

Dear friends

I am greeting you as the Global Mission Coordinator, working out of the Assembly Office. I started this wonderful job, which combines my passion for overseas mission and my experience in working in Asia and the Pacific, in August. Indeed, I began by having two weeks on one of the more remote islands of Vanuatu for a General Assembly meeting and then a few weeks later headed to Seoul, Korea, for a conference on peace and reconciliation.

I am very keen to make contact with those of you who have loyally supported global mission over many years. As well as sending you my Christmas greetings, I want to update you on what has happened in the past few months and let you know how you can continue to join together with us in mission.

Joining with the Spirit

A word first about mission... the mission of God, we remember, is not ours: it is God's. We are called to discern where the Spirit is working and join in that work. In doing this globally, we join with partner Churches and organisations; as well as with congregations and with individuals. This mission is not hugely different from what we do locally in New Zealand, with every congregation and every Christian called to participate in mission.

As we come to Christmas, we remember God's gift to us: the Christ child. We call him Emmanuel, *God with us*. And this is what mission is all about. The language of joining, of friendship, of partnership, of empowerment is really important. God comes among us and we join with God and each other here and overseas to love the world that God loves.

Myanmar Mission Partnership

This is being facilitated by St Columba @ Botany Downs in Auckland, under the leadership of Angela Norton. A strong link has been made with the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar and many teams from New Zealand have gone as work parties into the Shin Province. The church there really values our friendship and solidarity, as well as our development aid. Our listening and learning enables their voices to be heard beyond national boundaries.

Angela has just come back from a trip to Myanmar overwhelmed by seeing the results of our partnership with the churches there. "It was a very exciting time to be there," she says, "our relationship with the local people is really valued".

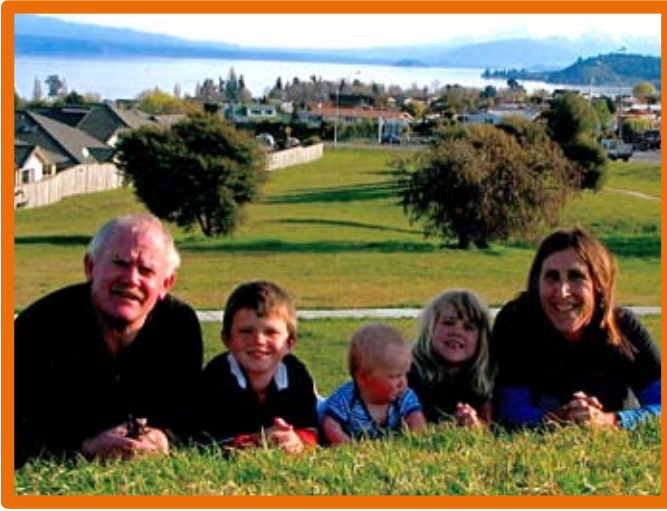


I have enclosed a brochure on our Myanmar partnership: we welcome regular giving through the Rice Bowl Fund or enquiries about joining one of the work teams travelling to Myanmar in 2011.

Please pray for the people of Myanmar as we engage with them, and for the team that will go on our behalf with Angela in January; that they may be open to the Spirit and to new learning.

Vanuatu Mission partnership

Our long standing relationship with Vanuatu remains alive and highly valued by them and us. At the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu in September, I was deeply aware of standing on the



shoulders of the “saints” who had served in mission in this Church. We are continuing to support projects in Vanuatu and we can pair up any congregation with an appropriate contact – just let us know if you are interested.

We also continue to support Talua Ministry Training Centre by providing an English teacher. Ken and Jenny Williams and family have returned home after two years at Talua: They say it has been an amazing time for their family and for their own growth. Jenny says, “When you think of going on mission, you think of all the things you have to give up. We want to thank God for all that we have been given.”

Paula Levy will replace Ken teaching English to Talua’s theology students. She and husband Roger and children will begin in January. Roger will help build new student houses and help with maintenance on the campus.

Onesua Presbyterian College also features in our relationship, especially as five of our Presbyterian schools make exchange visits annually. The horizons of all the young people involved are expanded phenomenally!

Upcoming projects in Vanuatu are:

- » Facilitating the PCV Mission Department to hold a “nakamol” (roundtable) meeting where the various mission partners gather and listen to how we can join together in mission in Vanuatu.
- » Bringing a Ni-Van chaplain to New Zealand with the next lot of fruit pickers working under the Recognised Seasonal Employment scheme.
- » Joining our young people together: Kids Friendly churches will connect with children in PCV schools and help to create a new generation of mission-focused young people.



Please pray for our relationship with the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu and all those involved, that we may learn to appreciate our common bonds in Christ. In particular , please pray for the Levy family as they settle into Talua.

Church of North India

The Friends of Jagadhri continue to spearhead our relationships in North India. They maintain contact with everyone interested in this work through their newsletter and the wide distribution of donations to the Christian Hospital, St Thomas School and churches in North India. Thank you for the wonderful response to the Moderator’s Appeal. These funds have been greatly appreciated by the Church of North India as a gift for young people. We still have copies of the book *Light and Love*, produced for the centenary of our work with the Church of North India, contact Doreen Ridell on doreen@pconnect.co.nz if you would like a copy (\$25).

Prison Ministry in Thailand

Kathryn McDaniel has been offering compassionate service to the foreign inmates of Chiang Mai prison for over 20 years. Kathryn asks for our prayers for these inmates, for their families in other parts of the world and for strength for herself.

I’d also like to highlight some of our many ecumenical partnerships, which are not primarily about aid and development but about joining together in friendship.

Presbyterian Women New Zealand at the United Nations

We are very proud of the work of Presbyterian Women (previously known as the Association of Presbyterian Women or APW), which in the past few years has not only become our major fundraiser for mission, through joint MWF/APW projects, but also a voice at the United Nations. Through Presbyterian Women, we have NGO status at the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, in consultation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs. In February, Mary MacIntyre (Presbyterian Women National Coordinator) and I will travel to New York to this meeting - it promises to be an exciting time, giving us a chance to bring our New Zealand Christian values to an international forum on the rights of women.

Presbyterian Church of Taiwan

We have some exciting exchanges planned in this next year with our friends in Taiwan. The PCT has asked us to help them establish ways of working with integrity with their indigenous people, who form a significant block in their church. So we will have some seminars in consultation with Te Aka Puaho at our national marae Te Maungarongo in Ohope late next year. We continue to have many exchanges between the young people of NZ and Taiwan: they come to Connect and we send our young people to their programme called "I Love Taiwan".



Please pray for young people in Taiwan and in New Zealand.

Korean Presbyterians

As we consider how best to integrate ethnic Korean congregations into the Presbyterian Church, we are aware that ordained leadership for these congregations comes from missionaries to New Zealand from the two major Korean churches to which we relate: the PCK and PROK. Joining together in mission means being open to receive, as well as to give. We received with much gratitude a generous gift from these churches to Christchurch Presbytery after September's earthquake.

We also have contact with the Christian groups in North Korea and through them have offered humanitarian aid. In the light of recent conflict between North and South Korea, we have recently responded to the request from the PROK to petition the UN to replace the armistice between the North and South with a peace treaty. (You can see the letter at www.presbyterian.org.nz/globalmission).

Please pray for peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula



Pacific partnerships

We have no intention of neglecting our traditional work in the Pacific. This is currently carried out within the Pacific regional partnerships of the Council for World Mission, and in the Pacific Conference of Churches. We were able to support our friends in Samoa significantly through Christian World Service in the time of the devastating tsunami in 2009.

Australia

Our relationship with the Uniting Church in Australia is many faceted, and we are delighted that their international mission agency

UnitingWorld has agreed to work closely with us in those parts of the world where we both work, and in preparation/evaluation work concerning mission appointments.

Christian World Service: our aid and development agency

Through Christian World Service, we are able to join with the Spirit in working with some of the world's most vulnerable peoples and places. Through an international partnership of Churches (known as ACT), CWS is able to provide immediate relief on our behalf in times of natural disaster, such as the Haiti earthquake and the current floods in Pakistan. We commend to you this year's Christmas appeal "Share the Care". This year the focus is on health and healing. Please pray for a generous and loving response to the appeal this year.

Council for World Mission

Perhaps our most significant mission partnerships are found through the Council for World Mission. We play a very active role in this network, particularly in the Pacific.

Kirstin Harray has just returned to New Zealand from the adventure of Training in Mission, which involves joining with young Christian people from within the CWM family for a year of mission service, in Johannesburg and then in India.

In this next year, we will work with CWM partner the Protestant Church in Kiribati, to help fund a pastor to Kiribati people in the Auckland region. These folk have immigrated here from islands that are overcrowded, can no longer offer work possibilities and whose shores are threatened by rising sea levels.

Please pray for the family of Churches in the Council for World Mission; that we might celebrate our common life as brothers and sisters in Christ

Local initiatives

Finally I want to salute all those congregations who join in mission in quiet and unheralded ways: like supporting a World Vision child, the CWS Christmas appeal, and the APW/MWF annual project. Some congregations send missionaries overseas themselves, while others connect with other agencies. Young people undertake mission trips to Madagascar, Nepal, India and other remote places and all around the country our missionary endeavours are held in prayer. Together in mission, we are playing our part in making Jesus Christ known.

Keeping in touch

Our global mission pages on the Presbyterian website www.presbyterian.org.nz/globalmission are regularly updated. *Spanz* magazine now features four or five stories of global mission in each issue - some connected with Global Mission's work, some from congregational missions and some from individuals. Pick up a copy at church – it's free for Presbyterian and Uniting churches.

This letter is a one-off communication but I very much welcome your responses and questions. I expect to visit all presbyteries next year to speak about our work and would welcome an invitation to join with you at your place – I am happy to speak to groups large or small!

I hope this goes some way to updating you on our ongoing work in global mission. We really value your participation in our ventures, and welcome your prayers and your continuing financial support.

As we celebrate Christmas, we are conscious of it being a time of hope and joy.

May you give thanks for the many blessings we know in Aotearoa and be inspired to join with us in mission to take God's love to the world beyond our shores.

Yours in Christ



Pamela.