# **VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION**

October 2024



#### **PNG Bible Church Pastor Accepts Truth**

as told by VIA Nancy Manigu to Wilfred Nangu, VIA Coordinator, Sepik Mission, PNG

The *PNG 4 Christ* site at Sifonduo village in East Yangoru is in a central ring of more than six Sunday worship churches. People of all backgrounds attended each night listening to the Bible truths clearly explained by guest Pr Richie Gako, the Youth and Family Life Director of Sepik Mission.

Every night's message established more truth and satisfied the people's searching hearts. When Pr Gako appealed, many interests walked to the front for a dedicatory prayer, among them was the PNG Bible Church pastor, Bradley Paringu. (*Photo above: Bradley at centre in red shirt, wife and baby behind him.*)

Bradley admitted the truths and made a pledge to be baptised. He brought his wife to be prayed over by Pr Richie and both received baptism. God be praised for directing their path to His family of faith.

Bradley's parents are of the Apostolic Church faith and his siblings are Assemblies of God (AOG) members. Bradley told his parents and family members to leave all these false doctrine practicing churches and attend the Sabbath truth church.

Bradley and his wife received a copy of a World Changer Bible from Sepik Mission's VIA Coordinator at the small church they now attend for worship. Bradley's future plan is to attend Adventist Theology Training School to equip himself to further serve God's purpose in the field. He is also praying that there be may some kind person to sponsor his tuition fees.

## **Gizo Outreach**

VIA's Field Director, Dr Neil Watts has just returned from visiting with a group of VIAs in Gizo, Western Solomons Province. Besides meeting with the VIAs and discussing their work and hearing their challenges as well as their inspiring commitment and stories, some of them were able to stay on and support Pr Watts in a ten-day evangelism reaping program.



It was a wonderful experience for the VIAs as they were able to assist in the nightly meetings as well as with visitation of interests. Pr Watts really appreciated their support and the sacrifices they make daily in their work of caring for churches and reaching out to their communities to help save souls for God's kingdom.



# God Causes Baby to Sleep

by Kenneth Kuas, Madang Manus Mission, PNG

In March, a father came to me offering money and requesting me to pray for his daughter's three-month old son who was having difficulty sleeping. I told the man that I would not accept money, but I would pray for the child the next day.

That night I prayed earnestly to God for a miracle to take place in the life of this little child. The next day at 5.30am I travelled by motorcycle to reach this family's home. When I arrived at the family's residence the family were restless because for the past three weeks they have not been sleeping well. They had felt that there is no hope for this helpless child. But my presence was felt as if Jesus was with them.

To give hope for the child's family I shared a thought from the book of Matthew 9:18-26. I then asked the mother to give me the child and invited the family to be in one mind as I prayed earnestly to God to intervene and heal the child so that the whole family will know that God exists and that when there is no hope, God brings hope in the life of people.



I gave the child back to the mother and told her to lay him in his bed for rest and I departed. Next day I went back to check if the child is fine. The mother was speechless, she was so very, very happy that she ran and hugged me with tears of joy!

Today the family is attending church, praise be to God. The God we are serving is a miracle God, a Sustainer of life.

# **Prayers for Reuben**

#### Madang Manus Mission, PNG

VIA Reuben James Sitbie's District Director added a note to Reuben's report that missionaries and teachers working in Kerehu, Madang, are finding it difficult to move around safely. Innocent people are being killed for no reason by people who are involved in sorcery. Let's pray for Reuben and his family.

# **God's Protecting Hand**

Madang Manus Mission, PNG

VIA Michael Muli has many stories, but he says, "I am grateful for Jesus Christ's blessing and protection. Why? Three- or four-times opposing persons attacked my family and I with bush knives, stones and sticks but God would not let the blade injure our mortal bodies. God is good all the time!"

# Mission HQ Fenced by Converts by Wilfred

Nangu, VIA Coordinator, Sepik Mission, PNG

The Sepik Mission HQ fencing team were all new converts from the *PNG 4 Christ* evangelistic meetings in Wewak. All our boys came in from block settlements around Kaindi of Wewak urban in the West Coast District of Sepik Mission.

All of them have some life skills experiences but no work to find income to sustain their livelihoods. They have been struggling to extend their simple knowledge in a way that provides for their personal needs and for other family members. We made a casual call for volunteers to assist to build a fence at the back yard of Sepik Mission headquarters. We needed to stop unknown people trespassing and many materials going missing in the Mission area, and also to reduce the fear of families being attacked at night.



These strong young boys with a willing heart came to help out in the fencing work with their young minister of the gospel Markus Jeligah of the Kaindi church plant. Praise God for saving souls for His Kingdom. We believe that this kind of united support, given by our new believers, will strengthen their resolve to hold on to their faith in God. Now they can say, "That's the fence I built for my church." They are committed to unite together in worship & fellowship in God's mission plan across the entire Sepik region.

I now take the challenge to invite our church member families to pray for them that our great God will provide more sustainable ways to provide for their livelihoods. And may they also become disciple-makers and bring the good news of Jesus Christ to others like themselves who need the salvation news of the Lord. Thank you for your prayers.

# **Connecting Hearts: The Power of Your Six-Monthly Reports**

Your support of volunteer Bible workers in the Pacific is making a real difference in spreading the gospel. We want to highlight the importance of the six-monthly reports you should be receiving from the volunteers. These reports are a unique feature of VIA,



creating a special connection between you and the volunteers you support.

Getting these reports to you is no small feat. Our volunteers often work in remote areas, facing significant challenges to send updates. Yet, most persist because they know how much these reports mean to you and given how much your sponsorship means to them.

Here are three ways to make the most of these precious reports:

- 1. Use them in your devotions. Regularly, thank God for the volunteer's work and pray for His blessing on their efforts.
- 2. Share the reports with friends and family. You might inspire others to join in supporting this vital work.
- 3. Message (SMS/WhatsApp) your volunteer. A simple "thank you" and follow up comment on their last report, or word or verse of encouragement can mean the world to a volunteer. (Please note, with SMS, volunteers probably will not be able to reply due to limited phone plans.)

Remember Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up."

Your support and prayers are a source of strength for VIA volunteers. Thank you for being a crucial part of spreading God's love in the Pacific.

# Sabbath is True!

#### New Britain New Ireland Mission, PNG

One of VIA Matthew Moses' interests was a Catholic who was reading a World Changer Bible, maybe given to him by a friend or a missionary. He told me, "Now I know that Sabbath is the true day of worship." Currently we established a Bible Study group at his residence, and he also sends his children to church.

# Drown to Die, But ...

by VIA Lence Kepas, Morobe Mission, PNG

As Christian leaders we have the responsibility to make new disciples of Jesus. This knowledge has meant that we have moved from place to place according to the church planner made by the church board and business meetings.

Sometimes we come to villages of illiterate people where old and young struggle in life because they have not received government services for many years. They are living without hope, but the Seventh-day Adventist church gives them hope through the messages we share with them. Even though they are illiterate, God's Spirit is working with them to help them know their Saviour, Jesus Christ. As a result, many people are accepting Jesus daily and being baptised.

The churches I am ministering to are located far apart, so it takes me seven to ten hours of walking to visit them. To make it even more difficult, there are four, very fast flowing rivers that I must cross over. As a result, my wife and two sons we drown to die but we thank God that He saved us to live again.

## Dear Heavenly Father,

We come to you with hearts full of gratitude for the incredible generosity we've seen recently. Your love shines through your people's actions.

Thank you for:

- A Pacific Island church in Australia sponsoring three new VIA volunteers. Their commitment to supporting their brothers and sisters sharing your Word is inspiring.
- The person who returned from *PNG 4 Christ* and became a new sponsor. Their firsthand experience moved them to support this vital work.
- The sponsor who after selling their house made a large donation. Their sacrifice will touch many lives.
- The sponsor of one volunteer who came into extra funds and put on 10 more volunteers for a year. Their extra blessing will spread Your message far and wide.
- The churches and individuals who gave anonymously. Their humble gifts show true servant hearts.

Lord, we are amazed by these acts of kindness. They remind us of your endless love and grace.

Please bless all our sponsors and the volunteers they support. May their generosity inspire others to join in spreading your Good News across the Pacific. We pray that more hearts will be touched, and lives changed through their selfless acts.

In Jesus' name, we thank you and praise you. Amen.

# Zaw Khin's Journey to Jesus

by VIA Win Myint, Myanmar

Thank you so much for your supporting my ministry. Because of your help and prayers, I am still in God's work and my church members' spiritual lives are growing. Recently four new members were added through baptism. I would like to share with you one beautiful story.

One day, as I went out for visitation, I arrived to Yone Ein village. There I met a person named Mr. Zaw Khin. Zaw was raised in a traditional Buddhist family. He is a very friendly person. I share with him about the living God who I worship and invited him to our church program on the Sabbath day. He joined our worship program for the first time in his life. After worship service, we had lunch together. There we talked a lot about Christian faith, including the Sabbath.

Zaw said he enjoyed our time together and that he was interested in our religious programs, so I invited him to come to our church worship next week. He also invited me to visit his home and share the gospel with his family. I often visited his family and shared the gospel and gave them some counsels for healthy living. Zaw continued to come our worship programs.

I then gave Zaw and his wife Bible studies for two months and finally, they accepted Jesus as their personal Redeemer through baptism. Now, they are learning God's love and sharing with other people in their community. Praise God!



**NOTE:** The *Adventist Review* magazine recently published an article on the mighty work of God that is happening in the very challenging circumstances where Win Myint and other faithful, frontline workers are serving in Myanmar. Under the title, *Amid Turmoil, Evangelism Results in More than 800 New Members in Myanmar*, the article begins with:

"Amid significant challenges, the Living Hope evangelistic series in Myanmar has resulted in the recent baptism of 861 new believers. The August 18-24 series, hosted by the Myanmar Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (MYUM), has been incredibly successful at navigating challenging situations and fostering spiritual development, regional church leaders said."

"Myanmar has faced a period of difficulty that has made religious activities more challenging. The evolving situation in the country has led to increased restrictions on freedom of movement and assembly, impacting the ability of church leaders and members to travel and conduct evangelistic work. Despite these obstacles, the Adventist Church in Myanmar has shown resilience, adapting its methods while maintaining its spiritual mission, leaders explained."

To find the full article please Google: Adventist Review Myanmar Baptisms 2024.



## **God's Blessings**

Western Highlands Mission, PNG

VIA Freeman Kiso writes, "I enjoy God's blessings through my missionary work. People pay respect when I'm talking and the number of people is increasing every Sabbath. I am a primary school leaver but when I committed to do God's work He blessed me on how to read the Bible. Everything I do was succeeded, and I really see God's leading and blessings upon my ministry."

## Want to Visit VIAs in the Field?

Are you looking for a 'holiday' with a difference? What about a mission-focused travel experience? Just like a real holiday, your airfares, accommodation and other expenses need to be covered by yourself, but this trip will be a kingdom investment as you take time to visit and encourage VIAs on their frontlines of mission.

Register your interest by email and we will let you know well ahead of the next opportunity to visit PNG, the Solomon Islands or Vanuatu with VIA's Field Coordinator, Dr Neil Watts.

> Email Neil at: <u>nwatts48@outlook.com</u>

# Just Leave the Comforts and Go by VIA

Robinson Adilawa, Northern & Milne Bay, PNG

I was called to serve as a volunteer missionary while being an ordinary church member and the elder in one of the branch churches under Alotau town Seventh-Day Adventist church. As a grade six leaver without any ministerial qualification my mind got worried when I thought of all that missionaries and pastors have to do in the mission field.

The missionary life has not been easy when leaving the comfort of my home and the relatives. Along the pilgrimage of missionary work, I have encountered countless experiences, both challenges and blessings. However, the hand of God has been like a shining star in the dark cloud of challenges. Consequently, it gives me the assurance of God's leading and providence in His work on earth.

I accepted the first missionary call to go and serve at Borowai, a new work area, with my wife and a daughter. We pitched our tent among the shrubs and lived in it for eight months. It was from the comfort of the tent that I started a bottle, tin and plastics ministry to promote health and wellbeing of the locals. My family collected those things and dug holes to dispose them rightly in the pit.

The people were impressed while seeing our good work of collecting the rubbish and some asked us the reason why we were collecting the rubbish, so we started to explain to them the health benefits of it. As a result, many inquired to know more about the new faith that promotes a healthy lifestyle.

On the first Sabbath only three people worshipped at Borowai but the number grew to 30 after a year. When we left, we had an established branch church with 205 church goers! God was working tremendously for the people's salvation.

In one of our mission work areas called Goga, the population is about 1,200 and Huhuna has 700. Fifteen people have accepted the truth but only five were baptised. One of the errors that has been injected was about rebaptism from the Anglican faith. The people had been told, "if you rebaptise in any other denomination, you will be cursed."

Regardless of all the challenges, I have seen the hand of the Lord in so many ways. He strengthened me to grip my hands onto the feet of Jesus so that wherever He leads me I will follow and will continue to follow until my Lord returns.

What I've learnt from the VIA missionary experience when compared to being an ordained elder is that the true meaning of discipleship is to leave the comforts and "Go" for the gospel's sake, for the salvation of other people who have not known and accepted the Truth. Therefore, I take delight in the missionary work regardless of the situations in my life and family. We will continue to serve the Lord at any place and any time when the Lord calls us for His work on this side of eternity.

# London Missionary Society Planted the

**Seeds** by VIA Robinson Adilawa, Northern & Milne Bay Mission, PNG

The walls of spiritual darkness in Milne Bay were broken by the London Missionary Society with the arrival LMS's Scottish of James missionary Charlemers. He first settled in the south-east Papua mainland near Suau Island in Milne Bav. From 1877-1930



the LMS slowly stretched the wings of Bible beliefs in the lives of the people of Milne Bay.

The northern coast of Milne Bay was later entered by Anglicans, United and later Pentecostal churches. Seventh-day Adventists, with the commitment and service of Pastor Howell commenced their work in Milne Bay from a base at Gesila Island between 1957 and 1959. Pastor Lester Locke also did literature evangelism to the plantation workers in the islands of Milne Bay.

Other than the Adventists the other denominations mentioned did not teach the danger of some local cultural practices, but rather they blended with their culture and encouraged their cultural norms and beliefs together with the Bible teachings.

Spiritualism is the ingredient that flavours all forms of rituals and hinders the quick progression of the light of truth along the shores of Milne Bay. It is very difficult for the people to say no to their non-Christian cultures and beliefs. However, slowly the beacon of Adventist Biblical truths were ignited from Gesila Island to other parts of the islands and made their way to the mainland in Rabaraba and Alotau in Milne Bay Province.

More recently, Pastor Lawrence Keranu and Ministers Dickson Amos and Steven Amos did effective groundwork with the concept of Total Member Involvement (TMI). They met the physical needs of the people. They even built a permanent village house for a crippled United Church mother and she was converted to the Adventist faith and baptized during *PNG 4 Christ*.

This lady lives in the very place where the LMS pioneers first settled near Suau Island. Praise the Lord that more than 141 people have now been baptized from Suau. First LMS came with Bibles and now people from Suau are now receiving the Adventist Biblical truths with hearts full of joy. The greatest need now is to have a trained minister to nurture the spiritual 'infants' who have just converted to accept the truth.

# **Clothing Given & Land Received**

by VIA Lency Abana, Solomon Islands Mission

I am working in a very interesting area with many non-Adventist people. They are Catholics, South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC) and Anglicans. These people have hated Seventh-day Adventists for many years. They have not allowed us to



visit in their communities or run Bible studies in their communities because they say that our messages are very convincing!

I praise God that today these communities are opening up for us to visit those in need. One interesting thing I want to tell you is that the SDA message is spreading everywhere in my working area because of the clothing ministry. I give clothes to those who are in need and pray with them.

Not only that, but through the clothing ministry and visitation, Moses Ngene and his brother Peter J Lena have given us a piece of land to build a church or whatever mission the SDAs want to build on that land. These SSEC families who gave us the land are also ready to go through Bible studies. They are now interested to listen to the work of God.

## **Roselyn's Story**

by VIA Taikaki Bob, Morobe Mission, PNG

Mathew and his family were Lutheran believers who worshipped on Sunday. He had four children. Roselyn was his firstborn and she was converted through the songs and Bible truths that we shared. She decided to go to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but her



father refused to let her go so she only attended when her father was absent.

I kept on visiting her and praying with her and giving her Bible studies. Roselyn decided to be baptised. Roselyn's father transferred her to a better school, so she went to live with her uncle who is an Adventist and happily attended church every Sabbath.

Roselyn was baptised on the first Sabbath of the *PNG 4 Christ* reaping campaign along with eleven others. News of her baptism reached Roselyn's father and he was very embarrassed and frustrated about it. He even destroyed a relative's house chasing Roselyn.

After what happened, we encouraged Roselyn and prayed with her to remain faithful to God. She said that she won't give up the faith that she had found in Jesus. She's now in grade eight and has asked our church family to pray for her for the National Examination.

To God be the glory for Roselyn's decision and for her wonderful testimony!

# **Swollen Leg Healed Through Prayer**

as told by VIA Nancy Manigu to Wilfred Nangu, VIA Coordinator, Sepik Mission, PNG

One night in 2023, Suzie Tobi felt a little pain in her right foot at a toe joint. The next day her entire leg was swelling fast and the pain was increasing. She could not move around so she had to wait in the house while other family members cared for her needs.

Family and friends advised her to seek out witch doctors, but Suzie's mother who is an active Adventist deaconess and an Adventist Community Services (ACS) leader said no to any practice of witch doctor's advice or medicine. "We should pray to the living God for answers to her problem", she said. All her extended family and friends left, and no more support was given to cure Suzie's leg. The mother asked her church family to pray with her.

The problem grew worse, but no hospital assistance was taken, every step was by prayer alone. By mid-2023 she found a little relief to the swelling, but the pain remained strong and she still could not move about. The church family continued to offer prayers that God must heal her sickness and that Suzie must be baptised during the *PNG 4 Christ* reaping campaign at Sifonduo in East Yangoru.

Suzie never attended church worship with her mother who was a widow with two sons and four daughters. As the prayers continued and time passed in 2023, Suzie experienced some changes with the heavier pain reducing and the sore areas recovering.

While preparation for PNG 4 Christ was happening the church members received а message from Suzie that her sore leg was almost healed and the continuous pain had all disappeared. The church family kept praying that after these signs of God's power brought wholeness her to diseased leg, she must now accept Jesus Christ.



In early 2024 Suzie told her mother that she wanted to be baptized as a witness to what the great God had done to her personal health. She said, "It was God's providence, and I will not deny this truth and must accept Him." The church family praise God that He saves people in difficult situations for His glory.

Suzie got baptized in the *PNG 4 Christ* meeting with 16 other candidates through the same church plant. Praise God that his grace extends far, to the uttermost. Suzie is happy and attending worship every Sabbath. She assists in taking leadership in the church, just like her mother does, and witnesses to other families near and far as we approach the Lord Jesus Christ's Second Coming.

## **Mountain Challenges**

#### by VIA David Adzab, Morobe Mission, PNG

My work area is in the Finisterre mountain ranges. It took us nine hours to walk, climb the mountains and cross the fast-flowing rivers to reach Wara Bung where we held an evangelistic camp meeting 28 January to 8 February.





"I'll go where you want me to go dear Lord, Over mountain or plain or sea. I'll say what you want me to say dear Lord, I'll be what you want me to be."

SDA Hymnal, #587

# **Exciting Opportunity for Church Partnerships!**

Volunteers in Action (VIA) is excited to offer a special sermon for your local church. This sermon highlights the amazing work of our volunteers in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and beyond.

The message draws from Philippians, showing the joy of supporting gospel workers. It thanks churches for their help and highlights an opportunity to directly support mission work in the South Pacific. Alternatively, we could take a Sabbath School preliminary.

Already, 30 churches partner with us by supporting a VIA gospel worker. Your church can join this growing group, but there is no obligation to do that if we are invited to speak. We're happy to visit just to raise the individual awareness of your church members about lay volunteers in missions and their crucial role in sharing the gospel.

Is your church interested? Please contact us! Let's talk about bringing this encouraging message and opportunity to your community.

Thank you for supporting VIA.



Jenni Rippingale encouraging mission at Nambucca Heads.

# Young Boy Healed

by Jonah Jerry, Western Highlands Mission, PNG Lapson Lakit was a five-year-old boy from Kingsand Village. He was sick for three weeks so his parents tried to move him to the hospital but they couldn't bring any healing. Finally, I went and prayed for him, and he was healed. At that same week on Sabbath, his mother came with Lapson to church. They really said thanks to God. His mother changed her heart and next week she will be baptised. Praise God.

## **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 as they continue to work faithfully.

# Multiple Ailments Healed by Wilfred Nangu,

VIA Coordinator, Sepik Mission, PNG

VIA Nancy Manigu who works with other VIAs Fabian Herman and Micah David, shared this report about student Magdalene Waine. Magdalene was grade doing nine at Kusambuk Technical High School in 2019 when she began to have various sicknesses in her body. As a voung student, she did not understand the cause of those sicknesses, but they severely affected her life and studies in school.



Magdalene's family did their best to bring traditional herbal medics, but all was unsuccessful in relieving her diseases. More ailments arose in her life and as she grew worse they had to leave her on a bed to die.

Thinking that God would heal her diseases, a few mothers from a Sunday church visited her several times and prayed and invited her to attend their church, but she refused to accept their invitation. After this a community health worker attended to her problem, wrote a disease referral report and said that she should be taken to hospital in Wewak town for proper checks and treatment.

The hospital doctor discovered that Magdalene had a number of ailments to be treated so she was admitted for 12 months in hospital for closer examination and to hopefully cure her. The doctor had identified multiple, painful body sores which meant that she could not wear some clothes, sleep well or sit down comfortably. She had irregular monthly cycles and other swelling and pain in parts of her body.

The doctor put Magdalene on several six-hourly treatments but after a full year in hospital she felt that no medicine was going to heal her.

One moment, while in her hospital bed a unique Bible text came to Magdalene's mind. It was Jeremiah 29:11 and she recalled it as Jesus saying, "I know I have a better plan for you, not to harm you but to give you good success in the future." Magdalene had attended SDA church worships as a teenager when her father got baptized but he later left the church. Maybe she had heard a pastor share this text in a sermon at church. Magdalene prayed in hospital, "Dear Lord Jesus if this promise in Jeremiah is true, I want to claim it as my own, heal my diseases. I want to follow you. No medication in hospital can cure all my sicknesses."

After this simple, short prayer to Jesus she felt a healing touch and was able to leave the hospital soon after. During *PNG 4 Christ* at the Sifonduo site in East Yangoru, Madeline was baptised and today she regularly attends church. A copy of a World Changer Bible was given to her by the VIA Coordinator of Sepik Mission at the church where she goes to worship the all-powerful, undefeated God. She likes to share with others what God has done and is doing in her personal life.

## God in the Battle Zone

by VIA Charles Paul Sailen, Sepik Mission, PNG

My family and I are not steady in our place because of tribal fighting in every location. Murders and killings everywhere. For the Gospel's sake we still work. In one incident they nearly killed me with a bush knife, but I already prayed immediately before the incident. This tribal fighting is continuing and wherever I want to move I move with fear. Always I pray for guidance and protection. There is no community leader with the people. I became a community and a spiritual leader at the same time. With God's help I solved problems, assisting them with caring and bringing peace to them.

# Are your friends looking for ways to support VIA volunteers on the front lines of mission?

Please invite them to donate at **volunteersinaction.com.au/donate**/

## **OTHER EASY DONATION METHODS**

**Post Cheques** to: VIA, 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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