

VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

October 2025

Mission Beyond the Boundaries

by Pr Paul Lipu, VIA Coordinator, EHSM, PNG

In 2024, Esau Arumbil, a fresh, young graduate from Omaura School of Ministry was cast into a mission field at the foot of Papua New Guinea's highest mountain, Mt Wilhelm in a predominantly Catholic community without Adventist presence. It was tough, challenging work yet he kept a cool head.

As time progressed, he thought of giving up, until with the help and advice from the District Director and the Local Mission Secretary, he was assigned a room to live in and a sheltered space to use at his discretion. He had some casual visits, interactions and prayers with the community members and he now had shelter and a space to begin worship programs, but people would still not come.

By God's grace and leading, Minister Arumbil decided to start a pre-school with just a few children. The number of students then grew to 12, to 40, and it continues to increase. The students usually had short devotions before and after their classes which then led them to start a small group in which some adults joined in with the children.



Esau and twelve of his precious students.

Esau is hoping to soon harvest the first fruits through baptism, maybe at the opening of the clinic. The community has also seen an increase in student numbers and they're now in cramped conditions. We praise God that they have allocated land which will house all three projects together—the school, a new clinic and a church.



Small clinic under construction.

Even though missionaries are restricted in establishing new churches, Minister Arumbil, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, started with a pre-school and plans for a small clinic and eventually a church. The local community has now embraced the church's initiative and are helping out by gardening to plant potatoes and cabbages to raise funds for the three projects. To God be the glory!

Please pray that God will provide funds to build new classrooms, the church building and other areas of need so that our church can be firmly established. Minister Esau's dream is that one day this community will be an Adventist Community.



Community members clearing land to plant gardens to raise money for the school, clinic and church.

Thank You Avondale Memorial

by VIA Karigo Sonny, Finschaff District, Morobe Mission, PNG.

It is a great blessing to serve as a volunteer missionary (VIA) in Morobe Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church. My life as a missionary in Finschaff district is a journey of pain, hardship and challenges. Yet, I pressed forward, placing my trust and faith in the Almighty God, Who sees me through.



In the past six months, I assisted youths from the organised church to cut timbers for the pastor's house and helped in the construction. I also participated twice in the children's week of prayer programs and conducted a funeral service. I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to Avondale Memorial Church for your generous support. Thank you for your mentoring and support.

Ex-VIAs Leading Stewardship Across PNG!

by Julian Archer, SPD Stewardship Director

Having been involved with VIA since the late 1990's I have been blessed to witness many dedicated missionaries who started out as frontline VIA Bible workers and moved on to become pastors, Mission departmental leaders and even Mission and Union presidents. These men know the challenges, joys and real hardships of frontline service and to see them carrying their principles into church leadership is so encouraging.

In early September, the PNG Union Mission selected their departmental leaders for 2025-2030 and I am excited to see that the nation's Stewardship Director and the Associate Stewardship Director are both men who started out as VIAs. By God's grace, Pr James Kiangua and Pr Leslie Yamahune will guide the stewardship program for more than 600,000 Seventh-day Adventists in PNG, and I know that God will bless them as they continue to humbly serve Him.



Pastor James Kiangua

To see these men in action in the highlands of PNG, please watch the *Practical Stewardship* 30-minute documentary that is available for viewing at this QR code or online at:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCMNePgJnBk>



Pastor Yamahune as a VIA, baptizing a young disciple.

Dear VIA Sponsors

Let us again praise God together as we continue to support these dedicated soul winners on the front lines. They certainly deserve our utmost, sacrificial support as they continuously work so faithfully.

VIA's Field Director Visits Frontier

Dr Neil Watts, VIA's Field Director was the guest of honour at the dedication of the first ever built Adventist church in the Waro frontier region of PNG. His visit, with VIA Coordinator Pr Jim Wagi, to Lake Kutubu in the Western Highlands Mission, meant so much to this isolated mission field and its workers unexposed to the wider world.



The community which has been against Adventism for many years asked Dr Watts to visit their places and pray a blessing on their people which Neil happily did. A spokesman then officially declared on behalf of the community that the SDA Church was permitted to operate in their area. He said, "We want change that begins with education, religion, economic and social development."

Waro church was then dedicated and the meetings concluded with its first baptism of eight souls. Among this group was Nato, the only candidate from Waro and the one who donated the land for building the church. Nato's relatives had objected but he fearlessly defended his choice and told them to, "Change the logo on one of the two other churches to an Adventist logo" so that he could then worship with them! This was difficult for them to do so Nato donated land for the newly constructed church. *(Joyce & Nato below)*



Dr Watts reported, "I saw first-hand the wonderful results of VIAs starting several new churches in this remote new work region where no SDA Church work existed. VIA will continue supporting the sustainability and the growth of the church—especially in PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.



Locals gathered at the community meeting house.

Surviving the Wild by VIA Jason Jega

It was a calm and promising morning as we set out on foot for another patrol to the remote Wamabe District. As missionaries in the rugged and untamed lands of Papua New Guinea, we've grown used to facing the challenges of jungle terrain, long distances, and unpredictable weather, but nothing could have prepared us for the sudden encounter that awaited us deep in the forest that day.

My wife, Mrs. Diana Jega, was walking ahead of me with our supplies strapped securely on her back. Some were wrapped in plastic and others carried in her traditional bilum. We were navigating a thick part of the bush, surrounded by tall trees, dense undergrowth, and the sounds of chirping birds and distant running water. The forest, though breathtakingly beautiful, has its dangers, and on this day, danger came charging at us on four legs.

Without warning a wild pig burst out of the underbrush, grunting aggressively and heading straight toward us. These wild pigs are not just territorial; they're known to be vicious, and in a matter of seconds, we found ourselves running for our lives. The thick forest offered little space to manoeuvre, and the undergrowth slowed our pace.

Thinking quickly, Diana spotted a tree with a sturdy horizontal branch and scrambled up it. With her hands gripping the mossy bark and her feet pressing against the trunk, she climbed to safety—still carrying her load. It was a powerful image: a determined woman of faith balancing supplies and survival, suspended above the jungle floor, trusting God for her protection in the midst of chaos.



Mrs Diana Jega climbing a tree to escape a wild pig.

Eventually, the pig wandered off, perhaps sensing no easy prey, and we were able to continue our journey, shaken but safe.

This incident was more than just a brush with danger. It reminded us of the unpredictability and sacrifice involved in frontline ministry. We are called to bring the Word of God to every corner of our district, even if that means walking into the unknown. And many times, our wives and children walk with us, facing the same risks and enduring the same hardships.

The message we carry is clear: God is faithful even in the wildest moments. Like David, we may face wild beasts, but God delivers His servants (1 Samuel 17:34-37). We go not in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord who called us. The Gospel we

preach must reach every home, even those deep in the jungle, and no pig, no hardship, no isolation will stop the movement of truth.

Challenges are plenty in our ministry: impassable rivers, sleepless nights, long walks under heavy rain, sickness with no nearby aid, and moments like this where even our lives are threatened, but with each trial comes a testimony. And with each testimony, our faith is strengthened and others are inspired to stand firm in their calling.

So we press on. With love for the people, passion for the message, and faith in God's protection, we go where He sends us. Even if it means scrambling up a tree in the middle of the jungle!

VIA's Vision Continues After His Passing

by Pr Liborius Ato, Gen. Secretary, NMBM, PNG

I regret to inform readers that, after a short illness, VIA Ben Orovo went to his rest, leaving behind his dear widow wife and two children. Ben lived for Christ and showed great commitment to ministry in the following ways.

He assisted the church pastor for Saiho and other branch churches to host an Adventist Community Services (ACS) federation program that brought a lot of real help to the people of Korere area. New church building timbers were sawn to replace the old canvas worship shelter that seventeen souls were worshipping in after *PNG 4 Christ*. Eleven new souls were baptized at the end of this ACS outreach and are now all worshipping at Korere.

Also, at the end of the ACS program, two Practical Stewardship skills trainings were organized for the people of Saiho and branch churches. One was for inland fish farming and the other for cocoa farming projects. Adventists and non-Adventists attended the one-week program with the entire mission team.

This ACS outreach took place in an Anglican dominated area and a huge land was given to the SDA church by the Chief Sengijo. The LO (Chief) took his stand when the Adventist altar call was made, indicating his baptism and also his family.

And Ben's legacy is even more as the current primary school will also become a new high school. Ben envisioned the complete transformation of the community of Korere to Adventism and God is still blessing his vision. Korere will be an additional District of the NMB Mission making it District #9.

I am also sad to inform you that VIA Wesley Ukini lost his wife on Wednesday morning, 27 August. Wesley is now at mourning with his small family at Wamabe District, Northern Province. Thank you to VIA for your support of these families during these tragic times.

We look forward with great expectation to the day when we will be reunited in the presence of our soon-coming Saviour.

Arguing and Debating with Noel *by Mathew Moses Avapura, West New Britain Province, PNG*

It all began in 2018 and 2019 when I was serving as a lay volunteer in Sagsag, Cape Gloucester, in the New Work Area. During that time, I met Noel, a man from Aimola village located in the inland area of Gloucester, West New Britain.

One day, Noel sent me a message saying that he wanted to talk with me about the Sabbath. I was eager to share the truth, so I went to visit him. But instead of calmly discussing, every time I visited, Noel would raise his voice, debating and arguing strongly against me.

Despite his confrontational approach, I remained patient and calm, refusing to argue back. I simply explained the reasons why we, as Seventh-day Adventists, keep the Sabbath holy. The Sabbath was established at Creation and it is part of the Ten Commandments – written by the very finger of God (Exodus 20:8–11). Jesus kept the Sabbath – He is our perfect example (Luke 4:16). The disciples kept the Sabbath – even after the resurrection (Acts 13:42–44).

I told Noel the history of how the change of the Sabbath came about. For a long time, Noel resisted. He was passionate in his debates and arguments, but I trusted that God’s Spirit would continue to work in his heart.



VIA Mathew & Noel (R)

In 2020–2021, I left to attend Omaura School of Ministry, where I studied and later graduated. Not long after, I received news that deeply touched me: Noel had finally accepted the Sabbath truth! He began attending church faithfully on Sabbaths, standing firm in his new conviction.

Sadly, in recent times, Noel became paralyzed and can no longer walk. Yet, despite his condition, his wife continues to faithfully attend the Sagsag Branch Church. This testimony reminds me that God’s Word never returns void, and even the most difficult debates can turn into powerful testimonies of transformation when handled with patience and love. Let’s remain faithful and loving, always.

The Church Planted in the River!

by VIA Coordinator, Wilfred Nangu, Sepik Mission

For the eighty members of Wom village river church plant in Angoram District of Sepik Mission, Sabbath worship wasn’t always comfortable. They met together in a structurally weak building, under an old, leaking sago palm leaf church roof. In the wet season the rain dripped down from above, while the river rose up from below! Everyone had to canoe to church.



Leading former VIA missionary Joseph Jano and others came together to discuss how they would build a new church and roof.

The leaders asked all members to pray for God’s solution—and to begin construction as they prayed! When the framework was complete, they had a financial shortage to buy iron sheets to cover the roof. They kept praying and Joseph Jano brought their funding request to the VIA office at Sepik Mission. Upon seeing photos of the completed frame, we lodged a roofing funds application to seek sponsors from our VIA team in Australia.



We praise God that the project application was approved and funds were given through the VIA trust account at Sepik Mission treasury to the hardware store, and then the Elders were called to pick up their materials from the store.

Finally, the roof was covered and pictures taken. Thank you sponsors in Australia for our dream church which is now in its first stage of completion and is a great witness to the 4,000 precious souls living in the area.

We can Praise the Most Highest God in all His goodness for providing this so soon. We also pray and thank you to sponsors and all the team who support God’s work to progress and advance and hasten the Lord’s soon Second Coming. May God’s name always be glorified!

Total Member Involvement Wins Souls

by Pr David Tovirika, Bougainville Mission

Jerry Mamatau is from the Catholic-dominated Tantareki Village in the Buin District of Bougainville Mission. He is married to Hellen, a Seventh-day Adventist woman and through the work of VIAs and others Jerry was baptized during PNG 4 Christ, 2024.



The Tugiogu church teamed up with the Bougainville Mission Stewardship Director, Pr. David Tovirika, and hosted a two-week outreach program involving Total Member Involvement (TMI) and Sustainable Empowerment Trainings. Revelation of Hope Sermons were preached for sixteen nights by Pr. David Tovirika. Also, the Bougainville Mission CFO Elder Bilfred Kange, who is a Certified Financial Literacy Trainer, trained 40 participants. Healthy cooking classes were also run. When the call for baptism was made, seven candidates came forward and were baptised on the Sabbath. We praise God that Jerry's parents were included!

The whole Catholic community of Tantareki participated in the closing feast and gave their thanks for the TMI program.



Pr. David Tovirika & seven, newly-baptised ex-Catholics.



TMI team building a widow's house.

Soldiers Reconciled

by VIA Streland Puivi, Bougainville Mission

Due to ongoing conflicts between the Mekamui, Konou is a 'No Go Zone' in Buin District. Under God's leading the Bougainville SDA Mission led by Pr Mathias Foxy decided to do a nine-site, TMI outreach there.

The evangelistic series were run and many practical helps given including sewing classes, singing ministry, cleaning cocoa blocks, cooking classes and reconciliation seminars.

Touched by the grace and love of God, comrade Jonathan Silver and his soldiers made a commitment to reconcile with one of their enemies. By God's grace we will witness more reconciliations and baptism in the near future. To God be the glory.



Soldiers in the jungle with their weapons.



Celebrating a God-led reconciliation ceremony.

Back From The Edge

by Steven Onato, Bougainville Mission

A high school teacher came to our church during a really dark season in his life. He was battling addiction and had completely lost all hope. Over time, through consistent prayer, community support and one-on-one mentorship, we saw a God-powered transformation take place in his life.

Picture Rolls & God Pods - Massive Impact

by VIA Isaiah Otingau, Sepik Mission, PNG

VIA Co-ordinator, Wilfred Nangu, distributed picture rolls and God Pods to his VIAs and within 12 months this report came in from one recipient Isaiah Otingau (R) who received five kits.



I gave the outreach picture rolls and God Pods to five active people and these are God's results so far:

1. Sebastian Wangi, Dauanang Village: 11 small groups started and land donated for a new church.
2. Walter Peter, Kindagaten Village: 4 small groups, 1 lamb shelter for Sabbath worships, 2 souls baptised, seeking for church land.
3. Richard Mathew, Narvari Village: 4 small groups, many Bible studies followed by Isaiah doing an outreach where 32 people stood for baptism, land donated for a church.
4. Nancy Wangan, Asangamut Village: Many Bible studies given and Isaiah ran a number of programs, Baptist church pastor and members gave their land and church to SDAs and pastor is becoming an SDA pastor through Omaura.
5. Mathew: two small groups, 17 members (all ladies and children), many Bible studies, land donated for a church.

Let's continue to praise God for what He is doing through His VIA workers and the picture rolls and God Pods. The South Pacific Division and Adventist Media are now supplying thousands of new picture rolls and God Pods into PNG. What a day it will be when we get to heaven to hear the millions of testimonies from PNG and around the world!

Houses Torched But New Church Planted

by Bill Mass Madang-Manus Mission, PNG

It was around 2019, that I and a VIA Missionary, Mr Celestin Igogo, conducted open Bible Studies in MirKuk Village. After a week some of them were happy and received these new truths. A few weeks later, a fight broke out between MirKuk youths and Panim youths, resulting in a few deaths and some houses burnt down, putting a halt to outreach.

But, we have been praying for MirKuk's people since then and God intervened and answered our prayers. On the 11th May, 2025, a young man from MirKuk assured us that a piece of land is ready for an Adventist church.

So, in late 2025 we're planning regular visits to MirKuk Village to have more Bible studies with them and conduct cottage and evangelistic meetings as well and finally erecting a new church building to cater for a few precious sheep. Please pray that God will help us to bring His message to them.

Omaura Sponsorships Please

Since the 1960's, Omaura School of Ministry has been a preparation powerhouse for lay workers who have no prior theology background but want to increase their outreach and ministry abilities. They learn Bible truths and are also equipped with a very practical approach to ministering in the village, especially new villages that they're entering.

With the incredible outpouring of God's Spirit during *PNG 4 Christ* the need for theologically-sound, practical evangelists and local church leaders is greater than ever.

Thanks to ongoing donations from generous members and the Union and Division, Omaura is undertaking major expansion plans with new classrooms, dormitories and offices all under construction to try and meet the demand. VIA has been asked to try and find more sponsors to assist VIA Bible workers to attend Omaura for their two-year training.



Four Omaura students in their dorm room.

The total fee for an Omaura student is 5,000 PNG Kina per year (~AU\$1,800). When a VIA moves from their field work to study at Omaura, VIA Australia and their local Mission redirect their \$1,500 (~4,200 Kina) annual stipend for Year 1 to help cover their Omaura fees for that first year. Students need to find the remaining 800 Kina from other sources or their own savings or earnings—which can be very hard as VIAs aren't in a position to pre-save money on their limited stipends and they often also need to find money to help their families survive while they are studying.

For Year 2, the students need to find all 5,000 Kina of their fees, which means that some leave before finishing and they don't receive their certificate.

VIA is seeking sponsors who are willing to assist VIA Bible workers through their second year of upskilling at Omaura. If you sense God calling you to support frontline mission in this way, please contact VIA today to discuss the needs. Thank you for your faithfulness.

New Ireland Mentoring Visit Update

by Pr Neil Watts, VIA Field Director

Being in Kavieng, Papua New Guinea amidst all the celebrations leading to the 50th anniversary of PNG's independence has been exciting. What a joy it is to see the nation continuing to grow and strengthen as God leads so many people here into His work.

There are currently only five VIAs in New Ireland, as it only started up here again a year ago, but the interest is great. Pr Leslie Yamahune and I were able to help another fifteen or more put in their applications to be considered for sponsorship. They are a committed group, and many have already been working faithfully as unpaid volunteers. I will send a longer report when I return home.



Pr Neil Watts (L) and Pr Leslie Yamahune (R) with the VIA's and applicants in New Ireland.

Ear Chopped During Unrest

by VIA Ben Waun, PNG

When two parties were having a dispute, I wanted to bring peace with the help of some of the community elders. During the process there was an accident and my ear was chopped by one of the other parties. I will continue to love and serve these people in the name of Jesus.



VIA Ben Waun with his bandaged ear.

A Close Call

by VIA Freddie Sauba, Bougainville Mission

By God's grace, on 11th April 2025 I was able to avoid a drunken man who chopped my fellow deacon's left hand. My deacon friend is now recovered from the broken bones and nerve damage at Buka Hospital.

The Power of God's Word

Morobe Mission, PNG

Mangki Church in Bulolo District, under the pastoral leadership of Gabby Kaulo conducted an evangelism outreach in the unentered Awata village. Every evening, almost every person from the village came to listen to God's word presented through PowerPoint slide presentations.

The church also organized home visitations and went out with gifts of clothes and other items like soaps and food for the needy people in the community. The outreach resulted in the baptism of seven precious souls who gave their lives to the Lord. The baptism was conducted by the District Director Pr. Mac Uhoni.

Another highlight of the outreach, through power of God's word and prayer, was the decision made by the village tribal chief to follow what the Bible says. He brought out his objects used in ancestral worship and witchcraft as well as objects believed to be the guardian and protector of the entire tribe.



The tribe's chief and one of his daughters.

He then confessed that by keeping the objects in his house his family has suffered for many years. He said the consequences of keeping the objects included the unexpected deaths of family members, sudden illnesses and poverty. He claimed that he and his family wanted to be free from this slavery by accepting the freedom and liberation accomplished and made available by Jesus on the cross of Calvary.

The village requested for another outreach this year if the church has time, and they will be glad to give a piece of land to build a shelter for worship.



Six people in queue for baptism and more than ten more new people responded during the post baptism appeal.

Baptisms Amidst War by U Sauk, Myanmar

My name is U Sauk, and I want to give thanks to God for His protection during this dangerous time in our country. Although there is war and fear all around, I am still safe under the loving care of Jesus Christ. His grace gives me strength every day.



During my mission work, I visited a village where many displaced families had taken shelter after fleeing from war. These people had lost their homes and everything they owned. They were living in broken huts, with very little food. When I met one particular family, their situation touched my heart deeply.

Though I didn't have much, I brought them some food. I continued to visit them daily, helping in small ways, and over time we became close friends. During these visits, I shared with them about Jesus and how He loves us, forgives us, and gives us hope in hard times.

I began praying for them every day. I asked God to open their hearts to His truth. God answered that prayer. After many Bible studies and honest conversations, the family decided to leave their old beliefs and follow Jesus. Finally, the family was baptized and became part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

This experience reminded me that even in suffering and chaos, God is still working. There are still many displaced people who have never heard the truth about Jesus. Please keep them in your prayers, that more hearts may be reached by God's love and grace.

Bombs Falling, Baptisms Happening

by Daw Mwe Mwe, Myanmar

My name is Daw Mwe Mwe. I live in Ywanga village, Swan Township, Pago Division in Myanmar. I thank God that the mission selected me as one of the VIA workers. There is no Christian in my village. The whole village is Myanmar Buddhists. My first contact with a Christian was Mr. Eh Bweh Paw, who visited my family in summer of

2022. From then, he came to us every Saturday. He shared with us about Jesus, about the Sabbath truth and health messages. He taught us how to pray. Then, the mission leaders conducted an evangelistic meeting for one week. We learned many Christian beliefs during the meeting. At the end of the meeting, my husband and I accepted Jesus as our personal Saviour and got baptised.

Now, my husband and I are sharing about Jesus with others. Sometimes, displaced villagers gather at our home. We have more chances to share the good news. I lead Sabbath programs and we cook food for the audience. Weekly we have about ten worshipers. I gave Bible studies and four people got baptized in the last year, all converted from Buddhism. I take care of them because the mission leaders cannot come to my village.

Now, I am giving Bible studies to two more people. But traveling here and there is very difficult due to civil war. For many times, bombs are falling near our house. But still God protects us. Please pray for us, that God may continue to protect us.



Daw Mwe Mwe leading worship at home.

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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