

# MISSION NEWS

Mission Activities of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

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# THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN FOREIGN MISSION AND HOME MISSION

Guest Editorial

Rev. John Kroeze

*Rev Kroeze has been a missionary in Brazil, a pastor in Legana congregation and currently works as pastor in Cairns with a distinct focus on home mission work.*

Speaking from experiences in Brazil and in Australia there are both differences and similarities between foreign mission work and that done in home mission. In Brazil people are still religious and are willing to discuss religious matters. Their religion is mostly in vain, but at least they believe in God, angels, devils and spirits. Their religion, where I worked, was mostly a hybrid. There were various combinations of Roman Catholicism, Pentecostalism, animist African voodoo religions and South American Indian influences and spiritism that came from a Frenchman, Allan Kardec. It was sometimes quite difficult to separate out the various influences for they mixed. However, the majority were religious. Nevertheless, the Reformed faith was unattractive despite being the only truly gracious offer of life.

In Australia on the other hand, Christianity is often a dirty word. The cosmology of the big bang and the doctrine of evolution have reduced the world to the material level. There

is no God, and if there is, you don't need to pay any attention to Him because He doesn't do anything. There is no heaven or hell or day of judgement. There is nothing after death and if there is, I have been fairly good in life so should be alright. Life is for living in the here and now. There are those who are open to discussions about the Word of God, but such people rarely want to spend time talking about such things for they are all in a hurry and have better things to do. Contacts are hard to come by. There are religious people around, but often they are from other cultures and have their own variety of religion or Christianity. On the other hand, churches of the charismatic variety that entertain and provide programs for children are plentiful and booming. They have a high turnover because, after a while, many realise that what they promote is empty and they have been deceived. However, there are those who stay and continue in this form of religiosity. They are attracted by this form of religion.

Where does the Reformed faith fit into all of this? In both countries it is unattractive. It seems like death to the flesh. It does not satisfy our native human desires. We preach

Christ crucified, folly to most people and offence, for it tells us we are no good, evil, to use our Lord's own words (Mat 7:11). It tells us we cannot save ourselves to any degree. It says you can only be saved through following the Lord Jesus Christ and that requires taking up your cross to follow Him. Crosses are death instruments. We have to die with Christ so that we can live with Christ (Gal 2:20; Phil 3:7-11). We do not like to deny ourselves. We do not like to put the old nature we have been born with to death. It is always a struggle and a life long struggle.

How then do we keep going on? The doctrine of election is the mainstay of every Reformed missionary. We are to call all to repentance, but not many will come. However, the elect will come and stay. We don't have to resort to attracting the flesh to grow the church. We know we are

not working in vain, for God has His people wherever He sends us. We do not fret the numbers, because the kingdom of God grew from a little seed, a little bit of leaven. We do not know the influence of the Word of God and how it spreads, but spread it does. God will triumph and will gather His own and His kingdom will come with all its glory and it will be the only kingdom left standing in the end. God will gather His people and then the end will come. Therefore, beside calling people to repentance and faith the church prays: Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. We long for the establishment in full of the kingdom of God and we work to that end.

# NORTH EAST PNG MISSION

## Chairman's Musings

Frank Janssen

*"And now its about time to head off into the day and find out what the RM team here has in store for us to witness and enjoy today. On Sunday we plan to go and see our Brothers and Sisters in Hila DV and then next week we will be in Port Moresby. Hopefully I can muse about that in the next edition of Mission News."*

The paragraph above is how I ended my last musing. So therefore, to keep to that commitment here is part 2 of the Board visit to PNG (if you need context, refer previous article in October Edition of Mission News).

On the second Sunday morning, it was another 5am wake up call. This time we were privileged to have Pastor David and Erika as our tour guides. When you start waking up early to make sure you are on the road on time, you start to realise that the church plants are a fair hike away, even from the new base in Ukarumpa. Whilst some of the road is in good condition, it's the other sections that can be quite draining and then 6 hours of driving in a day can take its toll. You quickly begin to appreciate how much travel our missionaries do on these roads, twice a week, to

preach on Sunday in Hila, and then on Wednesday night come here for Lotu (club/teaching).

For Hila it was a first that the Mission Board came, and for the Board it was our first visit to Hila (obviously). Again, we were graciously provided for with traditional cooking. Being the newest church plant, it was good to see men already in leadership roles. Pastor David preached in Hila, whilst it is special to be under the preaching of the local Pastors, it is good to recognise that we do have missionaries in PNG, and that they too preach Gods word. This is what they are called (and love) to do. It's interesting to see how far the church of Hila has come, in a short amount of time, we sincerely are very grateful to the Spirit for His work in this church. May a strong foundation continue to be built, so that a fruitful church may take hold. The visit to Hila concluded our visit to the field in NE-PNG.

The visit continued though now in Central District / National Capital District. Before we travel to the 4 church plants on the Port Moresby side, plus a bonus visit to the URC, I probably should remind you why we as Southern River Board are in Port Moresby. Yes, we support the RCBC in many ways, and yes we all work together, so it's good for the SRMB also to visit the other locations, but this time there was more to the visit. In 2021 the Co-Operating Churches agreed to send a missionary to the Port Moresby churches to assist the work done there, as the burden on the team in Port Moresby (supported by Canada and New Zealand) is too great, and there is too much work to be done in the churches without the support of another missionary. Therefore, the visit was important to learn more about the churches, get to meet the national Pastors and also appreciate the work that needs to be done. What follows next is the whirlwind tour over 3 days.

I appreciate that further in this Magazine, Brother Mark Mulder will have submitted the College Report. However, I will also mention the RCBC here, as that was our next port of call. On Monday, after a fantastic flight on a 10 seater plane from Ukarumpa to



Port Moresby, we arrived at RCBC. It was here we got the grand tour (whilst Brother Marks YouTube videos are fantastic, it's even better to do it in person). As I have visited previously, the growth of the campus is what struck me the most. Sometimes growth can be a worry if it was expanding for expansion's sake, or if it was just to make the ex-pats more comfortable, but it was neither of these, in fact it was to cater for more students, and to make sure they have the correct facilities as appropriate. New student housing has been built, the chicken house (for fundraising) is well structured, the new classroom, library and admin block are fantastic and well used facilities, and we then got to see work being started on the two campus worker houses. We came during a block break, so we did not witness any teaching action at the college, and there weren't many students on campus. During the visit though, we were reminded that most of the students are first generation Christians who are still growing a lot in their faith and probably just come to faith in the past 2-5 years. This is an extra burden on the staff, however one that they have always worked with, so it will be interesting to see how it goes once 2nd generation children start to attend.

The first church we visited was in Beretete (Rev S 't Hart's former residence). When we arrived, we straight



away noticed the new school building and that the church had had its roof extended since the last time we had visited (2019). Pastor Nawai and his wife met us, as did some of the leaders of the church, and some of the women who we met the week before at the Mama's Bung. It was good to discuss with Pastor Nawai about the needs of the churches in Port Moresby (POM), and also the support they had for another missionary. After church on the previous Sunday, the congregation of Beretete spoke about the congregation and where it was on the Pauline cycle and its path to institution. Pastor Cor Kleyn reflected on the drive back that it was a blessing to see Beretete grow, as they probably have had the least help from Reformed Ministries of all the churches. They have grown on their own so to speak. So here again it is simply amazing to see the work of the Spirit.

We did two visits to 9-mile, as Pastor Aisi wasn't available on the first visit. On the first visit, we visited the school, on the second visit we caught up with Pastor Aisi. It was interesting to find out that a new person found the church via the Facebook page in the previous week. It is a reminder that it's not only street preaching that can call the people to worship, but also via other means such as the Tulait Magazine, the Reformed

Church of PNG website and of course Facebook. During the discussion with Pastor Aisi, he spoke about the maturing church. And whilst he would like to see more male leadership, he also noted the joy of the churches about Candidate Pastor David Kaupa, however he noted that that will impact 9-mile as well (as Candidate David was an elder at 9-mile). He commented on the youth bung (held for POM side) at 9-mile on its success and also the amount of people at 9-mile Lotu the previous night. Whilst we saw very little of the congregation at 9-mile, from the reports from Pastor Aisi it was good to hear about yet another faithful church in PNG that recognises Christ as her King.

Whilst Beretete, 9-mile and East Boroko are fairly close to Port Moresby, that can not be said about Veifa'a. It was a different drive then that other long drives (in the Highlands), as it was flat, but like the other drives parts of the road were in very good condition and many parts of the road were not so great.... Once arriving at the church, we meet an elder and also Sister Clotildes Mum (Pastor Isidore's Mum-in-Law). However, Pastor Paul wasn't there, so we went on a thoroughly enjoyable, hot walk through the neatest and most orderly town in PNG, and providentially we didn't have to go to Pastor Paul's house as we met him in the middle of town. He showed us Christine's (RCBC student) house, the drying lake, and then the grave of Brother Joe (Christine's husband who died of Covid last year). From here we walked a while to Pastor Paul's house (it is in the middle of the forest), here we meet 2 of his 3 children and were able to talk a bit about the church, the support he receives, the need for another missionary and also the ups and downs of the church at Veifa'a. What a humble and sincere man Pastor Paul is. We are so grateful for the time and attention that the Pastors gave to us, hopefully the Lord provides another missionary in His time and that we can help the people here.

Lastly Pastor Cor took us to Wednesday night Lotu (club) at East Boroko. There were 5 adults from East Boroko in attendance (2 related to Pastors from PNG) plus one student who came with us from RCBC. There were a lot of young children and also teenagers. Again, it

was good to see a Missionary in action, as Pastor Cor went through a devotional on Malachi 1. East Boroko was a stark reminder of the state of the nation (power cuts during the evening), the poverty (slum area) and need for the gospel (many men were gambling) was as evident as the path was narrow and slippery. East Boroko doesn't yet have its own Pastor and therefore here again we see the need for us to support and help while the foundation of this church is also laid and worked on.

During the 3 days, we also had an opportunity to visit the URC in Tubusereia. The history of the URC is basically that it's a breakaway from the Uniting Church (and isn't related to the URC in North America). This is a group of about 14 churches, some churches have a membership of about 500 (so much larger than the RCPNG). Tubusereia is on the coast, and an ex-student (Pastor Vagi) from RCBC is currently serving there (he was originally from the URC). There are a few challenges that the URC is going through, and Pastor Vagi is currently part of these discussions. It was clear that there could be a lot of work to do with the URC, if they are willing. And whilst currently RM doesn't have the manpower really to assist the new missionary could, the Lord willing. However, there remains the opportunity in the URC for the reformed preaching, so we hope and pray, that the RCBC can continue to train up Pastors for this federation as well.

So, what is the conclusion? The blessing of seeing a snippet of each church helps you reflect where all the churches are at. Many of the churches are starting to consider institution and therefore also taking steps to be a federation, and therefore the thoughts of being sister churches of NZ, Canada and Australia should start to take place, this too is an exciting development!! With the information also provided by the RM team, you can further knit some pieces together. It is clear by no means that the job is complete, the Reformed Churches of PNG need support as they build the foundations on which their

federation hopes to grow. Therefore the Missionaries, Support workers, Mission Board, Supporting and Co-operating Churches still have much to do in PNG to bring God's word to the people.

It indeed was a blessing to visit PNG, and hopefully with this and the previous Musings, you too got to see a little bit of the work of the Spirit in a land that so desperately is crying out for the true Gospel.



#### Prayer points:

- Thankfulness for the growth and faith that can be witnessed in the Reformed Churches of PNG. May God continue to bless this growth.
- That God will be with all the Mission personnel as they continue their task with the Reformed Churches of PNG especially as some take breaks after their conference or others go straight back into the work.
- That God will guide the work so that a call can be made for a missionary in Port Moresby and the harvest there can be attended to. Whilst much work has been done on this front by the Board, the challenges to call a missionary are great and much wisdom and patience is required.
- That God will be with the National Pastors, Pastor Isidore, Pastor Paul, Pastor Tony, Pastor Nawai & Pastor Aisi as they continue to do their task in the RCPNG.

# THE FRUIT OF YOUR LABOUR

North East PNG Mission Board

David Pol, North East PNG Mission

As a young man who spent much of his growing years in a rural agricultural setting, there were many beautiful things about each season. However, there was a time of year that stood out. Autumn. Autumn meant fields of dazzling yellow canola, golden ears of wheat, row upon row of towering stalks of corn and the short and green potato plants, ripe for the harvest.

It wasn't just the colours that were a delight. It was the anticipation in the air. It was the joy of those who would be taking in that beautiful harvest in due course. The rewarding feeling of a year's worth of labour finally coming to fruition brought an attitude of determination to see it through to the end. Winter was coming and with a lot of hard work and by God's grace all would be well prepared to meet it.

It was a similar feeling that met us at the last third of this year. For my family, October marked a year on the

mission field. For Pastor Ryan, it was quite a bit longer. All the same, we looked with the same anticipation, trepidation, delight and determination on what would likely be among the two biggest events of the year: the Highlands preaching tour and the leadership conference in Hila.

## **The Preaching Tour**

This past month we had the opportunity to go on a Highlands tour, preaching on the topic of addictions. Starting October 10 in Lae, we moved our way up into the highlands. There were quite a number of ways in which this Highlands tour bore fruit.

First, our relationships with the two church leaders who accompanied us were strengthened. Apa, a deacon from 9 Mile and a worker at the RCBC and Paul Kamina, a deacon from Lae, were a great help to us. More than



“The people in Yonki will receive us graciously even if we unexpectedly find ourselves preaching against addictions to row upon row of people selling Buai and smokes...”



that, though, we were able to have some good discussions with them.

Both Apa and Paul come from the Highlands and the places we visited were quite dear to their hearts. It's quite something to go to someone's "hometown". You see a different side to them. When you share meals, share downtime and share memories with someone you're able to see who they are and how they have experienced life from a whole new perspective. It doesn't just bring you closer to them, but the day-to-day conversations both in the vehicle and out also gives a clearer picture of their lives as church leaders as well as their hopes and dreams for the church beyond their respective congregations. If for that reason alone this preaching tour bore fruit it would have been successful.

Second, we were able to see the differences in culture from place to place. When the first Dutch immigrants came to Canada, some of the early pastors wrote home about how difficult it was to pastor these congregations. The reason? The cultural and behavioural differences of Dutch immigrants who came from such a variety of backgrounds in the Netherlands, leading to frequent friction. Likewise in Papua New Guinea it is good to get a taste of the cultural differences. The people in Kundiawa and Kerowagi are very expressive and enthusiastic. The people in Goroka are more reserved and carefully weigh the preaching of the Gospel. The people in Yonki will receive us graciously even if we unexpectedly find ourselves preaching against addictions to row upon row of people selling Buai and smokes, as long as you are able to greet them with humour, gentleness and proof that you are preaching *from* the Word *for* their good, as Pastor Ryan so beautifully did.

Coming to know the people you serve, especially as they gather in the cities in heterogenous groups, goes a long way to understanding them and serving them well.



Third, we give thanks for a few inquiries that were made to our local pastors about attending the Bible College. There were those who were touched by the preaching and wanted to receive more of this kind of teaching with the express desire of taking it home to their own communities.

Fourth and most clearly, we give thanks for the fruit of those who were pricked with a hunger for the Word as it is faithfully proclaimed. It was not just those who professed a desire to change their lives. A lot of people commented very positively on how though we did give strong warnings, we also preached grace, forgiveness, hope and change instead of just condemnation and fear. “We just wish we could sit under this kind of preaching every Sunday!” or “Can you guys stay a week or two and preach every day in the marketplace? We want to hear more!” were frequent refrains. The more than 1700 magazines we sold also attested to a hunger for living a life that is conformed to this Biblically based preaching.

We do not have enough workers to fill this void. That being said, they saw our source material. They saw how we desired to be deeply grounded in the Word. By God’s grace, this passion for a preaching that is grounded in the Word will shake their home congregations as well, encouraging a reformation in churches beyond our own. We could already see the seeds of such a reformation in

the people who said they wanted reform in their own home churches. In this, too, we see seeds planted which by God’s grace will bear a future harvest.

### **The Hila Leadership Bung**

By God’s grace it is not just outside our churches that we see the fruit of our labours as co-workers in God’s field (1 Cor 3:9). We also have the joy of looking back on this past year and seeing the fruit of our labours in our home churches as well. The leadership conference (Bung) that we held in Hila was a clear picture of this.

First, we see a desire to share the true preaching of the gospel. Not only were members from our own churches invited to this bung: members of other churches were invited as well. This training session became an opportunity for the spread of the Reformation (or a return to it).

Several leaders from the Lutheran Church, the Faith Fellowship church and the SDA church showed up and were very interested in what was taught. The deacon who showed up from the SDA church was especially interested in going back and putting into practice everything that he had learned. This was encouraging, as most of the time, the SDA churches in this area have been openly hostile to the surrounding churches (especially the Lutheran Church) and condemning to hell





everyone who doesn't worship on Saturday, refrain from pork, and refrain from lighting fires on Sunday (along with a myriad of other laws). If a touch of the Reformation spreads inside their church, that would be a beautiful thing.

Second, we were able to see more mature brothers sharing with brothers who had more to learn. Our brother Paul Kamina at the conference. He was able to lend his experience as a deacon, which was helpful for the topic that was covered, and he also was a connection to Lae leadership, who are overseeing the work in Hila. As that was the case, the members of Hila were very happy to have him there. His presence, maturity and input is a small picture of the harvest that God has let us participate in as workers in His field.

### **Final Thoughts**

These two events, the leadership bung and the Highlands tour, both served to reinforce two things. They reinforced that sense of anticipation and joy and they reinforced a determination to see what God has in store for our Reformed churches and beyond.

The fields are white for the harvest. The harvest continues to come in. There are times of disappointment, it is true, but there are also times of profound joy. Despite the pace, both the preaching tour and the leadership bung proved to be a time of encouragement and joy.

The Reformation is not just ours. This culture of weighing our traditions, changing and going back to the Word of God is something that God has allowed us to inherit with the intention of sharing it abroad. Let us pray that the fruit of our labours might be something that doesn't just touch one church in a country crying out for help. Let us be bold in asking God that our efforts might bear a harvest of righteousness and serve in the gathering in of countless sheep from other sheepfolds as well.

Lastly, let us thank God for the privilege of being able to be tools in His hand and fellow workers in His field. Let us pray that he might continue to allow us to enjoy seeing the fruit of our labour and feasting in spirit as we are strengthened in the work of His kingdom.

“Let us pray that the fruit of our labours might be something that doesn't just touch one church in a country crying out for help”

# MISSION INDONESIA

Eric de Haan

Dear readers

It is almost 3 years to the day that we were able to visit Sumba as mission committee. During this time, we have tried to keep you updated with developments in Indonesia, however as you can imagine, when not much information is coming in, it makes these articles somewhat difficult to write. Now I seem to have just the opposite problem, so much information, I barely know where to begin! I guess I'll start at the beginning then.

Our trip to Bali and then onto Sumba was uneventful enough. Anyone flying to Bali recently will know the limited choice of airlines, and their habit to change your flight times at the slightest whim. Clearly there is a reason why they have only 1 star in their logo ☹️. The changes

enforced upon us meant no time to visit Bali Mission Post during our outward transit. We arrived in Sumba on Saturday morning where we were met by rev Balla, our host, and Ferdinand Paratu who kindly reintroduced me to Rhonda. She was looking a bit older, a bit more battered around the edges, and held together in places by electrical zip ties. For readers new to Mission News, no Rhonda is not a person, but the red Honda which I usually ride, but who has a bit of a personality & could be compared to a partly broken-in brumby. Rev Balla took us to view the recently completed church building at Laindeha which is now in use by the local congregation.

After this we travelled to Kataka for our first consistory



New church at Laindeha

meeting of the trip. We were warmly welcomed and thanked for the support given by Mission Aid to repair their damaged manse after Seroja hit.

We received verbal reports from all the following evangelists based in Sumba who were present representing their mission posts.

Ev Yan Laki Ngella for the post at Lai Hobu expressed thanks for continuing support for this post. This group managed to keep worshipping together despite Covid and the congregation is continuing to grow. The new motorbike recently received was also much appreciated and makes Yan's task more manageable, without the constant breakdowns and repairs that were required on his old bike.

Rev Markus for the post at Tanambanas also reported that the group there is continuing to flourish with a couple of families recently joining the church. He has recently finished further studies in Java and will likely be replaced by another evangelist in the near future.

Evangelist Djems From Lae Wunga reported some continuing tensions at this post, mainly due to the group wanting to take control of the church and manse building projects, and not relying so much on direction from Kataka. There is also an issue with the motorbike provided for the evangelist, as the community believes that it is for community use and not limited to the evangelist. Consistory is currently dealing with this matter and holding reconciliation meetings, and as a result Ev Djems has been helping out with preaching at Kataka, while students from the college have been preaching weekly at Lae Wunga under the supervision of rev Anton Priang of the Honggaroru church. We are praying that this matter may be resolved peaceably and soon for the spiritual well-being of the whole community.

Laindeha – Rev Balla gave a short report on his activities at the posts of Laindeha and Maubokul where he is continuing to preach weekly. The church building at Laindeha is now completed, and this has been a blessing to the community there. Maubokul is continuing to grow



and now numbers close to 50 members regularly attending worship services.

At the conclusion of the meeting which included a delicious hot meal, we travelled 2 hours south along the coast to the church of Lumbuwinu. The roads were in a good state and despite a few showers along the way it was a pleasant trip. We were happy to see Rev Etty in good health, as he had recently been struggling with issues caused by diabetes. As is often the case in Sumba, a pre-arranged meeting for Saturday night had disappeared in a moment of miscommunication. Sunday we were due to visit the mission posts of Lainggada and Katundul which are served by Evangelist Novianus Benjamin. As Lainggada is some 60 kms into the mountains, and in order to arrive at a reasonable time, this meant leaving at 7am. Now being prepared for travelling in Sumba during the rainy month of November takes some planning. Brian had the forethought to take along some super-duper wet weather gear, which was very effective at keeping out the rain, only problem was if you were wearing said gear whilst it wasn't raining, the sweat produced was no different than being completely exposed to the elements, which is exactly the preparation I had the foresight to engage in. Thankfully it didn't rain on the way to the mission post, and we arrived in good



View of the hills surrounding Lainggada

time to be reacquainted with the locals. It was hard to believe that we hadn't seen them for 3 years, although Novianus did look like he had matured quite a bit. Hardly surprising given that he was in his early twenties when we last saw him & that meant he had aged approx. 15%, whereas Brian and I had only aged 5% and clearly, we had hardly changed at all ☺.

We enjoyed a worship service held on the verandah of the manse. Evangelist Novianus preached mainly in Sumbanese, but bible readings and singing was done in Indonesian. Around 12 members of the total 25 were present, with a good many of these being young children. They have certainly experienced a fruitful Covid season. There was some tension within the group regarding the lack of progress in building the new church building, as this had been promised to be completed approx. 18 months ago. It is difficult for such isolated people to understand the govt restrictions regarding Covid, and the ensuing rapid increase in costs, and difficulties in getting available workers. Thankfully the consistory was able to smooth things over with the promise that building would start within weeks, with Rev Etty personally supervising the building project. We enjoyed a meal together and then had to debate whether we would press on to Katundul, which was a further hour travel deeper into the mountains. We were advised that if it didn't rain,

there was a good possibility of making it all the way by motorbike, if it did rain it would be advisable to return to Lumbuwinu.

After a good deal of sniffing the air and nose-scratching the prevailing wisdom was that it wasn't going to rain, and we were good to go. Rev Etty stayed behind for further discussion with the locals at Lainggada, while Novianus, Brian and I headed off. The further we went, the worse the road conditions got, and pretty soon it was taking all my experience just to remain upright. After about an hour, and just as we reached a good stretch of road, Novianus unexpectedly stopped and informed us that we would be walking from that point on. He thought it might rain and then we and the motorbikes would be stuck down the bottom of a steep valley, probably for days due to the slippery track. We could see the mission post about 400meters across the valley and maybe a couple of hundred meters below us, but without the ability to fly, or a zip line across, we had to trek around 5 kms, and wouldn't you know it, the prophecy of Novianus came true.

We were approx. halfway there when the heavens opened, and within seconds we were totally drenched. Even Brian was wet, but that may be because he had left his new wet weather gear with the motorbikes back up



Enjoying a break on the way to Lainggada

the hill, this time I had the foresight to be prepared and upon reaching the mission post some 30 mins later, I proudly produced from my backpack a nice clean & dry shirt from a waterproof plastic bag ☺.

We were met by around a dozen members from this community. Unfortunately, the monsoonal rain had prevented around half the members attending, as even walking along the steep and narrow tracks from the opposite direction from which we came, is simply too dangerous. Thankfully, the daily wet season rain is only confined to 3 months of the year. Evangelist Novianus preached the same text as in the morning, on the parable of the unforgiving servant Matt 18: 21-35. Even though it was the 2nd time I heard this sermon, I didn't understand

any more of it this time around! It was good to note the keen interest with which the members were listening. Very often in mission posts, the hearers look as if they are "switched off" during the preaching. What was surprising to note, was that at both mission posts, the tunes of the psalms seemed to be very familiar to the listeners, whereas they struggled with even well-known Indonesian hymns. After the service concluded we again enjoyed a meal (our 3rd already) and prepared to return to Lainggada where Rev Etty was waiting for us. That sounds soooooo easy doesn't it. Well let me tell you, it involved a 5-kilometre hike back up the mountain after a solid hour of downpour, and then riding back on waterlogged, muddy clay track, which was interspersed with super slippery soapstone sections, and oh and by the way, Rhonda had decided for this trip that she didn't need rear brakes anymore. Any bike rider knows that when dealing with wet and slippery conditions, best to leave the front brake alone, and rely only your rear. I only had Rhonda's gears to rely on, and readers will probably remember that Rhonda likes to play this game, where on challenging downhill sections, at the slightest bump she will jump out of first gear into neutral, thus relieving any braking resistance from the engine, leaving me hurtling to the bottom in, shall we say an "uncontrolled manner"

Prior to leaving Katundul and knowing what was waiting for us, I prayed earnestly for a safe journey, and am completely certain that it was not my skill (or lack of it)



Evangelist Novianus preparing to preach at Katundul

“I prayed earnestly for a safe journey, and am completely certain that it was not my skill (or lack of it) that enabled me to reach our destination without accident”



Consistory GGRI Lumbuwinu (and Brian)

that enabled me to reach our destination without accident. We arrived back at Lumbuwinu at around 8 in the evening, desperately tired and saddle-sore only to find, yes you guessed, yet another rice and chicken meal waiting for us ☺.

The next morning, we had a surprisingly early meeting where everyone showed up before 9am! Surely this must be a record for Sumba! We met for close to 1½ hours discussing the various needs of the mission posts and the support we are privileged to supply. Sadly, a member of the congregation had died unexpectedly early that morning, a widowed man of approx. 60 Yrs., who had been discharged from hospital only the day before and was believed to be well on his way to a good recovery. This really brought home the disparity between a first world and third-world healthcare system, and where the average life expectancy is still around 60 years of age in Sumba.

Once we made our farewells around 11am, it was to travel 3.5 hours to the mission post of LaiHobu. We stopped by at GGRI Melolo to catch up with Rev Hina and to pick up Rev Balla who would be accompanying us for this leg of the journey. It was also an opportunity for him to spend some time with Evangelist Yan who is his brother.

Again, we were burdened by frequent rain periods and despite the conditions we made good time. About 3 Kms short of our destination we met Yan, who flagged us

down from the side of the road. He informed us that we would be going no further on our bikes, as the road had been literally washed away in some sections, and was impassable. Now 3 kms doesn't sound too bad for a couple of relatively fit 60 Yr. old's and wouldn't normally be an issue if the roads were flat! But having all our luggage with us and lugging around 10Kilos in a backpack and given the terrain was steeper than any hill in Roleystone, it was a good 45 mins before we eventually spotted the blessed relief of the mission post emerging from the rain & mist. We spent an enjoyable evening with Yan's family, and some church community members before bidding everyone an early good night and retreating to our patch of the verandah. Even the constant chatter and acrid cigarette smoke couldn't keep us from the land of nod.

As this about the halfway point of the trip I will leave it to the next issue to continue, where you will be informed of the new mission post for GGRI Padiratana, a ridiculous journey to LaAu involving 3 river crossings, and some exciting news for the Bali Post. It certainly was good to finally be able to visit our Indonesian Brothers and Sisters, and see first hand how God is continuing to gather his people together through the advancement of the Gospel among the unbelievers.

Till next time, on behalf of Mission Indonesia.

# WANTUN – MAMA BUNG

Mission Aid North East Papua New Guinea

Elaine Vandebos

While in PNG in September/October, I had the immense privilege of attending a day at the Reformed Churches of PNG's Mama Bung. This women's conference is held once every couple of years and this year was a 4-day conference held in Wantun in the Markham Valley.

Present at this conference were women from all 7 churches/church plants in Papua New Guinea. Travelling to Wantun for the attendees is no mean feat. The women who came from the furthest away live in Veifa'a. This village is a 4–5-hour trip by PMV (public bus) to Port Moresby. It was then a 1-hour flight to Lae and another 4–5-hour trip by PMV from Lae to Wantun in the Markham Valley. For myself, it was a mere 3-hour trip from Ukarumapa to Wantun with Pastor deJonge and his family.

On Tuesday, we left Ukarumpa at 5:50 am to join the Mama Bung and the opening of the Logos Glory Church. Upon arrival, the women were seated and ready to start. Pastor Tony began the day with a short address to officially open the church. He read from Solomon's dedication prayer in 1 Kings 8. The official opening was simple, with Pastor Ryan and Pastor Isidore cutting the ribbon.





It was clear that the main business of the day was the Women's Bung.

The theme for the bung was:

“Christian women are what kind of women?”

They work to spread the gospel.

They teach their children about the gospel.

They adorn themselves with the gospel.

They manage their houses well.

Pastor Tony addressed the women about their responsibility of spreading the gospel. After the address, the women were divided into groups to answer some questions. They were then asked to have 2 people from each group report on the discussions. Women in PNG are the same as Australian women in that the argument followed about who would go to the front (no one wanted to be the one).

After lunch, Pastor Ryan spoke to the women about how their primary responsibility is to teach their children about the Lord.

It was wonderful to see women from all areas of PNG gathered in harmony to discuss and learn from God's Word. League days in Australia are relatively easy commitments for women to make, but for the PNG women coming from Port Moresby the cost of the flight, travel from Lae to Wantun and the return required several years of saving money.



Mission Aid NE PNG would like to support the women in the Reformed Churches of PNG by printing the speeches, with study questions into booklets which the ladies can use for their weekly Bible study in the next few months. The booklets would be helpful as a reminder and a memento for those women who went to the conference, and those who didn't get a chance to go, they would still be able to learn everything that was taught.

If you are interested in supporting this worthy cause, feel free to give a donation using the bank details listed below. Please label your donation as Mama Bung booklet.



### Donations to Mission Aid

Mission Aid NE PNG aims to provide financial support for projects identified in north-east PNG that will complement the mission work provided on the ground in a sustainable and responsible manner. We welcome donations for our existing projects, and encourage anyone who wishes to support a specific cause to contact the Committee at [secretary.missionaid@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.missionaid@gmail.com).

Account Name: Mission Aid

BSB: 066-131

Account Number: 00902095



# COLLEGE CORNER

Reformed Bible College, PNG

Mark Mulder

Graduation Day has come and gone, and for us as the organisers, that's a big relief. A relief because the day was very successful. PNGers are not time-oriented people, rather, they are event oriented, and the bigger the event, the more responsibility is cast on to the organisers to make sure everything goes right. Big events always involve food, and, the really big events need to have pig meat as part of the food. Well, graduation ranks right near the top, and so we needed to make sure there was enough pig meat for everybody. That leads to another 'problem'; how many people will come? We always ask the churches to let us know the numbers, but because they're not time oriented, we get the numbers just prior to the event (when all the planning and purchasing has been done) or, on the morning of the day! So, we have learnt to estimate how many will come by looking at who is graduating, and what kind of support they usually



Steam escaping from the mumu pit (earth oven)

get from their church. This year, one of our students came from the URC in Gaire, and we knew that most of the village would come, so we estimated a total figure of 400 people. Guess what, we got 390. Phew.

All of the food is prepared beforehand and placed in plastic tubs so the attendees just need to line up, pick up a tub, pick up a bun, and get themselves a drink. It's very efficient, and before long everybody is seated under the shade, enjoying each other's company.

Going back to the pig meat; it's really important that no red meat is seen. If red meat is seen, that is frowned upon, and people will remember the graduation for all the wrong reasons. That means that when we cook the pig meat, we need to make sure it's in the earth oven for long enough so that we end up with pig meat well done. Well, that's the next problem, you can't quickly uncover the earth oven to check on the progress. Once you open it up, that's it. All the heat escapes, and if you need to cook it for longer, you basically need to start again, meaning, lighting another fire on top of rocks and wait for those rocks to get stinking hot, put the pig meat back in, cover with banana leaves and soil, and wait.

Having done this for a number of years now, I've worked out that the meat should be in for about 2.5 hours, and so I made that quite clear to the students whose job it was to cook the pig meat. Seeing as the process started at 2am, and as I was required to help in other areas, I was fairly confident that all would be ok. Wrong! For whatever reason, they uncovered the oven after 1.5 hrs and not 2.5 hrs. Aaaargh...red meat....negative feedback from our guests.....not good. The lead student felt pretty bad, but he was also

determined to fix the problem. “We will improvise, Mr Mark.” I commended him for that attitude and then left them so that they wouldn’t feel my disappointment. □  
Improvise they did, because, when it came time to eat the food.....no red meat. Fantastic.

Graduation was a lovely event. We graduated 2 diploma students and 7 certificate students. There were lovely speeches, all encouraging our graduands and all giving praise to our Father in heaven, for his guiding hand. We even had a local TV station come by, getting a lot of footage of the event. When I spoke to them at the end, they informed me that they knew one of the students, and because he spoke so glowingly about the college, one of the producers decided to send a team to get footage so that they could put together a package for one of their regular programs called, Living Your Destiny. As we don’t have TV, I have no idea what the outcome was. □

Two days before graduation, we typically take all the students to a local beach to enjoy each other’s company and to just relax. It’s as well the police here are pretty relaxed, because we took 65 people (35 adults, 10 teenagers, and 20 children) in just 5 vehicles. It’s amazing how many can squeeze into the back of a ute. It was all

rather cosy. This day, too, was a wonderful event.

In other matters, Ron de Vos came, and checked out our electrical situation. He’s furnished us with a report listing a number of recommendations, and right now we have started enacting them. It will be good once it’s all complete; much safer, and less voltage drop.

We are looking forward to welcoming a number of workers from Australia and New Zealand, who will be helping us build 2 campus workers houses. More on that in the next mission news.

The recently held Women’s League Day collected money for our bookstore. Thank you, ladies, for your generous response, and know well that the money will be well used. We have started an advertising campaign, targeting more affluent PNGers, in the hope that they’ll drop in and purchase quality Christian books. We can then also dialogue with them about the Reformed Churches and the reformed faith. Who knows what might become of all this. We pray that God will bless our endeavours.

Till next time, wishing you the LORD’s blessing.

In Christ alone

Mark



The Graduating Class of 2022

Encourage the congregation to sing more from the Psalms:

# PSALM SINGING SEMINAR

LITINDO, Indonesia

Ferdinand Paratu

Psalm 147:1

“Praise the Lord, for it is good to sing praises to our God!

Yes, praise is pleasant and appropriate”

Singing in the church worship is one of the many ways we express our praise to our Triune God about the greatness of His love, and His providence towards us. We praise the Lord, our God because we have received so much from His hands. We acknowledge His majestic works, we praise His love and care for us, and we worship Him for His providence. But singing does not always mean praising the Lord for all His wondrous work. Yes, we like doing that because we want to please our God. Singing is also a prayer. Singing is a way through which we come and ask God for forgiveness of our sins, for protection from our enemy and for His blessings for us. The variety of these themes can be found in the Psalms.

The reformed churches of Indonesia (GGRI) is one of the few churches that still sing the Genevan Psalter, a tradition which has been passed on from generation to generation since the 16th century. Though we are pleased with this fact, we are also sad with another fact that Psalm is no longer the first choice in our church worship. There are at least three reasons why people do not love the Psalms as much as they do with the Hymns.

The first reason is the influence of the singings from other churches to the GGRI members. GGRI is very small in NTT (Sumba, Sabu, and Timor). Our recent survey shows that our members in this region is not more than 8,000 people. Compared with the Christian Church of Sumba (GKS) which has 300 instituted churches with 500,000 members across Sumba island, we are not even close to that number. How big is that influence? Very big. We are surrounded by these churches, and every where we go we hear their hymns, and these hymns become very familiar in our ears. We use the same hymn book called Kidung Jemaat, and the congregations are more familiar with this book, especially the youth. Because of this familiarity, the congregations tend to like the Hymns more than the Psalms. There must be a reason behind this, and that reason is not merely a matter of choice or preference. It must have something to do with the knowledge and understanding about the Psalm singing.

The second reason is the melody. Though this can be argued, most people find it very difficult to sing the Psalms. I tend to agree with this reason, but their reasoning is not entirely acceptable. I agree that a number of Psalms are very difficult to sing, but mostly are singable. The congregations tend to sing only familiar Psalms, with easier melody. It is common to hear people sing from Psalm 1, 25, 32, 138 in our corporate worships.

But how often do we hear people sing Psalm 34, 54, 56, 137? Not very often, or probably never.

The other reason has something to do with history, and this applies to the older people. Late in the 1970s, when the versification of the Psalm was first introduced to and received by GGRI, the number of Psalms was only 100 songs. This versification was well known as the Kijne's Psalm. He was a missionary in Papua who versified the Genevan Psalter into the Indonesian language. His work was not finished because he died from heart attack in 1970. His version remained in use in GGRI until early in the 1990s (and still in use in Kalimantan and Papua). For so many years, people were accustomed to singing his version, until a newer and more versification was embraced by GGRI. This one is famously known as YAMUGER version. It is a complete set of Psalm, adding 50 more Psalms that the Kijne's version did not have. When we shifted from Kijne to YAMUGER version, people were not really aware that there were 50 more Psalms in this book. That is the main reason why Psalm 60, 108, 147 were not familiar to the congregations and church leaders because they were not in the earlier Psalm book of GGRI.

To address these issues, and to raise awareness about the importance of singing the Psalms in the congregations worship, LITINDO has made a seminar rally which targets all the congregations, including the branches and mission posts. GGRI-NTT, where LITINDO is based, has 19 instituted churches, 25 branches and more than 50 mission posts.

Starting at the Seminary of the Reformed Church in Waimarang, LITINDO has managed to conduct seminars in 20 different places including Kalimantan and Papua. This activity remains to be the target of LITINDO until it reaches all the churches in NTT, also in Kalimantan Barat and Papua. The seminar consists of three parts: the history of the Genevan Psalter, the spiritual blessings we have from singing the Psalms, and the reasons why we sing them.

The historical background of the Genevan Psalter might not be very important to the congregations except the

fact that these Psalters were the project of John Calvin when he first served as a minister in Geneva. The emphasis of the seminars is more to share the spiritual blessings we have from the Psalms. There are at least two main blessings; We sing the Word of God, and we praise Christ and all His wondrous works. The latter is the point.

The person of Christ, His office and His works are portrayed in the Psalms. However, finding Christ in the Psalm is difficult, and it is even more difficult to the congregations. How often do we sing the Psalms at Christmas? The congregations will prefer to sing "Hark the Herald Angels sing" or "Joy to the World". They are beautiful hymns, no doubt about it. Is it because we do not have a Psalm about Christ's incarnation? If we see it from a bigger picture, God gave us Christ because He remembers His promise to His people, and in Christ all the world have seen the salvation of our God (Psalm 98). That is the point when Paul wrote to the Galatians that when the fullness of time has come, God sent His son, born of a woman. Christ's birth is the fulfillment of the salvation that God promised in Psalm 98. Isn't it a wonderful Psalm to sing at Christmas, praising God for His faithfulness for giving us Christ? Or how often do we sing from the Psalm 22 at the Good Friday service? Jesus himself quoted this Psalm on the cross, a Psalm about his suffering, rejected both by God and man? Or why don't we sing Psalm 69 about the hostility of men towards Christ? These Psalms are rarely sung, or probably never sung at all. When we gather in church at the ascension day when Christ ascended to His heavenly throne where He is crowned as the King of kings and Lord of Lords, why don't we sing from Psalm 93, 95 and 99 about Him being the King who has been given the power and authority on earth and in heaven (Mat.28:18)? How wonderful it is if we can sing the Psalms, meditate on it while remembering Christ and all His wondrous works.

Singing the Psalm is not merely a matter of choice, but it is also a command. If we love our God, we will obey His commands and His words. Paul writes to the Colossians, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom

teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God” (Col.3:16). If we can sing the hymns so often and love them, why don’t have the same attitude towards the Psalms? Church leaders (ministers and elders) ought to have the love to the psalms, the love which they can spread to the congregations in every Lord’s Day when the people of God come to worship Him. We all need to have that desire to sing the Psalms like the Psalmist says in Psalm 101, and be glad and have heart full of joy when praising God (Psalm 108).

LITINDO continues to encourage the congregations to sing the Psalms, not only because it is our consent in the church order, but more importantly because it is the Word of God. It is the praise that God himself put in our mouth, so we can sing it back to Him for His glory. In each of the seminar, LITINDO introduces and shares the electronic version of the Psalm book thanks to YAMUGER who gave LITINDO the permission to share this e-book to members of GGRI. This e-version also contains church documents; the three forms of unity, the liturgical forms and prayers. This book can be easily opened in all smartphones platforms, android or ios. LITINDO wants to bring the Psalm closer to the people, right in their hands. Anywhere they go, they have the Genevan Psalter in their hands. Now the GGRI members, especially the youth can always have access to the Psalms, and they can always sing along in the church worship, or in their home devotions. The students at the seminary also can always learn and motivate themselves to sing the Psalms, and will become the pioneer in the congregations they are about to serve. We continue to pray that the congregations will come to love the Psalm more than before, as the words we sing are not of man but are set forth from the mouth of God.

**Praise the Lord!  
For it is good to  
sing praises to  
our God; For it is  
pleasant, and  
praise is**

*beautiful.*

Psalm 147:1

# KIDS MISSION CORNER

Here are some puzzles for different ages in the family to try to solve. They are all about the wild animals that live in Indonesia. Did you know that a lot of our Mission Workers live in Indonesia? Maybe you have seen some of these animals at the Perth Zoo.

Can you unscramble these animal names?

- REGIT .....
- DIBR .....
- YMEKNO .....
- DNORGA .....
- PHLENTA .....

Using the letters in the word below, how many new words can you make?

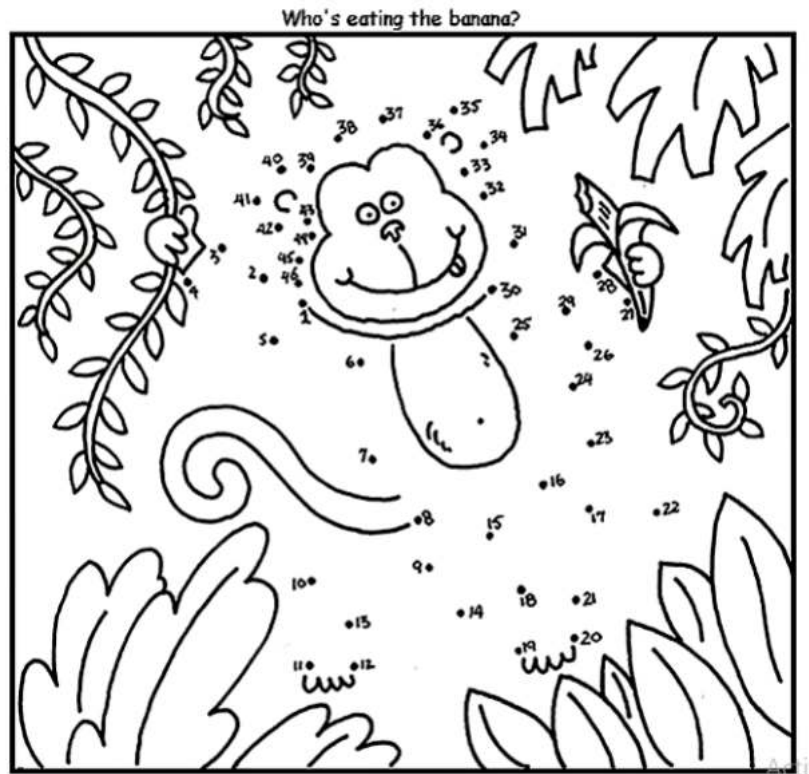
**ELEPHANT**

- .....
- .....
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- .....
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- .....
- .....
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- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

Hunt for the words shown on the list below, then circle them as you find them.

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
|                 | I X Y T B T J O C N |
| Starling        | N C G M H I D T Q A |
| Pygmy           | D Z G K G O R P M T |
| Rhinoceros      | O B G H M Y M D M U |
| Orangutan       | N E Z O P G P Y O G |
| Komodo / Dragon | E S K D R A G O N N |
| Bird            | S G N I L R A T S A |
| Indonesia       | I T N A H P E L E R |
| Mission         | A M I S S I O N A O |





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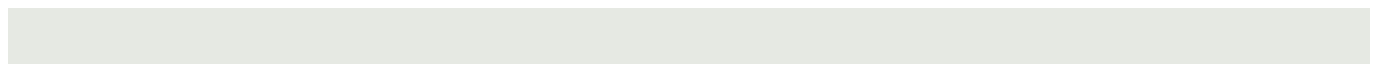
# BIRTHDAY CALENDAR

December – February

Mrs Erika Pol	01.12.96
Zachary Dejonge	05.12.18
Makenna VanderWal	09.12.17
Mrs Merinda van der Kamp	17.12.91
Benjamin Kleijn	19.12.09
Br. Ben van der Kamp	14.01.92
Graeme van der Kamp	20.01.20
James DeJong	13.02.21

# MISSION COMMITTEES

Indonesia • Papua New Guinea • Philippines • Sabu • Sumba



### Mission North East Papua New Guinea

**Sending Church:** Southern River

**Cooperating Churches:** Armadale, Byford, Darling Downs, West Albany, Southern River

**Supporting Churches:** Albany, Bunbury, Busselton, Launceston, Legana, Melville

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**General Deputy:** R Dekker (DD)

**Meeting Secretary:** R Plug (By)

**Report Secretary:** D Hordyk (By)

**Treasurer:** E Eikelboom (By)

**Members:** K Bruning (A) B Dykstra (A) N Huizinga (A)

D Terpstra (DD) V vanDyke (DD) E VandenBos (SR)

D teWierik (SR) N Dekker (WA) Ben Hordyk (WA)

Carl Plug (WA)

**Missionaries:** Rev R & Mrs R DeJonge, Rev D & Mrs E Pol

**Mission Workers:** Mr B & Mrs M van de Kamp

**Web:** [www.frcmissionpng.org](http://www.frcmissionpng.org) ; <https://www.facebook.com/groups/271603523844307>

### Mission Aid North East Papua New Guinea

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**Secretary:** Brooklyn VanderLaan

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**Mission Board Liaison:** Elaine VandenBos

**Web:** <http://missionaid.frcarmadale.com/>

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### Mission Indonesia

**Sending Church:** Rockingham (R)

**Supporting Church:** Baldvis (B)

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**Vice-Chairman:** Br B Bosveld (B)

**Treasurer:** Br B Bosveld (B)

**Minutes Secretary:** Br B Pleiter (B)

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**Correspondence Indonesian:** Br B Bosveld (B)

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**Member:** Br J Moesker (R)

**Evangelists:**

Rev Muriwali Yanto - Malang

Rev Markus Ndhijawa - Tanabanas

Rev Yan Pariamalinga - Bali

Rev Balla Rihi - Maubukul

Br Jhems Umbu Ngabi - Lae Wunga

Rev Arison Pekambani - LaAu

Br Yan Laki Ngella - Lai Hobu

Br Melkianus Kalambar Tara Amah - Watu Bara

Ev Jekson Kambaru Windi - Dampit (java)

Ev Novianus Benyamin - LKaingada & Katundul

**Web:** <http://mission.frcrockingham.org>

### Mission Sabu

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**Pastors:**

Reverend Mada Bihah

Reverend Windi Kurung

Reverend Djara Wadu

Reverend Amos Ndawa Mada

Reverend Yohanis Here Pa

**Evangelists:**

Brother Thomas Dida

Brother Lay Djama Riwu

### Mission Philippines

**Sending Church:** FRC Baldvis

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Rev. S 't Hart (Mel) Rev. C Vermeulen (DD)

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