



# Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Summer 2017 Newsletter

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

## ACPNG'S NEW ARCHBISHOP-ELECT

At the close of this June's Provincial Council meeting, Bishop Allan Migi from the New Guinea Islands Diocese was elected to be the next Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea. By far the longest serving of the five ACPNG bishops, Bishop Allan has been Senior Bishop for over a decade now. He will bring considerable experience to this primatial role over the next seven years, having worked in an Australian and two of PNG's dioceses, participated in the 2008 Lambeth Conference and been ACPNG's representative on the Anglican Consultative Council. A humble man, Bishop Allan was evidently overwhelmed by his election and the subsequent congratulatory telephone call from the Archbishop of Canterbury, inviting him to the next Primates Meeting in Canterbury in early October. Following his enthronement in Lae on 3rd September – PNG Martyrs' Day - Archbishop Allan will live and work at the Anglican compound in Lae, adjacent to the Anglican National Office. The Archbishop's office will comprise two staff:



*Archbishop-Elect Allan Migi*

Fr Peter Moi who, with a theology degree from St John's College, Auckland, was previously Principal of Newton Theological College. Fr Peter was appointed Provincial Mission & Ministry Coordinator at this same Provincial Council meeting. This new role is intended to help improve the standard of ministry across ACPNG's serving priests, whilst acting as an adviser to Newton College Council

Margaret Poynton, an experienced CMS mission volunteer from New Zealand, who will continue in her role as Executive Assistant to the ACPNG Archbishop. She will also continue to have responsibility for the proper use of funds provided by ACPNG's external partners; provide budgetary and financial oversight at Newton and Kerina Colleges; and will shortly be providing training for a new administrator at Newton College.

Margaret, having written the Koki parish article for our last Newsletter, has now provided this exclusive interview with the new Archbishop-Elect:

*How did you become involved in the Church?* "My elder brother, the late Fr John Barge Migi, was a priest in the church. His elder son, Fr Job Migi, is now a priest. My

second-born brother is an Evangelist and my other brother at home is parish Vice-Chairman. So you see that it has been a family interest and family calling. My interest for the church and with the church has been with me while I was at Primary School and, while growing up, I started realize that it was a Migis' family interest. During my high school days, my feeling of calling to be a priest became stronger. So, straight after grade 10, I decided to attend Newton Theological College in 1986.

While at Newton College for four years, I felt God's calling deeper and deeper. I was ordained Deacon in December 1989, at Rabaul in New Guinea Islands; ordained priest in November 1990; and elected to be Bishop of New Guinea Islands Diocese in November 2000."

*Where did you serve before becoming Bishop of NGI?* "The parishes I serve before I was consecrated as a bishop in February 2001 were: Rabaul Parish NGI Diocese 1990-1991; Frenchville Parish in Queensland 1992 - 1994; Nindewari and Kokoda parishes in Popondetta Diocese from 1994-1996; then back to NGI, serving at Kumbun parish from 1997-1999; then Menpa parish in 2000."



*Archbishop-Elect Allan Migi, retiring Archbishop Clyde Igara and their Executive Assistant, Margaret Poynton*

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What is your vision for ACPNG? “My vision for ACPNG is to:

- guide and find a way forward in strengthening and supporting the ongoing church ministries carried out by clergies, catechists, religious orders and church organisations
- maintain unity in the church by putting some of the things back in order and back on the track
- understand each other’s situation in all the dioceses and move together as church
- regain the confidence of everybody internally and externally”

Finally, a bit about your family? “Thank you. Mary is my wife and we have five children. The first girl, Annie, has married and had twins girls. My other four children are Dulcie, Daphnie, Marrie and Junior Allan still in school.”

Archbishop-Elect Allan has invited PNGCP Chair, Bishop Peter Ramsden, to preach at his Enthronement. Bishop Jonathan Meyrick, representing the Norwich Diocese Link, will also attend the Enthronement on 3rd September. Both UK bishops, together with those attending from Australia,



NGI Bishop Allan Migi and Mother Mary at 2008 Lambeth Conference

Melanesia and New Zealand, will participate in a Partners’ Meeting called by Archbishop Allan for the following day.

*Editor’s note: We anticipate that Archbishop Allan will be available to speak to us at our next PNGCP Supporters’ Day in London on Saturday 30th September, before going on to attend the Primates Meeting the following day*

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## OCEANIA PRIMATES TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE THREAT

Earlier this year, Archbishop Clyde Igara met with his fellow Primates from Australia, Melanesia and Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia to issue a warning of the threat to their region from climate change. In a joint statement, the five Primates said, “We agreed that as whole nations of ocean people lose their island homes, climate justice advocacy and action must become the most urgent priority for Oceanic Anglicans”.

The Primates noted that they were four Provinces covering many nations, more than 1,000 languages, with rich and diverse cultures. They said they were united through the interweaving of history and long friendships, but were coming together through a backdrop of disharmony: “We gather at a time when nationalism, ridicule, fear-mongering and hatred are so prevalent. In such a climate where ‘me first’ or ‘we first’ dominates, we affirm: ‘we together’.

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## MELANESIAN PARTNERSHIP

At the beginning of July, Archbishop George Takeli and Senior Bishop Nathan Tome from the Anglican Church of Melanesia attended the ACPNG Provincial Council meeting in Port Moresby to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Provinces.

The MoU will see closer Anglican ties within Melanesia; contribute to a deeper understanding and development of a Melanesian Theology; and resource-sharing in Theological Education.

In future, the Melanesian Archbishops will be able to stand together on issues facing both Provinces, such as climate change. Following the signing, Archbishops George and Clyde planted two Modawa trees in the grounds of St Johns Cathedral, Port Moresby.



Retiring PNG Archbishop Clyde Igara and the new Archbishop of Melanesia, George Takeli, plant two modawa trees as the symbol of accord between the two Provinces. ACPNG’s Archbishop-Elect, Allan Migi, is second from right in the blue shirt.

## CHALLENGING TIMES AT KERINA COLLEGE

It has been a traumatic year for all at Kerina Evangelists' College, ACPNG's training institution at Tsendiap in Aipo Rongo Diocese. Fr Newton Ekoda left the College for family reasons in the middle of 2016 and is now parish priest at Koki in the Port Moresby Diocese. Fr Peter Mandap, the College Principal, took sick-leave at the beginning of the year and sadly died in May. Bishop Peter Ramsden remembers him well as a lively curate during his time at All Souls Parish, Lae. Although unwell himself, Fr Martin Boken stepped in to fill the void left by these two absences. This was only to be for a short time as he passed away in June.



Visitors welcome to Kerina College graduation

Faced with the urgency of this situation, having just appointed Fr George Kasmé of New Guinea Islands Diocese to the position of lecturer at Newton College, the House of Bishops were obliged to relocate him to a similar position at Kerina College. With only one lecturer and the immense pastoral need there, Fr Adam Wali, parish priest at Koinambe, was also asked to go to Kerina to support Fr George and the students. As the Koinambe air-strip is currently closed, Fr Adams' relocation involved a tough two-day walk. Kerina College continues to be supported administratively by Margaret Poynton as part of her overall responsibilities in the Archbishop's Office.



Students' wives wearing their village costumes for graduation

## SIMBAI REFLECTIONS

*This latest Newsletter dispatch comes from Lynn and Tony Fry, mission volunteers from Norwich Diocese:*

"Working in Simbai we are never bored. Tired, yes. Hungry, yes. Frustrated, yes. But never bored. There are so many challenges, mentally, physically and spiritually that Tony and I spend time each evening discussing our day and trying to find some insight and wisdom. We see very clearly here, the issues with an imported Western culture. Very many good things were done - education, bringing peace to warring tribes and of course bringing the light of the Gospel and all that brings. But they also received a foreign culture the country still struggles to assimilate into their own. While on the surface, there is governance and institutions and Christian teaching, you don't have to dig too far to find the conflict with the PNG culture.

While there is a structure of law and order, local justice rules in the remote areas and it can be swift and brutal. While technically there is meritocracy, in reality the 'wantok' system is deeply embedded and becoming stronger. Clan members are given priority over everyone else. While 90% of the country are Christian, there is a widespread fear of witchcraft and a belief in natural spirits that rule the land. When local culture and Christianity come together, it is wonderful. It is thrilling to see the Gloria sung in tok ples with kundu drummers in bilas dancing up the aisle.

It is a troubled country, 40 years into independence, and seeking to step into maturity as a confident nation. It is sad to see education declining. Although numbers

registered in schools are up, attendance is poor for pupils and staff and there is a shortage of good management. But the desire for learning is there. In Simbai, we have started a small business-centre at the vocational college, training a hardworking and focussed group in office skills and service to the community. Other students study Tourism and Hospitality, Carpentry and Agriculture.

As I write, the community is preparing for a three-day St Lawrence celebration. For the last two weeks, everyone has been busy: pandanus huts sleeping 100 have been erected; cleaning-up teams are everywhere; and there have been nightly singing practices in the church. There will be around 200 baptisms and confirmations and 25 new members will be welcomed into the Mothers Union.

Life here is challenging. In between lessons, there is chopping firewood, finding food and fetching water. We cook in the outside kitchen on the floor. Our hygiene standards are declining - washing by candlelight might seem romantic but it really isn't! After a difficult day, when I was feeling sorry for myself, I sat in the church praying for wisdom. I received these words, 'Sometimes we are called out of self-absorption and become models of love'. So that is what we are trying to do. Whatever our life circumstances, in the end it comes down to - do we really trust God? Do we trust Him to give us what we need? Do we trust Him to guide us? High in the mountains of Papua New Guinea, we are learning the answer."

*Apologies for two errors in the Easter 2017 Newsletter: particularly for mis-spelling Dr Pene Key's name in the item acknowledging her life and death; also for 'Koko' appearing in a photo caption about the life of Koki parish. Editor*

## MIDLAND'S ORDINATION

PNGCP Committee member Revd Ed Backhouse, who had two ACPNG placements during his training, writes:

“On the 9th of July, I was ordained by the Bishop of Derby, Alastair Redfern, in All Saints Church, Aston where I am to serve as Assistant Curate. The service went extremely well and one did not have to look far to see the PNG connection. Two ex-PNG Bishops, Peter and Roger, were present and wore tapa-cloth stoles for the occasion. I also had a tapa stole that had been given to me during my 2016 visit by the Jiregari family and made by Mother Guka for the purpose of my ordination. Since my ordination, there has been much interest in ACPNG by the Bishop and Archdeacon as well as my parishioners. This will hopefully strengthen after Fr Luscombe and Fr Giles from Newton College spend most of a week here with me in September. I look forward to serving my parishes and contributing to the cause of PNGCP in the coming years.”



Bishops Peter Ramsden (PNGCP Chair and previously Bishop of Port Moresby) and Roger Jupp (previously Newton College Principal, then Bishop of Popondota) were two of Ed's sponsors at the ordination

## HOME-GROWN TALENT

Simon Kamong, NGI Diocesan Secretary, shares another ACPNG story of achievement through hard work and dedication:

Deini Tapi comes from near Alotau in Milne Bay Province. After training as a Community Health Worker at St Margaret's College in Popondetta, he spent several years in Koinambe Health Centre, in Aipo Rongo Diocese. He then worked in similar posts in his own Dogura Diocese before transferring to NGI Diocese. There, his hard work and building of a new Aid Post at Au, caught the eye of Ulch Tapia, a Lutheran then working as Anglican Health Secretary. Ulch seconded Deini to the University of PNG at Goroka to take a degree in Rural Health. Upon graduation, he was then appointed to Dogura Diocese as Diocesan Health Services Coordinator, before becoming Diocesan Health Secretary back in NGI Diocese in January 2017.

## ACPNG, PNGCP & PNG NEWS:

- Br Oswald Dumbari SSF has been re-elected as the Franciscan Minister Provincial for PNG for a second term. Br Oswald was awarded the Member of the Logohu in the PNG New Year's Honours List at the beginning of the year, for Services to the Anglican Church of PNG and to the people of the Oro Province. The SSF Provincial Chapter meeting in July was attended by the newly-elected Minister General for the worldwide SSF, Br Christopher John, originally from the Waikato region of New Zealand.
- After seven years at Newton Theological College, the last five as Principal, Fr Peter Moi has been appointed as the Provincial Mission and Ministry Coordinator to work with Archbishop Allan Migi. The Deputy Principal (Academic), Fr Leonard Jinga, has been Acting Principal for the last six months whilst continuing his on-line theology degree studies with a South African university, with the financial support of the Scottish Episcopal Church and PNGCP. Retired Archbishop Clyde Igara will act as caretaker-Principal (Administration) for the foreseeable future.
- Following the appointment of Bishop Allan Migi as Archbishop, Bishop Nathan Ingen of Aipo Rongo Diocese has become ACPNG's Senior Bishop.
- Although PNG had the highest ever number of women candidates in the recent national elections, not one was elected to Parliament

## A JOURNEY THROUGH LENT WITH PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PNGCP has an attractive, illustrated booklet available for use by Lent Groups this coming year. In five highly-informative chapters, participants will travel from The Last Supper to the Crucifixion and each will reflect on a key aspect of life in PNG, with suggestions for discussion and prayer. Booklets are £2.50 each, p&p included. Please send your order, cheque email or tel.no., and posting details to Janet Wells at the PNGCP address at the end of this Newsletter.



With grateful thanks to the following for their contributions and help in compiling this Newsletter: Margaret Poynton; Simon Kamong; Lynn & Tony Fry; Ed Backhouse; Janet Wells; +Peter & Sue Ramsden; Peter Milburn; Jasper Rea. Any comments, queries or ideas to the Editor, John Rea [johnndellarea@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:johnndellarea@yahoo.co.uk)



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