

# VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

April/May 2022

## Western Highlands Send Their Thanks

by Pr Luke Nathan, President, Western Highlands Mission, PNG

We would like to salute you and the team of Sponsors throughout Australia who have the heart for the ministry here in Western Highlands Mission. With more than 107,000 church members, 278 organized churches and well over 1,000 company churches WHM is the largest mission in the entire Papua New Guinea Union Mission. With this large and consistently growing membership we are surely facing administrative issues, especially in pastoral care.



The financial and prayer support from VIA sponsors for so many years has helped us in a great way, and the church has benefited broadly through the presence of the many VIA sponsored lay workers.

You might not know what happens here, apart from the reports we send, but time will tell and very soon when our King of Kings and Lord of Lords appears in the clouds of heaven, and when every work is brought into the light, I am sure that you will be rewarded for the greatness of helping WHM to sustain, nurture and win souls for Jesus.

I would like to personally thank you so much for your support. We will very much embrace your ongoing support and are prepared to work hand in hand with you.

## Baptisms in West Taraka

by Maureen Charles Ningel, VIA in Morobe Mission, PNG



When the District Director visited West Taraka church recently, he had the pleasure of being able to baptise eight people who the local VIA missionaries had led to Jesus through Bible studies. Praise God for such a beautiful surprise!

## 7 Baptised and 54 Lined Up

by VIA Jezreel Hambak, Sepik, PNG

My team and I ran an evangelistic meeting in Nov/Dec 2021. It was right up in the heart of the Torrecili border ranges between East and West Sepik.



It required many kilometres of carrying PA systems, bags of clothing and food, tents, petrol, Bibles and many other items. We praise God that seven souls were baptised and 54 others have already made a stand. There are many youth and elderly people who have chosen to put God first in their lives. I want to keep making a difference in people's lives by sharing the gospel of Revelation 14:6-12 with everyone.



### VIA SPONSORS ZOOM EVENT!

Saturday 25 June 3:30pm - 4:30pm (AEST)

This online event will deepen your understanding of how God can use lay people to help achieve His gospel mission. You will hear how your sponsorship of VIA volunteers is adding vital capacity to the work of the Missions in the South Pacific.

#### GUEST SPEAKERS

**Pr Leslie Yamahune** – District Director for New Britain New Ireland Mission in PNG will share his personal experiences from the frontlines of VIA.

**Julian Archer** - Stewardship Director for the South Pacific Division will share insights from his journey through business and VIA ministry.

**Derek Rippingale** - VIA Board Chair will share how God has led and continues to lead VIA into the future.

We also encourage you to invite anyone to attend who may have an interest in sponsoring a volunteer. There will be opportunity to directly engage and ask questions of the speakers.

*We'd love to see you there!*

Just Join us on 25 June using these details:



Event link: <https://zoom.us/join>  
Meeting ID: 867 1133 1045  
Passcode: 757295

## The Gospel Shared Through Doughnuts

by Grace Luke, a young VIA in Biwa, Alotau District, PNG

“What is that in your hand?” God asked Moses. Grace felt God asking the same of her, so she began to use her ability to make delicious doughnuts to connect with people in her community. Her popular treats are well known, and people often stop to buy from her and chat about their day.



Grace has forged close relationships and become a trusted friend to many. Some asked her about how she learnt to cook and why she gave away so many, and in this way, she began to share God’s love with them. Grace is now a young VIA Missionary in her town, setting up Bible discovery groups, giving out Bibles and training women in how they can set up their own little businesses to support their families.

She says she needs more Bibles and literature to give out to new interests. Please pray for this young woman as she works and bakes for God in the little town of Biwa.

**Young Kenny Stands for His Beliefs** as told by VIA Rupert in Kerandu District, Northern Milne Bay Mission, PNG



Kenny was in primary school when he and his family accepted the truth about God’s Word and were baptised into the Seventh-day Adventist church. He learned to love and protect this truth as he continued to study with his family and read the Bible for himself.

In late 2021, when Kenny was in grade eight, a Christian group from another denomination came to visit and worship at his home. Kenny recognised that the way they were worshipping was contrary to the Bible. He stood up and said, ‘This is false worship’, quoting verses from Revelation. Some of his family members were upset and told him to leave.

Kenny reached out to his friend Rupert, the local VIA Missionary asking for advice and encouragement. Together they studied about the worship God asks of us. Then they prayed that God would raise up other young missionaries in their area. Kenny knows the time is short before Jesus will return and he dreams of one day soon becoming a VIA Missionary, just like his friend Rupert.

## Former Inmate Builds SDA Church

by Wilfred Nangu, Sepik Mission, PNG

Sentenced to prison for a crime committed in 2001, Terence Sumun, a faithful Catholic, went to church in prison every Sunday. The worshipping inmates were all told to lift both hands facing the rising sun. Looking back, Terence now realises that he was worshipping the sun and not the true living God.

Terence then decided to follow the Assemblies of God congregation to prison worship on Sundays. The church leaders asked him to be their church worship leader every Sunday, but they also forcefully asked him to be baptized in their faith first, again Terence rejected this appeal.

Terence then joined the Seventh-day Adventist worship and fellowship activities and was faithful for a period of six months. On 31 December 2004, he heard Adventist leaders appeal to prison inmates who would like to be baptized and become an Adventist through bible studies. Terence signed up and did Bible studies for fifteen months.

When his family heard that he was planning to be baptised as an Adventist, it was like an electric current shocking their hearts. They sent messages telling him to think again and make a better decision, and later said DO NOT get baptised. Terence replied from prison that he had confirmed his faith with the Holy Bible, that His Living God is bigger than all problems, he was not turning back.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 Terence was baptised and soon after he dreamed of building an SDA ‘lamb shelter’. Upon his release from prison in 2009, his family welcomed him and gave a large portion of land. Terence jumped straight in and built a home and lamb shelter on it.



13 years of weather took its toll on the original lamb shelter.

He invited his family and friends to come for fellowship. They are now building a more permanent structure and VIA has supplied the roofing iron.



Terence says, “God bless your support of my dreamed church. Do pray for its completion and dedication program.”

## Miracles Still Happen

by Ms Rachael James, VIA in Lelegwagwa, Northern & Milne Bay Mission, PNG

Rachael works with four SDA church companies in a remote part of the Milne Bay Province. She has only been a Seventh-day Adventist herself for six years, and despite the fact that she hasn't received full training, she eagerly fulfills her role as a VIA Missionary, sharing the truth that has changed her own life and brought her so much peace. As well as leading church companies and conducting Bible studies she is also active in her community, assisting with simple medical necessities and building gardens. Here she shares two stories from late 2021 which have strengthened her faith.



Early one morning Rachael was called to the house of a woman who was struggling with a difficult birth. Rachael quickly realised that a trained nurse was needed and she sent word for a nurse to attend. The nurse didn't arrive for several hours so Rachel stayed with the mother, helping in any way she could, all the time praying for the safety of both the mother and baby. After six hours, the nurse arrived and a healthy baby girl was welcomed into the world. There were some further complications in delivering the placenta, but the exhausted mother survived. The nurse remarked that it was Rachael's prayers that had saved the mother and baby. She praised God for giving her this opportunity to share God's intervening power with this family in a new frontier mission area.



One Sabbath morning a father arrived at Rachael's house and asked if she could come back to his home and pray for his bed-ridden daughter Evelyn. She had been unable to walk for twelve months and was becoming depressed and despondent. Her family attended the United Church in the area but sought the prayers of this Adventist VIA missionary. The head elder of the Gopea Adventist Church accompanied Rachael. Here is what happened in Rachael's own words: "The healing power of God was demonstrated. After two days Evelyn was able to walk unassisted to the kitchen, then to the outside toilet and even down to the river to bathe. Continuous and persistent prayer was offered and now she is able to walk up the hill to the family's garden and accompany her mother to help sell produce in the market."

Rachael is praying that this healing miracle will help Evelyn to make up her mind to follow Jesus and to join one of Rachael's Bible study groups.

Although she has received some criticism from a few church members about being a single, female VIA missionary, Rachael is not discouraged and continues to look up to Jesus, her constant companion and guide.

## "The Lord has not Forgotten Us!"

by Maureen Charles Ningel, Morobe Mission, PNG

"The Lord has not forgotten us!" was the tear-filled response of the prisoners of Buimo Prison, PNG's second largest prison, when the Adventists came to visit. Special permission had been obtained in order to enter the prison during the COVID lockdown period.



The church members of West Taraka had prepared a meal to share and they also distributed food, a little cash and World Changers Bibles. They presented a simple worship service and prayed with the prisoners. Their message was one of encouragement to be patient and allow God's love to enter their hearts and bring about change.

"That was the best meal we have had in years", some commented while other inmates just asked for a hug; they felt so alone and unloved. The visit was so successful that the prison wardens have given permission for the church members to visit again soon. They returned home praising God that they had been able to minister to Jesus by visiting the 'least of these' in prison.

## Prayers During COVID

by Rex Sam Ala, WHM, PNG

I praise God during this time of crisis and for Holy Spirit who is working in me to help bring healing to many. I thank God that He is near to those who call on Him. He supplies the needs of those who honour Him (Psalms 146:8-9).



During the Delta Variant crisis with COVID, most of our members were infected so I told them that if they are very sick they must phone me and I will pray with them. One old man was very sick and his family and some of the church family said he was going to die. I started to pray with him for two weeks, but he was about to die. The family brought other people to pray for him but he said, "No, only Sevende Pasta bai prea lo me." (Only the SDA pastor will pray for me.)

I cried in my very heart to God and asked him to let the family and community see how powerful You are and give glory to you. I kept praying and after a few days he started eating and drinking and he fully recovered!

Now the man is attending church and weekly meetings. Praise God!

## Sandra Japmaholi's Sacrifice for Mission

by Wilfred Nangu, Sepik Mission, PNG



Of all the possible locations available, VIA worker Sandra Japmaholi decided to do her missionary work on the purely Catholic island of Kairiru. She left her family of three children and husband to answer God's call.

In 2021, Sandra began by working alongside island residents whom she had met already, and they invited her to study the Bible with them.

Soon after, a widower father of five girls gave us a portion of land on which to build a temporary bible study shelter and church. The five daughters are very helpful with the building. The roofing iron was sponsored by VIA donor partners and roofed early in 2022.



(L) Sandra and the five dedicated daughters. (R) Sabbath worship together in Bennad's home.

Kairiru has no baptized members, but bible study continues, the non-Adventist landowner and his family and other friends are in 'class ready' and they will be pioneer Adventists after their baptism.

Sandra plans to do more charity work for other families to build relationships in preparation for the sharing of the everlasting gospel. She requests all our prayers for her and the people of Kairiru, and her family who she has left behind.

## Morehead Remote Outreach

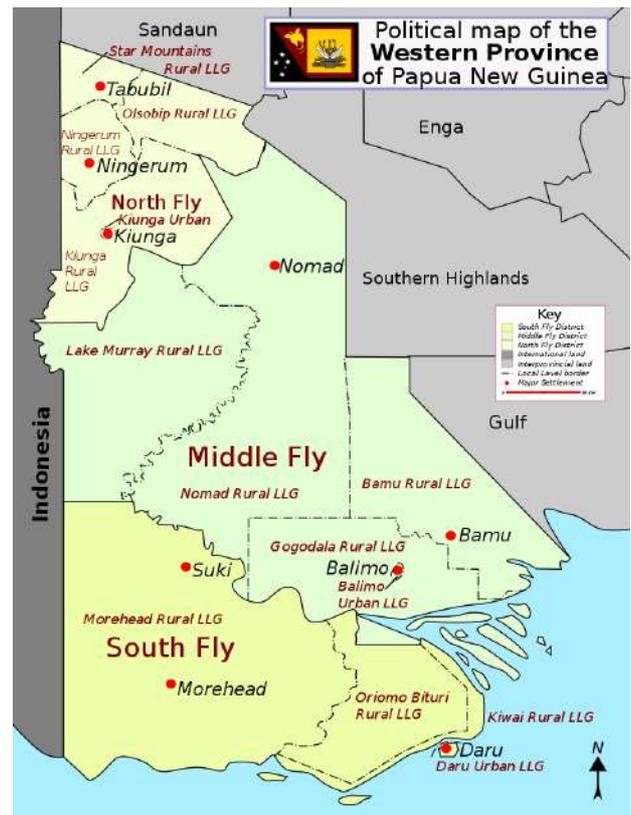
by VIA Murray Maipu & Rosemary Piet

The Trans-Fly is a large, incredibly remote area along the south-west border of Papua New Guinea, immediately north of Cape York, Australia. It is a place of thick jungle, mountainous terrain, vast swamps and the mighty Fly River.

Our evangelism trip to Morehead in South Fly was a long journey, all by foot, through eight villages. Forty-six of us were carrying heavy loads all the way. We thank God that the locals were very generous with food and shelter to give us strength and encouragement along the way.

After setting up in Morehead, the regional capital, we all enjoyed the nightly outreach programs and Dr Chester Kuma's last days' health messages were also shared, by video. We praise God that thirty candidates were baptised, and the line was long when the pastor appealed for others who want to study more in preparation for baptism.

The area we ministered in is huge and only has two lay missionaries looking after the whole of it. Please, we need more full-time workers and lay missionaries to reach this isolated part of PNG.



### 100% GOES!

VIA only uses 0.5% of total funds for overhead costs—and it all comes from bank interest!—so **100% of your gift** goes to the field. ☺ Thank you for trusting us with your hard-earned donations as we invest it for eternity.

## Sissano Lagoon Church Grows

by Grace Moko, South-east Papua, PNG

To get to Barapu village I need to paddle by canoe across Sissano Lagoon. We only had one church family there when I first visited so we met in their home by ourselves.



You can imagine my surprise when I visited again and found that there were now too many new interests to meet in the house, so church met under the house! I am now working with Barapu Village people to make plans to build a church of their own.



*Worshipping under the house to have enough space for all.*

## Would You Walk 5 Hours to Do a Bible Study?

by Tonny Pendebola, Solomon Islands Mission

VIA volunteer, Tonny Pendebola is willing to go the extra mile, or ten, in order to share Jesus. In September 2021 he set out with three friends, hiking five hours through steep terrain and rain to reach an isolated village and waited for the people to come and greet them. No one came.



The four weary travellers prayed that the Holy Spirit would move on these peoples' hearts, and soon after, the village chief emerged, telling them his people were fearful to become 'Seven-days' (Seventh-day Adventists).

Tonny assured the chief that they were not there to force religion on anyone, just to share the exciting news that Jesus would soon return and is calling each of us to make a choice. Follow Him or turn away. After sharing a short Bible study on Amos 8:11-12, he conducted a training on how to study the Bible. He then asked if anyone would like to have further Bible studies. Two precious souls responded to his call. Five hours is a long way (each way) to

go to conduct a Bible study, but Tonny is committed to completing studies with those who have shown interest. Let's pray that from this small group interest will grow and baptisms be multiplied.

## VIA Work Resurrected in Kimbe

by Pr Leslie Yamahune, VIA, Kimbe, PNG

Good morning and greetings in Jesus' name. Volunteers In Action are doing well across the Pacific, especially in Kimbe in PNG! Here I send you the story of a resurrected VIA workforce.

Volunteers In Action was almost non-existent in New Britain New Ireland Mission (NBNIM) for roughly the last twenty years. The work of VIA had faded out from NBNIM because of no good coordination, but little did we know that the gospel, through the Holy Spirit, was moving faster than we thought into the remote parts of the province.



After graduating from Pacific Adventist University, I was picked up by NBNIM and sent to Kimbe as their District Director. When I was settling in, Cliff Morgan called me to establish the roofing program and offered three churches to be roofed this year.

Joan Bambai was a female minister who had faithfully committed herself into the gospel. I visited her church and saw her need and so we roofed her church last March. I conducted meetings and five souls were baptized. Jenni Rippingale from the VIA office in Australia then gave us five lay Bible workers to restart the work of VIA in Kimbe, NBNIM. Praise God!



God is so good to us. We are planning for two evangelistic series and praying for twenty souls to be baptized at each series. There are already new areas requesting VIA lay Bible workers.

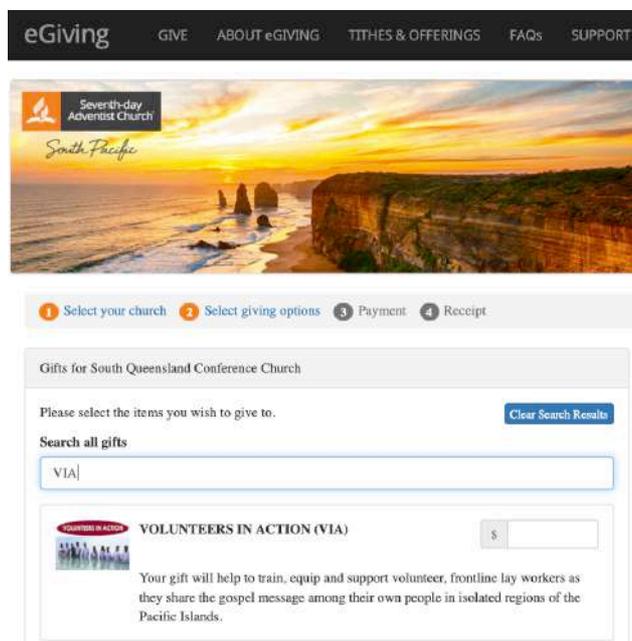
The work has been resurrected and we are moving forward again! Please pray for us, we've just begun. God's blessings to you sponsors of the VIA program.

## VIA is on eGiving!

We are so grateful to the South Queensland Conference Treasury team who have managed all VIA finances for more than twenty years. Now they are being even more generous as they have included VIA in their eGiving recipients list. Thank you!

### How to donate to VIA with eGiving

Simply go to [www.egiving.org.au](http://www.egiving.org.au) and select your Sth Qld Conf. home church (or just select 'South Queensland Conference Church' if you live outside of South Qld), then search for VIA in 'Search all gifts'. You can then insert the amount of your donation in the *Volunteers In Action* box and follow the prompts. So we can credit your VIA account, or allocate your gift to an appropriate VIA layworker, please also email your name and donation amount to Val at [admin@volunteersinaction.com.au](mailto:admin@volunteersinaction.com.au)



The screenshot shows the eGiving website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for GIVE, ABOUT eGIVING, TITHES & OFFERINGS, FAQs, and SUPPORT. Below this is a banner image for the Seventh-day Adventist Church South Pacific. A progress bar indicates four steps: 1. Select your church, 2. Select giving options, 3. Payment, and 4. Receipt. The main content area is titled 'Gifts for South Queensland Conference Church' and contains a search box with 'VIA' entered. Below the search box, a result for 'VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION (VIA)' is displayed, including a small image and a description: 'Your gift will help to train, equip and support volunteer, frontline lay workers as they share the gospel message among their own people in isolated regions of the Pacific Islands.'

### How to set up a recurring eGiving payment

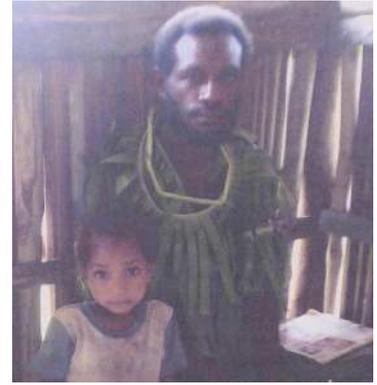
If you wish to set up recurring payments to VIA you will first need to set up a myAdventist account. Go to eGiving as outlined above and then follow the myAdventist login and registration link on the right-hand side of the eGiving page. Once your myAdventist account setup is complete, simply go to eGiving and insert the recurring amount you wish to pay and tick the 'Recurring gift' box in the credit card payment section.



If you want to be an **anonymous donor** to VIA you don't need to worry about having a myAdventist account, simply use the eGiving instructions above.

## Clothes or No Clothes? by Linus Keiforo, South-east Papua, PNG

His statement was simple, "Wearing clothing or no clothing, as long as I go to heaven." He had made up his mind to worship with the Seventh-day Adventists and as he entered the church he said, "I have no proper shirt for worship so me and my daughter will take the back seat."



This young man came into the newly opened church with no shirt on his body. He just made his 'shirt' out of a banana leaf on top of his skin and took a seat. He said, "I must go to church, even though I have no shirt." Praise God for his desire to attend and for the local members' willingness to accept and serve him and his daughter.

*Dear sponsors, Let us again praise God together as we continue to support these dedicated soul winners on the front lines of the battle. They certainly deserve our utmost, sacrificial support.*

### Need Help with eGiving?

Just click on the 'HOW TO' links in the orange box in the top-right corner of the eGiving web page at [egiving.org.au](http://egiving.org.au)

#### OTHER EASY DONATION METHODS

**Post Cheques** to: Volunteers In Action, c/- Val Friend, 3 Friends Court, Yeppoon, QLD 4703

**Direct Deposit:** Westpac, BSB 034002, Account 482352 (Please use your VIA Sponsor ID number or your name as the reference).

**Credit Card:** Monthly, quarterly or half-yearly scheduled credit card payments. Please contact Val at the details below for a Payment Authorisation Form.

**Need a Receipt?** Please contact Jenni or Val.

*THANK YOU!*

**To all our wonderful, dedicated, generous sponsors! THANK YOU! We hope you've been blessed while reading about the amazing ministry that your support makes possible. God is working through YOU!**

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