

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

October 2022

Makeshift Shelter is a Seed

Due to limited Church finances, a local Church Mission could not budget for a minister in an area, so VIA Paul Hovis was posted there to be the shepherd. He's only been there a few weeks but has already started a new small group, in addition to the nine other small groups already existing. We received this image of the makeshift shelter for their latest small group—it's a seed from which God will bring forth much fruit.



Prayers for our Myanmar Missionaries

VIA currently has four faithful volunteers working in Myanmar. Pr Isaiah Hai has reported that two are currently in a civil war zone and are very difficult to contact. Let's keep these two Volunteers in Action in our prayers, that their messages will continue to win hearts to Jesus in spite of the difficulties.

Literacy Classes as Outreach *by Leslie Yamahune*

In many parts of Papua New Guinea, literacy classes have been set up by VIA gospel workers who use the Bible as their teaching textbook. Recently a student from one of these classes read publicly for the first time, leading the Wednesday night prayer meeting program. This photo speaks so eloquently of this man's quiet self-assurance and achievement. He is reading with such joy, holding this precious book that has unlocked the secrets of the written word for him.



Ten More for the Kingdom! *by Kenneth Kuas, VIA Coordinator, Madang Manus Mission*

A recent series of evangelistic meetings held at Nobonob village in PNG, resulted in the baptism of 10 precious souls. VIA missionaries, including Paul James, have been working closely with local churches in the district, and are moving the gospel message into new, unentered areas.



A Beautiful & Increasingly Common Sight

How precious in God's eyes are baptism ceremonies like this one pictured below from Unavi District in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea.



Dear VIA 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.

Many Thanks from Bougainville

Excerpts from a letter of appreciation from Pr Julius Divu Kaidavu of Bougainville Mission

In my three years as president of the Bougainville Mission, we have received ongoing support for 18 VIA gospel workers and roofing iron for nine churches. This has made it possible for many converts to make their way into our church. On behalf of this Mission, I would like to thank you for this support given.



Paramount Chief Tony Ray (pink shirt) and Amos Vereta (blue shirt) who is also the United Church Pastor who requested the Adventist outreach program.



Local members are now using the underneath area of an incomplete member's home for Sabbath worships and other meetings.



VIA workers arriving at a bush village for an outreach program.

One of the outreach programs at Piva Church included a Community Service program known as 'Bucket Ministry', where essential needs of community members are packed into buckets to be given away to the hosting United and Catholic community.



At the end of the outreach program 12 disciples were to be baptized, however due to some threats from the parents of those who want to be baptized, only seven were baptized. The other five wishing to ease the tension deferred their baptism to 3rd quarter.



Two prominent Chiefs took their stand for baptism and Sabbath truth and the last day Church.



Thank you all again for your generous sponsorship of our VIA workers who are making such a huge impact on God's work.

A Devil Attacked my Baby!

In countries like PNG where the devil is openly worshipped by some members of the population, there is often great fear of the way that his power is manifested. VIA missionary Rex Sam Ala, reported that on the 4th of May his children were woken up by a woman at their front door, weeping for the pastor to help her. They ran to wake their father, and when he approached her, she cried out that her baby boy was being attacked by the devil. She opened the baby bilim (woven bag that women carry their babies in) and showed Rex her dead baby, crying that the devil had killed him.

When Rex put his hands on the baby, he could feel that it was still warm and thought he felt blood moving in its veins. They all knelt around the tiny still body and joined hands as they prayed to the God of Heaven. When they opened their eyes, the baby opened his eyes too and when the joyful mother picked him up, he immediately started drinking from her. God healed that little boy in answer to their prayer and the following Sabbath the woman and her precious baby boy were in church, joining in prayer with the Adventist church members for the miraculous way He had answered their prayers.

Olsobip Church Report *by VIA Jim Francis*

My mother was the first convert for whom the Olsobip church was built, after much quarreling and arguments for the new Seventh-day Adventist to be accepted into our community. After the pioneers left, the church existed on its own without a trained missionary.



As a teenager growing up, I was so much involved in all the bad habits. I started to seriously attend the church just seven years ago, because of my mother's continuous prayers upon me. New doors were opened in my life when a doctor from our place decided to sponsor me to get proper training to come and work in our society as this was a great demand for the gospel truth to be preached to our part of the district.

Now I thank God for what He has done for me and am ready to share some of my ministry highlights with you.



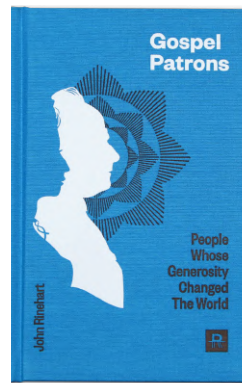
Twenty souls who were baptised recently was the greatest moment of my ministry. Others have stood up for Christ and declared to join the church which I will be preparing for another baptism.

Many have shown great interest to join the church as a result of my ministry, but it's always been the case that there's something that holds them back like fear of being rejected by the community and many of them are heavily involved in spiritualism practices.

Some youths who heavily involve themselves in drugs and home brews have given their lives to Christ and have got their water baptism and some are in my baptismal class preparing for the next baptism.



Thank you for reading my little highlights about God's work in Olsobip area. God bless you all.



Gospel Patrons— that's what you are!

We hope that all our sponsors were blessed by your copy of John Rinehart's book, *Gospel Patrons*. If you haven't read it yet, please make it a priority. It will warm your heart and build your faith as you continue to support frontline missionaries. If you

didn't receive a copy please email admin@volunteersinaction.com.au

Churchyard Becomes Battlefield

Many VIA missionaries serve God under very difficult circumstances, and some face challenges that we can't even imagine having in Australia. Tribal fighting is becoming more and more intense in the area where VIA Newman Tindiwe works, and with guns replacing the traditional weapons of knives and spears, getting caught in the crossfire has become increasingly deadly.

Newman reported that 2022 has been very challenging for him, since his ministry has been deeply affected by the constant tribal fighting. Despite the dangers, he praises God Almighty for His blessings of protection over his family. Early one Sabbath morning, when Newman and his family were sleeping, someone crept into their home and shook them awake. They could hear gunfire and smell the smoke from homes burning nearby. They were led quickly away to a safe place, and Newman knows that it was God who sent this friend to save them.

He reports sadly that he cannot go back to the church where he used to serve because the area has been destroyed and turned into a tribal fighting battlefield. The whole community had to flee for their lives and none of them can return yet. His heart aches as he makes this request: "Please pray that the fighting and killing will stop. Killing is becoming normal to the warring tribes. Please, help me pray for Walumane village."

Thank You from Solomon Islands Mission President

On behalf of the Solomon Islands Mission, I wish to thank VIA Australia again for the financial support. Your support has helped to sustain the work of our volunteers in the mission. Our volunteers continue to serve faithfully and lead many people to Jesus through their efforts.



We are truly grateful to God for the kindness of the sponsors and pray God's blessing upon their lives and families. *God's blessings, Pr. Silent Tovosia*

The VIA New Testament! by Julian Archer

I recently looked back through a few issues of these VIA newsletters and was amazed at how much the article headings read like chapter headings in the Bible's book of Acts! We praise God for his leading, protection and mighty Spirit as He works in and through the faithful VIA's under such trying circumstances.

Here's a sample of the faith-building headings—all are stories that your support made possible. Thank you again!

- Devil Priest Chooses the Lord
- 7 Baptised and 54 Lined Up
- Congregations United After 14 Years Apart
- Merolyn's Faithfulness to Plane Burners!
- Please Build More Churches!
- 'European Soldiers' Defend God's Work
- Former Inmate Builds SDA Church
- No-One Could Stop the Preaching
- Even Stoning Can't Stop This VIA Preacher!
- Church Membership Quadruples
- Would You Walk 5 Hours to Do a Bible Study?
- 52 Baptised During Tribal Fighting!
- Maureen Mingel - A PNG Dorcas!
- Young Man Stands for His Beliefs
- Demon Possessed Healed
- Protected by God
- Cursed but Safe
- Miracles Still Happen
- From Buddhist to Adventist Evangelist
- Skin Health Leads to Spiritual Health
- God's Miracle Healing
- Van Breakdown Brings Animists to Jesus
- Persecuted but Strong
- Baptised Amidst Adversity
- Healing of a Demon Possessed Girl

We praise God for every miracle, every blessing and for every life that is being prepared for eternity.

"Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

2 Corinthians 11:25-27 (NKJV)

By Land and Sea

VIA Missionary Freddy Sauba works on Saposa Island in the West Coast District of Bougainville Mission, and he really cares about the church members under his care, no matter how inaccessible their homes are. In Australia a pastor can sometimes visit four church families within a day, but when your means of transport is either walking or boat or a combination, visitation can take a lot longer.

Freddy set aside one week in order to visit with and encourage four families and their Branch Churches, scattered through the Atsinima & Korepovi areas. The route by land was short but difficult through rugged mountain terrain, so he decided to take the sea route and then walk the remainder of the way. Even though God blessed them with good weather, the 40km boat trip took 10 hours and when he was dropped on the beach, he still had two hours of walking in order to reach the first home. You can imagine how overjoyed each of the families were when Freddy arrived on their door steps. He enjoyed time catching up with these isolated church members in their homes and prayed with each family.



In one home Freddy met with an elderly man who had been a church pioneer in the area. He was in a lot of pain, suffering with a diabetes foot ulcer, and he asked Freddy if he had any medication to help with the pain. Freddy sadly told him that he did not, but was able to do some simple herbal treatments that did alleviate the pain a little. During his week of walking and visiting, Freddy met with a total of 30 people. They requested that he come and visit them each quarter.



Untreated foot ulcers cause incredible pain.

Freddy is seeking sponsorship through VIA to provide him with a simple first aid kit so that he can give rudimentary treatments for needy people he meets in remote locations. May God richly bless this faithful missionary.

“I Want Them Ready to Meet Jesus!”

When you ask VIA missionary Jon Anmath what his hopes and goals are he quickly replies, “To prepare lives so they will be ready to meet Jesus at His coming!” He has been with VIA since 2018 and is now in charge of shepherding five organized churches, twelve company churches and four branch Sabbath School churches in Amabelao west Malo, Vanuatu. He’s a busy man and yet he made time to bring together all the elders and spiritual leaders of his churches so that they could enjoy a spiritual retreat together.



They have been all very supportive of Jon’s work in their areas and have been able to complete and support several projects: paying off land for a new church to be built on; completing some much-needed but long-neglected projects; and providing financial support for Malo Adventist School. Of course, their over-arching focus is to win souls to Jesus, and at the end of 2021 eleven precious candidates were baptised at the Ambatu organized church. Another recent outreach program faced many challenges from direct spiritual warfare, but ended beautifully with 19 precious souls baptised into God’s family of believers, and the following day the church enjoyed the celebration of two weddings!

Discipleship is a Process by Pr Leslie Yamahune, Area Supervisor, Kimbe, WNB, PNG

Discipleship is a process and not an event. We have followed Christ’s process of disciple-making to grow a new church in the Hoskins area of West New Britain Province. We only found one person interested in Adventist beliefs in a village that was traditionally all Catholic. The Hoskins area minister and I visited this person for the first time in January, 2022. We then followed Christ’s process step by step:

Phase 1. Visitation and friendship ministry to establish relationships.

Phase 2. We were now invited to have a small group bible study and bedtime stories.

Phase 3. We have constant studies and develop it into plans for an evangelistic meeting and a church

building. There was no possible place to organize the meeting. The Catholic Church does not allow Adventists to set up in their village. Jethro Sebastine from Kainantu was employed by MoraMora vocational as the chef so we arranged with him to organize the meeting.

Phase 4. We ran a prophecy seminar in the school outside of the village in May. VIA Australia helped us with roofing iron and today we have a new church building!

Phase 5. Every Sabbath we conducted trainings in disciple making. Young people joined us and the newly baptized members and new interests were very motivated, and loved to share Jesus with others.



Now we welcome new visitors every Sabbath. Our little church is already overcrowded! God is good, and yes, let’s always remember that in God’s work, discipleship is a process.

VIA SPONSORS ZOOM EVENT!

Saturday 19 November 4:00pm – 5:00pm (AEDT)

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

Dr Neil Watts – VIA’s Field Director will share reports and personal experiences from his training and management visits across VIA’s territories.

VIA Field Workers – Hear stories from the very frontlines of mission from the VIA workers and the leaders who oversee the action.

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!

(Please remember that it starts at 4pm NSW daylight savings time.)

Just Join us on 19 November using these details:



Event link: <https://zoom.us/join>
Meeting ID: 850 5697 4659
Passcode: 655064

Michael Serves in a Battlefield *by VIA Kuas Kenneth*

Just over a year ago, Michael Muli, a VIA lay missionary and formerly a literature evangelist, was called to work at Barum village in the Transgogol local level government area in Madang district. While this location description means little to an Australian reader, locals hear it and fear for their lives!

The area has been controlled by criminals who often kill indiscriminately and without warning. Homes are attacked and burned to ashes. The population has scattered. The danger is so great that the schools have been closed down and teachers and pastors alike have fled the area. And into all this Michael was called. Prayerfully he walked the streets and interacted with people who were willing to speak with him. His constant message was, "In spite of everything that is happening here, Jesus still loves you."



Slowly, slowly, he won the confidence and trust of the community. Recently a piece of land was donated on which to build a church and missionary house. He has been studying the Bible with a small handful of people, and on Sabbath the 20th of August two candidates were baptised. Praise God for the way He is working through Michael in this very difficult place.



"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Ephesians 6:12-13 (NKJV)

Mother to So Many

VIA Bible Worker Maureen Mingel is based in Morobe Mission of PNG and she spends a lot of time visiting and praying with the many people in her network. She likes to visit with active members and missing members but most of her time is dedicated to visiting people in her community who are not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She shares many experiences from these visits, praising God for the way He is blessing others through her.



Recently she was invited by one of these friends to come and pray for his very sick, elderly mother. As she entered the village, people followed and watched as she took the woman's two hands in hers, shared some words of hope and then prayed. She led the onlookers in an impromptu praise service, encouraging them to join her as she sang, 'My God can do anything.' Two weeks later Maureen and her daughter happened to be passing through that same village and were delighted when the old woman called out to them from her doorway. She jumped to her feet and with a loud and joyful voice called out, "Thank you Jesus for your prayer and for God's powerful healing." She called on her friends and neighbours to gather as Maureen offered up a prayer of thanks. She then told Maureen that she wants to become a Seventh-day Adventist. What wonderful news!

Maureen and her daughter have also had the opportunity to share rice and vegetables with young men who are unemployed and sometimes cause problems around town. When the boys saw Maureen a few weeks later, she overheard them saying to other friends, 'There is the missionary family we told you about, who gave us the food we shared with you. Do no harm to them.' They treat her and her family with care and respect and she has even had the opportunity to pray with them.

Maureen has also opened her heart and home to the tiniest church members. When new members are having marital problems and there is a lot of unrest in their homes, Maureen and her daughters take their babies home and provide them with a caring safe environment while the parents are sorting out their problems. They visit the parents regularly during this time of separation, praying with them and helping to bring about reconciliation. When the babies return home again, Maureen visits regularly to ensure these precious little people continue to receive the love and care they need.



Letter of Acknowledgement

by Pr Leslie Yamahune, on behalf of Moe Church Elder in Kimbe

Praise God and to Him be the glory. Thank you sponsors. The God we are serving is good and He answers prayers in appropriate timing. I was converted from Protestant church accepting Adventist teaching of Sabbath truth and the truth of Second Coming of Jesus. The beliefs of secret rapture was not Biblical.



Me and my family plus other five people left our first church and baptized in March 2017. The mother church made commitment to roof our new church with 40 pieces of iron but it didn't eventuate. It was in the centre of the village and we were mocked by our people.

The frame of the church was the battle for us. We erected the frame and left it for almost 5 years. We were just praying as new believers for God to help. In March 2022 we received a call from Cliff Morgan notifying us that the VIA roofing program will provide 40 pieces of 14 foot roofing iron! We roofed our church in the centre of the village and baptized five new souls and twelve people decided to go through bible studies. Praise God!

Thank you sponsors for the funds you assisted us with here in Moe Village Church. The church has become a light house of the gospel and it witnesses about Jesus' return to the people of Moe. Thanks for your generous Spirit and commitment to support God's work in roofing. Praise God and blessings to you.

117 Baptised at Unavi by Paul Lipu

Exciting things are happening in the Eastern Highlands of PNG. One example is the recent baptism and profession of faith ceremony where 117 precious souls chose to follow Jesus.

We praise God that eighteen of the candidates were baptized through the earnest efforts of VIA worker Simeon Koleyasi. He was very happy to see the Lord reaping such a bountiful harvest. God is doing great things and I thank you all for your support.



Some Thoughts of Thanks by Julian Archer



As I see the way that you, dedicated VIA sponsors and donors, are sacrificially supporting VIAs on the frontlines of mission across the South Pacific, it tells me that you believe in this statement above.

Everybody loves a banquet feast with family and friends. By God's grace, in 2020, across the South Pacific Division, more than 57,000 precious people decided to join us at the 'banquet table' of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was the result of all Church departments, supporting ministries, local church outreaches, one-to-one friendship evangelism and every other activity undertaken by God's Spirit.

Church growth through baptisms and professions of faith has never been higher. I'm in no position to do this, but I want to thank you, and every church member, for your faithfulness in giving your time, talents, finances and so much more to invite, welcome and feed such a precious multitude.

Thank you for recognising God's blessings in your life, by systematically returning a faithful portion of all your income through your local church and via eGiving.

Thank you also for creating an environment where your tithes and offerings and donations are being used in frontline mission to win souls for the kingdom, more souls than ever before!

Your ongoing support for VIA is 'building a longer table' and the marriage supper of the Lamb, God's great banquet feast, is coming soon. What a day of rejoicing that will be! **Thank you.**

SPREAD THE WORD

Please tell your friends about the kingdom-building work of VIA and invite them to become sponsors too. 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.

Lost Audio Bible Found ... by a Dog!

In the area where VIA Daniel Kumbia works, most of the church members are illiterate, so the Audio Bible that he received through VIA has been a real blessing to his ministry and to his church family. Every Sabbath the Primary class uses it to listen to a Bible story. The Audio Bible makes God's word accessible for these people who cannot read it for themselves.

Sadly, the Audio Bible was stolen and thrown into an area of long grass, every church member felt the loss. They searched and searched, but it remained lost. Then they got together and prayed that God would return His Audio Bible to them. The next day a dog walked into the church with the missing Audio Bible in its mouth! "We thank God for His goodness," Daniel says.

Eavesdropper Contributes to Building Fund

Mark Nepo must be a powerful and loud speaker. This VIA missionary from Western Highlands Province of PNG recently shared this incredible story. After conducting a meeting on stewardship in his church he was amazed when the village councillor approached him and placed 500 kina in his hands for the church building project. This non-Adventist government representative hadn't even been in the church during Mark's talk, but his house was positioned opposite the church and he had been listening as Mark spoke and had been convicted to give to God's work. Mark says, "God works in amazing ways. The Councillor was listening to the message. I am praying for the Councillor and his family."

Looking Back at God's Leading *by Bill Mass, VIA worker, Madang-Manus Mission, PNG*

In 2002 my wife and I did a VIA-led church plant in Musendai village in Ambunti/Drekikir District of East Sepik Province in PNG. We left Musendai in 2011 and moved to Madang to plant another church. After more than a decade away from Musendai church family, I recently travelled by ship to Wewak then vehicle to Musendai village, arriving late at night. On Sabbath morning I visited the church members and we shed tears together as we looked back on the pioneering days of their church, and how much it has changed.

I stayed with them for the next four months and conducted two open Bible study series and Sabbath morning witnessing in the crowded local markets. One night I showed a video showing that Sunday worship will be the Mark of the Beast. Many people attended and told me that they wanted to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I also took a few men to the forest where we cut some timber for a new, replacement church building. More than 100 men, women, boys and girls helped us to carry the timbers for the new church. I then helped them to draw plans and to start making the wall frames.



At the end of my stay, I left them with many tears, and travelled back to my family and to the other churches we have planted and are nurturing. That is my story and God will continue to bless you in supporting me to do His work to save souls. Thank you.

VIA Management Team

It takes a special group of people to accept God's calling to dedicate large portions of their personal time to run a large, church supporting ministry like Volunteers In Action. God has blessed VIA with a management team who are inspired and energised by all that God is doing through the lives of the more than 400 dedicated workers who are winning souls for the kingdom.

With a skills mix that covers administration, finance management, business operations, communications, ministerial support and more, the team below are committed to ensuring that VIA's sponsors and frontline ministry team are kept informed, funded and supported as the good news of the gospel is lived and preached across the South Pacific. Thank you team!



Derek Rippingale
(Chairperson)



Jenni Rippingale
(Treasurer)



Dr Neil Watts
(Field Director)



Greg Walker



Julian Archer



Terence McHugh

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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