

# *Abundance*

THE MAGAZINE OF ANGLICAN OVERSEAS AID | WINTER 2022

## *Sowing Seeds of Hope*



# Sowing Seeds of Hope

Jo Knight

CEO, Anglican Overseas Aid

**"What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."**

Luke 13:18-19, NRSV

When we look at the world today, it can become easy to be discouraged by conflicts, natural disasters, inequality and human suffering. Yet we are called to be light to the world, and work to bring the Kingdom of God to earth. God calls us to undertake small acts of kindness, in subtle and even hidden ways, show mercy, act justly and serve out of love even when it is unnoticed, and do so without ceasing.

In this edition of *Abundance*, we explore how, through the faithfulness of our partners and supporters, seeds of hope and love are being sown. At times it may seem small, yet we move forward together, believing in faith that as we work for the Kingdom of God, these seeds will bear fruit both on earth and in heaven.

On pages 3 and 4, we are delighted to share news of new partnerships with Anglican Missions New Zealand and Mothers Union Australia. Working in unity and partnership maximises the impact for people in need.

Valerie Browning and the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) continue to demonstrate amazing resilience in face of drought and conflict. We provide an update on page 5.

In the *Imarisha Maisha* project, our partner, the Anglican Church of Kenya, continues their work. On page 6, we look at how they are combatting gender-based violence and building resilience and self-reliance.

As we seek to give greater voice to those living and working in communities, we feature an interview with Rebecca Moli from the Anglican Church of Melanesia in Solomon Islands on page 7, and the Bible study on page 13 was written by Rt. Rev. Manuel Ernesto, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Nampula, Mozambique.

Self-reliance is one of Anglican Overseas Aid's (AOA) four key thematic areas of work. On pages 8 and 9, we provide a snapshot of how our partners are enabling effective household and group savings, greater financial literacy and independence and supported self-reliance initiatives with evidence of increased economic opportunities for communities.

AOA is accredited by and registered with:



Despite all the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of AOA has continued through the faithfulness and passion of you, our supporters. On page 10, we speak with Ruth Hamlyn-Harris, a long term supporter from Brisbane, and learn a little about her commitment to AOA and how she is sowing seeds of hope in her community.

We also see a wonderful example of some young supporters, who as part of Lent, raised \$510 to help children at the Spafford Children's Center in East Jerusalem, showing that you are never too old or too young to sow hope and love into the lives of others.

It has been a great joy to meet with some of you in my first months in this role and I look forward to meeting more supporters as we all return to "COVID normal".

I have been amazed to learn that we have almost 275 supporters who have been part of the AOA journey for over 25 years! I am delighted that The Most Revd Dr Philip Freier, Archbishop of Melbourne and President of AOA, together with his wife Joy Freier OAM, will host a garden party of thanks for these wonderful supporters on October 1, at Bishops court, Melbourne. More information can be found on page 11.

For over a decade, the late Marg Docking OAM, supported by a dedicated team of friends and volunteers, has impacted the lives of thousands of Ugandans. Wise Choices For Life (WCFL) educates young men and women on how to plan and raise healthy families. AOA is delighted to be entrusted to continue Marg's legacy and has been working to bring Wise Choices For Life under the umbrella of AOA. You can read more on page 12.

Finally, as we experience the growing impacts of climate change, AOA will this year join the global Christian movement of *Season of Creation*, encouraging us all to reflect on how we can be wise stewards of creation.

Our prayer is that as you read these stories of change and hope, you will be inspired in your journey of sowing seeds of love, peace, kindness, generosity and hope.



## Meet Jo - AOA's CEO

A Christian leader and Anglican, Jo has 20 years of experience and a strong commitment to justice and sustainability. Jo is married to Peter Carolane, the Senior Minister of Merri Creek Anglican in Melbourne's inner north, and they have two boys.

In this her first edition of *Abundance*, we asked Jo a few questions to get to know her a little more.

### How do you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus?

*"Aligning how I use my time and talents to the vocation that I feel God has called me to has been really important to my faith and focus. I see a spiritual director who has helped me tune in to the ongoing work of Jesus in my life, and I have found the approach resonates with me and helped shift me from bible head knowledge to deeper prayer and awareness of our living God. I am challenged into a bigger vision of the gospel and God's struggle for the good creation here on earth. I am convicted again of the part I play as a Christian to lovingly care for all creation, both people and the planet. The way I live, consume, seek justice, give, speak out and pray all matters to God and his vision for this earth."*

### What's one thing that you love about your local church?

*"I get a front-row seat as my husband leads our church, and I love being part of the vision, creativity and spiritual boldness that is the culture of our church. We birthed our church at the time I gave birth to our youngest son Ezra, and I'm reminded how young and fresh we are as a community and are not set in our ways. We are in the process of planting again in Melbourne's inner north and this exciting growth keeps us all spiritually awake and reliant on God."*

### What do you enjoy doing when you rest?

*"I love resting with my family and heading to the bush. We spend a lot of time in the Grampians which is part of the Gariwerd Aboriginal cultural landscape. The particular green, grey and ochre of the native bush contrast with the towering and enormous rock faces. The mountain ranges are solid and ageless. We stay in an old family holiday house which is an endearing time capsule from the 1960s. My favourite reading spot is in front of the fire on the couch, looking up at magnificent views. In the foreground, there are little ground birds, oblivious to me looking on, kangaroos grazing and big impressive birds vying for my attention in the treetops. In this place, I find rest and renewal."*

All photos in this newsletter are supplied by AOA unless otherwise stated.  
Front cover: Sowing Seed. Credit: Pedarilhos, Getty Images.  
Right: Left to right Rev Tracy Lauersen, Rev Heather Cetrangolo, Canon Julie-anne Laird, AOA CEO Jo Knight, Rev Denise Nicholls attend a Micah Women Leaders Network meeting.

## New Zealand Partnership



AOA is delighted to formalise our partnership with Anglican Missions New Zealand with the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The two agencies have already worked together in programs that included the *Tropical Cyclone Yasa Relief and Resilience program* in Fiji and most recently the *Tonga Emergency Response*.

Anglican Missions (AM) supports and facilitates international development and humanitarian aid activities on behalf of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

With a shared Christian commitment and Anglican heritage, both agencies work in a spirit of partnership to support communities in developing countries to overcome poverty, injustice and disaster.

With both agencies of a similar size, the partnership enhances our abilities to jointly seek new funding opportunities, build capacity across our teams, share resources and critically, respond to the needs of people living in poverty or experiencing a humanitarian crisis.







## ▼ MU Partnership

In April, The Rev Anne Kennedy, Mothers Union Provincial President Australia, visited AOA. Mothers Union (MU) has engaged AOA and our partner, the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia, in a two-year project to improve communities' preparation and management of natural disasters in Tonga and Fiji.

With many of AOA's projects already working with Mothers Union teams across the world, we are delighted to strengthen our relationship with MU here in Australia.



## ▼ Strategy Refresh

AOA is currently working on a new Strategic Plan to guide our work over the next decade. Fundamental to this review will be discerning how we continue to live out our mission of connecting Australian Anglicans with dioceses across the world, responding to both people living in poverty and to disasters.

As our Board and team work through this process, we will be engaging with church leaders, supporters and partners, as we seek to listen and respond to God's calling on the organisation.

Your prayers for wisdom and discernment would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to contribute, you can email your thoughts to [aoo@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](mailto:aoo@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au)

## ▼ Tonga

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, \$46,393 was raised to support the people of Tonga to rebuild their lives after the tsunami struck the island nation on January 15th. The funds are being used to address the immediate needs of affected communities and support them through mid-to-long term recovery and rebuilding activities.

AOA's partnership with Mothers Union (left) is also building community preparedness for future natural disasters. Please keep the people of Tonga in your prayers.



## ▼ Welcome Andrew

AOA is delighted to announce the recommendation of Dr Andrew Smith to join the AOA Board.

Andrew grew up at St Stephen's and St Mary's Mt Waverley, where he held leadership roles. Andrew and his family currently worship at St Hilary's Kew, which they support with their time and talents.

Andrew is a Consultant Upper GI surgeon, working at Alfred Health for 30 years, and is now in private practice, currently directing a multi-disciplinary surgical practice in Glen Iris. With a passion for international aid, Andrew has visited DR Congo and Uganda on several occasions.

Andrew comes to AOA, having recently served on the board of Wise Choices For Life.





# Ethiopia Update

In our last issue of *Abundance*, we reported that Ethiopia's year-long war between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and government forces had killed thousands of people and forced more than two million from their homes.

Additional support for our partner, the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) is now needed to prevent disease outbreaks at one of the most vulnerable times of the year. Due to unreliable rains, it is expected that herds will not produce much milk and that the Awash River will run very low and be contaminated.

Valerie Browning and her extremely dedicated team are feeling the weight of the responsibility they carry in working with the Afar people. Their resilience is something to behold and Valerie continues to talk about hope amidst their struggles. She states that "Together, we must build up...hope to the Afar society despite the conflict: people must start-up local petty trading, life skills and basic learning even in their displacement...child and maternal health must not be neglected. APDA is working on how they can access food at affordable prices. Right now, their future is in our hands."

The struggle of the Afar is illustrated by the incredible story of Kadiga. She is 32 years old and fled when conflict broke out in the town of Aba'ala in December. She and her five children, her mother and the neighbouring women ran for three days into the rural area of Aba'ala, where she was until late February.

When the conflict started again, the temporary house they were staying in was burned. They fled with 12 children, she being by then nine months pregnant. She carried their two-year-old and struggled to carry water. After four days of running and walking, Kadiga experienced labour pains. She explained that "it was awful to go with the labour for two days until I could take no more".

Collapsing under a tree, the baby began to come and Kadiga was helped by a woman she barely knew. This is how her sixth child, a son, came into the world. Local Afar helped to revive her and she continued until she reached Harsuuma in Afdeera, a total journey of nine days. In Harsuuma, government food was distributed and Kadiga is now recovering.

It is difficult to imagine the enormous challenges that people like Kadiga and many others have to face, especially in such a harsh environment and in the middle of a conflict. Through the dedication of our remarkable supporters though, we have this year provided a grant of \$45,000 to assist APDA to bring medical interventions to pregnant and new mothers and children under five. We have also released \$10,000 from our Rapid Response Emergency Fund to provide emergency relief for people affected by the Tigray conflict.

We ask that you continue to uphold the Afar people in your prayers.

Below: Emergency shelters built from tree branches and covered with cloth to provide protection. Credit: APDA





# Kenya Update

The *Imarisha Maisha* project in Kenya continues to support communities to reduce their vulnerability to violence.

After a successful first phase, the project, with the help of funding from the Australian Government's Australian NGO Co-operation Program, has now entered a second phase. The new phase is working with communities in 13 locations in Nyeri and Laikipia North counties and is building on a program to promote respectful relationships between men and women and between adults and children.

One of the highly encouraging ways that our projects work is through the inclusion of children. It is a reminder of what Jesus said about children, that the Kingdom belongs to such as them. In the *Imarisha Maisha* project, our partner, the Anglican Church of Kenya, is working with the Kenyan Department of Education to continue building a network of "Child Guidance Counsellors". This allows schools, including early childhood centres, to identify and work with children who show signs of trauma or distress.

There is so much happening in the communities to provide hope. The project is now strengthening community structures to promote safety, resilience, and self-reliance. It is doing this in several ways.

Firstly, community leaders, including local chiefs and Nyumba Kumi (grassroots representatives) are being given greater knowledge of legal rights, including family violence and child protection so that communities can be safer.

There are varying causes of violence in the communities, including differences in power between men and women, increasing poverty levels and not enough access to productive resources and opportunities. These are all now being addressed.

Local clergy (who are trusted in the communities) are also being trained on "biblical perspectives on gender-based violence", and greater emphasis is placed on working with men to be part of the change process. It all makes for a brighter future.

Challenges remain in the communities though. Drought has affected various areas, increasing community conflicts related to trespass and illegal grazing. As COVID-19 has impacted communities, mental health issues have also increased. The project is dealing with this to educate communities on how to deal with such issues.

Despite the challenges, hope abounds in these people. One area where hope is lifting people up is with people living with a disability. Gladys is one of the ladies involved in this. She is one of the Nyumba Kumi and spends her time encouraging other people to give back in the same way she is doing. She appreciates the project for the work it has been doing in recognising and supporting people with disability. "In the commemoration of the International Day for persons with disability, 15 out of the 28 people received a medical assessment", she happily stated.

'Imarisha Maisha' means 'strengthen life' in Swahili. Gathering from what has been happening in the project in recent months, it is an apt name indeed.

The *Imarisha Maisha* project in Kenya is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Co-operation Program (ANCP).



Below: Young people raise awareness of gender-based violence in Laikipia county.  
Credit: Anglican Church of Kenya, Mt Kenya West Diocese.  
Opposite page: Rebecca of Anglican Church of Melanesia. Credit: Rebecca



# Solomon Islands Sower



We recently asked our long-serving Project Officer in the Solomon Islands to share with us her work with communities.

Rebecca Moli has worked with the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM) in partnership with Anglican Overseas Aid for 11 years. Rebecca moved to Honiara from the island of Malaita to work with ACOM.

As Project Officer, Rebecca has a critical role in leading coordinating AOA's four projects:

- Safe, Strong Communities,
- Churches Promoting Healthy, Safe and Just Communities,
- Positive Parenting Program,
- Safe Churches Working Group.

In her role, Rebecca advocates and educates people across the Solomon Islands against gender-based violence, highlighting social issues and promoting economic empowerment. Rebecca regularly meets with members of government ministries and national gender and protection service providers, while also directly implementing the project activities in some of the most remote communities in the Solomon Islands.

*"It's a blessing to see people equipped and empowered to create change in their community and improve their living standards."*

## What are some of the key challenges facing the communities you work with?

*"The living standards of women and children in the communities. Violence against women and poor living standards make it difficult for women to lead full and rich lives. Just last week the husband of a young married couple in my family's village became drunk and killed his young wife.*

*Attitudes and the way of life in our culture need to change. We need to take all the positive parts, remove the violence and poverty, and combine them with the best of other cultures. We need to change our mindsets."*

## What aspects of your work are you most passionate about?

*"I love to see the development and empowerment of female leaders. To see leaders developing within important groups such as the Church, Mothers Union, Women's, and Savings groups is exciting and a sign of positive change.*

*However, in our culture, the opinions and voices of men dominate, which often has negative outcomes for women. So, the training that we are providing is critical in making the sustainable long-term change in our communities and culture."*


## How can the role of women in the Solomons Islands improve?


*"Training is very important. However, we need to continue to train the broader society and the Church, which is why a theological framework is critical in changing current beliefs. Even when women are trained and have confidence, when they go out into the community to help improve life, they are met with male leaders who mostly have traditional beliefs. That's why it is so important that we build partnerships with male leaders who understand the importance of women and support gender equality and participation. Few church and community leaders understand this.*


*Because of Gender Theology training, these few passionate community and Faith leaders now continue to work side by side in responding to women's empowerment in ACOM."*

## How can AOA supporters pray for you?

*"I would welcome your prayers.*

 *For more women to come together, share their experiences and support each other to become role models of change in our communities.*

 *ACOM church leaders – for wisdom and safety.*

 *For my family and especially my daughter who is 12 years old. Her schooling is being impacted by the arrival of the COVID-19 virus.*

*"I would like to say thank you to the AOA supporters and to the Australian Government (DFAT) who are helping us to improve the lives of our community members."*

The Safe, Strong Communities project in Solomon Islands is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Co-operation Program (ANCP).





# Seeds of Self-reliance

Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) works with partners and communities to help change lives in four key areas:

- **disaster and climate adaptation,**
- **self-reliance,**
- **health & well-being, and**
- **safe relationships.**

Each area plays a vital role in addressing issues of inequality and vulnerability, and yet without a strong foundation of community self-reliance, change lacks sustainability and falls away over time.

 *Self-reliance makes it more likely that fathers can afford health care for their children.*

 *Self-reliance makes it more likely that women can seek out safe relationships for their families.*

 *Self-reliance makes it more likely that farmers can better adapt to the impacts of climate change.*

AOA, along with its Anglican and like-minded partners around the world, are committed to enabling and investing in greater self-reliance within the communities we serve. To do this, AOA builds on strengths and scales-up household and group savings networks. The investment focuses on sustainable 'payback' and 'rotational' models and supports innovative pilots to promote self-reliance.

Across the world, Anglican partners have enabled effective household and group savings. They have also enabled greater financial literacy and independence and supported self-reliance initiatives with evidence of increased economic opportunities for communities.

## Sri Lanka

Desperate for funds, vulnerable women in Sri Lanka often turn to moneylenders who loan at very high daily interest rates. Many then take additional loans to pay off previous loans and as a result are trapped in a vicious cycle of debt.

In response, AOA's partner, LEADS, has introduced a self-help group system to support at-risk women by promoting self-reliance and economic resilience.

A self-help group is comprised of 12-15 women who live nearby, to generate a savings fund to strengthen their financial security. A compulsory weekly saving is deposited by each member into the common fund. This fund is accessible to members for emergencies and loans for income generation activities as it grows into a sustainable foundation. Group members are supported with training on leadership, administration, and income generation. Each group is supported for two years to ensure they are well established.

The system helps families break out of the cycle of poverty by providing a long-term sustainable alternative. This is achieved by helping them through the habit of saving, discovering skills for income generation and being able to access loans through peer networks.

## Solomon Islands

The Christian Care Centre (CCC) is the only medium-term women's refuge in Solomon Islands. It is operated by the Sisters of the Anglican Church of Melanesia. Through our work, the Sisters and women survivors undertake financial literacy training. The Sisters share training during activities such as handicrafts and vocational activities, integrating financial literacy education into weekly activities.

One Sister explains the importance of the training:

*"They help women when they go home because in rural communities they only teach them to make gardens. Some have been victims all their lives, husbands have not allowed them a space to learn other things. It is only when they come here that they learn. These courses and workshops have also really helped us Sisters. We can improve the management of the centre and develop plans needed for survivors. We are grateful; we want more training in similar money topics".*

A woman survivor shares, "when we come here our minds have been opened by the things we learn here. These are things we have not heard when we were at home".

The Sisters and women survivors report that the training has a positive impact and strengthens their knowledge and skills in financial literacy. They feel more confident in their knowledge and skills, with increased capacity for economic empowerment opportunities for women accessing the CCC. The Sisters share financial literacy skills on an ongoing basis via the centre's core education activities.

Another Sister commented, "we can help the survivors with ways to assist them with financial literacy when they leave the centre".





## Kenya

AOA's partner, the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), assists highly vulnerable communities to develop small to medium-sized businesses. ACK's approach is to form support groups amongst people who take part in their training activities, utilising the strengths-based approach to consider actions that can improve the livelihoods of the group.

This means that people with similar experiences (for example, survivors of family violence, couples experiencing relationship break-down or people living with disabilities) work collaboratively to decide how to develop income-generating projects at either the group or household level.

This has continued to create a diverse range of businesses such as bead-making, production of re-usable sanitary napkins, plant nurseries or diversification of farming activities such as beekeeping.

One farmer, who belongs to a small business group for men, commented that,

*"The Agricultural officer advised us to plant tree tomatoes, as the market demand is high. We have sold some tree tomato seedlings to neighbours, and income from this covers costs such as manure and fertiliser. We already have a buyer for the fruit. We have a plan to start pawpaws, with 50 trees on a demonstration plot."*

The capacity and organisational structure of groups are developed with the aim of registering with the Government of Kenya as an autonomous Community-based Organisation (CBO). This allows groups to conduct their own fundraising. Well-developed groups register as CBOs and this enables them to gain access to a range of government supports including small grants and other resources. As a response to COVID-19, groups were taught to make soap detergent and reaped strong sales while also performing critical community service.

An independent evaluation in 2021 concluded these communities now have improved economic self-reliance and confidence with more households having increased incomes through income-generating activities. The majority (72.7%) of households declared an average annual income of above 100,000 Kenyan shillings (KES). This was an improvement compared to the baseline data that indicated that 50% of individuals had an average income of between KES. 0-5,000. (KES 5,000 = AUD\$58)

The *Imarisha Maisha* project in Kenya and the *Towards Abundant Life For All* project in Mozambique are supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Co-operation Program (ANCP)



## Mozambique

Our work in Mozambique encourages farmers to plant crops that hold the soil and assist in avoiding erosion. In 28 communities hosting people displaced due to violent conflict in the north of the country, the Anglican Diocese of Nampula is working with 560 farmers who are actively involved with conservation agriculture. They also work on understanding and trying to mitigate the impacts of climate change and deforestation.

Together, the Diocese and communities have managed to sow demonstration fields with a variety of crops and have planted sweet potato that minimises soil erosion while also providing a rich source of nutrition. Families have also been shown how to re-purpose plastic bottles to plant seedling trees as part of the Green Anglican program.

Luciano is the lead farmer in the community. After being trained himself, he then trained 19 others on conservation agriculture using his farm as a community demonstration farm.

*"I have personally learnt more about conservation agriculture. It was a blessing for the Church to come into our community and provide us with the training and assistance, especially with the addition of (displaced people) in our community".*

Through strengthening self-reliance, AOA and the Diocese of Nampula, in partnership with communities, are working on mitigating the impacts of climate change, enhancing much-needed food security, and improving Life. Abundantly. For All.



# Supporters Sowing Seeds

**AOA was established to be a conduit between Australian Anglicans and Anglicans (and like-minded organisations) working with people in need across the world. We recently spoke with Ruth Hamlyn-Harris and asked her why she supports the work of AOA.**

Born in Miles, in the Western Downs region of Queensland, Ruth moved at an early age to Brisbane with her parents and two older siblings and the family grew with another two siblings born in Brisbane.

The family attended St Matthew's Holland Park and when Ruth was about five they moved to East Brisbane, St Paul's Anglican Church becoming formative in her childhood and teenage years. She then trained as a nurse at Princess Alexandra Hospital (1964 - 1968.) One of the reasons for selecting nursing was in case she was called to be a missionary.

Ruth moved to Tasmania to do her Midwifery certificate in 1968 before returning to Brisbane to train in Maternal and Child Health. She worked in Maternal and Child Health clinics in Cairns and Rockhampton for short periods before moving to Europe in July 1970, returning via South Africa at the end of 1973; arriving home in 1974.

Ruth was involved in many activities at St John's Cathedral in the late 1970's and early 80's and then at St Barnabas' Sunnybank, where she led the Mission Support Group for some time. Now Ruth worships in a Retirement Village (where her parents were living 1993 -2008) in the Parish of Inala close to home.

While in Africa she visited Kenya where her sister was serving the Turkana people, with the African Inland Mission. Ruth realised that without knowing and understanding the culture and language, sharing her faith was almost impossible, and realised her mission would be with those with whom she could communicate. This was confirmed when she was involved with Education for Ministry, a course for laypeople.(1993–2007)

Whilst travelling and working in Europe she worked as a School Nurse for The Trefoil School in Edinburgh, begun by the Girl Guides to evacuate disabled children during the war. Finding this fulfilling, she looked to continue this on her return to Brisbane, working at Montrose Home for six years, and trained in Paediatrics at the Royal Children's Hospital in 1977.



At the end of 1980, choosing to look after families rather than individuals she left to work in Community Health, but rather than be assigned to paediatrics, found herself working in geriatric care. Although an unexpected outcome, she loved working with elderly people and remained in the sector for 10 years before early retirement due to a disability.

John Noble, had a critical role in Ruth's spiritual journey (from Sunnybank days in the 80's then when he was St Francis' Theological College until he was appointed Bishop of the Northern Region of Brisbane, 1993) and it was John who first mentioned AOA to Ruth.

However, it was reading Valerie Browning's book *Maalika: My Life among the Afar Nomads of Africa* that committed Ruth to become a supporter of AOA. "I went to hear Valerie speak and she wrote a very challenging inscription inside my copy of the book."



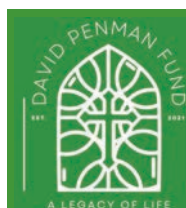
"As you read this book, work out how you can make things better."

Valerie Browning 2010

As Ruth continued her journey of support with AOA, she discovered that she had interests in many of the places AOA worked including North Africa, East Jerusalem and Myanmar.

Today, Ruth continues to support AOA, spreading seeds of hope amongst her network. She recently shared copies of AOA's Lenten Booklet with others where she worships. Ruth's commitment to helping others extends beyond this life, as in 2015 she contacted AOA to advise that she would leave a bequest so the lives of people in need could continue to be transformed.

Ruth's life of faith and service to others continues, with some signs of it slowing down. AOA is blessed to have many faithful supporters like Ruth. We give thanks for each of you and the seeds of hope and love that you sow into the lives of those in need.



The David Penman fund was established to enable supporters to leave a lasting legacy, bringing hope and changing the lives of the world's poor, through the projects of AOA.

For more information, contact us on 1800 249 880, [aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](mailto:aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au) or visit our website.

Copies of *Maalika* by Valerie Browning can be purchased for \$15 including postage.





## Child Sowers

During the season of Lent, Merri Creek Anglican Kids were able to raise funds for the Spafford Children's Center.

Modelling the sacrifice that Jesus made for us at Easter, the children were encouraged to raise money by doing jobs or giving up something they enjoy so they could help others in need.

Washing cars, walking and riding to school instead of catching the bus, and extra jobs around the house were some of the varieties of ways the children were able to raise money to fill their boxes. (Some parents even gave up coffee!).

The church had a Hot Cross Bun Drive with their local Bakers Delight to allow other congregation members to support the Center.

It was exciting to reach a total of \$510 for vulnerable and disadvantaged children in East Jerusalem.



Top: Some of the Merri Creek Anglican Kids with their donation boxes. Credit: J. Boonstra  
Bottom: Bishops court and the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Rev Dr Philip Freier.  
Credit: Anglican Media Melbourne.  
Left: Ruth. Credit: Ruth Hamlyn-Harris

## Thank You!

Thank you for supporting AOA's work to bring life to people living in poverty and disasters.

Throughout COVID-19, our supporters have enabled our work to continue, at a time when the pandemic multiplied the risks and dangers many of our overseas communities faced. Your support has been a source of hope.

AOA is blessed to have almost 275 supporters who have faithfully supported our mission for over 25 years. As we emerge from COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, this year we would like to thank and honour these amazing long-term supporters.

As President of AOA, the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Revd Dr Philip Freier, together with his wife Joy Freier OAM, will be inviting all our supporters of 25+ years to a "Thank You Garden Party", at Bishops court on Saturday, October 1st.

The beautiful gardens of Bishops court provide a wonderful opportunity to meet together and personally thank these faithful supporters.

For supporters living outside of Melbourne, or perhaps unable to travel due to health or age, we understand that you may not be able to attend. To express our sincere appreciation, we will send a certificate of appreciation to you by mail and remember you in prayer.

Supporters will receive invitations with full details shortly. If you haven't yet reached 25 years of support but would like to attend, please email us and we will place you on a waiting list. email: [aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](mailto:aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au)

We look forward to a very special day and sharing pictures of the event in the next edition of *Abundance* and on social media.





# Seeds of Life

In 2009, Marg Docking OAM visited Uganda as a midwife. What she found was needless maternal death, abandoned babies and children, and teenage mothers living on the streets. There seemed to be so many orphanages and aid organisations trying to help, yet few of the really poor Ugandan people seemed to have basic knowledge about family planning and pregnancy.

Marg decided to travel and meet people where they were, learning everything she could about local beliefs and Ugandan history in an attempt to understand why extremely large families were so common. The key seemed to lie in the many myths surrounding reproduction, how many valued women and children and their understanding of strength; (for men in Uganda, strength was measured by the size of their family). It was clear that if a change was to come, men would be a key force in that change.

"So working with the local people, we wrote down all the knowledge that was seen as the most critical to Ugandan families, and that was how Wise Choices For Life began."

Marg started a series of workshops on reproductive health, teaching a combination of practical medical knowledge and God's purpose and value for every life.

*"They were small at first but we were amazed to find that everyone that we talked to wanted to know more; they were so hungry for answers and to gain more knowledge."*

Marg and her team taught about relationships, conception, pregnancy, family planning, gender roles and critical thinking, leading participants to make wiser decisions for their future. Using discussion, reflection and dramas in an open atmosphere, allowed participants to question traditional myths and practices.

Once the course had been completed, participants were able to access a training kit with charts, models and tools, enabling them to pass their knowledge on to others. The demand for the workshops continued to grow.

Wise Choices For Life (WCFL) aims to empower Ugandans with knowledge about how God created their bodies, to know God's heart for their families, and to envision a better future.

"Choice over your fertility leads to choice over so many other circumstances in life."

After passionately serving the people of Uganda for 12 years and establishing Wise Choices For Life, Marg sadly passed away in 2021 after a battle with cancer.

Before her passing, the Board of WCFL commenced a search for an organisation that could continue Marg's vision.

Earlier this year, with the unanimous support of the WCFL Board and the blessing of Marg's family, WCFL was entrusted to Anglican Overseas Aid.

WCFL Uganda had previously become an independent entity, supporting Marg's belief that ultimately change had to be led by the Ugandan people. Independent, WCFL Uganda operates like AOA's other partners.



The smooth transition of WCFL Australia to AOA has been blessed by having two WCFL board members planning to join AOA in voluntary roles. Dr Andrew Smith has been proposed to join the AOA board, and Dr Janice Smith plans to bring her significant technical expertise to the AOA's development committee.

AOA is also excited to welcome Elizabeth Grace, WCFL Australia Operations Manager, into the AOA team.

The seeds of change that Marg spread in Uganda have continued to flourish and bear fruit. AOA is honoured to continue to support Marg's mission to help families in Uganda make wise choices for life.



Top: Marg Docking OAM Founder of Wise Choices For Life, and Joyce Kidulu, Country Director WCFL Uganda. Credit: WCFL

Above: Elizabeth Grace, Operations Manager WCFL at AOA, and the WCFL Logo

Right: Anna Beade, Mothers Union Chairperson and Adepto, Rt. Rev. Manuel Ernesto, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Nampula, Bishop Father Maurício Namilo of Mecuburi Parish. Credit: Anglican Diocese of Nampula.



# Bible Study

## Stewards of the earth

In this edition of *Abundance*, we have been exploring how we can sow seeds of hope, love, peace and self-reliance. Increasingly, our world is being impacted by climate change, whether floods and fires in Australia or the increasing rate of natural disasters across the globe. These are causing increased food security, human displacement, loss of lives and inequality.

How should we respond to this growing crisis? Our Bible study is prepared by the Rt. Rev. Manuel Ernesto, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Nampula, Mozambique. The Anglican Diocese of Nampula is AOA's program partner in Mozambique, where the nation is facing the significant challenges of internal armed conflict, internally displaced people, climate change and COVID-19.

*"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19: 9-10 (NRSV)*

To counter challenges, families, communities, workplaces, and countries may be tempted to exploit God's creation beyond its rhythms of sustainability and forget their moral responsibility for the most vulnerable in society.

However, God's ethical code commands landowners to be good stewards of God's resources and relationships by not exploiting the land beyond its limits and allowing the poor and the foreigner to glean from their farms.

In sparing the land, they fulfil God's holiness as their creator, and in leaving room for the poor and foreign residents to work, they provide people with dignified livelihoods. In challenging times, living simply so that many can simply live, is an act of faith and good stewardship.

Listening to God who speaks through the creation and learning the language of nature can help heal the planet. Likewise, limiting our consumption so that increased means of production are generated for many, enables a more equitable and sustainable life for all.

Jesus has equated the love of God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) with love for the neighbour (Leviticus 19:18) and made it the foundation of all moral requirements (Mark 12:30-31).

In response to Jesus' call to love our neighbour, we have seen a worldwide movement of solidarity and generosity in response to the pandemic.

However, in fully envisioning restoration in a post-COVID world, we need to move beyond charity to full inclusion and participation in God's family.

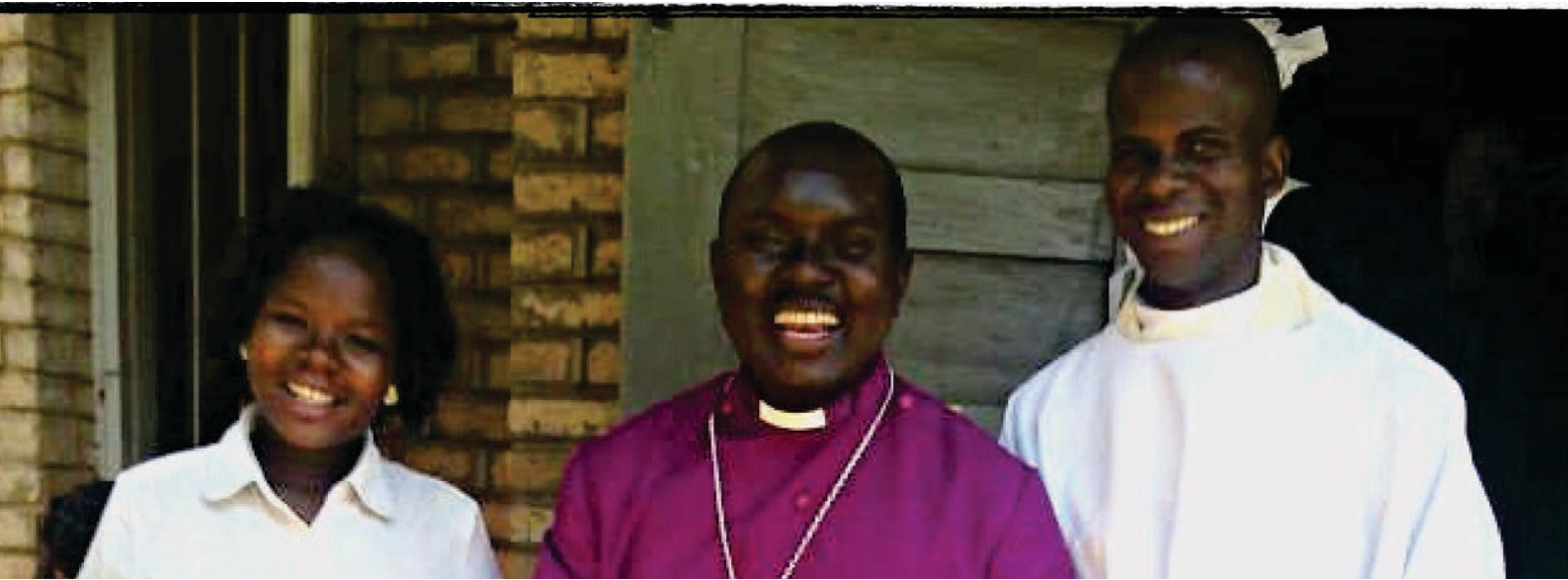
## Questions

- ✿ What actions can you take to improve your stewardship of the earth?
- ✿ "You should leave them for the poor and the alien." How do you feel Australians treat the "alien"? Are there opportunities for you to demonstrate kindness and support refugees, foreign students, foreign workers etc?
- ✿ "Living simply so that many can simply live." How does this statement resonate with you? Are there actions that you could take to live more simply?

## Prayer

*Generous and loving God, freely you gifted us with abundant resources from your creation and joyful relationships with your son Jesus.*

*Make us good stewards of your creation and let us be mindful of the needs and dignity of the most vulnerable in our communities. Amen.*



# Season of Creation



The Season of Creation is an annual Christian celebration to listen and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to pray and protect our common home, the 'Oikos' of God.

The Season "Celebration" begins on 1st September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends on 4th October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

Throughout the month-long celebration, the world's 2.2 billion Christians are encouraged to come together to care for our common home.

Anglican Overseas Aid is excited to join both Green Anglicans and the Act Alliance in partnering in this annual event.

This year we will unite around the theme, "Listen to the Voice of Creation." During the COVID-19 pandemic, many have become familiar with the concept of being muted in conversations. Many voices are muted in public discourse around climate change and the ethics of Earth-keeping. These are the voices of those who suffer the impacts of climate change. These are the voices of people who hold generational wisdom about how to live gratefully within the limits of the land. The 2022 Season of Creation theme raises awareness of our need to listen to the voice of creation.

The Psalmist declares, "The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." (19: 1-4)

Creation never ceases to proclaim, but do we listen?

During the Season of Creation, our common prayer and action can help us listen to the voices of those who are silenced. In prayer, we lament the individuals, communities, species, and ecosystems who are lost and those whose livelihoods are threatened by habitat loss and climate change. In prayer, we centre the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

Listening to the voice of creation offers members of the Christian family a rich entry point for interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue and practice. By listening to the voice of all creation, humans from all cultures and sectors of life can be joined in our vocation to care for our common home (Oikos).

May this 2022 Season of Creation renew our ecumenical unity! And may this season of prayer and action be a time to listen to the Voice of Creation, so that our lives in words and deeds proclaim good news for all the Earth!

The burning bush is the Symbol for the Season of Creation 2022.



**Listen to the  
Voice of Creation**  
SEASON OF CREATION 2022

Today, the prevalence of unnatural fires is a sign of the devastating effects that climate change is having on the most vulnerable of our planet. Creation cries out as forests crackle, animals flee, and people are forced to migrate due to the fires of injustice that we have caused.

On the contrary, the fire that called to Moses as he tended the flock on Mt. Horeb did not consume or destroy the bush. This flame of the Spirit revealed God's presence. This holy fire affirmed that God heard the cries of all who suffered, and promised to be with us as we followed in faith to our deliverance from injustice.

This symbol of God's Spirit calls us to listen to the voice of creation, and faithfully respond through worship, repentance and action. As you celebrate Season of Creation, light candles, adorn a bush in your place of worship or action. And may this symbol remind us to take off our sandals, contemplate our connection to holy ground, listen for the voice of creation, and be filled with hope to quench the fires of injustice with the light of God's healing love that sustains our common home.

## This Season - Get Involved

This September why not join us and commit to planting a tree as an act of renewal of the earth.



Plant a tree at your home.



Encourage your Parish to plant trees with your local Council or Landcare group.



Plant a tree to mark a special occasion or in memory of a loved one.



Give a plant as a gift to a neighbour or friend.



Invite your local MP to a tree planting event and share why this is important.



Engage with local indigenous leaders/groups to listen and learn about their perspectives on country.

Take a photo of your tree planting or activity and send it to [aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](mailto:aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au)



# Restoration without seeds

How do you regreen millions of hectares of land without planting a single tree or sowing seeds, and in the process restore hope to thousands of people?

World-renowned agronomist Tony Rinaudo knows the answer lies in focusing at the roots—of both trees and communities.

Tony and Liz Rinaudo arrived at the edge of the Sahara in 1981 to plant trees. Few trees survived in the hostile terrain, and those that did were relentlessly cut down. After two and a half years of failure, Tony discovered an embarrassingly simple method of restoring the landscape without planting a single tree

In his 17 years in Niger, Tony discovered a simple and affordable method of regreening land lay in reviving damaged trees rather than planting new ones. It's a technique that not only alleviates poverty and soaks up carbon, but also costs almost 36 times less than planting trees from scratch.

This approach named Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) has, from small beginnings, already regreened more than 18 million hectares in 27 countries, reduced our carbon footprint and transformed millions of lives and livelihoods.

For Tony, this is not only a restoration of land; the most remarkable transformation is the restoration of hope.

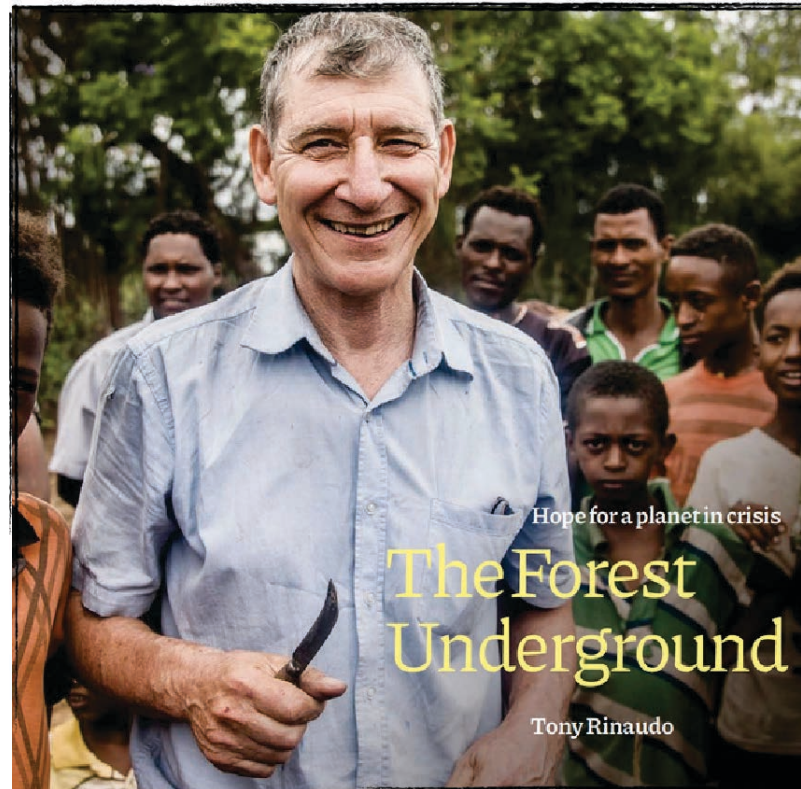
*"People's dignity was restored before our eyes. Think of how soul-destroying it is for parents not to be able to adequately feed, clothe and educate their children. Year after year of poverty takes its toll, and too many farmers have low self-esteem and see no way out of their predicament. Hopelessness sets in.*

*One of the greatest bonuses I received for my work was to witness a precious transformation as hope was restored. When people stopped being victims, and began to hope, they were changed forever. People were being empowered and liberated. FMNR did not create dependency. It was bottom-up development, putting individuals and communities firmly in the decision-making seat."*

In 1999, Tony and Liz returned to Melbourne, where they attend St Alfred's Anglican Church in Blackburn.

Tony has continued to champion FMNR and has earned numerous plaudits and awards for his efforts, including a Member of the Order of Australia, the Right Livelihood Award, and the Commandeur du Merit, Agricole award from the Niger government.

**"If you work with nature, miracles are possible".**  
Tony Rinaudo



Tony shares his insights and inspiring life story in his autobiography *The Forest Underground: Hope for a Planet in Crisis*.

*The Forest Underground* offers tangible hope for climate change, as well as a deeply moving account of one man's faith-journey.

In a seemingly hopeless crisis, this is the good-news story that will move hearts and hands to care for the planet.

Information on how you can purchase *The Forest Underground* can be found at [www.iscast.org/tfu](http://www.iscast.org/tfu) and it is available through Koorong.





The United Nations estimates that there are at least 1.5 million people who require immediate humanitarian assistance and protection in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and Nampula.

Can you help the Anglican Diocese of Nampula as they respond to this crisis?

# Multiplying Impact

Mozambique Appeal 2022



1800 249 880

Freecall

[www.anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](http://www.anglicanoverseasaid.org.au)

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☐ My cheque/money order is enclosed, made payable to Anglican Overseas Aid (Addressed to us at PO Box 389, Abbotsford VIC, 3067)

## Direct Bank Deposit\*

☐ Our Bank details are: BSB: 703-122 Account number: 05000470 Account name: Anglican Overseas Aid

\*(Please email [aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au](mailto:aoa@anglicanoverseasaid.org.au) with your name, postal address, project/campaign/ where most needed you wish to support, and the amount you deposited so we can send you a tax-deductible receipt)

## Thank you for your support.

Donations of \$2 and over are tax-deductible.

Appeal closes 31/07/2022. Your donation will be directed to a general fund that allows us to support our projects that are funded by the Australian Government. If donations exceed the amount required, any excess funds will be used for work where most needed.

Please consider a regular monthly donation to support this important work – call us on 1800 249 880 to organise a regular automatic deduction from your credit card or bank account.

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