



Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Easter 2025 Newsletter

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

MOTHERS' UNION CELEBRATION



MU participants start Prayer Walk at Holy Name School with prayers for PNG's education sector

Late last year, Bishop John Dubabagi and the Dogura Diocese - aka 'the Jerusalem of the Anglican Church in PNG' being the landing place of the first Anglican missionaries to PNG - hosted the 16th Provincial Triennial Mothers Union (MU) Conference at Dogura. This was a most appropriate choice to also mark the 75th Celebration of MU work in PNG. It was here, in November 1949, that Mrs Christine Crutwell from the MU Church of England arrived with the express



Prayer Walk ends at Calvary Point, praying for repentance on behalf of PNG and a return to the cross of Christ for deliverance

commission to establish the MU in PNG. Consequently, on Lady Day, March 25th 1950, the first ever 300 'native' mothers were admitted as MU members at the Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul, Dogura, thereby officially starting MU work in ACPNG. Since then, MU work spread and is thriving in all five of ACPNG's dioceses.

Prior to the Triennial Conference, the leadership of the Dogura Diocese MU conducted a week-long Enrichment Programme exclusively for the Dogura diocesan delegates, based on the MU worldwide theme of 'Transformation' and the MU's five defining Objectives.

The Triennial Conference was based at ACPNG's Holy Name Secondary School on the Dogura plateau. The host Girumia Deanery coordinated preparations and surrounding deaneries and communities provided local building materials, food and labour. It was attended by some 300 MU leaders, plus observers, from all five ACPNG dioceses. The week-long meeting started with a Prayer Walk, where MU Members joined the rest of the nation to celebrate its 49th Independence Day. The Prayer Walk began near Holy Name School, with prayer stops at various places throughout the Dogura Anglican station before finishing at Calvary Point, near the cathedral. The packed and well-received conference programme then ran from Tuesday to Friday, finishing with the election of new Provincial office bearers for the next three years and a final service in the Cathedral.



MU delegates sing final hymn in Cathedral as clergy process out

DIOCESAN OUTREACH

In December and January each year, most PNG students and many with paid jobs enjoy their annual 'long holiday', often returning home to their villages. In **Aipo Rongo diocese**, whilst with his family back in his home village of Ainong, it was far from a quiet time for Acting Archbishop Nathan Ingen. Over three weeks, he travelled to visit three parishes in Simbai Archdeanery, conducting confirmation services and dedicating new outstations.

In St. Andrew's parish, Kumbruf, Bishop Nathan dedicated two new outstation chapels, acknowledging the hard work and contributions of the community, clergy and leaders in making the construction possible. Describing it as a testament to the dedication and faith of the local congregation, he encouraged them all to make these facilities a vibrant centre for worship, fellowship, and mission work. In two packed services at Ini, further reflecting the spiritual growth of the wider parish, he confirmed a large number of well-prepared candidates from the wider area.

Whilst visiting St. Paul's parish, Kaironk and its outstations, Bishop Nathan reportedly confirmed some 700 candidates and, back in his own *asples* parish of St. Matthew's, Ainong, a further 567 candidates were confirmed. Meanwhile, in January, a contingent of selected men, plus family members, from the diocese left Mt Hagen to start their ordination training at Newton College.

In January, in **Popodota Diocese**, Bishop Lindsley Ihove also undertook two arduous patrols. The first, deep into the bush of Aeka Deanery, to St. Peter's church in Sagere village. There, he confirmed 60 new Christians and conducted the ordination service for a young man from the village. A fortnight later, he visited St. Paul's church, Katuna, Mamba Deanery to celebrate St. Paul's Day, confirm 122 candidates and ordain one Deacon and a priest to serve locally.



A Kumbruf welcome for +Nathan (in turquoise shirt)



Ready for confirmation at Kaironk



After the service at Ainong

MODAWA INSTITUTE NEWS

The Modawa Institute of Higher Education in Popondetta has taken another step forward with classes starting in the David Hand School of Teaching. Principal, Bishop Jeffrey Driver, said this first year intake was intentionally a small one, "This is a soft start, we are learning and growing, introducing new staff and new requirements, so we want to take our time and build carefully". Preparations have been going on for this development for some two years, with enlargements to lecture theatres, improvements to the library, ICT and staff housing. Staffing has been expanded with qualified academics in the disciplines required by the national curriculum for teacher training. The cost of some of this additional staffing will eventually be met by the Department of Higher Education but, in the meantime, the institute must carefully manage a much-expanded



Fr Gabriel (left in back row) with new theological students

budget while still investing in more infrastructure. A new boarding facility for female students is the major project for this year. The cost of the prefabricated buildings has already been met by partners, including the Australian Government. However, transport and construction costs still need to be met.

The institute has a new intake in theology, with 17 ordinands and eight day students from the dioceses of Popondota, Aipo Rongo, New Guinea Islands and Dogura. With Fr Giles Motisi off to Australia for further studies, Fr Gabriel Manae has been appointed Deputy Principal and Fr Spencer Kombega has joined the academic team.

BUSY PRIEST

Most stories in these newsletters reflect significant events or initiatives and the activities of ACPNG's various leaders. It is always good to include some of the often-unsung individuals who, collectively, constitute the bedrock and underpinning of ACPNG's work. Many ACPNG clergy, together with their families, often live out dedicated lives of service in challenging circumstances amongst local communities where the people, language and customs may be quite different to their own. As well as providing local leadership, spiritual and pastoral care for all in their assigned parish(es), some contribute much to local development and the Church's wider work and governance as the following illustrates:

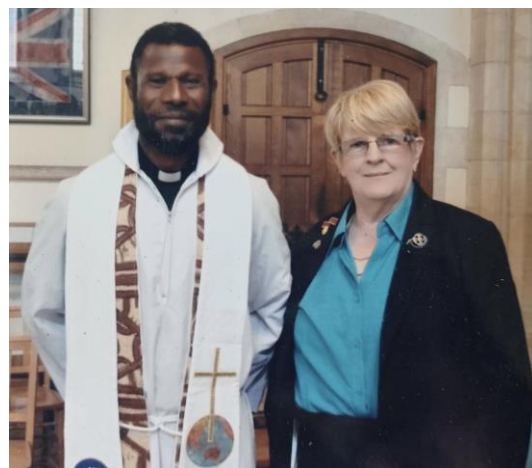
With seemingly undiminished dedication and vigour as he approaches 60 this year, Fr Isaiah Masida has certainly had a very full and varied life of ministry. Born at Killerton on the North Coast of Popondota Diocese, he and Bishop Lindsley Ihove were Martyrs' School classmates. Through his subsequent work with the SSF Brothers and youth work at Resurrection Cathedral, Isaiah felt called to start priestly training at Newton College. By ordination in 2003, his potential was already apparent and he was appointed Domestic Chaplain to Bishop Roger Jupp. In the 22 years since, Fr Isaiah has served in 10 different parishes in Popondota Diocese.

Throughout, Fr Isaiah's talents have been additionally well used. In his first decade as a priest, he was variously: Dean of Resurrection Cathedral; Diocesan Council and Diocesan Student Selection Board member; Archdeacon and, briefly, Vicar General; and Diocesan Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) Chaplain. He also spent five years on the Newton Theological College Council. In 2014, in Wales, the Archbishop of Wales commissioned Fr Isaiah to serve for three years as World GFS Chaplain alongside Australia's Canon Val Gribble during her World GFS Presidency.

Fr Isaiah is now Archdeacon of Kokoda for a second time, supporting the Deanery's seven parishes, whilst priest for Holy Name parish, Kebara. Here, recent initiatives

include a special Christmas service involving over 100 local children and, in February, a big, shared breakfast to mark the launch of MU work in the parish. Four of Archdeacon Isaiah's parishes are along the Kokoda Highway, with the furthest, Eiwo, a five-hour walk away. The other three are in the Owen Stanley mountains, requiring one to three whole days' walk to visit them - considerably more if it is stormy and the mountain rivers are in spate.

Fr Isaiah and Mother Lillian also enjoy a lively family life, with six children and 14 grandchildren. Of the youngest, one is at St. Margaret's School of Nursing and the other completing her secondary education. The three sons plan to build a parental retirement home on a gifted site at Soputa, Mother Lillian's aspires.



World GFS Chaplain & President in Wales



Kebara Anglican church & school compound



2024 Children's Christmas Service at Kebara



MU gathering at Kebara

CLERGY WIVES CONFERENCE



Thelma presenting the badges/pins to Mother Mary Tariambari (CW President)

Thelma Guni describes her involvement in the Popondota Diocese's 7th Clergy Wives' Conference at the SSF Haruru Friary: "I was invited to talk on Women's Empowerment in terms of their ministry as clergy wives, plus an overview on Parenting for Child Development and to hand over the MU badges and pins gifted by PNGCP in the UK. The Clergy Wives' Ministry involves the wives of village evangelists, deacons and priests, Newton College graduates and retired clergy from the ten deaneries in Popondota Diocese. Together with mutual support, development and information-sharing activities, they actively raise funds to help retiring diocesan clergy. Inevitably, active participation is a challenge for some, including officers, due to their geographical location, travel costs, communication and connection issues. I noted they only have one sewing-machine to sew vestments to sell; need a camera and laptop for administration work; and deanery committees would benefit from a small cell-phone to use in areas where reception is possible."

PNG, ACPNG & PNGCP NEWS

- Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Bishop Anthony Poggo, has been visiting Anglican Provinces in Oceania to help foster unity and strengthen relationships across the worldwide Communion. His tour has included the Solomons, Fiji and New Zealand and is scheduled to visit PNG before Easter. He also attended the retirement service for the Archbishop of Melbourne, Philip Freier, who has visited PNG several times and is a past Newsletter contributor.
- Principal of Newton Theological College in the Modawa Institute, Bishop Jeffrey Driver has attended a gathering of Anglican Seminary Deans from East Asia and Oceania at St John's Theological College, Auckland. The meeting explored the indigenisation of theological education, a matter particularly relevant to the cultural diversity of PNG.
- In the Anglican National Office, Lae, Annsli Kabekabe has moved from being Communications & Community Development Officer to work as Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning Coordinator in ACPNG's Church Partnership Programme.
- In 2019, a disastrous fire at Martyrs' School destroyed the John Duffy dormitory and the SSF Brothers' staff accommodation. Since, they have lived in an on-site container. Now, thanks to the international fundraising efforts of SSF Minister General, Br Christopher John, the Brothers are in their new house and expect to be joined there and on the staff by two Melanesian Brothers.
- ACPNG has a long-standing relationship with the Diocese of Norwich. On behalf of its Norwich Link group, Rev's Sue Martin writes: "The Bishop of Norwich Lent Appeal 2024 raised £10,000 for water systems at student houses at Newton College and are delighted that this will help increase sanitation and clean water availability for students and their families. We are planning a pilgrimage, led by the Diocesan Bishop, Rt Reverend Graham Usher, for September 2025. We look forward to meeting Anglican colleagues across PNG and engaging with the mission and ministry in places such as Newton College and the New Guinea Islands. The visit will include the Martyr's Day celebration and the Partners' Meeting held between the ACPNG leadership and its overseas partners.
- The PNGCP Committee meeting in February confirmed the appointment of William Spooner as PNGCP Chair to replace Bishop Jonathan Meyrick and Bishop Peter Ramsden as the new Vice-Chair in place of John Rea.



New Brothers' house for Martyrs' School chaplains

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