

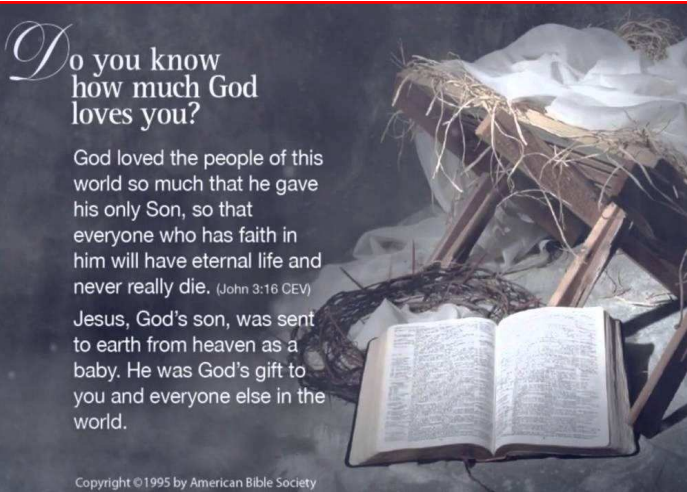
Life in the Vine

December 2017

Volume 23, Issue 4

*"What is Christmas? -
God's love Gift of Jesus to You."*

"This is how God showed His love to us. He sent (gifted) His one and only son into the world that we might live through Him" 1 John 4:9



"Behold I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. ...You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." Luke 2:10

Inside this Issue



Children's Ministry
Page 5



Asaroka Partnership
Page 7-10



Confirmation
Pages 12-13



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[YouTube](#) **GGLC YouTube**

Pastor Greg Shares

God the Father's Gift of Jesus

Our family always loves Christmas, despite the chaos that often surrounds it. Even though we know **how profound it is that God himself leaves heaven to enter our world just so that we could be closer to him**, we always get caught up in the busyness of Christmas preparations & often don't reflect on why we are doing them. Synchronising travel plans, organising food, shopping for gifts & wrapping them, all take time & usually don't give us much pleasure. But one activity causes us to stop, reflect and enjoy each other and our faith; decorating the tree.

Every year we put the same decorations on the tree, in the same order. As we do we reminisce about Christmases past; what we were doing, with whom we were celebrating. We also treasure the hand-made decorations that the children made throughout the years. The battered piece of coloured paper, roughly shaped like a star, means more to us than the expensive store bought accessories. **Each time we place a humble, made-with-love decoration we think about Mary that first Christmas.**

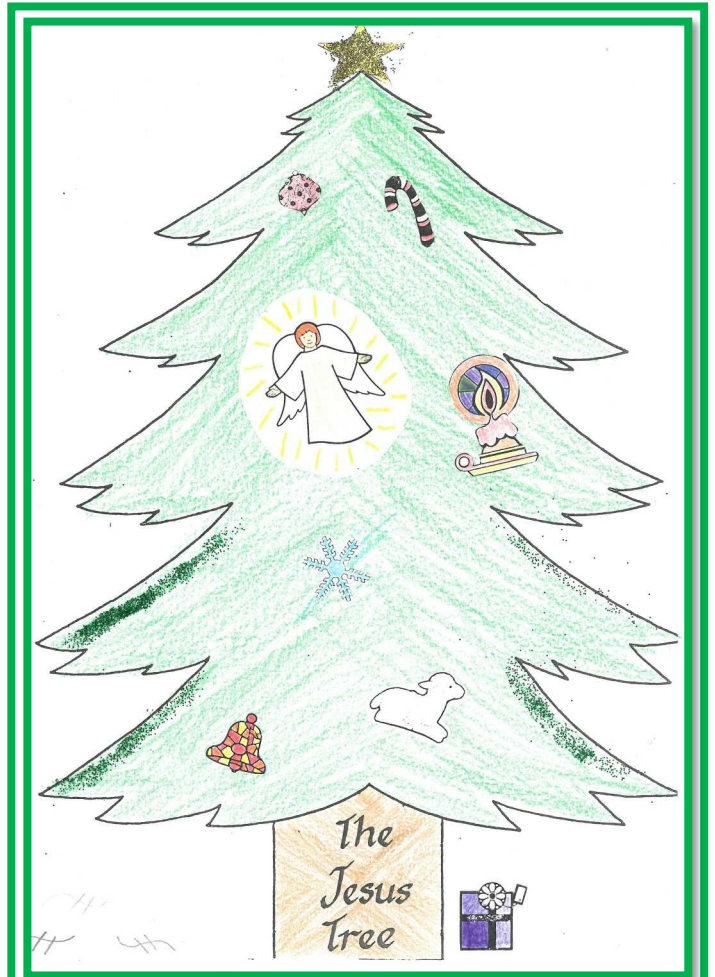
And Mary said:

***"My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.***

***From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.***

***His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation."* Luke 1:46-50**

Just as Mary was overwhelmed by the love of God to choose her to carry the baby Jesus, we **ponder how blessed we are to enjoy the presence of Jesus in our lives. Everything is different with the gift of Jesus.** We do not travel the journey of life alone. We are recipients of his blessing, just as Mary declared. The Christmas story carries a promise that everyone who follows Jesus will enjoy the gifts he has for his people. The battered decorations, the lights on the tree and the simple exchange of gifts warms our hearts as we, **like Mary, glorify the Lord for his gift of Jesus at Christmas.**



Everything on the tree reminds us of Jesus, that is why we call it the Jesus Tree.

Christmas tree: this evergreen tree reminds us that Jesus is alive.

Snowflakes: this reminds us that God makes us all different because we're all special to Him.

Angels: this reminds us that the angels told Mary that she was going to have a baby, they visited the shepherds and filled the sky with praises to God and they watch over us every day.

Candy cane: this reminds us of the stick that the shepherds use. Jesus is our Good Shepherd.

Woolly lamb: this reminds us that we are Jesus' little lamb and that He takes good care of us.

Bell: this reminds us of the beautiful sounds of people singing praises to God.

Round Bell: this reminds us of the beautiful world God has created for us.

Star: this reminds us of the star that the Wise Men followed to find the Newborn King.

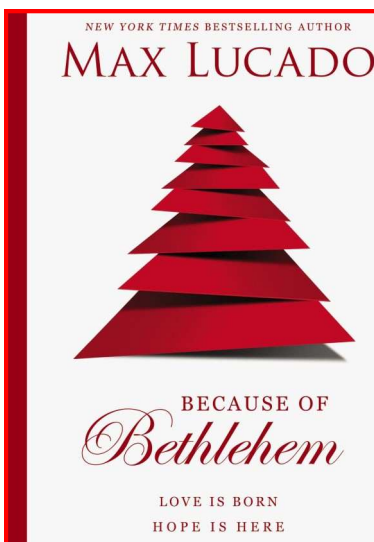
Presents: this reminds us of the very first Christmas gift that God gave to us – His son Jesus.

From the Editor



Welcome to the final edition of 'Life in the Vine' for 2017. As the school year comes to a close and Christmas approaches people seem to become frazzled and anxious about all that needs to be done. Some people feel uncomfortable and do not look forward to Christmas for various reasons. BUT for me, Christmas is a wonderful time of the year as I wait expectantly for the arrival of the Christ child as a babe in Bethlehem—bringing afresh to me the great love God has personally given to me (which is for all peoples). It is the celebration of Christ's birth promised long ago in the Old Testament and recorded in the New Testament—a part of God's amazing plan to bring all people back to Him. This plan was completed with Christ's death and resurrection which we rejoice in over Easter. For me Christmas isn't about getting caught up in the festivities, the presents and the decorations (although they are nice). For me Christmas is this gift of love from God. A love so great that he would gift His only son to life on earth and then death... so I could live with God forever in His presence. I pray that this Christmas you will keep your eyes focussed only on Jesus and His great love for you. All the rest will take care of itself. Christmas without Christ is no Christmas.

Rosalie Hoklas – Editor contact email: hoklas@internode.on.net

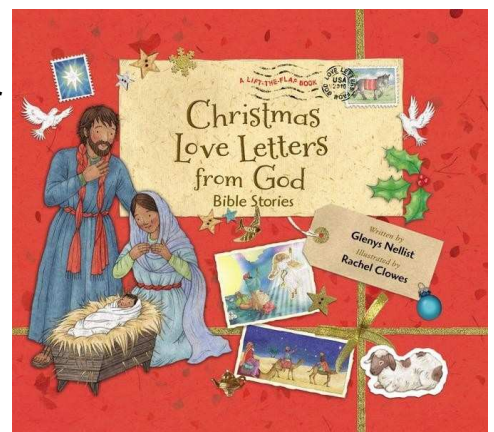


Looking for a great read that will help you stay focused on Jesus and His birth. Max Lucado has a book just about this titled 'Because of Bethlehem'. Join with Max in this lively, heartwarming celebration of all things Christmas. On every page, Max's words will encourage, captivate and inspire you, but most importantly, they'll point you towards the One worth celebrating. Max Lucado loves Christmas. The carols & cookies, the decorations & favorite films, the warmth & generosity of the season. But most of all, he loves it because it's during this time of year that people will wonder and inquire about the baby born in the manger. This little baby became the King on the cross. Christmas proclaims the truth of Easter to come.

Check out:: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PINXitf-q4>

Are you looking for a great way to help your children focus on and learn of Jesus birth? If so, check out the book "Christmas Love Letters from God" (This is one of a series of books about love letters from God.)

'Christmas Love Letters from God' written by Glenys Nellist cleverly combines both prose and poetry as the story of Jesus' birth unfolds. The book begins with Isaiah's prophecy and ends with the visit of the wise men. Following each story, the child will find his or her own letter from God, written as if God is speaking, folded into a small envelope attached to the page. A Bible verse, entitled God's Perfect Promise, accompanies each story & letter as God's personal words of love, promise, & hope.



Jesus was God's gift to the world. But it wasn't just for Christmas. It is a gift that has been given every day of every year since that time, and the gift is still freely given.



Highlights from Church Council

Jon Schutz - GGLC Chairperson

- In my first Life in the Vine article as Chairperson, I said that the **“Church Council itself doesn’t ‘do’ the ministry, but it’s there to make sure it happens”**. Reflecting on that it is pleasing to see how Ruth and Dave have picked up their leadership roles in Christian Education and Pastoral Care respectively and we are starting to see some exciting developments as a result. Some have been well publicised – such as the upcoming one-day seminars and 4-week course – but other things are also happening behind the scenes and having a positive impact on the lives of people in our community.
- **GGLC Foyer Renovations** including Coffee Space, Play space, Pastor’s Office, Toilets – after a long period of planning, we are almost at the point of starting to build.
- **The Finance Team** met in September and has produced a provisional budget for Congregational approval at the Half Yearly Meeting. About 65% of our budget is invested in people, paying the salaries of Pastor, Pastor’s Secretary, Children’s Ministry Worker and Youth Coordinator, and training. 24% is allocated to utilities and property costs, including loan repayments. 6% is allocated to the LCA SA/NT District, leaving 5% for various other running costs.
- **Our 2017 budget position is a concern.** Projections based on figures to the end of October point to an end of year deficit of \$30,000, in part due to extraordinary expenses such as the altar and sanctuary furniture that were commissioned as part of our 30th Anniversary. Setting aside extraordinary expenses, donations are falling \$17,500 short of the budgeted figure. Last year at the same time our budget was in a similar position, but thanks to the support of members we ended with a very small surplus.
- With building commencing and a new loan to repay, we would like to enter 2018 on a firm financial footing, so **we ask again for your support to bring our budget back to a balanced position.** Details of how contributions can be made are in the weekly bulletin and e-news.

At the end of this year, Daniel Dutschke will be stepping down as Property Coordinator and Allyson Dutschke will be retiring from the position of ChildSafe Coordinator. Daniel will continue to support the Property Team. Also Alexandra Schmocker will finish her service on Church Council as Youth representative. **We thank them all for their valuable contributions.**

It has been a big year with the 30th Anniversary celebrations as a highlight, but **we have much to look forward to for the coming year!**



SAVE THE DATE

Sat 20th January 2018

For the inaugural

‘Education Saturday’

held at Golden Grove Lutheran Church.

Guest presenter is

Dr. John Kleinig

Come to grow and enrich your faith, hear from God’s word and enjoy the fellowship of others.

More details to come

Speak to Ruth Zimmermann or Pastor Greg if you would like learn more about this amazing day.



Children's Ministry

By Natasha Jaeschke



Golden Grove Lutheran Church children's ministry involves a partnership with parents to guide children towards the **HEART of GOD**. Children are a blessing from the Lord. With these blessings also come responsibilities. As stewards of God's children, parents are responsible for helping children grow physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. Churches also have a responsibility toward children. We want to provide an environment in which children are safe, are taught at an age-appropriate level, and are encouraged to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. Highlights of this ministry are:

Mainly Music -Each week, parents & caregivers bring their children for a thirty minute session of music, rhyme, movement, listening and more. The adults must participate in the session, and in fact, it is vital that they do so, because this encourages the children to enter into the actions and singing. In Term 3 and 4 it was all about making music where the children used a variety of instruments culminating in a percussion band. The number of children participating is slowly growing with an average of eight each session.



Kids @ Heart - is a ministry based program held during Sunday morning worship at 9:30am. We recently learned about the Lutheran Reformation which celebrated 500 years in 2017. We also discovered why the "Wise man built his house upon the rock" and what message Jesus was teaching us through the "Parable of the bags of gold/talents".

For each of these topics the children have viewed and discussed abstract art, viewed YouTube animation of the story, found the book of Matthew in the Bible - as well as enjoying dancing and singing to biblical songs. Everyone loves Kids@Heart!

CC's - Children of Christ is an opportunity for members of Golden Grove Lutheran Church to assist and serve the children of Golden Grove Lutheran Primary School, thus forming strong connections. Each CC's evening Pastor Greg and Paul (Youth Worker) assist me to run each session. Members of Golden Grove Lutheran Youth have assisted the children and enjoyed forming relationships with them. Leanne Schiller has been instrumental in assisting me with organising a hospitality group to help with snacks on the evening but most importantly to interact with parents as they watch their children participate. I would like to thank all those who assist on the hospitality team. I would also like to thank Joel, Robert and Jordie who take care of IT, light and music at each CC's. Some highlights this year have been the disco and games evening, Games 2 U, movie night and Christmas craft.



The final CC's was held on the 24th November and was a 'wheels' evening.



Golden Grove Lutheran Youth

G'day all

A lot has happened in the last few months & we are almost done for the year. It has been fantastic to have 34 youth come through this term. It's been awesome to see how the regulars welcome the newcomers like they have always been here. On top of new youth coming in we also have had more leaders join our team. This has made nights much easier as the team are not having to commit to every Friday night. Our Jr leaders are also getting more involved in helping organize events and are really good role models for the younger youth. It's been incredible to see their growth over the year. They also help with CC's when its running, as well as some of the older youth who are not quite old enough to be Jr leaders. It's great to see so many of the youth wanting to be involved and grow their leadership abilities.

The same format continues for Bible Studies with Pastor Greg leading. This term we have looked at what is sin. We have had great discussions in small groups on this topic and a lot of great questions come from it also. The games nights have been super. This term we kicked off with a



sports night and played different games indoor & outdoor.

We had our second NELY (North Eastern Lutheran Youth) event. We hosted a worship night with some chill out games beforehand in which a large percentage of our youth attended. We visited Salisbury Bowling Club where



Jono Voigt ex state player and Peter Voigt a coach came out and guided us in how to play, giving us some pointers. A

big thanks to the club for not only hosting us but also for giving us a great deal. The year finished with the amazing race & a mystery box dinner to cap it off. Each night has a devotion led by one of the leaders, ending with small groups.

Term 2 saw the start of a young adults group run by Jesse Hahn. They meet Monday nights in the youth room beginning with board games from 6:30pm. The main session begins at 8:30pm & have covered a range of topics. It is open to anyone out of school.

As Pastor Greg would say in conclusion: "It's been a fantastic year & I am excited to see what next year brings." God bless Paul Voigt

Not to be missed

Come and visit the baby born in Bethlehem

@ Golden Grove Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve Service

Sunday 24th December @ 7pm

& let us worship this babe - our saviour Jesus Christ

on Christmas Day

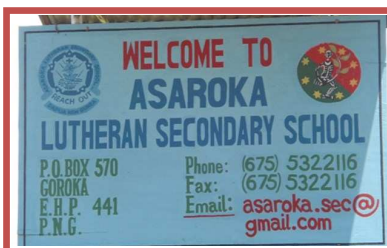
Monday 25th December @ 9:30am

**Corner Richardson & Sunnybrook Drives
WynnVale**

Contact: 8282 6051 or Pastor Greg: 0413 075 665

**All welcome...
so bring your family & friends
for an experience of
true
Christmas Joy**





Asaroka Partnership



Jesus said, "I am the vine, You are the branches." John 15:5



Asaroka High School was started in 1962 by our member Pastor Len Tscharke and was from years 7-10, a continuation of the Primary School grade levels. These schools were the first English speaking Lutheran Primary & High Schools in the highlands.

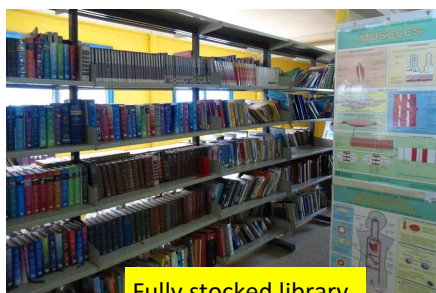
Our Partnership began with our first visit in 2006, after Pastor Len and Claire saw that the school was not in good shape and he felt a strong calling from God to assist.

In 2006, the School had 800 students. **In 2017 School has approx 2500 students**, with 1,000 of them boarders. Many students have become day scholars and they walk or bus to school. There are 65 teachers, including Principal Peter Hasu and 3 Deputies. Due to the lack of teacher housing on campus many need to travel to school each day.

Asaroka High School was **granted Secondary School status in 2010**, with the first Year 12's graduating in 2011. In 2016 they graduated 320 year 12s.

Asaroka High School has a proud history of helping produce many country and community leaders.

To date we have had 6 groups from Golden Grove visit Asaroka with 34 different members, within a wide range of age groups. We have had 2 visits from the Schools to us. Once the Primary and Secondary Principals and another time the Secondary Principal and several department heads.



Fully stocked library

Early practical help achievements

included: Helping to set up the schools first computer suite, repairs to the important water

system for the farm, repairs to the farm machinery, stocking the library with books, the supply of many text books and installing a phone

system into the school. The Primary School built a new building to house a computer suite and library which we have stocked.



Containers 1 & 2 now used for storage

We have now supplied 3 containers of school resources. While focus is on the secondary school due to their great needs, we have also supplied many resources to the Primary & the Elementary Schools. While it has been important to help the schools in a practical way, a large **focus of our Partnership is about Relationships and Encouragement**. The results of this has been quite significant in the reunification of the local communities with regards to their support of the schools and the importance of education to their children.



New Home economics classroom.. New computers

They have done much in and around their schools to build on new infrastructure and improve what was there and their programmes. The Outreach Team is active. Teams of students go into villages on weekends to support the residents and run Christian programmes.

The Principal Peter Hasu has said that his goal is that every student has a personal relationship with God by the time they finish their schooling there. They greatly appreciate the support – all done with the love of Jesus.

Asaroka believes the partnership is here to stay as long as Golden Grove & Asaroka exist.



2017 Team Reflects On Their Trip To PNG



Daniel Dutschke (team leader) I was last in Asaroka with my family in 2011. Back then, I had seen improvements in the infrastructure (since my trip in 2007). New classrooms & other buildings painted. Since then the PNG Government started it's Free Education policy which saw the numbers rise very dramatically at most schools. Asaroka went from about 1000 to 2500 students with class sizes of 80 in some instances. This has put a huge strain on all there, Principal, staff, students & the infrastructure. There are now more buildings and more happening currently and planned, to try to cope with these numbers. **They are so grateful for the resources we have sent them and are trying hard to manage and use them carefully & efficiently.** While there, we could sense the strain they were all under in the post-election period they were in and were very grateful to the school for the time we were given and the staff who spent valuable time with us. We know they had to play 'catch up' with their own work when they returned to the school at the end of the day with us. The school management has to be very prudent with what money they have & use it wisely where there is the greatest need at the school, which means other areas may miss out. We all need to be very supportive of this regardless of our own thoughts and continue to keep them in our prayers. We had some beautiful times with them, including a Partnership Re-Dedication with Martin Akira on the Sunday at Church at Asaroka. The encouragement we continue to give them gives them the strength to continue in their valuable work of both 'Kingdom Building' and 'Nation Building'.



We also had some great time with Himony, Ennie (guest house), Helen Rende, Pastor Baitel from St Johns and some of the other Nurses who continue the friendships begun many years ago. The encouragement all these others get from our friendships (& we from them), is also so important in our relationship building up there. Their love for us is very clear. They know we are there as friends, to love and support them all as one family in Christ.



Allyson Dutschke Returning to Asaroka and Goroka in September felt like visiting family – it was a delight to renew relationships with many people we had met 6 years ago, and to see what has changed in their lives, while also sharing what God has done in ours.

One frequent question was: "where are Karl and Sarah?" as many remembered them travelling with us. Having taken photos with us, it was very special to share these with our friends.

One young man made himself known to us – Emmanuel Nando – he and Karl became good mates during our previous visit, and it was very special to tell him about what Karl was doing and find out that Emmanuel was also now studying at University. (He even still had the family photo from 6 yrs. ago – so we updated it with a new one)

Another very special person we wanted to visit was - Osborne Tinkeo, however we were only able to see briefly when he came to the airport before we were leaving. He is the son of our beautiful sister Siam, who passed away in 2016. It was very special that we could meet with him and share some precious time together before we flew home. These two young men are our 'Sons', and we think of them often and keep them in our prayers.



My other special times were the worship opportunities – at St. John's in Goroka, and also with the Asaroka school community. The worship with these people is very heartfelt and genuine, and while it may not have the 'polish' we like to give the services in our church, there is a great sense of faith and connection – both with each other and with Christ. To be part of these experiences leaves you feeling very warm and embraced. Oh, and being included in the receiving line with Pastor Baitel after church in Goroka was lovely – shaking the hands and receiving blessing from many – including many of the nurses who have visited here with us previously.



It was a lovely trip, full of blessings, and I look forward to returning again.

The partnership continues and the next trip will be sometime between July-September 2019



Ken Tscharke The visit to Papua New Guinea recently was a very enjoyable & a blessed time. It was a time to reconnect with the people at the Asaorka schools, and with our many friends in the town of Goroka. I particularly enjoy meeting the local people, as many of them were previously living near us at the Asaroka Lutheran Secondary School many years ago. (Our family lived at the Asaroka school in the 1960's and early 1970's.) Some of the people have since passed away, but many are still living and are involved within the Lutheran Church, live in Goroka town and near the Asaroka schools.

I have often found most people in Papua New Guinea to be quite open to the Christian faith. It often happens when shopping in their supermarkets, to hear Christian music being played through the speakers. (Hillsong, hymns, are often played within their shops.) In Australia we can learn a lot from them about their openness to the Christian faith.

It is always a real blessing for us as a group to spend time in worship with the people. They always love music and the playing of guitars in worship. May God bless our partnership relationship with the schools at Asaroka, and I look forward to visiting them again soon.



Pastor Greg PNG, a Land of Grace

'Lukim yu' our PNG friends said to us as we left Goroka airport. It means 'see you later'. As I boarded the plane I promised myself that we would definitely see each other again soon. Even before our flight from Goroka to Port Moresby landed I felt sad that I wouldn't be able to see my beautiful PNG brothers and sisters for another two years.



Jesus commanded us to **'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (John 13:34)**, and that's what we experienced when we shared 10 days at Asaroka.

Everywhere we went our team was showered with love and the grace of Jesus. Staff at the school gave up their entire week to work with us, despite having an increased academic workload because of the late start of term. After serving us all day, these teachers returned to school & worked late into the night & then collected us early the following day. We never witnessed their sacrifice; all we saw was their willingness to give unconditionally. This is the essence of our partnership. Grace given & grace received. Worshipping with the school community on the last Sunday enacted our union, with Christ at the head. We bless each other because we first received from Jesus and we come together to glorify God with our common faith. There was an experience of the Holy Spirit during worship as if God himself was anointing this relationship. There is no doubt I have been changed by this visit with our brothers and sisters in PNG. Reflecting on our trip over the last few months I believe that we receive far more from them than they receive from us. I would encourage us all to prayerfully consider joining the Asaroka ministry team. Everyone who visits Asaroka is moved in Spirit. As Jesus' disciples our faith is refreshed.

Kuno Berghout Asaroka is a place of contrast

I went there expecting a third world country and it certainly is, but it's changing unbelievably fast. Rubbish is burnt in the streets but lots of people have mobile phones. People walk everywhere but I saw more Toyota Landcruisers than I did in Coopers Creek.

I find it amazing how well the people have adapted to change so far but can't help wondering how they will go in the future as more and more western influence is brought to them.

The number of schools and churches was also a surprise. Given that Asaroka is not on the main road but rather at the end of a very ordinary dirt road I can see the school is going to have to work hard to remain an in demand school. The connection and support of the Golden Grove Church has certainly been an important part of that success and that support will be needed into the future.





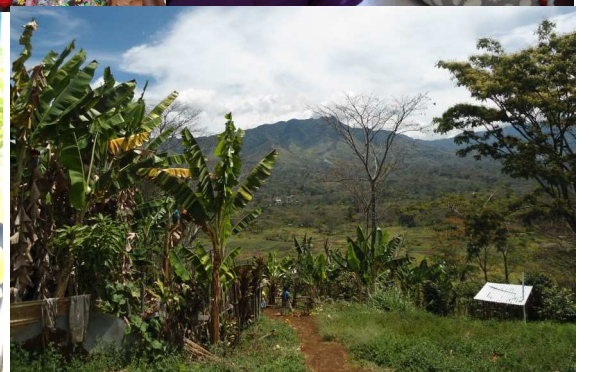
Asaroka News & Reflections Continued...



Rosalie Hoklas In September 2017 a team of 6 members from our Church & School Community travelled to Goroaka & Asaroka Papua New Guinea to visit, encourage and support our friends who we are in partnership with. Since the partnership has begun 34 members have visited as part of this venture, & for some it has been several times. For others their involvement has been in collecting, preparing & packing items for the containers that are sent up. For others it has been financial or prayer support. This partnership is directed and guided by our loving God and although we are supporting them it is a reciprocal friendship because we are refreshed & encouraged by their strong faith and trust in God. PNG is a beautiful country with lush vegetation, and delicious fruits. The people are warm and willing to share their faith, culture and stories. This is now my third trip and I already am looking forward to my next visit. The friendships and connections made are sincere and genuine and it is great to know that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Although our partnership is with the Asaroka High School we do not neglect our amazing friends—the nurses and community in Goroka who always find an opportunity to visit and spend time with us—despite their very busy work loads. Please continue to pray for our partnership, to pray for our brothers and sisters, & that our faith and trust in God will remain strong and focussed.



Check out the information board near the fellowship centre/ church door to learn about our friends, the school and to look at many photos related to Asaroka & Goroka.



John Arvio son of Arvio (village chief who helped Len Tscharke in the establishment of the Asaroka School) hands over to Daniel Dutschke a spear & billum as a reminder of our partnership with this community. Daniel then hands it onto the congregation chairperson—Jon Schutz.

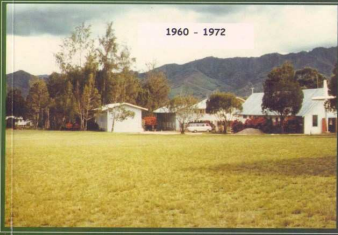


'Asaroka Happenings' is a magazine printed occasionally with news of what is happening at the Asaroka High School, It is available on the GGLC web site under the section 'for members'. If you require a hard copy speak to Judith at the church office.



Seed Time

1960 - 1972



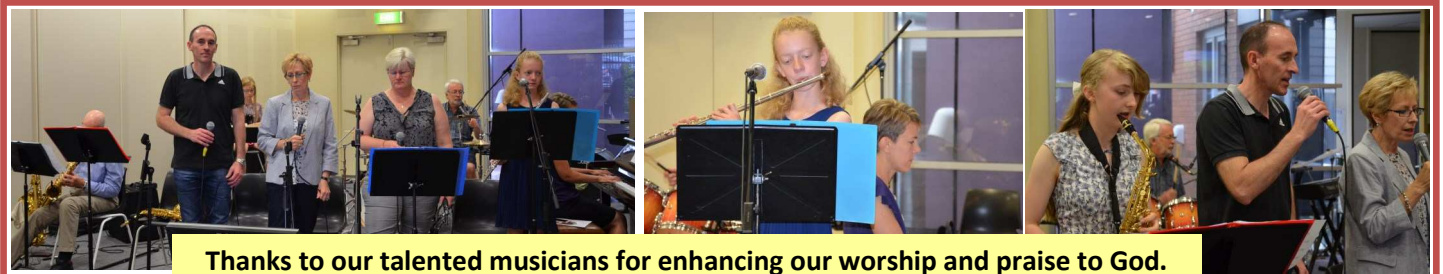
In God's Garden

By Rev. Len Tscharke

Do you want to know more of the history of Asaroka? Purchase a copy 'Seed Time in God's Garden' by Len Tscharke for an informative & interesting read. Available from GGLC office.



Children took a session in discovering Papua New Guinea during 'Goldentime' at GGLPS with Mrs Hoklas. They explored money, spears, baskets, hats, bilums, books, pictures, meri blouses, used a map to find PNG, & tried the animal whistles.



Thanks to our talented musicians for enhancing our worship and praise to God.



School & Church Picnic held on the GGLPS oval on Sunday 26th November. Beautiful weather, fun, food & fellowship.



Confirmation

On Sunday 26th November, 5 young people reaffirmed their faith in their Lord Jesus during the confirmation service. Pastor Greg has journeyed with them over 18 months teaching & guiding them on their faith journey. Please pray for them & encourage them as they continue to grow in their knowledge and love of Jesus.



The purpose of confirmation instruction is the edification (building up) of a confirmand in the Christian faith. Put another way, it is to help the confirmand:

- **Personally confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and take personal ownership in declaring, by the power of the Holy Spirit, their own allegiances to Christ.**
- **Eagerly explore the awe and blessings of God and the mysteries of the Christian faith.**

Today they confirm their faith that was confessed and given at their baptism. Each confirmand shared their faith and a love for Jesus that they expressed in a Faith Statement.

Pastor Greg



I believe that we have one almighty God who created the heavens and the earth. I believe that God is always there for me, guiding me along the way. Going through confirmation has strengthened my faith and connection with God. When I feel down, I ask for help from God trusting that he will always guide me through tough times. I believe that faith can be a bit like the brain, you can't smell, touch, see, hear or feel your brain but you know it's there, without it we would be nothing. It's the same with God, most people can't touch, smell, see, feel or hear God but I know he's there, the connection between man and God, I believe is faith.

I believe in the trinity, & although it can be confusing I believe that there is three different persons but yet still one God, three different persons in one. I believe that God sent his one & only son down to our earth to take away our sins & he did this by making the ultimate sacrifice, dying on the cross. I believe that Jesus is both fully man and fully God, both of these at the same time.

My favourite bible verse is **Romans 8:31; "if God is for us, who can stand against us?"** I like this bible verse because it says how if you believe God is always there for you, you can stand up to anyone knowing that God will always be by your side every step of the way. **Chelsea Freidrich**



I believe that God is our saviour and guide. He provides me with all that I need and has provided me with all that I have. I believe that God created the heavens and the earth and that God is made up of three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I believe that God's love for me is unending and that he will listen to my prayers. God has the power to do anything. I believe that God has many plans for my life and that he wants the best for everyone. I believe that God gives me a choice of whether or not to follow him. I believe that God is with me during the good and bad times and that he will help me to do the right things.

I believe that Jesus Christ was God's only son. I believe that Jesus walked this earth and died on the cross to save us from our sins. I believe that Jesus did this not because he had to, not because he didn't have any control, but because he loves us. He then descended into hell, but on the third day he rose again. I believe that Jesus was simultaneously God and human.

I believe that the holy spirit is with us always even though we can't always see him. He gives us the fruit of the spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

My favourite bible verse is **Philippians 4:13, 'I can do all this through him who gives me strength.'** I like this verse because it gives me courage that God will be with me.

In Confirmation I have learned a lot about Christianity and how to show your faith to others. I learned that our mission as Christians is to share the love and word of God. In Confirmation I have also grown closer to God. **Ashleigh Preiss**



I could come up here today and say, 'I believe in God the father, God the son and God the holy spirit and that he loves me.' But that's not what I'm here for. Yes, I believe in that but the Christian faith is so much bigger than that and my faith is so much more than those few words. I've had the opportunity to learn about God & develop my faith through a lot of Christian support. This has come from my family, the congregation I grew up in, school and bible camps. If someone were to ask me 'who is God in one word?' I wouldn't be able to reply. God is so many things. He is Power. He is Love. He is grace. He is Holy. And the best part is that he never changes. God is God. God is incomprehensible. How can he be three different parts in one God? How can he be this powerful? How can he love us so much? He loves me more than anyone else ever has and anyone ever will. In my Life God protects and shields me. He leads me in the right direction and puts me back on track when I lose my way. God knows me and knows what I need so he can provide for me. And, he sets me free. ***"because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death."; Romans 8:2***

My relationship with God has grown tremendously through the last few years. From getting more involved in church to several Blueprint ministry camps, plus confirmation classes, my faith has flourished & I truly now believe everything I was told as a child. As a Kid, I thought I got it. Jesus loves me and a guy built a boat and chucked some animals on it. But my faith is so much more than that now. God has put me in a place where I have grown so much closer to him. He planned for me to come to him and put me in a place where I could do that. ***Jeremiah 29:13 "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."***

Everyone here is a sinner. But everyone here has also been saved. Jesus took all of our sins upon himself. He sacrificed himself for sinners, for people who defied his father and ignored his teachings. He saved me and he saved us all from our own wrong doings.

Psalm 13:5 "But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation."

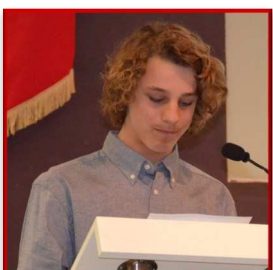
With this trust I have in God, I know that my future will be safe and secure in God's hands. I know that with God in my life that I will live out the life he wants me to and he will keep me safe. ***"What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31*** **Holly Schutz**



I believe that God has open arms for everyone, and that God loves, cares and helps anyone. I also believe that God is always there beside you or around you wherever you go. Also that everyone is God's family and everyone is welcome to heaven with God in his kingdom. I feel that my relationship with God has grown ever since I realised that God needed to be in my life and I feel my relationship bridge to God has grown as well so my relationship is getting stronger with him. I see God working in my life when something goes wrong and I need comfort or when God needs to chisel away something in my life so God can be number one in my life. In the future I can see God working in my life.

I am learning more about God and when I need guidance as to where my future is going when I am an adult. To me God is someone who I can talk to when I have troubles, someone to share my prayers with, someone who can tell me I can forgive because I love you and someone that I can TRUST. I feel really grateful about what Jesus did for us to save us and to wash away our sins, and now God can forgive us so if we do something wrong he will say "I forgive you". I believe that God is so amazing and did so many miracles not to hurt but to help or heal.

Favourite bible verse: Phil. 4:13—"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." **Lacey Hitchenor**



God has a plan for everyone. God has provided me with a loving family, and a life filled with love and hope. He has also blessed me with opportunities to serve him, and he has given me every tool that I need to do so. God reveals his direction for my life, through the way he has made me, with a certain personality and unique skills and abilities. My life experiences make me who I am

today, and I will always be growing and learning, with God protecting me.

Favourite bible verse: Acts 16:31—They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." **Bailey Gal**



There's never been a better time to be a Christian

The following are sections from an article written in 'Vox Point' Nov 2017, the National Magazine of Family Voice Australia. It was based on an address by Campbell Markham at the Hobart launch of the Coalition for Marriage on 7th Sept. To see the article in full check out the website www.fava.org.au or email: office@fava.org.au

What a mess our poor nation is in. There is so much conflict, so much confusion, so much pain. We have forgotten what a human being is. Our freedom to speak is dissolving before our eyes.

But there has never been a better time to be a Christian. There are two reasons why I believe this to be true. *First* because we have the answer to what the world is crying out for.

Our nation has been deceived. It has been told that divorce doesn't matter, that pornography is harmless, that gender is fluid etc and that anyone who says different ought to be prosecuted. Millions have been hurt by these lies.

But there has never been a better time to be a Christian. We have the bible. We have the word of God, a bright light in the darkness. It shows us the wonderful truth that human beings are crafted in God's image with dignity, value & purpose.

There has never been a better time to be a Christian, because we get to tell people about God's good plan. The *second* reason is because we are beginning to experience the joy of persecution.

When the disciples were arrested for refusing to shut up about the resurrection of Jesus, they were beaten. But they responded with joy: "The apostles left rejoicing....they never stopped teaching & proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ."

There is nothing trite about joyfulness. It is about that deep & wide river of confidence, security, & peace that comes from believing Jesus when he said: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

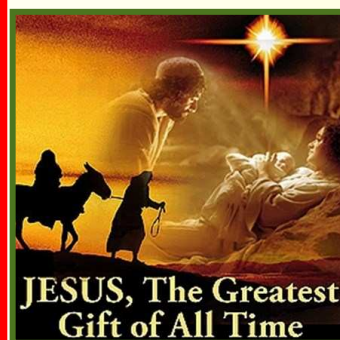
How tempting to respond to insults & persecution with anger & bitterness. No, we will never be cowed into silence by persecution. Out of love for our community we will fight anti-discrimination laws that attack our basic human

freedoms of expression, of conscience, of religion. We will be angered for the lies that hurt our community, but we not be angry for ourselves. Instead we will respond to personal attacks with an unshakable joy, confidence and peace: for the persecution shows that we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus, & with the presence of Jesus.

There has never been a better time to be a Christian—I speak from personal experience. My colleague & I have been summoned to explain ourselves before the State's antidiscrimination Commissioner. Having being threatened with prosecution, we now get to tell our nation about our Saviour Jesus Christ, & it is worth a thousand persecutions. Many lament that the debate over marriage is not an even (fair) fight. We have truth on our side. We have Jesus on our side: the Creator, Immanuel, God With Us. In the fight between truth & error, the world versus the church, it is not an even fight.

There has never been a better time to be a Christian, because although in God's providence the word marriage may come to be redefined in our laws, & although it might be counterfeited, or obscured for a time, the thing itself, the beautiful institution that God created, cannot be lost. God's people can seize this moment. We can seize the opportunity to speak out in love to protect our nations understanding of marriage. Do not fear. Pray, tell people about Jesus with courage, passion & compassion. And when you are opposed, let your peace & joy be seen—**Jesus in us**—be seen.

***The greatest gift given long ago
Wasn't wrapped in paper or tied with a bow
God's only Son from heaven above
Given to us straight from His love
Lest we forget please hold on tight
To the great truth brought on that night
His gift of love for all to receive
The gift of salvation to those who believe***



"Do not be afraid. I bring you great news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." Luke

Mission statement: Giving all people opportunities to fish in a Christ centred environment.

SEMAPHORE JETTY — Sunday 10th September

23 keen fishers ventured to Semaphore Jetty in very cool conditions at daybreak for a 6 am start. Fishing was so slow that the winning fish caught were 2 cowfish by Chris Simanis. Otherwise the only catches were an undersize mullet and sand crab. We suspect that a large seal may have fished the area prior to our arrival as it remained with us for the entire 3 hours in the water alongside the jetty pylons. The BBQ breakfast was much appreciated thanks to Christine McCulloch for organising the bacon/eggs and cooks Geoff Hill & Shirley Hasler.



ANNUAL CAMP at MENINGIE — Fri-Sun 20th-22nd October

Cool and sometimes windy weather greeted 31 attendees at the Lake Albert Caravan Park for the Camp— however the park itself was quite sheltered and comfortable. Tea at the local Meningie Hotel Friday night was followed by an early start to the fishing program on Saturday morning. All but the Caldicott family (who found success at nearby Narrung) fished the lake in front of the caravan park. A total of 60 Carp were landed with a combined weight of 99.25kg. Junior winners were Caitlin Hiscock and Lachlan Caldicott who both landed 1.75kg Carps. Major Carp catches for the day recorded for club members were Chris Simanis (12), Zimmo (10), Louise Sumner (8) and Leanne Caldicott (5). Senior winner was Graeme Hoklas with a 4.75kg of 68cm length. Weighin was a challenge as Graeme forgot the GGAF “fishing box” containing the digital scales. Daniel Dutschke came to the rescue with an old spring scales he keeps in his car. Winner of smallest Carp was Allyson Dutschke. However the old scales were not able to register a reading. Thanks to Louise Sumner for organizing the Camp which included a tasty BBQ, salads and dessert. A few keen fishers tried their luck early Sunday morning. Allan Hasler and Graeme Hoklas each hooked a 60cm Carp however Graeme prevailed with the heavier 3.25kg weight.

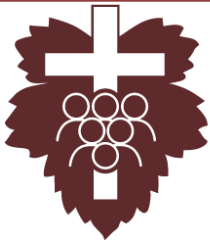


PRESENTATION NIGHT— 18th November

35 GGAF members and friends attended an informative and fun filled evening at the Lutheran Church complex at Wynn Vale. GGAF MC Zimmo masterfully compered a busy program including powerpoint presentations of each event, many door prizes and fishing quizzes. Prizes were presented to winners of each event during the year and President Graeme Hoklas thanked this year’s Committee for their dedication in planning and attending events. Steve & Lyn Castle from Spot On Tackle were in attendance and were sincerely thanked for their ongoing support and sponsorship including the very successful Tackle Night. 2017 Senior Champion is Chris Simanis - a second time champion - and Junior Champion is Lachlan Caldicott - third year in a row. The Encouragement Award was presented to Mark & Leanne Caldicott – excellent supporters of GGAF over many years. The Committee will soon be planning for next year and we invite any suggestions for events and fishing locations.

We wish all fishers a blessed Christmas and tight lines for 2018.





GOLDEN GROVE LUTHERAN
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal—Shane Paterson

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**BELIEVE
COLLABORATE
ACHIEVE**

... in our community all people matter

Christmas, along with Easter are two of the great seasons of the church to celebrate with the students. It is through these two events that the Christian message and teaching about Jesus is undertaken by staff.

It is essential that we as a school teach about Jesus: his birth, life, death and resurrection. This is the core of our faith and we need to strip back the commercialism and tell our school community about Jesus and what he has done for us.

Our recognition of Christmas began early this year with the school participating in the local Christmas parade (which ended at TTP). 35 members of our school community walked in this parade. Prior to the end of the school year we will have our annual Christmas picnic. A new addition on the calendar this year is our Christmas carol evening to be held on the school oval on Tuesday 12th December (6:00 pm).

Students are currently rehearsing to share the Christmas story on the evening. All members of the community are welcome to join us at this time for carol singing - food vans are available to purchase dinner prior to the main event.

As usual quite a lot has been happening in the school:

- ◆ A number of staff (and partners) travelled to Japan during the October break to enter into a formal sister school partnership with a school near Hiroshima
- ◆ Work has begun on a new breakout space (for students to work, read and relax in)
- ◆ The students designed and helped create an outdoor 'chill out' zone
- ◆ The year 6 class as part of their celebration of learning presented an 'Exhibition'. The depth of knowledge and the way in which the students shared their learning with others was phenomenal and highlighted the strength of our teaching and learning program
- ◆ The P&F ran a highly successful Trivia Night with the purpose of allowing the whole Golden Grove community to have fun together. It was terrific to see so many people from both the school and the congregation enjoying themselves.

As we wind down as a school for another year we thank and praise God for the many blessings he has bestowed on us.

May you have a blessed Christmas. Shane Paterson

*GGLPS presents
a 'Carol Evening'
Tues 12th December
On the school oval
beginning @ 6pm.
All welcome
Food vans available*

