vanuatu favourite), and other local delicacies. We reciprocated in small ways with cake (the traditional ex-pat dish – mostly banana cake). Ally’s icing was a big hit!

While there were no confirmed cases of coronavirus in Vanuatu (as of mid-March), the school formulated plans and practices to put into place both now and in the future. Vanuatu has no means to test for this disease and very limited health resources to cope with an outbreak. Your prayers in this matter would be appreciated.

Brian and Ally were deeply disappointed that they had to return home early. Fortunately, they are able to continue supporting Talua by writing policies and doing other work remotely. They said, “It was a real privilege to be at Talua and continue the valued partnership between PCANZ and PCV. We felt like we were part of something pretty special, and hope there will be time to return later in 2020. Despite the challenges faced by the coronavirus, we encourage anyone who may be thinking about doing something like this to talk with us, and also with Global Mission Coordinator Phil King”.

Serving Together as Partners in Mission in Myanmar

Since 2018, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand members Wayne and Helen Harray have served with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar. They recently returned to New Zealand on furlough and have written this brief summary of their work so to date.

It's been 21 months since we left New Zealand to work at the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar's Tahan Theological College (TTC) in Myanmar. Working in Myanmar has its own unique challenges. The politics of the country are a lot more complex than we, or most people in New Zealand, realise. We work primarily with the Chin people, who are a completely different people group to the other seven ethnic groups in the country. The Chin themselves are made up of at least 35 language and tribal groups (some put it as high as 54) with their own intertribal differences and tensions.

When we arrived our roles were loosely defined as follows:

- Helen was to teach pastoral theology on a half time basis (6 hours a week).
- Wayne was to develop the six hectares of dormant farmland the college owns to create a supplementary income for the college, and create an environmentally friendly farming model that could be used as a demonstration farm for students and the community.

What actually transpired is slightly different. Helen has been appointed Head of Department of the Liberal Arts department, which focuses on teaching conversational English, and this has become more than a full-time job. Wayne has added the major goal of restoring the depleted and impoverished soils to full health. Space doesn't allow for a full summary of what we have achieved so far, but impressions after 21 months can be given.

Helen is teaching with extremely limited resources, when we compare with what we would take for granted in New Zealand. However, it is not just TTC that has limited resources; this is true for almost every educational institute across the country that has been affected by 60 years of military rule – during this there was no promotion

of education in any way, shape or form. This does lead to real frustrations. In spite of this, progress is being made, albeit slowly. Helen has made significant changes to the model of teaching and it is her intention to continue to do so - introducing teaching practices and methods that are more aligned with current world standards.



 **Wayne and Helen with fellow TTC staff member Zohmai Rokhum at a graduation dinner in March 2020.**

Wayne has made inroads into restoring the land that he has been entrusted to manage. As he drives around it, there are two major emotions that 'envelop' him; satisfaction at what has been achieved so far, offset by the challenge of knowing that it will take at least another five years for the land to really start to show signs of maturity and bear results.

Wayne says, "I am learning as I go and the overall management system of the property is evolving constantly. Let's hope that COVID-19 becomes a thing of the past very quickly and that we can get back to roles that we very definitely feel called to over the next few years".

Wayne and Helen were planning to stay in New Zealand until mid-May. However, at the time of writing their return date is unclear. For more news on Wayne and Helen's work at TTC you can go to their blog site at: helenharray.com



Ⓜ Global Mission has helped to fund church buildings in the remote Chin State, Myanmar. Augcheng and Canbong churches are two that have recently been completed.



Ⓜ Sponsored nurse aid students with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar Women's Secretary, Hming Sangi.



Ⓜ Members of the Leith Church team with Wayne and Helen Harray and Tahan Theological College staff outside the chapel.

A team from Leith Church travelled to Myanmar in January to visit Wayne and Helen Harray at Tahan Theological College, and learn more about their work. They observed the daily life of the College, spent time with staff and students, and learnt about the culture and context of the ethnic Chin people who make up the membership of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar. They were able to help Wayne and Helen in their work; some intend to return again. Teachers in particular are needed to help develop the English language department that Helen manages. Please contact Global Mission Coordinator Phil King if you are a teacher and would like to know how you can contribute.



Wayne Matheson and Phil King led a Bible study with the young adults group at Christ Church in Jagadhri, India.



A familiar environmental message in an art class at St Thomas School, Jagadhri. The school is active in art, culture and recreation programmes.



Wakatipu Church's Iraja Max, (above), gave a music lesson at a Bush Mission School in Vanuatu. Roberto, (below), received gifts from a village chief.



In the highlands of Espiritu Santo island there are many villages that still live according to traditional custom. In recent years, the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu has gained the trust of many in these villages and has developed an extensive Bush Mission outreach which includes sharing Christianity, developing schools and establishing medical aid posts. Teams from the Wakatipu parish have joined the Bush Mission outreach for the past few years. If you would like to learn more about this, contact Wakatipu minister Carlton Johnstone for more information.

RECONNECTING WITH ST. THOMAS SCHOOL - MISSION THROUGH EDUCATION IN INDIA



Phil King and PCANZ Assembly Executive Secretary Wayne Matheson in the new chapel at St Thomas School.

Visits to St Thomas School in Jagadhri, India in 2019 have helped to revive PCANZ's long-standing connection with the school, and opened the way for new opportunities to serve in mission. A well-regarded school in the Hindu majority community of Jagadhri and Yamunanagar in Haryana province, St Thomas treasures its links with PCANZ and always puts on an enthusiastically warm welcome for visitors from New Zealand. The school has a roll of over 3,000 students and of these, only a very small minority are Christian. However, in staying true to its roots, the Christian students receive scholarships which enable them to attend the fee-paying school. Religious affiliation tends to have an impact on economic status in India and so this policy is a great help to the Christian families in this community. Mrs Chandana Lall was appointed principal in 2016 and has ensured that St Thomas has a strong commitment to maintaining its emphasis as a Christian school. One of her first projects was to develop a chapel within the school, which she achieved by having a basement room converted into a warm and welcoming place for worship. This was completed despite opposition from some in the community who opposed the move. This is an example of how life for minority institutions in India has become more difficult under the current political climate which has seen the rise of an often-vociferous Hindu fundamentalism in some regions of India. Assembly Executive Secretary Wayne Matheson visited St Thomas with Global Mission Coordinator Phil King in May last year. "I was hugely impressed with the principal's passion, commitment; vision and plans for the school," he said. "She wants to ensure present staff and students understand the history and how this is important as the school continues to grow and develop. And underlying this is a gentle yet firm Christian faith and a commitment to nurture the Christian faith of others among the staff. I was greatly encouraged."

Phil says that his visits to St Thomas have given him some of his greatest highlights during his time as Global Mission coordinator. "While it is really important to offer support and encouragement to the Christian staff and students, I have also been deeply moved by interactions with Hindu students at the school. Their acceptance of me and openness to sharing from the heart has been very moving and helped me to see the importance of supporting St Thomas," he said. "Providing quality education in this multi-faith environment can help to break down barriers of caste and religion, which still have a strong impact in modern-day India."

Members of the PCANZ with an interest in education and cross-cultural mission are invited to enquire about visiting St Thomas school in a short-term capacity, from 2021.



St Thomas students representing the diverse cultures of India.

Scholarship support for nursing students

School of Nursing students at Christian Hospital, Jagadhri, continue to be the recipients of Global Mission scholarships. This is likely to be the case for only two more years as the School of Nursing winds down and nurses are educated at other institutions. Our sponsored students from the Christian community in Jagadhri and Yamunanagar are very grateful for the assistance given which enables them to have a career and support their families.



Four of the students who are receiving scholarships from Global Mission at the School of Nursing in Jagadhri.

PROGRAMMES AFFECTED BY THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Many Global Mission programmes for 2020 have been affected by the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus and the subsequent travel restrictions. This is disappointing but health and safety comes first and we need to wait for travel to be safe again before we resume programmes with our global partners. The following programmes have been cancelled or postponed for 2020:

- Council for World Mission - Training in Mission, April – November 2020
- PCANZ youth leaders to the PCV youth assembly
- PCV youth leaders to Connect and leadership development programme with PCANZ
- Council for World Mission - General Assembly, June 2020
- I Love Taiwan youth programme, July 2020
- Going Global Youth Programme to Taiwan January 2021
- A wide range of partnership projects involving congregational teams and Church schools with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu
- Teaching support opportunities to Tahan Theological College, Myanmar
- Brian and Ally Mackay have returned home from Talua Theological Training Institute
- At the time of writing it is too early to know whether international mission partners will be able to attend the PCANZ General Assembly in October. A decision about this will be made as soon as possible.

As you can see, this has had a considerable impact on our work and created uncertainty regarding future events. But it also means that our partners have been seriously affected as well. So even as we adjust to the disappointments of being unable to follow through on our plans, let us also remember and pray for all those whose lives, livelihoods, communities and ministries have been negatively impacted by the challenging circumstances being experienced all over the world.

Strengthening Partnerships with Taiwan and Vanuatu

Global Mission hosted members from two partner churches over two different events in 2019, with the aim of relationship building and leadership development. With the help of PCANZ



congregations, Global Mission hosted ten youth leaders – five each from Taiwan and Vanuatu – for a two-week programme. The culmination was their attendance at the Presbyterian Youth Ministry's national youth leaders training weekend, Connect, at Ohope marae.

This was our first experience hosting youth from two partner churches at the same time and was a great success. Connect was a real highlight leaving members of the team hungry for more. Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu youth leader Welle Taforua said that he gained much from his time in New Zealand, and that his presbytery youth were grateful for the opportunity that had been given. There were lots of positive outcomes from this programme and as a result, Global Mission is planning to bring youth leaders from Vanuatu to Connect again in 2021.



Vanuatu school chaplains Carl Nial and Kevin Dalesa outside St. Kentigerns College chapel.

Two chaplains from Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu schools, Carl Nial and Kevin Dalesa, attended the conference of the New Zealand Association of RE Teachers and School Chaplains, followed by the Presbyterian Schools' Conference at Saint Kentigern College. The conferences are designed as professional development and encouragement for religious education teachers and chaplains. It is hoped that this new development can lead to ongoing support and professional development for school chaplains in Vanuatu.

COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION TRAINING IN MISSION PROGRAMME

Joel White of Balclutha Presbyterian Church was selected as a participant on this year's Training in Mission (TIM) programme hosted by the Council for World Mission. Joel was meant to begin the seven-month long programme in April, before the coronavirus pandemic put an end to the programme for 2020. The TIM programme has moved to a more academic format after its previous action-reflection model and was to take place in New Zealand, Fiji, South Korea and Jamaica. Joel is yet to decide if he will take up the option of being a preferred candidate for the programme in 2021.


In the past two years it has been great to see St Kentigern schools develop service programmes with Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu schools. Some outstanding results have been achieved by hardworking teams of staff, parents and students. Through various contacts and good planning, these teams managed to transport and build adventure playgrounds in two PCV schools, giving the students first-class recreational facilities (see below). Congratulations to St Kentigern chaplain Reuben Hardie who led this effort. With the PCV increasing their stake in education in Vanuatu there is a growing need to help with resources and we intend this to continue as soon as the situation allows.



Presbyterian Church of Korea Theological Students Visit

In recent years the PCANZ has regularly hosted students from the Presbyterian Church of Korea's university and theological seminary (PUTS) for a short internship. This year a team of three students participated in a KCML block course and had exposure in a number of Presbyterian churches throughout the country. (This happened several weeks before the Covid-19 concerns developed). Many thanks to the staff and students of KCML, and the many ministers and members of our churches who offered hospitality to this team. These visits help the students with their ministry formation and build understanding and awareness between our churches and cultures.



 **Students from the Presbyterian Church of Korea with staff and interns at the KCML block course in Dunedin in February this year.**



YOU ARE INVITED TO GET INVOLVED

If you, your congregation or mission group would like to follow up on any of the stories in this newsletter, contact the Global Mission Coordinator, Phil King.

DONATIONS

Donations to Global Mission can be made by online banking or by cheque. The online bank account number is 020500 0086963 10. Cheques should be posted to PCANZ Global Mission, P.O. Box 9049, Wellington 6141

PCANZ Global Mission: globalmission.org.nz

Facebook: Global Mission – Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

Global Mission Coordinator Phil King, phil@presbyterian.org.nz

DD 04 3818294, +64212506467