



Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Summer 2025 Newsletter

PNGCP is the UK-based mission agency dedicated to raising awareness of, and support for, the Anglican Church in PNG

EASTER BLESSING

Since Easter, the Modawa Institute of Higher Education in Popondetta, comprising Newton Theological College and the new David Hand School of Teaching, is now an accredited higher education provider under PNG's National Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST).

The registration is the culmination of several years of work by the Principal, Bishop Jeffrey Driver, and the Modawa Team. It involved preparation and submission of a detailed proposal to DHERST addressing national standards similar to higher education requirements in countries like Australia and New Zealand. An intensive audit followed in November last year with the consequent report and development recommendations resulting in the granting of registration.



Some of the staff and B.Ed students of the Modawa Institute of Higher Education in the Newton College Chapel



New Head of School of Education, Jean Ifuda

Jean Ifuda has been appointed Head of the David Hand School of Teaching from August. With an Oro Province background, in recent years Jean has worked in Port Moresby whilst, as previously featured in PNGCP newsletters, also establishing a highly successful Early Learning Centre in her home area near Tufi. She holds a Master's Degree from Newcastle University, Australia; has PNG teaching qualifications, and has very significant experience in institutional leadership.

Dick Kolai, previously a teacher at Newton College, has joined the Modawa Team from Aipo Rongo, where he was Diocesan Secretary. In his new appointment, he will combine some teaching with general campus administration. Fr Gabriel Menae continues as Deputy Principal at Newton College whilst Principal-designate, Fr Giles Motisi, undertakes further studies in Australia.

Prefabricated buildings have arrived for new boarding facilities for female students comprising

two accommodation cottages and an amenities block. The buildings will be constructed by the Institute's team of carpenters over the coming months and should be ready for the start of 2026.

The Modawa Institute is entering an agreement with the Northern Provincial Government to contribute to Police Reserve Training, providing boarding facilities and lecture rooms for the training programme when they are not in the Institute's term-time use. This will provide additional income for the Institute as well as benefitting the Province.

Under the leadership of ACPNG's Health Director, Mrs Estelle Jogoba LM, a working group has been assembled with the goal of introducing a Diploma of Nursing Programme for the Modawa Institute by 2027. Negotiations are also ongoing to draw in and co-locate the nearby St Margaret's Community Health Worker Training School at the same time as the establishment of the proposed School of Nursing.

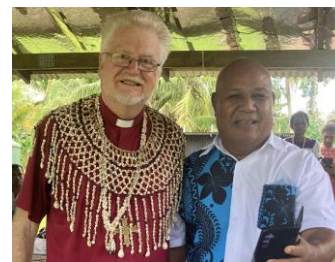


School carpenters building new female accommodation



New Modawa Institute sign

Real appreciation is due to Bishop Jeffrey for the development and establishment of the Modawa Institute. Shortly after retiring as Archbishop of Adelaide, he was invited by the House of Bishops to visit Newton College and assess its viability. Then, the college was struggling: effectively bankrupt with staff unpaid; buildings in disrepair; the teaching programme languishing and the Principal seriously ill. For the bishop, supported by his wife, Lindy, a week's visit became an eight-year commitment spending half of each term at the college teaching, reorganising, planning and building. He stepped down as Principal in June after a farewell service and feast. Among the many speeches and gifts, the Oro Province Education Adviser presented him with an elaborate shell necklace, a symbol of esteem in Melanesian culture and said, "Bishop Jeffrey came to the Province as a gift of God. We had tried for ten years to get a teachers' college going and we failed. But then you came to us and now we have our teacher's college". Happily, Bishop Jeffrey will continue to visit over the next two years as a mentor and adviser to the development of the Institute.



Bishop Jeffrey with Oro Province Education Adviser

ANGLICAN LEADER'S VISIT

The Secretary General of the worldwide Anglican Communion, Bishop Anthony Poggo, has paid a first visit to ACPNG as part of an Oceania tour that also included the Solomons, New Zealand and Australia.

In Lae, Bishop Anthony spent time with the ACPNG bishops and planted commemorative trees to further promote the Communion Forest initiative within PNG. He also visited the Anglican Health Service office to learn about the essential services the church provides in many of the communities they serve, mostly clinics are in rural areas where medical assistance is otherwise difficult to access.

He was particularly pleased to see one of ACPNG's Adult Literacy Projects. Started over 25 years ago in Aipo Rongo Diocese and initially aimed at women wishing to become literate, the programme is now Church-wide and open to adults 15+, educating them in English, maths, social inclusion and religious education, with the goal of enabling students to read and write within nine months. He later commented, "I admired the adult literacy initiatives carried out by the church. This is a personal encouragement to me coming from South Sudan where literacy levels are very low."

On his final Sunday, Bishop Anthony gave the sermon at a service at All Souls, Lae, helping confirm several of the parish's young people who also led the prayers. Acting Archbishop Nathan Ingen expressed ACPNG's deep appreciation for the visit, commenting, "As Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, you carry the important responsibility of fostering unity and strengthening the mission of the Church worldwide. We are grateful for your leadership and your commitment to the growth of the Anglican family across all nations."



Welcome for Bishop Anthony at All Souls, Lae



Bishop Anthony with two of the Adult Literacy tutors

Later, reflecting on the trip, Bishop Anthony said: "I have greatly enjoyed and appreciated my time in Papua New Guinea. It has been particularly valuable for me to visit churches, meet with the leadership network here and to learn more about the community-based, philanthropic initiatives that are happening here regarding education and health. I thank God for the vibrant spirituality I have witnessed in the people I have met in Papua New Guinea and pray that my visit has inspired them as it has me."

POPONDETTA REFLECTIONS

Ella Sibley, USPG's Regional Manager for Europe & Oceania, recently visited PNG for the first time. She writes:

"I visited Popondetta Diocese, in company with Br Christopher John, Minister General of the Society of St Francis. Hosted by the SSF Brothers at Hetune Friary in its beautiful grounds, we were fortunate to be there at the same time as a gathering of the diocese's third order Franciscans. They had their own programme, visiting local parishes in a large truck, often returning late, singing hymns in the gathering dusk. Some had walked three days to attend this gathering, in order to be affirmed and refreshed in their faith.

I had planned to spend a week in PNG, but this was sadly cut short by Cyclone Alfred, which struck Queensland and significantly delayed our flight out. This meant we had to squeeze our programme into just four days! One highlight was the visit to the Modawa Institute. Br Christopher has been involved in the library there and so it was our first stop. The smell of wet paint lingered around the entrance where, just days before, a new wheelchair-accessible ramp had been installed – just one of the many improvements being made in line with government recommendations, setting the Institute on firm footing. Inside, we surprised five theology students who were studying John's Gospel and various commentaries, in preparation for an essay in their "Introduction to Biblical Studies" module. Stacked by the reception desk were piles of brand-new children's books, with their bright colours and shiny pages, all waiting to be catalogued and placed onto the shelves for the new students in the David Hand School of Teaching. Elsewhere on campus, we met Charles Soso, an education lecturer, who spoke of the excitement of the new School and the challenges of starting a new course, recruiting staff, and welcoming students with varying levels of previous education.

Another wonderful afternoon was our visit to the Clergy Wives Ministry. I was accompanied by Thelma Guni, from the Anglican National Office, who had brought with her a dozen mobile 'phones as a gift, to enable communication between the clergy wives, who live far apart. Mother Mary, the President, described their ministry – the sewing of vestments, selling communion wafers, prayer books and lectionaries, and how some of the proceeds support retired clergy and their wives, who may have no other form of income. They sang hymns, we prayed together and shared food. Groups such as the Clergy Wives Ministry and the Mothers' Union are important spaces for women to support one another in faith and exercise their ministry.

I am deeply grateful to Br Christopher for accompanying me on this visit, as it's not easy for young women to travel alone in PNG. I had a wonderful time, though it was much too short! "



Electricity-pole view of part of the SSF Friary compound at Hetune



Ella with Thelma, Mother Mary and some of the clergy wives

PNGCP SUPPORTERS DAY – Saturday 15th November 2025

Where? Anglican Communion Office, St Andrews House, 16 Tavistock Crescent, London W11 1AP - two minutes walk from Westbourne Park tube station on the Hammersmith & City line.

Programme? Tea and coffee from 10.30am. 11am welcome and introductions, with Communion Service at midday, followed by a simple provided lunch. The afternoon includes opportunities to meet and hear contributions from two ACPNG diocesan leaders, Bishop Reginald Makele from New Guinea Islands and Bishop John Dubabagi from Dogura, and to receive feedback from the most recent Overseas Partners Meeting in PNG. 4pm finish.

What now? Diary the date and, to help with catering, let Janet Wells know if you are coming on 0207 7582 9905 or wellsjanet2@gmail.com please. We look forward to seeing you there!



+Lindsley Ihove with young people at St James, Hohorita



+Reg Makele with other NGI Church education leaders



NGI Mothers' Union annual conference in Kimbe

PNG, ACPNG & PNGCP NEWS

Congratulations to:

- the Anglican Church of Melanesia, ACPNG's sister-Province and near neighbour, which marked the 50th Anniversary of its independence from the Province of New Zealand, Aotearoa & Polynesia with a week of celebrations in June.
- the Melanesian Brotherhood, founded in The Solomons in 1925, which continues to be a living testament to the vision of the founder, Ini Kopuria, inspiring generations through prayer, service, and community outreach.
- the Australian Board of Mission, ACPNG's largest overseas partner agency, which will be celebrating 175 years of missionary support to the wider Anglican Communion in October.
- and PNG, where preparations are afoot for the nation's 50th Independence Anniversary on 16 September.
- After this year's Martyrs' Day celebration, the ACPNG leadership will meet with their visiting external partners from the UK and New Zealand, whilst those on pilgrimage from Norwich (UK) and Waiapu (New Zealand), led by their diocesan bishops, will variously visit the ACPNG dioceses of New Guinea Islands, Popondota, Dogura and Aipo Rongo.
- In November, Bishops Reg Makele of New Guinea Islands and John Dubabagi of Dogura will take part in the annual course for new bishops at Canterbury before embarking on a local visits programme and Supporters' Day involvement.
- In May, Bishop Jonathan Meyrick and John Rea stepped down, by rotation, as PNGCP Trustees. William Spooner and Bishop Peter Ramsden became PNGCP Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. They, together with Janet Wells, Jan Nicholson and Simon Courage continue as Trustees, with Kola Akinola newly elected a Trustee.
- Bishop Andrew Hedge from the Waiapu Diocese in New Zealand was a welcome guest at the May meeting of the PNGCP Committee. At the August Meeting, Dr Glen Mola, Professor of Maternal Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of PNG, gave a first-hand briefing on the PNG AIDS crisis and the challenges facing Port Moresby's General Hospital and PNG's medical services.
- Sad news of the death of Howard Moody (81), a long-time ACPNG supporter in Scotland. Past PNGCP Chairman, Nigel Stock, writes: 'Having finished schooling, Howard and I flew out to Port Moresby together in September 1966 as VSO Cadets. We were both deployed as teachers at St Paul's Primary School at Dogura, then the Head Anglican Mission Station in the Diocese of New Guinea in the Anglican Province of Brisbane. Philip Nigel Warrington Strong was its bishop. In early 1967, Howard moved to teach in the mission school at Eroro where Father Jeremy Ashton was priest.'
- PNGCP recently launched a small grants scheme to encourage local initiative and development in ACPNG's communities, institutions and services.

STOP PRESS: With an 83% increase in known infections in 2024, PNG health authorities have just declared a national HIV crisis, with concerns the surge in cases will put further pressure on the nation's struggling health system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Grateful thanks for help in compiling this Newsletter to: Bishop Jeffrey Driver; Janet Miles (ACO); Nigel Stock; Bishop Reg Makele; Dr Glen Mola; Emma Sibley (USPG); Bishop Lindsley Ihove; Katie Drew (MM(UK)); Chris Luxton; Kola Akinola; Bishop Peter and Sue Ramsden; and Jasper Rea. As always, any Newsletter comments or concerns to John Rea johnhellarea@yahoo.co.uk



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