Papua New Guinea Church Partnership
Summer 2026 Newsletter

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

SMALL GRANTS SUCCESS

Launched just last year, the PNGCP Small Grants Scheme is proving a much-appreciated and well-used success. Intended to empower grassroots initiative and build local capacity, 31 applications for the maximum £1,000 grant were received in the most recent round, with agreed requests totalling £13,500. Successful applications reflected two main themes: building repairs, plant and equipment; and a wide range of income-generation projects, including pigs, chickens, petrol resale, sewing-machines, trade-school activity, etc.. A number focussed on youth activities. Future applications will be considered and awards made twice yearly.



Christ the King Chapel Sefoa purchased prayer & hymn-books and material to make surplices and vestments in time for Easter

PNGCP Chairman William Spooner recently wrote, "I went to the Clergy Wives' office in Popondetta this morning. They have made good use of their 5,000 kina grant, purchasing three sewing machines and materials to produce clergy garments. Around 30 clergy wives are involved in the work and they gather for sewing, fellowship and food together. The garments provide a modest income stream to fund the Clergy Wives' ministry, e.g., travel to make hospital visits, burials for clergy, wives and children should they die in service, and to sew their own clothes and for their children, and gifts for clergy and mothers upon retirement."





Fr Nicholas Kaam being briefed in Mt Hagen on the new generator destined for St Alban's Kwima…



where, after MAF flight and overland portage, the generator was welcomed and blessed…



…before powering an inaugural community celebration with youth music

CHURCHES PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME (CPP)

This is a long-term funding programme by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade linking the seven main PNG Churches (Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, United, Salvation Army, Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist) with their Australian Church NGO counterparts to implement health, education, gender equality and community development in remote areas whilst strengthening the overall governance and operation of these PNG Churches. In this programme, ACPNG is partnered with ABM Australia.

These PNG Church Leaders, together with their Australian partners, recently came together in Port Moresby to meet with the Australian High Commissioner to jointly commit to a further phase of this focused development programme.



PNG & Australian Church leaders at CPP meeting

HIGHLANDS COMPENSATION

Regular readers will recall the terrible road accident in a hired vehicle in 2024 which killed Juliet, wife of Diocesan Secretary Dick Kolai, severely injured Jesicah, wife of Acting Archbishop Nathan Ingen and left several other passengers, including teenage clergy children, with minor injuries. Reflecting Melanesian custom, the Anglican Church in Aipo Rongo Diocese has subsequently ensured those directly affected received compensation including 120,000 Kina and 26 pigs. The Diocese's Anglican Health Service recently organised a thanksgiving week-end, including a feast to appreciate those who had contributed in cash or in kind to the compensation programme.



Food donated for the celebration feast



Mother Jesicah Ingen helps distribute the food

ACPNG AT BELFAST CONSULTATION

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) held its latest three-yearly meeting hosted by the Church of Ireland in Belfast in late June. It is the only formal Instrument of the worldwide Anglican Communion that gathers bishops, clergy, and laity, ensuring a synodical principle at the international level. An explicitly consultative body, ACC's authority is moral and relational, providing a crucial forum for the "whole church" in its discernment and shared life.

NGI Bishop Reginald Makele is the current ACC representative, with Annsli Kabekabe, from ACPNG's Church Partnership Programme, the Youth delegate. They were joined in the nine-day meeting by the Church of Melanesia delegation, led by Archbishop Leonard Dawae. During the gathering, Bishop Reginald led the intercessions at the closing service in Belfast Cathedral, while Annsli spoke at a youth event. Both the Papua New Guinea and Melanesian delegations met the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dame Sarah Mullaly, presiding over her first ACC meeting.



Annsli Kabekabe, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Bishop Reg Makele

The consultation provided an important opportunity for ACPNG and the Anglican Church of Melanesia to strengthen their partnership within the Anglican Communion. In working together, the two churches helped ensure that Pacific voices were strongly represented in discussions and votes, and demonstrated their commitment to shaping a distinct Melanesian approach to the Communion.

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE

Earlier this year, led by the Fr Nicholas Kaam and Mathew Kuraiwae, the Jimi Deanery in Aipo Rongo Diocese held its first-ever planning consultation workshop. Over three days, representatives from the nine parishes met at St Alban's Kwima to share information and ideas and draw up a local action plan on a range of challenging issues, including the national resurgence of HIV & AIDS.

Participants also recognised that traditional ownership of land was their biggest asset and means of livelihood through subsistence farming. As a local contribution to its sustainable care and development, they decided to contribute to the Anglican Communion Forest Initiative through the planting of cocoa and coffee trees. This would bring income for parishes and help support the work of future evangelism. Some 2,000 cocoa seedlings that had been grown with the support of Kalanz Eco-Investment were blessed during the workshop and will be distributed to parishes for planting during the coming months.



The cocoa seedling nursery



Planting a cocoa seedling

MODAWA INSTITUTE



One of the Education students' classes

PNGCP Chair William Spooner recently spent several weeks working within the Modawa Institute. He reflects: "Much has changed since members of ACPNG's overseas partners from the UK, New Zealand and Australia visited Newton Theological College two years ago. It has become the Modawa Institute of Higher Education - a developing tertiary institution offering certificate and diploma programmes in theology for ordinands and lay leaders, alongside diploma and degree courses for trainee teachers. In the short-term, pending the creation of further student living accommodation, most education students are relatively local and non-resident, significantly swelling the campus presence alongside those living in residence.

This transformation, strongly supported by the national and provincial governments, reflects the wider needs of Oro Province, which has some of the lowest literacy rates in PNG. Here, many young people lack the qualifications or skills needed to secure employment which, together with limited job opportunities in the area, leaves young people feeling little hope for the future and contributes to rising crime and civil unrest.

Against this backdrop, the Institute's School of Education is providing an important pathway into teaching. Although the annual tuition fee (c. £1,500) is beyond the reach of many families, students completing the three-year diploma or four-year degree are well placed to enter the public service, offering stable employment, regular income, and the opportunity to improve educational standards across the province and nation. The commitment and experience of the lecturers is particularly impressive, reflecting extensive classroom expertise and a clear sense of the importance of their work.

Within the School of Theology, where the emphasis remains firmly on priestly formation, there is growing recognition of the opportunities for Anglican clergy to contribute to education by teaching Religious Education and serving as school chaplains as Catholic and Lutheran clergy already do. This would strengthen ACPNG's wider presence while equipping clergy with valuable leadership and administrative experience alongside their pastoral ministry.

A strong theological foundation is essential for clergy to exercise confident leadership within their communities. There is need to support village deacons, many of whom have limited formal theological education, through in-service training; also to provide serving clergy with mid-career opportunities for further study, whether through Modawa or other institutions. Such initiatives would help develop the next generation of senior clergy and provide a strong pool of candidates for future episcopal leadership.

I was particularly encouraged to meet a female theology student nearing the completion of her studies. It is right that theological education is open to all so that the Church can be strengthened by a new generation of women and men serving in lay chaplaincy and leadership.

There is much we can do as partners to help the Institute develop and deliver its vision eg: funding a training bursary for an ordinand at £500pa for three years; a £25 monthly allowance to provide everyday essentials for a residential student's family; a capital donation to help develop the campus accommodation, equipment and library materials."



Modawa branch Mothers Union members



Installing new water-tanks

For the last few years, PNGCP has provided each graduating priest's family with a hand sewing-machine to help with their future clothing needs and provide a means of income-generation long-term. With 12 priests graduating this autumn, we need to raise £140 for each sewing-machine and 'starter-kit' (scissors, needles, pins, cottons, etc.). Would you, your family or congregation be able to sponsor one and help provide this lasting benefit to a family, please? *Editor*

PNG, ACPNG & PNGCP NEWS

- Families across PNG's Highlands are facing depleted harvests and threat of hunger after the El Nino weather pattern brought frost and dry conditions. According to Oxfam PNG, the nation is currently the Pacific's worst-hit country from the impacts of El Nino. Below-average rainfall for almost a year, combined with frost in the Highlands and invasive pests, had destroyed crops and livestock. The aid agency estimates that up to three million people could be affected nationwide, including a projected 1.9 million in the Highlands
- PNG Independence Day (16 September) will be celebrated with a service on the day at Westminster Abbey, whilst next year, on 27th February, ACPNG will be celebrating its 50th anniversary as an independent Province within the worldwide Anglican Communion

PNGCP SUPPORTERS DAY – Saturday, 19th September 2026

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 11am. 11.30am welcome and introductions, with Communion Service at midday, followed by a simple provided lunch. The afternoon includes opportunities to hear update contributions from PNGCP Chair, William Spooner, after his recent six-week stay with ACPNG; news of latest leadership developments and the launch of the new Daily Prayer Guide for ACPNG. 4pm finish.

What now? Diary the date and, to help with catering, let Janet Wells know if you are coming on 020 7313 3918 or pngcpoffice@gmail.com please. We look forward to seeing you there!

- After being on the teaching staff at Newton Theological College, Fr Luscombe Bera has moved to Port Moresby to become the Anglican Chaplain to the University of Papua New Guinea
- Fr Robert Mackley, longtime supporter at Little St Mary's, Cambridge, is moving to Ely Cathedral as Canon Pastor. Little St Mary's has been a very generous and faithful supporter, including hosting a previous Supporters' Day

Sad news to share about:

- the untimely death from cancer of Dr Bruce Owen (54) who, together with his family, was remembered in prayer at the last PNGCP Supporters' Day. He and his wife Kate (nee Stratford) were volunteer doctors at Dogura in 1998/99. Over 500 attended the Thanksgiving Service in Newcastle where Ruth and David Webster, who were also volunteers at Holy Name School Dogura at the same time, spoke on behalf of PNGCP .
- Michael Courage (84) who died in June after a short illness. In 1960, he spent a year on VSO at the recently established mission station at Simbai, a clear highlight of his long life. Memorably, he bought five donkeys left behind by the Japanese in Lae and, aided by two village boys, got them to Simbai hoping they might help the movement of supplies locally. A visit to Simbai by son Simon in 2013 led to the whole community providing an unforgettably moving return visit for him and his parents four years later

(The colourful stories of these two past UK volunteers and 150+ like them who contributed to the development of the Anglican Church in PNG over the years, whilst finding their own lives deeply impacted, can be found in the recently-published book "Memories of Papua New Guinea" with hard copies available through the PNGCP office or website (see contact details below)

- Fr Andrew Collins Jones, Vicar of St Ignatius Sunderland, has joined the PNGCP Committee. One of his predecessors there, Fr Philip Strong, became Bishop of New Guinea in 1936, and its congregation has been a long-time supporter. In other changes, William Spooner, John Rea and Jan Nicholson have been reappointed as Trustees; Simon Courage has resigned from the Committee and Revd Lynn Fry has been granted a year's sabbatical leave



PRAYER LEAFLET

Thanks to Sue and Peter Ramsden's efforts, PNGCP now has an attractive and informative 16-page Prayer Leaflet, with a different prayer focus for each day of the month. In terms of personnel and services, the leaflet is accurate at the time of publication, June 2026. Whether you receive it in paper or digital format, a copy should accompany this Newsletter. Further paper copies of the leaflet can be obtained through the PNGCP office.

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