

MISSION NEWS

Mission Activities of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia

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*"For I am NOT ASHAMED of the Gospel for it is the POWER of GOD
for SALVATION to everyone who BELIEVES."*

Romans 1: 16

COVER PHOTO:

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Guest Editorial**NOAH
THE MISSIONARY**

There is a lot of evidence of a mission mandate in the Old Testament. God's Word is one and the plan of salvation is the same in the Old Testament and in the New. And as God revealed only one plan of Salvation in the Old and in the New Testament, so He provided and ordained only one means to receive the forgiveness of sins. This sole means for imparting and receiving the grace given by the Holy Spirit is the preaching of the gospel. Since "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6) or even to come to Him, and since "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17), and since God "desires all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4), then it must also follow, as the Lord Jesus Himself said, "the gospel must first be preached to all the nations" (Mark 13:10). This indiscriminate preaching of the gospel to all nationalities was God's will and purpose also in the Old Testament. This is asserted frequently, and most clearly, in the Psalms, "Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples." (Ps. 96:3). God expected and directed His Old Testament saints to share their hope in the coming Redeemer, as it was revealed more and more clearly in His Word, with the other nations in their

day. This is true, even though there was no record of any deliberate and continuing missionary activity in the Old Testament era.

The son and grandson of our first parents already started with the first public church-services so that others could come to faith and live. "And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD." (Gen. 4: 26). The family of Seth was the family of believers, and it was during the lifetime of his son Enosh that they began formally to proclaim the Name of the LORD. The Name of the LORD was now preached openly, the coming of the Messiah was openly declared.

We also get the evidence of some missionary activity in the seventh generation after Adam, while Adam was still living. And it is repeated twice "Enoch walked with God" (Gen 5: 21- 24). And this 'walking with God' is not to be thought of as a passive meditative existence, but as an activity of witnessing to others, as is mentioned in the New Testament: "Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly

deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” (Jude 14). It is crystal clear that the early believers preached the Word of God, His judgment over sin and His promise of salvation, in the world and to men who were forgetting God. Although they ignored God’s warnings, the Lord God and His faithful believers did not ignore them, but faithfully preached His Word up to the very time when the judgment of God befell and destroyed them in the great flood.

Another proof of this missionary activity, authorized and directed by the Lord God as His warning witness to the world, when unbelief and godless immorality overwhelmed the earth, is the history of Noah. The Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write of this hero of faith, “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.”

For 120 years Noah faithfully carried out his God-given mandate, witnessing in word and deed to a reprobate world, while God graciously delayed His judgement, and the ark was being built. In hindsight we know that his preaching of God’s law and gospel fell on deaf ears, and his faithful perseverance in his God-given assignment to build a great houseboat on dry land for an announced use over a hundred years later was met with jeers and taunts of derision. His example should shame us and spur us on when our zeal for God’s saving mission begins to

flag because of hindrances or a visible lack of more prompt results.

That Noah pursued an active missionary effort during the century of God’s longsuffering is amply demonstrated in Scripture. The Apostle Peter writes, that through the Spirit Christ also “went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared.” (1 Pet. 3: 20) and again, God “did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness.” (2 Pet. 2:5). Noah as a missionary in the Old Testament in the midst of an ungodly generation. The author of Hebrews writes, “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” (Heb. 11:7).

In this way God’s witness to the nations went on during the 350 years of Noah’s life after the Flood. But shortly after the days of Noah the Lord God again intervened with His judgment to stop the tide of mankind’s rebelling against His lordship and He demolished their arrogant project by confusing their language. The judgment of the Lord over Babel [Babylon] was also felt by the believers of

God “did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness.” (2 Pet. 2:5).

that day.

From that day onwards the families and races of mankind were scattered over the face of the earth and it became far more difficult to reach them with the preaching of God’s Word. From that day to the end of time God’s witnesses had and have to overcome the formidable barrier of the many languages and dialects. But the gracious God who had given His word of promise did not abandon mankind, though so many had turned their back to Him. In His love and compassion the LORD took care that the preaching of the gospel

continued in the Old and New Testament so that we can learn of the example of Noah the missionary in our days now the ungodliness is increasing and - as in the days of Noah - less people are willing to listen to the gospel and the hatred against the gospel becomes more obvious.

Rev. W. van der Jagt.

Armada Mission Board

CHAIRMAN'S MUSINGS

During the course of February, the family of Ryan and Ruth deJonge grew by one more child. We are very thankful for God for the blessing of the birth of James deJonge. All is well with Mother and child. Currently they have the birth certificate and passport for James, so as I write, they are waiting on the Visa so that they can return to PNG.

However, returning to PNG isn't that easy at the moment. Those following the news will no doubt have heard that Covid-19 is currently impacting PNG quite bad, so much so that Australia has limited travel between the two countries and domestic flying in PNG has been cancelled for a period of 4 weeks. Hence there is no set date yet for the deJonges to return. We leave this in Gods hand to provide an opening to allow their return.

The impact in PNG meant that the Board along with Ben & Merinda van de Kamp decided that Ben and Merinda should return a couple of weeks earlier to Australia than originally planned. Ben and Merinda are returning for the expected birth, the Lord willing, of their child. It was quite an ordeal to

leave PNG, with many hurdles to overcome (just like Ryan and Ruth, I am sure Ben and Merinda could write a short novel about the experience). As I write, they are currently in hotel quarantine in Brisbane, however with the outbreak in QLD, we are yet to work out when they will come to WA and under what conditions. Again, and peacefully, we leave this in Gods hands too.

So, the Mission team with the birth of James and the upcoming expectant birth of another child, will have grown by two, but there is 4 more also being added to the numbers. No, these are already born, so not four more babies, but a new Mission family! On the 1st of April 2021, Rev David Pol and his wife Erika and two children, officially join the team. They will commence a period of transition, Mission Prep and studying, whilst also packing up in Canada, saying goodbyes and getting ready to travel to PNG (via WA) the Lord willing in September/October. So far, the paperwork process is going well. We can't wait for them to join the team!

The observant reader, who is reading this article probably has worked out that whilst the Board is blessed to have three families that are devoted to the work in PNG, currently no family is on the field. Our thoughts and prayers go to the churches and church plants in PNG, so that the Lord can carry them during this time, especially with the Covid-19 situation also seemingly out of control.

We are thankful that even during this time, that Pastor

Henry Versteeg and his wife Rita, made it into PNG and once finished quarantine will assist Pastor Cor and Brother Mark at RCBC. What a blessing this is, as it has been quite a burden to only have two teachers at RCBC for some months now.

As a Mission board, we look forward to the meeting called the SCC meeting. This is a meeting where the Supporting and Co-operating churches get together to hear a summary of the work done, and approve the next years budgets and any proposals submitted. An extra point at the meeting is that it will be the last one that FRC Armadale will host, as this privilege goes to the sending church, of which on the 1st of July will be FRC Southern River. We look forward to a fruitful and blessed meeting.

Prayer points:

- Pray with thankfulness that Rev Pol can commence his study and the transition period to PNG.
- Pray for Ben and Merinda and family as they travel back to Western Australia and prepare for the upcoming birth.
- Pray that God will continue to give Pastor Ryan and Ruth a good break in Canada and prepare them for the return to PNG..
- Pray for the churches and our Brothers and Sisters in Christ in PNG so that God can surround them with an extra measure of care during the COVID outbreak.

Frank Janssen

Chairman Armadale Mission Board

Our thoughts and prayers go to the churches and church plants in PNG, that the Lord will carry them during this time...

HOW TO PLANT A CHURCH—IV

COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL

The third step in the Pauline cycle is “Communicating the Gospel.” The Biblical basis for this step is not difficult to establish. When the Lord Jesus Christ came, he came preaching the gospel (Mark 1:14-15). When he commissioned his disciples, he told them to go and proclaim the gospel (Matthew 29:19; Mark 16:15). When other concerns threatened to take away their focus from this task, the Apostles took steps to ensure that gospel proclamation would remain their primary focus (Acts 6:4). The Apostle Paul preached the gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere he went. He also exhorted his proteges Timothy and Titus to do the same. To Timothy he said, “Preach the word; be ready in

season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2). To Titus he said, “Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you” (Titus 3:15). The church is born through the preaching of the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23-25). Gospel communication is essential for church planting.

While this may seem so obvious as to be cliché, it is actually fraught with challenges for mission work. We must work very intentionally to ensure that other concerns do not crowd out the primary place of the preaching of the gospel. The concerns that threaten to do so are many: finances, education, interpersonal disputes, intercultural sensitivity,

government resistance, poverty relief, etc. For our work in PNG, any number of these are in play. Since there is so much poverty, especially in urban areas, it is tempting to give it primary focus. Because the illiteracy levels are so high, especially in the rural areas, it sometimes seems like we should invest more time and energy in literacy and education. These are of course important elements of mission work, as we don’t do mission work in a vacuum, but at the same time we must always remember that it is the gospel that is the power of God.

In his book *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, David Hesselgrave discusses four aspects of gospel communication. The first is contextualization, which basically means making adjustments in how you communicate the gospel in order to make it more understandable and impactful to the particular context that you are trying to reach. There is a kind of contextualization which gives more priority to cultural concerns of than the truths of Scripture, such that those truths end up being adjusted, minimized, or even outright rejected in order to make the message more palatable. We do not want to do that kind of contextualization. Proper contextualization holds firmly to *sola scriptura*.



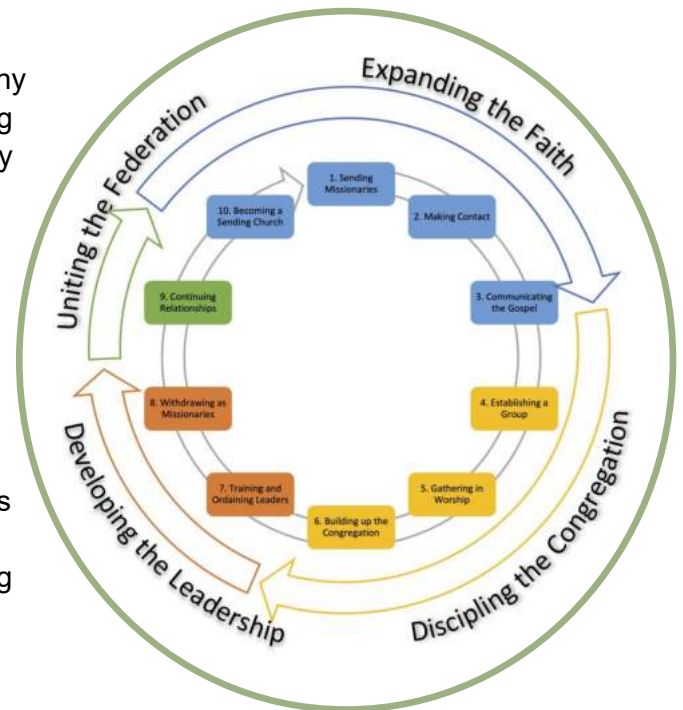
Hesselgrave notes that the Apostle Paul preached differently to Jews than he did to Greeks. With the Jews, he always argued from the Scriptures to prove the truth and relevance of the gospel. With the Greeks, who were not familiar with the Scriptures, Paul began with the nature and character of God and moved from there to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Different contexts call for a different approach to preaching the gospel that never changes.

In PNG, contextualization is also important. Because I am from a different culture, I have to try very hard to understand the cultural assumptions of the people I am preaching to so that I can most effectively preach the gospel to them. What makes this difficult in PNG is that nearly everyone confesses to be a Christian, but many have embraced false gospels. In this situation, we need to set the true gospel in opposition to the false one being embraced. Another challenge is with customs and beliefs that have a quasi-Christian character about them, that were perhaps even given the blessing of missionaries in the past, but that are contrary to the gospel. For example, in one

area there are many taboos surrounding a woman's monthly period, such that women are discouraged from attending church during this time. When preaching the gospel, it is necessary to deal sensitively with this belief, while at the same time showing that both the freedom and obligations that

come from the blood of Christ—freedom from unbiblical beliefs about blood and the obligation to gather for worship on the Lord's Day.

The second aspect of gospel communication discussed by Hesselgrave is the method. While we often think of gospel communication as something that happens publicly from the pulpit on Sunday, there are other important methods too, such as in the private setting of someone's house, teaching rather than preaching, engaging in a more polemic method such as a debate. In our work in PNG, we definitely utilize the method of public proclamation the most often, because preaching in public places like the bus stop or the market is seen as an acceptable and effective practice. While we believe strongly in the power of preaching, we do also look for and welcome opportunities to share the gospel in more intimate settings. Recently



we have had a number of opportunities to teach and share the gospel from house to house in the village of Hila in the Eastern Highlands. While we have not engaged in a lot of polemics, this is likely to become more important as we seek to engage areas like Kainantu in the Eastern Highlands, where the Seventh Day Adventists are very prominent and also very aggressive toward groups and messages that they see as a threat.

The third aspect of gospel communication is media selection. Again, while the spoken word is the medium we most often think about, other media can be used. For some years we have produced the Tulait magazine to complement and bolster our outreach efforts. This magazine seeks to deal with relevant topics of concern in the lives of many Papua New Guineans, while at the same time communicating

Lae, PNG

the gospel and showing the impact of the gospel on those issues. In many areas of PNG, people are preoccupied with *sanguma* a malicious form of witchcraft. The Tulait magazine that we wrote to confront this has been very well received and even used by others for teaching and resolving conflicts related to *sanguma*. Recently, we also started a podcast and have been promoting the podcast on Facebook for more engagement. Although we have only made a small beginning, we see great potential for sharing the gospel, engaging the culture, and providing helpful gospel-centred resources for church members and non-members alike.

The final aspect of gospel communication that Hesselgrave gives attention to is measuring the effect of gospel. I must admit that I find this topic uncomfortable. How do you measure the effect of the gospel? And even if you can measure, what conclusions are you to draw from it? Yet, as Hesselgrave notes, the New Testament records responses in terms of both quantity and quality. For example, Luke notes in Acts 2:41 that 3,000 souls were added to the church, and he mentions numbers on a number of other occasions too (4:4, 16:5). In his letter to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul notes the life-changing impact that the message had on the Thessalonians (1:4-10). We can also think of the instruction of the Lord Jesus to move on from places that are unwelcoming to the gospel (Luke 10:10-12). So,

it seems that measuring the effect of gospel communication is not out of the question. In fact, it is necessary from a practical perspective, since our time as missionaries and church planters is not unlimited. When we are planning our local outreaches and preaching tours, we tend to give priority to those places where the message has been well received before, and especially to those areas that we have established contacts. Sadly, as in the case of the Beregoro church plant, services were stopped when it became clear that the group that was not large enough or committed enough to make for a viable church plant. In all circumstances, however, we need to proceed with caution, with much prayer for direction from the Holy Spirit, and with the hope that God will bless the gospel proclamation with

receptive ears and hearts. In all circumstances, we know that God's Word does not return empty (Isa 55:11), and so even if we cannot measure it or we cannot see positive fruit, we can trust it is having an effect.

In a sense, all of the steps of the Pauline Cycle are about the communication of the gospel because it is the means by which the church is established and built up. In the next installment, we will look further at the effects of the gospel in forming a viable group.

Pastor Ryan DeJonge



R.C.B.C.

COLLEGE CORNER



2020 College Year...

The wet season continues to drag on; pretty much every afternoon we receive a good heavy downpour, which is appreciated as it cools everything down just nicely. The problem now is the ground really can't hold any more water so just the slightest rain, and puddles appear everywhere, and the resultant mud makes walking very, very slippery. Just recently I led a service in Beretete, which is about an hour and a bit drive from the college. The first half hour is on a sealed road the last $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour is on a mud track. Driving all the way in is now impossible and so you need to walk. We drove a short way in and then we parked our car and we started walking. For an hour and a half, we looked like novice ice skaters as we navigated the extremely slippery track. The only way to do it was to walk bare feet and realise that you were going to end up on your backside sooner or later.

After the service we spent an hour and a half getting back to the car. By the time we got there we

were bedraggled, wet, muddy and tired, but glad to see the vehicle in one piece. It was much more fun having the vehicle slip and slide all over the track, as we headed back to the sealed road.

The college year has started, and true to form we received an influx of students at the very last minute. This year we have eight new students, four males, and four females. So we have 14 students in the certificate program and four students in the diploma program. Slowly but surely our student numbers are increasing, year by year, and for that we are very thankful. What's nice this year is that six of the eight new students are members of the reformed churches of PNG. The two that aren't are our scholarship students from Lae City mission who applied for the student scholarship and were vetted by Pastor Issidore and Pastor Ryan.

So far everyone seems to be getting along just fine. You may think that this is a strange thing to say given that this is a Christian environment, however, do realise that our students are young Christians

and they come from varying cultures and inevitably there is a clash that occurs over some small matter.

To highlight that aspect of varying cultures, I've just finished teaching Christian Marriage and Family Life, and one of the topics we discussed was bride price and when a person is considered married. Essentially bride price is where the family of the groom gives money and food to the bride's family and then takes ownership of the female. The problem is defining when someone is married. For some marriage occurs when sex takes place, for others marriage occurs once the bride price has been paid, and still for others, marriage occurs when the first child is born. It's quite complicated and it is certainly entrenched within PNG culture, so much so, that they find it difficult to put into practice what Genesis 2:24 speaks about i.e. leave, cleave, one flesh. Sometimes I feel like I'm fighting a losing battle, however it's good to know that I can leave it in the Lord's hands, and, there are also stories of members of our churches who have deliberately pushed bride price to one side, at great personal cost.

RCBC FAMILY 2021.



We are very thankful that Pastor Henry Versteeg and his wife Rita have arrived in PNG. Currently they are residing in a hotel completing their two weeks of quarantine before they can be released and join us at the college. Certainly, we are looking forward to having visitors again for the first time for many months, and, more importantly having another lecturer to give us some relief. Both Henry and Rita are very well known here in PNG and so we don't need to do any induction. In fact, they could teach me a thing or two about PNG. :)

Please do include the needs of the Bible College on your prayer list, recognising that we are working with young Christians who need lots and lots of encouragement. Please pray that we may receive strength and energy to do our teaching and that the Visa for Pastor Hans Vaatstra may be issued soon.

**In Christ alone,
Mark Mulder.**



WET SEASON, MUD & MORE MUD.

Mundijong Mission

LITINDO



It has been a few months since Covid-19 infiltrated Sumba. The first case found in Sumba was in November 2020. Since then, the number of cases has increased and caused fear to people on this island. 19 people have been confirmed dead, 151 are still being treated and 456 people managed to survive this frightening virus. The local government in the East Sumba region in Waingapu issued a warning and restriction to all

businesses, schools and even churches activities. Schools were closed, business hours were restricted, and church worship services had to be done at home. This situation has brought uncertainty and anxiety to people, and to the LITINDO workers in Indonesia as well. There were plenty of activities that have had to be postponed due to the government restriction. Since the two seminars conducted in September and October 2020 (*Canons of Dort and Reformation Day Seminar*), no

seminars have been conducted again. The plan to conduct seminars to promote LITINDO's literature in several places in Sumba and Indonesia have had to be postponed, at least until all schools and seminaries are opened again in June 2021.

The resource centre in Waingapu remains open during the Covid-19 pandemic. A number of people pay a visit to buy books and ask for information. We may not have many visitors at the moment, but as time passes by, and the more people know this place, we expect to have more people visiting. The LITINDO workers are busy with the summarisation of the books in the bookshop. Work is also being done to format and distribute reformed Heidelberg Catechism sermons for evangelists in rural areas which is being done by the LITINDO workers Rev. Benjamin Rohy and br. Obed Umbu Pingge.

Though physical meetings and visits cannot be done, LITINDO Indonesia, at the moment of restriction, focuses to strengthen the partnership with organizations and publishers, and to start new networking with other organizations who can help us in the cause.

Another program that LITINDO is busy with is the translation of the Psalm Book into the Sumbanese language. The need of the churches in Sumba (17 churches) to have the



THE RESOURCE CENTRE REMAINS OPEN.

Psalm book in their own language has driven LITINDO to work together with two retired Ministers and a retired Evangelist to translate the Psalms into the Sumbanese language. The translation work started in November 2020 and will be finalized DV at the end of March. Hopefully, the Lord willing, the final draft will be sent to all the churches in Sumba for approval after LITINDO meets with the translators. The process of publishing the Sumbanese Psalm Book is now being discussed with the copyright owner in Jakarta, namely YAMUGER.

It is always our prayer in Sumba that the situation gets better, and may the Lord, our God, bless the world leaders, scientists, and paramedics for the vaccination that has already taken place, and their plan to produce more in the future. We are surely depending our hopes upon the providence and the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father. We pray, then we wait, and remain patient even in times of trouble.

Waingapu, March 2021

Ferdinand Paratu

LITINDO - Indonesia

PHOTO TOP LEFT:

Translators: Rev.Em.Agus Pindu Djawa,

Rev.Em.Pala Ranja Awang,

Ev.Em.Ndilu Mehang Paratu

West Timor

NEW HOPE (HARAPAN BARU)

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles". Isaiah 40:31



PONTIUS PILATE AND COVID 19

These days the topic of conversation always includes Covid you simply cannot avoid it, everyone has been affected. Cases continue to go up in a very steady pace along with a growing sense of mistrust. Too many incidences have happened where a patient was hospitalized for long known health concerns and yet the death certificate states Covid. As a result people avoid going to the hospital.

New Hope resident, Bertus* has been sick since the beginning of this year. He was very reluctant to tell nurse Esther about his complaints for it concerned his private parts. His condition became so painful that it affected his daily activities. His family was contacted and informed about Bertus health concerns, we asked permission to bring him to a specialist but the family said no. The following day his uncle

came to bring him back to the village and ask a 'prayerman' for help. Nurse Esther tried to persuade them to please have Bertus see a specialist so that he can be diagnosed and receive the appropriate treatment. Uncle would have none of it, saying that he is afraid Bertus would be diagnosed with Covid instead and with that the family would be denied all contact with the patient. Every week the New Hope staff contacts the family to check on Bertus condition and give him support and encouragement. Unfortunately, his condition has not improved at all, yet his uncle insists that he stay in the village. Please pray for Bertus and his family.



The pandemic's effect on the economy is much more concerning to the people than the threat of contracting a virus. In a desperate situation people do desperate things, over the past month there have been numerous break ins in our area, something unheard of before Covid. In February a group of five men were caught by the police, they had stolen 11 motorbikes in and around Kupang. Economic pressure was stated to be their motive.

Last week Ary, a young man from Rote island came to our door asking for a job, "I will do anything". We were shocked to see the desperation in his eyes, and greatly saddened by his story:

"Until last June I had a good job at the local mall where I worked as a security guard. Every month I was able to



sent money home to my widowed mother in Rote to help provide for my younger brothers and sisters. I have not yet told them that I have been laid off, I continue to sent money and as a result have not been able to pay my rent. The landlord has given me a one week notice to make the payments or otherwise I have to be out. I don't know what to do anymore, please help me."

Unfortunately Ary is not the only one, how does one respond to such worries and concerns?

What do you say to someone that has lost a loved one due to the virus or to someone whose loved one got buried according to Covid Protocol which means they never paid their respect even though later it turns out the patient didn't have Covid after all?

How does one motivate students of grades 6, 9 and 12 currently studying for exams? Many students don't see the use of it, they have not been in school for a year and they future looks less then promising.

So the big question is – how do you as leaders help others? This has been the question on our minds! What is the solution to give in this time of trouble. My husband always reminds me and others to keep focused on the word of God. The more you study the Bible, the more

you have peace in your mind. God's word is always the solution. We can remember of what Psalmist says:

"Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble."
(Psalm 119:165)

Last week, my husband preached from Lord's day 15 – he asked to pay special attention to the role of Pontius Pilate. Why is Pontius Pilate's name mentioned in the apostles creed? What does he have to do with our faith, that we need to mention his name every Sunday? The Bible points out that Pontius Pilate was used by God to bring about His great purpose. To the disciples at that time, Pontius Pilate was a cruel person for he did not deliver their leader; he had Him crucified! Yet, God knew what He was doing, using Pilate to bring about salvation for us.

Lesson learned:

- ◆ Don't jump to conclusions based on what we see now
- ◆ God has a plan for our good purpose, He does not make any mistakes

But then, how do we put into practice? Back to the question –

How do we help each other in this time of trouble?

We know that Satan wants us to be away from God's Word, therefore, we need to take a different direction.



Focus on God's Word. How do we do this in practice? In our church here in Timor, we have more 'cell group bible studies'.

Each cell group consists of 7-10 people and meet weekly to have a Bible study. The response so far has been amazing, people appreciate this closed group where we get to know each other better and where we are able to share our struggles and at the same time encourage and pray for one another.

This is a new venture for our congregation, one we would have probably not thought of had it not been for Covid! The Lord is good indeed.

At a recent church meeting it was brought up how the children have a lot of extra time on hand since the school load has been reduced so much. This is a tough situation for parents who spent most of their day in the rice fields and gardens working leaving the children unsupervised at home supposedly doing their school work. As human nature has it, the children often study the screen more than the books!

The solution was to have the children focus more on Bible and

Catechism memory work. The parents are very happy with this approach.

As we near the celebration of Christ's resurrection may we all be comforted that our Heavenly Father is in charge and we are in His Hand.

Till next time,

**Femmy
Bouwman.**

Birthday Corner

April

Calvin VanderWal
18/04/2013

May

Rev. Ryan DeJonge
10/05/19??

Mrs. Ruth DeJonge
24/05/19??

June

Rev. Cornelis Kleijn
09/06/1981

Matthew DeJonge
18/06/2008

Isaac VanderWal
25/06/2011





Rockingham/Baldivis Mission

INDONESIAN MISSION COMMITTEE

Serving the consistories and congregations of the Free Reformed Church of Rockingham and Baldivis
PO Box 531 Rockingham, Western Australia 6168

Trip to Bali & Java

Dear readers

It has taken me quite some time to finally pen an article regarding a mission trip made early last year to Bali and Java. One reason for my tardiness was the perceived lack of positive or measurable outcomes of this visit, together with the fact, that much has been happening in the other mission posts recently in Sumba, which quite rightly has taken precedence on the pages of this magazine. But given that you are now pretty-well up to date on happenings in Sumba, and there is ample space left to fill on these pages, there are no excuses

left. We also feel it might be beneficial to the readers, to also relate the seemingly mundane, and not so particularly memorable visits made. Not every visit culminates in 2 caped mission crusaders finding success and risking life and limb at every turn! The visit made by Grant Bosveld & yours truly definitely doesn't fall within this category.

Our mandate for this particular mission trip was to visit the mission post in Bali on Tuesday 11th Feb 2020, and then to fly to Malang in Java the next morning to spend a few days visiting the mission posts in Malang & Dampit, before traveling 6 hours by train to the city of Solo (Surakarta), where we were to meet with a group of Christians

who have recently requested membership to the GGRI Indonesia. Our trip was to coincide with a delegation from GGRI Kataka who have oversight of the mission posts we were to visit and were

seeking additional support in making a decision regarding the group in Solo. Our plan was to meet with them in Bali and then travel together with them to Malang the following morning. Of course, things didn't go exactly (or even remotely) to plan. To begin with our flight from Perth was delayed for a few hours which meant that we arrived in Bali close to 2pm instead of the 11.30am scheduled. On arriving we immediately sought to contact Rev Balla & Rev Anton from GGRI Kataka but were unable to do so. After checking into our Hotel & sourcing a couple of rental motorbikes, we made our way to the home of Rev Yan in Denpasar. We arrived to learn that the delegation from Kataka had only just left, deciding to take the afternoon bus instead of flying, and endure a marathon overnight trip across Bali, and then across the Java Strait by ferry, before arriving in Malang around 2pm the following day. We heard later that this decision was made to save on costs, but secretly I think at least one of the brothers has a real aversion to flying. The fact that he was violently "bus-sick" for most of the journey will maybe help cure his fear of aeroplane travel in the future. It was a pity that we missed them as we would have liked to have them present when discussing the mission post in Bali, with rev Jan Praliaminya and a few of the leadership group.



Catching up in Bali with Rev Yan & Novianus

We did end up having a fruitful discussion and got a good report of the work being done. Things were looking incredibly positive for this post at this time. We were surprised to see our former evangelist (Novianus), who had spent a year working in Bali, and happened to be visiting. It was great to catch up with him again. He was preparing to further his theological studies in Timor at Stakri.

After talking late into the afternoon, we bade our farewells and returned to our hotel. Our flight to Malang was scheduled to leave at 1.30pm the next day which gave us a relaxing morning to take in the buzz that was pre-Covid Bali. We arrived at the airport well on time, prepared to check in our baggage, only to be told that our flight on Lion (lying) Air was cancelled and we would need to go to ticket office to re-book. That all sounded very well until we found out that our cancelled flight was the last one to Malang for that day by any airline. What to do? A perfect opportunity to spend more time with Rev Yan and meet some of the congregation, but alas no,

all calls to rev Yan's phone went unanswered. Nothing for it but to play tourist for the rest of the day.

You have got to admit being stuck in Bali with a couple of motorbikes is not the hardest thing in the world to take! This is also the reason I take singlets and board shorts on mission trips because you just never know We made the most of it and had a great ride up the coast until we were forced to shelter in a great little beachside café for a couple of hours during a tropical downpour. The next morning, we were determined to get to the airport well before the required time just in case a similar event occurred. "No problem, your flight is on schedule" we were told. Ok then, plenty of time for an early lunch at one of the prevalent cafes. Almost all of the waiting room seats were taken up by passengers for other flights anyway. It's funny how the subconscious hearing works! I had just started tucking into my food when I was sure I heard the word Malang over the tinny

loudspeaker.

Can't be us I thought, our flight isn't supposed to board for another 45 minutes. But then a little later, a more urgent "last call for Malang on Lying (sorry Lion) air", and we were suddenly in a mad dash to the gate. We only just made it before they closed the flight! So herein lies the lesson dear reader. When travelling internally within Indonesia, sit in the designated waiting area no matter how early you are! Probably safer to sleep overnight just to be sure.

We arrived in Malang just 10 minutes after we left. This is possible in Indonesia (and some other countries) due to the anomalies of differing time zones. Once safely deplaned, we found a taxi to take us to Rev Yanto's residence some 20 minutes from the airport. We were warmly welcomed by a rather impatient party of delegates, who were more than keen to get on the road immediately, to travel to Dampit, a couple of hours away. They had arrived the previous day and had been debating whether to leave for Dampit without us. We did understand their frustration, but willingness alone doesn't make a plane fly faster or more frequently. Thankfully, sanity prevailed, and we were at least afforded the luxury of a quick coffee, lunch having been largely left uneaten at Bali airport, before cramming 7 adults into a smallish van for the not too comfortable journey up to the mountain.

Also accompanying us was Evangelist Endrow who had previously spent a year working in the Bali mission post together



Dampit - from left: Rev. Anton, Sukram family, Rev. Balla, Aus mission delegates, Rev. Yanto, Ev. Endrow

Exciting View from car on tollway

with Novianus, and had recently been appointed by Kataka to work with the group of believers in Solo. On arrival in Dampit at around 4pm we were met by the Sukram family. They were still receiving regular visits from rev Yanto in the absence of Evangelist Melki who had returned to Sumba, but Rev Yanto had not been able to travel and hold a worship service with them the previous Sunday. No problem, in typical Indonesian style, and impromptu service/devotion was arranged, and this family received their weekly supplement of Gospel preaching. We enjoyed an eagerly anticipated meal together, and discussions ensued until around 8pm, when back into the van we crammed to arrive back in Malang at 11pm & in bed by midnight. After such a rushed day we were looking forward to a decent rest. Not so!

Wet season nights in Malang are stifling hot and mosquitos are abundant. Fortunately, we were expected to rise at 5.30 am the next morning so we didn't lose too much time not sleeping! Both Grant & I were looking forward to the 6hour leisurely train trip to the former capital of Java (Surakarta) which is commonly called Solo by the natives. For weeks I had been anticipating this trip by slow train through the countryside, engaging with the locals and enjoying real Indonesian culture. But here again our plans were dashed. No-one had the foresight to pre-purchase the train tickets and booking at the last minute attracted a sizeable surcharge. "No problem we will



pay the difference" I volunteered. But no, it was deemed to be more prudent to hire a car and driver. So, Rev's Yanto, Balla and Anton, Endrow, Grant, myself and the driver crammed in for the most boring 5-hour trip down a concrete tollway, with nothing much to see for hundreds of km's, but the 1m high concrete barriers on either side of the road. The road itself is a huge feat of engineering, made entirely of concrete, and can be clearly seen from 16,000 feet in the air, traversing Java from the southern tip to the capital Jakarta in the north.

We finally arrived at the home of A Chinese-Indonesian family and were warmly welcomed. Our lodging consisted of a large room in which were jammed 5 beds along with various cupboards full of clothes. The smell of moth balls was all pervasive and pungent.

Dear readers, as I am writing this, something important and relevant to our mission work in Sumba has cropped up, that will appropriately fill the remainder of the space available in this issue. I will continue with the report of our trip to Java in the next issue, where we will encounter 2-am marches, the most amazing monument to futility, a somewhat Evangelical worship service, and the world's largest chook!Stay tuned.

REPORT BY REV BALLA
RIHI, KATAKA
MISSIONARY MINISTER

Here now is a report from Rev Balla on the work he is doing in the mission posts in Sumba. Rev Balla has been given the role of missionary minister, and his task is to initiate contacts in new villages, to ascertain whether they will be receptive to the gospel. He will then begin working to establish a mission post, which once well established, will be passed on to another evangelist to continue the work. I have edited this slightly for readability (EdH)

Report from Kataka Missionary minister. Rev Balla Rihi.

At this time, I would also like to give a report to the mission committee Australia. This report is the same I gave to the consistory at our meeting held at Tana Banas on 2nd February 2021. At this meeting it was said that perhaps God has given me talents which are different from some of the other servants of the Lord. God has been busy using me as an instrument to share the gospel with others but especially among the unbelievers or the Marapu. With the talents received I do not want to boast but want to remain a humble servant of the Lord and serve the Lord together with His

other servants. The plan is to use my talents to go ahead and prepare a new mission field, and once it has been operating for several months or year/s, the new post could then be served by another evangelist, which will then give me opportunity to look for another new mission field and start bringing the gospel from place to place. It cannot be denied that many want to hear the gospel, the harvest is ready but the need for more labours is also high.

I am very thankful to God and like to express thanks to consistory Kataka and the mission committee who continues to encourage me in this calling. Since I have been appointed as full-time missionary for Kataka I have already made many contacts at different places sharing the gospel with the unbelievers, this has taken me over many very rough and difficult roads, also hard on the motorbike.

At the end of 2020 I made a number of mission visits to a place in the direction of Laindeha. At the beginning of 2021 I returned to this village to visit with a few people I had spoken with on the last trip to pray with them and continue to share the gospel with them. As a servant of the Lord, we need good intentions and a love for the people otherwise it is better not to serve as evangelist. Being a missionary minister comes with many challenges and hardships, challenges from the unbelievers we meet, challenges in cost of living,

challenges with rough and broken roads even needing to walk to many places, just as some examples. I thank and praise God for the strength he gives me to meet these challenges. I also thank God for the good response from the people, I have not faced serious opposition, in fact the people I have come to share the gospel with are happy to share their food and drinks with me, this shows that they are not opposed to the gospel, but their hearts are being prepared to become children of God's Kingdom

It is true that the results of the visits made are not so far that they are ready and prepared to believe and receive Jesus as their Saviour, I therefore continue to pray for those people that God will work in their hearts so that they can come to faith.

I also hope that the work of mission is a sincere desire on the hearts of the consistory of Kataka and on the hearts of our brothers and sisters in Australia, so that the work of mission in Sumba and all of Indonesia will

Local girl in new church building at Maubokul which is served by Rev Balla



be blessed by God so that many more souls may be added to the church.

Once again, I plead for the prayers of the mission committee that our goals are in line with Matthew 28, going out and making disciples for the Lord.

Regarding the results of the work mission, I have been doing at Kawangu (Place where Rev Balla is building his house) and the good contact with families there, it has become clear that God is also using this event to spread the gospel. The consistory of Kataka



Rev Balla's new house nearing completion

Worship service in the home of Rev Kawangu



Rev Balla Preaching at home in Kawangu

hopes to start a mission post in this village and use the house of Rev Balla has a place for church services for the time being.

This is again proof / encouragement that God is using the consistory of Kataka to expand God's Kingdom here on earth.

The people in Kawangu in the past were members of the GKS (Gereja Kristen Sumba) but already for a long time have not gone to church. When I started to visit them and speak about the gospel inviting them to worship together, I can only thank God I did not meet resistance but a willingness to come along and join the post at Kawangu under the care of Kataka consistory.

There for now I, Rev Balla will also take care of this post at Kawangu. Church service at 7-30am then I will leave at 9am for Maubokul with church service held at 10am.

The post at Laindeha will have a church service in the afternoon at 4pm. In all 3 places services will be led by myself.

The consistory of Kataka requests the prayers of the mission committee in Australia and your encouragement in this work and your continued financial support so that this work of the Lord in mission can continue unhindered and that through this the name of the Lord may be praised.

So far, the report of the missionary minister Rev Balla Rihi, so that the mission committee of Australia can continue to be informed what is happening on the mission field, and this can then continue to be a focus of your prayers. May God also open the way to answer the desires of our prayers to fill the needs we have, especially the need for church buildings in several the mission fields.

We also continue to pray for and hope that the plague of the Corona Virus will come to an end, so that life can go back to what was normal and that we can hold our regular church services together with the congregation.

We also express our thanks to God that until now none of the members of the GGRI have died from the Corona Virus.

We can only but thank the Lord for His care and protection and continue to pray that God will

continue to watch over and protect His Church also in Australia from Covid-19.

Best regards

Rev Balla Rihi.

Please keep the work of Rev Balla and all Ministers/Evangelists in your prayers. The work continues albeit with added difficulty given the prevalence of Covid-19 in Indonesia, particularly in Bali & Java. If you have direct contact with our brothers and sisters in Indonesia, please contact them and let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers. May God continue to bless the ongoing work for the coming of His Kingdom and to His glory and honour.

Till next time

On behalf of Mission Indonesia

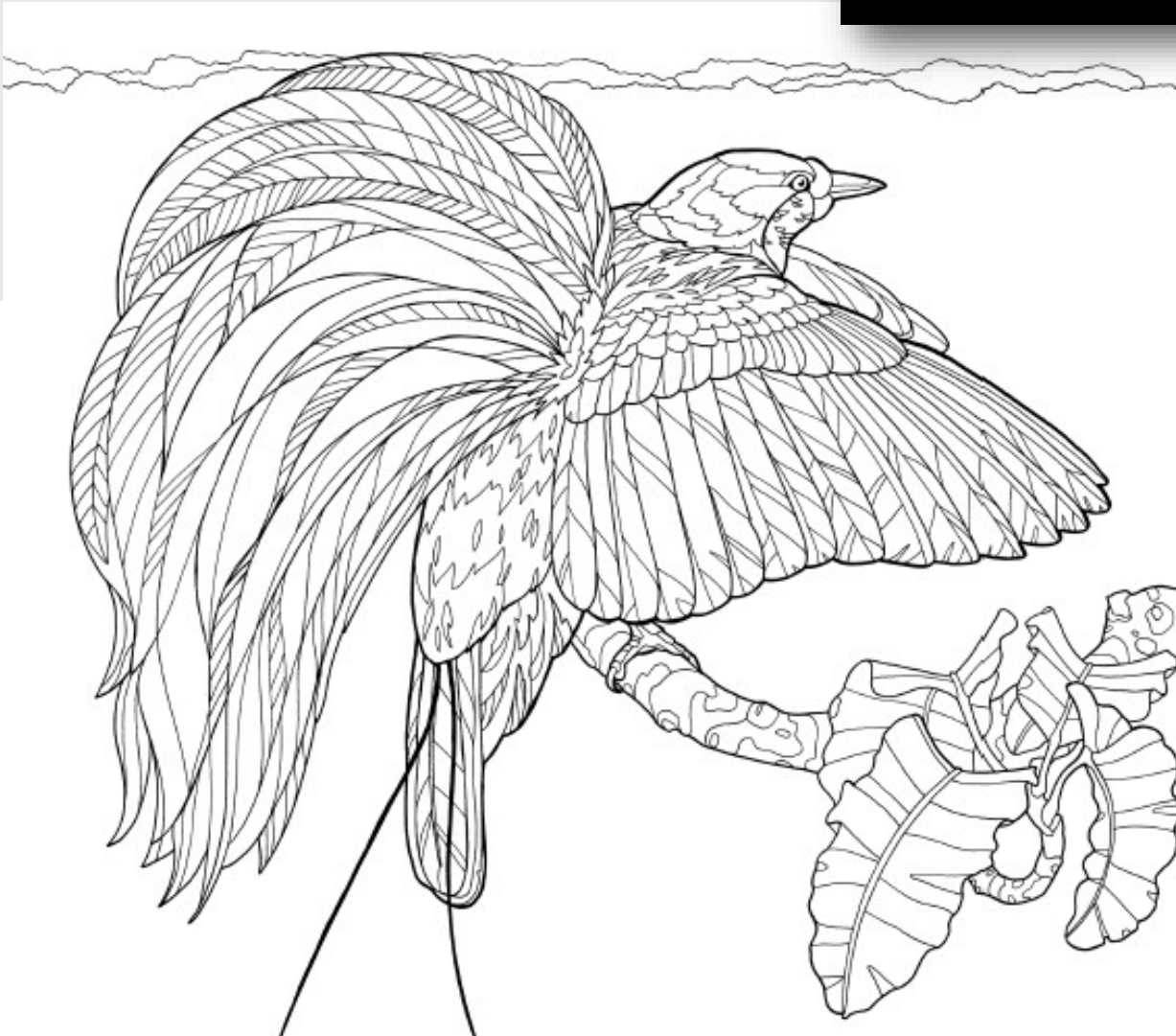
Eric de Haan.

Kids Page - MUD FIGHTS?

Have you ever covered yourself with mud before? Maybe you have had a mud fight with your brother or sister, or maybe you snuck up on Dad ready to strike with a ball of mud.

On the 26th of February, some missionaries in Papua New Guinea saw people covering themselves in mud. But they were not having a fun mud fight with their families. They were covering themselves in mud to show that they were sad, sad because the Prime Minister, Michael Somare, had passed away after a fight with cancer at the age of 84. He was an important Prime Minister for the people in PNG because he led them to independence from Australia.

This meant that they could take down the Australian flag and fly their own flag. They could also make decisions and laws by themselves. This means that our Churches and missionaries there need to obey the laws set by PNG, not the laws we have in Australia.



The new flag of Papua New Guinea has the beautiful bird of paradise on it. Can you add colour to this beautiful bird?

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