



March 2021 Newsletter

Director Anne Wandendeya Tribute | Film Night Fundraiser | Our New Ultrasound | Lance Matheson Tribute



Anne with her family
Left to Right: Mary, Anne, David,
Matthew and Grace (top left, Samson)



JOHN 11:25

Jesus told her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.'



Over 25 years of Australians supporting children at Bushikori in Uganda

About us

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The Bushikori Christian Centre is located in a rural village near Mbale, Uganda, East Africa. The centre is not an orphanage but a registered Non-Government Organisation (NGO).

Bushikori is a child sponsorship program, empowering children in poverty to be educated, growing up to become an agent of change in their own community. Care is taken that the sponsored children live with suitable guardians.

Bushikori's director was Anne Wandendeya, wife of the founder and late Pastor Sam Wandendeya, from 1998 until her recent passing in 2021. The main source of financial help comes from generous sponsors and supporters in Australia, facilitated by the Australian Support Committee, a Christian group of volunteers based in Geelong, Victoria.

Committee members are volunteers of all ages and denominations. We facilitate donations for child sponsorship, the Bushikori Health Centre, Joshua Primary School, the centre fund supporting the day to day running costs and special projects in Uganda. One hundred percent of specified donations are transferred to Bushikori Uganda.

Bushikori Christian Centre Orphan Support (Aust.) is registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.

Find us

Please advise our committee if you prefer to receive this newsletter by email or download from www.bushikori.org.au

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We would like to thank:

- Stephen Davey at Pagination for hosting our website.
- Christian College, Highton, for photocopying the newsletter.

Spreading the News

We would be delighted to provide information and a speaker for any churches, small groups and schools who are interested in receiving updates or would like to find out more about our mission and child sponsorship in Uganda.

Contact: president@bushikori.org.au

Prayer For the Community and Mission of Bushikori

ETERNAL GOD AND FATHER,

We praise you that you have made people to share life together and to reflect your glory in the world.

We thank you now for Anne's courageous leadership, friendship and mentoring to so many children, young adults, community members and government leaders through her service and work in your name,

We thank you for all that we and the community of Bushikori in Uganda saw of your goodness and love in her life and for all that she means to each one of us.

We pray for all who are involved in the Bushikori team, leadership and administration. As they continue to guide the programmes and the daily work of the Centre, equip them with skills and wisdom to continue with renewed vision and mission.

Father God, we pray that, encouraged by the example of your saints, we may all run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith; so that at the last we may join those whom we love in your presence where there is fullness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

Hundreds of people at Anne's Burial Service in Uganda on January 30th 2021



Anne Wandendeya

Late Director of Bushikori Christian Centre Uganda

Vale Anne Leah Mutonyi Wandendeya (1968 - 2021)

It is with great sadness we share that Anne Wandendeya died peacefully in her home - with her family by her side - on Wednesday the 27th of January, after suffering for several months from a rare and aggressive cancer.

Anne became Director of Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) in 1998 after the sudden death of her husband and founder of BCC, Pastor Sam Wandendeya. She has filled this role with fortitude, courage and above all, love. As Director, Anne's life was committed to knowing and being a mother figure to each sponsored child. It is no exaggeration to say hundreds in Uganda will mourn and pay tribute to this remarkable lady, who served BCC faithfully for 26 years. Her strength and selflessness and commitment to Jesus and His calling leaves a legacy that will be widely recognised in Uganda, she will be sorely missed.

We take this moment to pray for Anne's immediate family, especially remembering Samson, Grace, Mary, David, and Matthew as they mourn the loss of their mother. We pray for the Bushikori Board of Trustees in Uganda as they begin the process of selecting a new Director. We give thanks to the Bushikori Uganda Executive Committee and the Heads of Departments who are continuing the work during this time of loss, mourning and transition.

We too here in Australia are mourning the loss of our dear friend and sister in Christ, as will so many here who have been touched by Anne's witness. We remember our dear friend Anne, for her kindness, and her gentle yet unwavering faith that touched each one of us. May Anne now rest in eternal peace.



Anne with the Bushikori Team



Anne & the Australian Committee



Anne with Grace, Matthew, Samson



Anne in Geelong

ACTS 20:35

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Anne's Life in Leadership

I believe that this scripture from Acts sums up Anne's philosophy – work hard to help the weak, and show Jesus's love by giving.

I have a wonderful memory of the Melbourne Airport departure lounge where the Australian Support Committee (ASC) had gathered to farewell Anne at the end of her second trip here to Geelong. We had already exceeded the allowance for excess luggage

which the checking person had ignored, and now Margery Hobbs was helping Anne put on coats! I kid you not, Anne was wearing at least ten layers of clothing as what you wore was not checked.

...so she could then give it all away!

Anne wanted to take everything home that had been gifted to her so she could then give it all away! Later

she reported that she had hardly moved during the flight because she couldn't move with all that clothing in the way.

Anne and I have worked together for 22 years and have watched each other grow in knowledge, skill and poise. There have been misunderstandings and mistakes along the way, as expected with the partnering of two cultures, however throughout it all Anne was always gracious.

Anne took the responsibility of leadership very seriously. Her role could take her from organising grants from a town in Wales (United Kingdom), to hosting American Peace Corp volunteers in her own home, to giving tours to prominent Ugandan local and state politicians, to discussions with religious leaders and tribal elders over many issues.

Anne honoured many visiting work parties from Australia and found the courage to fly the long journey to Australia three times. In addition to this, Victorian winter weather and strange food created an ordeal.

As Director, Anne would chair meetings, prepare reports for government authorities, applications for funding, negotiate deals, give talks to small groups or stand before hundreds to speak.

... she was the mother to hundreds...

At the other end of the scale, Anne would hug a crying child to happiness, or answer her phone day and night to hear the woes of studying teenagers or pleading guardians. In Uganda, they say she was the mother to hundreds- well that takes up a great deal of time. It has been remarked that the phone seemed glued to her ear. As Director of Bushikori, Anne would listen and show great compassion to guardians trying to care for the needy children.

Most of the sponsorships go smoothly, however some, Anne would sigh and say to me "not every child will come up easily". However Anne believed in Colossians 4:17 - "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord". Anne said she guides her life with "whatever we have started we should complete". This was also in context to supporting orphans until they have a skill to support themselves with and was instrumental in Bushikori continuing to sponsor students through vocational courses, an aspect of our sponsorship that is unique. At that time youth

unemployment in Uganda was 40 per cent which meant that ceasing sponsorship at the end of senior school was like sending a young person onto the street with very limited opportunity for a secure future. Anne knew the journey of education is a long one and she appreciated deeply the dedication of sponsors.

To Anne nothing was more important than to bring a child up to self reliance. Anne believed Bushikori should be meeting the need at an individual unique level not as per program need. One size does not fit all. Easy to say but not always easy to do! But then Anne did have the determination to leave no child behind.

Anne was a strong advocate for the children but she was also an advocate for the marginalised. "In every society there are those not seen and we need to speak on their behalf. The marginalised need to know God, to have the love of Jesus, that is worth standing for."

There is a quote that sits near my desk which says

The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.

Anne lived this.

Anne was always sincerely giving thanks. Both to God and to all who gave help no matter big or small. One of the last items of correspondences we had with Anne was a letter of her honouring us and thanking us for helping her serve.

Anne promised to work tirelessly for the vision of Bushikori, and she did. The hymn, "What a friend we have in Jesus", reminds me strongly of Anne's response to all the burdens of leadership.

As all of Bushikori mourns the loss of its Director, I shall also miss my friend.



Kerry Peacock

President of the Australian Support Committee



TRIBUTE FOR Anne Wandendeya

Anne's Life and Family

2 TIMOTHY 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Anne Leah Mutonyi Wandendeya

Known to us all as Anne, in this reflection I will share a little of Anne's life and family, and the love I have experienced visiting Uganda. The above passage is so very fitting as we think about our friend, colleague, sister in Christ, Anne. She has fought the good fight, she has finished the race on this earth, she has accomplished this with steadfast faith, untiringly serving her God, her family and her community.

Anne's life began on November 11, 1968. During her early life she grew up in a village with her grandmother, because her father had divorced her mother. Frequently, she would run to school, without shoes, on an empty stomach and remain there until 5pm. When she returned home there was no guarantee of supper, so they were forced to forage for food.

As a young person Anne felt unworthy, her life lacked stability as she was moved from family to family, this gave her no sense of belonging or identity. Due to these circumstances she became a very reserved person who tolerated difficulties in life. At 12 years of age she was already skilled at house chores and caring for siblings.

Thankfully as she grew into adulthood she was blessed with good nurturing and mentoring. Then she met Sam Wandendeya, who she married on December 20, 1985. Their marriage was only to last 13 years before Sam died in a vehicle accident. Their marriage was blessed with five children and was a time of great blessing. Sam was a father and great supporter of her entire family.

Before Sam's passing, his life was spared from the murderous regime of Idi Amin, after which his calling was to care for widows and orphans, which saw Sam and Anne's early married life committed to this call. They lived in a place called Namatale. All their earnings would be spent on feeding needy children, giving them a cup of porridge a day. In 1989, Anne shared their home with 12 orphans as well as their three children. Needy children would come and just sleep under the tree outside as they knew that here they would find food and support. However, their landlord was not happy

with this arrangement and evicted them. Thus, they moved to live on their land at Bushikori where they built a simple house and planted their own food. Sam's taxi business paid the school fees of the orphans. They proceeded to establish the Bushikori Christian Centre and registered it as an NGO. A midwife came to live at Bushikori to provide medical care for the orphaned children. Anne states, 'Then because the midwife was there, the expectant mothers of the area would just come, and deliver under the mango tree and I would just help.' How amazing is our Lord, when his plans come to fruition through his willing servants.

Despite, education challenges in her early life, Anne went on to study nursing as well as secretarial work. Later in 1999, she had the opportunity to study planning and project management and again in 2006 she went to Arusha, Tanzania to study Development Studies at the Training Centre for Development Corporation. This education was vital in the development of the Bushikori Christian Centre that has progressed to what it is today.

In 1998, when husband Sam died and after various challenges, Anne took on the directorship of Bushikori. She said it was as Elijah had left his mantle to Elisha, Sam handed the mantle of Bushikori to Anne. She was not sure she wished to take this responsibility on, but in her usual courageous and faithful way she did so.

She successfully steered the NGO for 22 years as director, mother and mentor to countless Ugandans.

Anne's immediate family are son Samson, married to Sarah, son David married to Noel, daughter Grace, daughter Mary, and son Matthew, and her grandchildren Alinda, Eliachim, Kemba and Keila. Sam and Anne can be very proud of their children, they are all wonderful people, loving each other and serving their communities. I would like to remember Anne's mum, Juliana, a lovely lady with the biggest smile.

I have been blessed with opportunity to visit Uganda five times. In 1997, myself and Margery Hobbs stayed at Anne and Sam's home in Mbale, they vacated the house with their children to stay with relatives which Anne told me was 'the Ugandan way.' Needless to say we received generous hospitality with meals provided. I celebrated my birthday during this visit so we baked a cake in the electric oven which with load shedding is a euphemism for never knowing when the electricity will be on or off. But with Margery's hotline to God in prayer, the power remained on for the cake to cook.

There was rejoicing and feasting, the Ugandans know how to party!

[Anne was] prayerful in all that she did

In 1999, when Pastor Greg Illingworth and I were visiting I begged Anne not remain at home, insisting we could all be accommodated there. The living area was converted to a room fit for a king, for Greg, and I shared a large bedroom with Anne and (then) little Mathew. It was a precious time of living together and sharing lots of laughter, joy and prayer mixed with sadness as we remembered Sam. This has always been my experience with Anne, leaning on God and not on her own understanding, prayerful in all that she did, but full of joy and fun. All my visits have been the same, soaking in the love and hospitality of Anne and her family, and all at Bushikori.

In 2018, Anne and David visited Australia. During their stay, Anne, who knew that I wanted to come and celebrate Bushikori's 25th anniversary in Uganda in 2019, asked quietly, 'Mama Pamela what food can I serve you?' I don't eat meat in Uganda, and my travelling companion in 2019 said that I am the fussiest person she has ever met regarding food. Undaunted, Anne organised Vincent - the one who bakes the fantastic cakes for all the celebrations that you may have seen in photos - to come and prepare food for us at her home; salads, lentils, rice, fish, and an abundance of fresh fruit. We were most appreciative!

It's hard to imagine Anne no longer being at Bushikori, and how much harder must it be for her family and all those at Bushikori. May the words of Isaiah bring some comfort to us all, 'The Lord has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort all who mourn, to bestow on us a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a garment of splendour for the heavy heart.'

May the Lord bless and keep them all, Anne we will always love you, miss you and remember you.



Pamela Ferrar
Sponsorship Coordinator

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray with thanksgiving for the life of Anne, for all who mourn and for the mission of the Bushikori Christian Centre.

Lord our God, we thank you that your Son Jesus Christ triumphed in life and death.

Father in heaven, we thank you because you made us in your own image and gave us gifts in mind, body and spirit.

We thank you now for Anne and what she meant to each of us.

As we honour her memory, make us more aware that you are the one from whom comes every perfect gift, including the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us all with the gift of this earthly life and has given to our sister Anne 52 years that were graced with many gifts of character and love for you.

God our Father, we thank you now for all her life, for every memory of love and joy, for every good deed done by her and every sorrow shared with us.

We thank you for her life and for her death, we thank you for the rest in Christ she now enjoys, we thank you for giving her to us, we thank you for the glory we shall share together.

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done.

AMEN



Anne at Sipi Falls, Uganda

TRIBUTE FOR Anne Wandendeya

We celebrate your life

We at this point in time reflect on the time we spent together with joy- because you poured out all you had; all you were. You taught us the lessons of life with a patience that we now realize must have been God given. You did not hold back anything from humanity. Mum you taught us to respond to the call of God to say yes even when it may not make logical sense. As long as it was a Godly call you gave a resounding yes. Deep down in our hearts we grieve because humanly speaking, we will miss your company. We will miss the voice of a mother, grandmother, leader and above all else a friend.



David, Tabitha and Noel



Mary and niece Tabitha

The work now stands as a testimony of your endurance and devotion to the work of the ministry. Many years ago, when Sam went home you didn't hold back but rather, you stepped up and put your entire life on a standstill for us, for the children in need and for the noble cause. Jesus called and you answered with unwavering faith. Along the journey you pressed on even against many trials you pressed against the tide of life. We testify that in this context you came out with victory- a victory that we all share in, a victory of releasing many children and women from bondage, breaking the chains of poverty unto the freedom that many only dreams of.



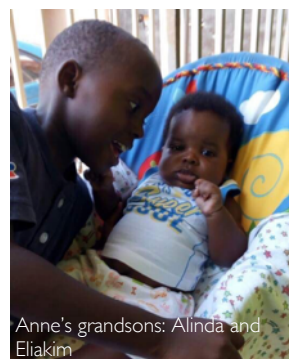
Anne's mother, Juliana, Anne's daughter, Grace and Anne



Anne with children Grace, Matthew, Samson and Samson's wife Sarah

And at such a time, we are because you stood in the gap at a critical time and you gave us a shot at life. We shall not forget for a lifetime the impact you have had on us. We shall carry the energy and use it to impact our generation like you did. We will forever miss your strength together with the faith that was clothed with a gentleness. We know you rest now safely in the arms of the Father, in a place where there is no more pain, no more difficult nights and we know you are healed and you enjoy the company of the angels and the saints. You have fought a good fight; you have run a good race.

You are loved and you will never be forgotten!



Anne's grandsons: Alinda and Eliakim



Anne's granddaughters: Kemba and Tabitha

*Your sons, daughters and
grand children*

'Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...'



The Bushikori Team

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees provides oversight support to the Executive Committee. Currently on the Board are Michael Wangwe, David Wanendeya, Samson Wandendeya.

Samson Wandendeya

Qualified with a Masters of Business Administration, Bachelor of Procurement and Logistics Management Degree and Diploma in Flight Operations. Samson interns as an Aeronautical Information Services Officer with Uganda National Airlines. Samson serves on the Board of Trustees, Executive Committee and is chair on the school management committee.

Dr David Wanendeya

Qualified with a Diploma in Medicine and Community Health and Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery. Dr David serves on the Board of Trustees and supports health care programmes.

Pastor Phillip Kalyebi

Qualified as a grade III teacher and with a Masters of Education. Pastor Phillip currently serves in full time ministry at Chrisco Fellowship Church. Pastor Phillip's service led to Anne, in her final hours, instructing her family to ask him to serve on the Board of Trustees, which he accepted.

Dr Pauline Tsekoko

Qualified with a Diploma in Public Health and a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery. Dr Tsekoko is advisor on health services at Bushikori Christian Centre.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee supports the day to day functioning of the mission. The Executive Director of Bushikori is a member. Currently the members are Valentine Thomas Odoi (Chairperson), Janet Wambede (Treasurer) Mr Michael Wangwe, Samson Wandendeya, David Wanendeya, Dr Pauline Tsekoko and Paul Tiboti.

Thomas Odoi

A retired Public Health Inspector. Thomas studied preventive medicine through the Royal Society of Health in London. In his role as Head of Public Health in Mbale, he was an examiner of all health officer students throughout East Africa. Retired in 1995 he assisted in the establishment of Oxford High School in Mbale. He has been BCC Chairperson since 2007.

Paul Tiboti

Formerly sponsored at Bushikori, Paul is qualified with a Diploma in Water Engineering, a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and is now mastering in structural designs. He serves on the Executive Committee and is a member of BCC school management committee.

Michael Wangwe

Among the very first orphans sponsored at Bushikori, Michael is a qualified grade III and graduate teacher. He is principal of one of Mbale's biggest primary schools. Michael also serves on the BCC Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.

Administration Team

The Administration Team is led by the Executive Director, which Anne faithfully served in until her recent passing. Followed by the Human Resources/Programs Manager who is Mr Moses Nangwale. After this are the Heads of Departments of; The Health Centre, Joshua Primary School Headmaster, Accounts under Administration and Child Care Department.

Moses Nangwale

Qualified with a Diploma of Business Studies and a Bachelor of Public Administration. Moses has previously worked as an accountant and a project director. Is in the administration team as Human Resources/Programs Manager.

Mary Wandendeya

Qualified with a Bachelor of Social Work and Administration and is part of the Child Care Department.

Janet Wambede

Qualified with a Diploma in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Development Studies. Janet has previously worked as an accountant. She serves as treasurer on the BCC Executive Committee.

Matthew Wandendeya

Recently obtained a Diploma in Computer Software Engineering.

Grace Wanendeya

Serves at the mission centre as a support in Infrastructure Maintenance and Development.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Our children at Bushikori come from homes suffocated by poverty. For some, they live with their parents and for others whose parents have separated, live with just their mother and maybe grandmother too. Odd jobs and small plots of land provide their very basic needs. However, when the rains fail and/ or crops are eaten by locusts, it is common for hunger and malnutrition to strike the children in the Bushikori catchment area. Life is precarious. When Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) was first established many of the children were orphaned due to the consequences of war and HIV/AIDS. It is evident from both past and present that Eastern Uganda is home to many struggling to survive.

However, sponsorship opportunities enable us to witness these children graduate as mature young adults with doors wide open to employment and a sustainable way out of poverty for both themselves and their families. We are grateful to all our sponsors for your love, care and commitment to the families of Bushikori.

Favour Mutonyi

Favour Mutonyi is a 7 year old girl who is in Primary 2. She lives with her mother and grandmother. Her family struggles to make ends meet as they have no source of income.



Emmanuel Wasilwa

Emmanuel Wasilwa is a 7 year old boy who lives in a simple mud hut with his parent who are very poor due to their limited income. Emmanuel's father hires a motorcycle each day to (TRANSPORT PEOPLE??) earn money for food. They have a small patch of land for subsistence farming.



Jesper Masaba

Jesper Masaba is a 4 year old boy in Primary 1. He lives with his parents who have no secure income and limited land for subsistence farming.



Merina Nanguni

Merina Nanguni is an 8 year old girl in primary 2. She lives with her father, mother and siblings in a mud and wattle home with an iron roof. They work the land at the small school she attends in order to grow food. They have no secure income.



Want to learn more about sponsorship?

Contact: sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

Disruption of mail services

Letters sent by sponsors to Bushikori Uganda are being returned to our PO Box in Geelong as it seems the mail is not leaving Australia. To ensure letters are received by your sponsored children during this mail service disruption, our committee will scan and email them to BCC. Please remember to use our address (PO Box 42, Geelong) as the return sender address rather than your own.

Our new Ultrasound

Written by Dr David Wanendeya

Ultrasound scan purchase

Bushikori would love to give thanks to the Australian support committee for providing funds to procure a much-needed ultrasound scan to the diagnostics department of Bushikori Health Center, a medical outreach ministry of Bushikori Christian Center.

The ultrasound service is picking up really well. We have on average the procedure carried out on a daily basis and we are grateful for the impact. We would love to see health care grow because the sponsors have educated so many young Ugandans, healthcare professionals who are ready to contribute to the growth of key areas such as health.

The funds were used to purchase a new ultrasound scan, a thermal-sonar printer and a power stabilizer to protect it from the common power surges that could ruin it all. The device is mounted on a portable trolley so we don't need dedicated space as we can run the scans bed-side with great mobility.



fetal distress, an obstructed labour. We are faced with the challenge of either attempting a delivery at a primary facility like ours or referring them to a nearby hospital'. Our hands and a fetoscope have been the only diagnostics at our disposal. There will be a great improvement in this area. We can survey the fetus quite extensively and make key life saving decisions in the interest of the mother and the unborn.

The Impact

The scan will also be used for other medical diagnostics conditions outside of obstetrics and will be open to the community and the sponsored children, guardians and their families.

Sustainability

Bushikori will be asking the users to pay a small user fee of 20,000 ugx (7AUD) that will go towards the maintenance and service costs including buying sonar print paper, electricals and having a visiting radiologist for expert cases.

BCC would like to appreciate Angela and the ASC for the gift of this valuable piece of equipment to the health care outreach department here at Bushikori. The quality of services will improve remarkably and we will be keen to share with you every bit of the success we experience. We would like you to know from the depth of our hearts that we are grateful.

The COVID-19 Effect

The lockdown brought many restrictions on transport and movement making it difficult for the expectant mothers to make it to the health center. Dr Wanendeya David writes 'very often our mothers come in late, from a failed attempt to deliver at home, often with a

Fundraising

Film Night

On a warm January night, 160 of us flocked in our masks to Waurn Ponds Readings Cinema to enjoy an early evening screening of the new Australian Film, The Dry. Due to pandemic restrictions, the organisers had little time to advertise this event. Therefore, it was encouraging to have many come along in such strong support of this very successful fundraising event. It was wonderful for all to see familiar faces again as well as to be ahead of the crowd in seeing this recently released Aussie film. Thank you to you all, the very loyal supporters and also new contacts who came along. We hope that each of you had an enjoyable and memorable evening whilst supporting the children at Bushikori, Uganda. Thank you to our long time supporter Readings Cinema, to you our loyal supporters and also new contacts who came along.



LETTER FROM

Head Teacher of Joshua PS

Thanksgiving of Gift by The Geelong College in 2020

Hello Friends at The Geelong College Junior School,

This is the head teacher of Joshua Primary School saying hello to you. I hope God is still keeping you safe from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Greetings from the teachers and children of Joshua Primary School. We, the Joshua staff and children, appreciate the support you sent to us during the lockdown.

We used the funds to facilitate teachers to continue the home learning and to prepare the COVID-19 home work books. This fund supported staff to follow up the COVID-19 home learning packages and to enable remote assessment.

The parents collected the booklets from school for the children to study from home and later returned the work for marking.

When some of the children reported back, we realized that those that took books were far better than those that had not taken the books.

This has helped us to preserve the investment of the sponsors and ensuring that this is not lost while the pandemic did shut down all the schools.

Schools are slowly opening again. So far we have two out of ten classes open. So I thank God for your compassion towards the children.

Please find below some photos of study booklets used by the children during remote learning.



Robert Wabomba

Head Teacher at Joshua Primary School

What is new?

Written by Dr David Wanendeya



Bushikori Students at the Christmas Gathering

Child Care Department

The Child Care Department (CCD) concluded with a successful Christmas gathering. Which in March 2020 seemed unlikely to happen. Praise the Lord for the kindness of the people in Australia to support this celebration where 330 children received a special meal and gifts to take home.

During the holidays, many children did not come to the Center except when unwell because the health center remains open. CCD are planning to have a series of Christian Education Training (CET) programs early next year. We will use the period to reach out to the children-hoping the COVID-19 situation stays under control.

The CCD team have been implementing the continuous education plan on a wider scale. The ministry of education has been sharing resources which can be installed on portable/remote devices to enhance both supervised and self-directed learning. The team are passionate in fulfilling Anne's passion for ensuring education is an investment into the future of children. We are working hard to ensure this investment is upheld. This activity will involve availing computers to sponsored children in clusters and facilitating our teachers to enhance learning.

The Health Centre

The Health Centre remains free from COVID-19 incidence. We have proved to be very strong in the standard operating procedures (SOPs) and our Covid screening. The community are confident to come for our health services. The centre has been providing care to students and mothers alike. I, personally, have conducted ultrasound scans for basic cases. Looking to the future, we intend to engage radiology services.

Recently, we discussed sustainable health through an initiative called the Cooperative Health Insurance. It intends to encourage people to work and save towards their health. There will be an emphasis for young working Ugandans to pay slightly more to support the vulnerable in their communities.

I am working to build up basic emergency surgical services- using what we have. We are aware of the financial burden both locally and to the Australian Support Committee (ASC). Thus, we intend to seek prayerful direction in lobbying locally for more involvement of the Anglican Medical Bureau and the Health Ministry. We shall share further plans as they develop.

Before Anne's passing, we were grateful for the prayers and support coming from Australia. We felt it every difficult night and found a place of comfort through it all.

Joshua Primary School

The headmaster and his team enjoyed a well-earned holiday after Christmas. They resumed in early January to prepare the candidates for the upcoming final exam. We think that having the accommodation for the teachers is such a huge motivation as we can see how it plays positively into their commitment to Joshua Primary School.

The general outlook is that we might see more classes gradually return to school if the situation stays under control. The government went ahead to hold an election which has seen the crowds grow and surges of the virus in the urban areas. Our prayer would be for safety.

The teachers who have not been teaching most of the year came in at the end year breakfast and a gift from the Christmas package was shared at a breakfast and lunch. Grateful for your gift to them. Prayers for Anne were said. It was very heart warming.

Christmas Gathering 2020

Written by Mary Wandendeya

Our Celebrations

The month of December brings the Bushikori family together to celebrate God's love to mankind by giving us his only begotten son at the Bushikori Child Care Department's (CCD) annual Christmas Gathering. ,

Like any other celebration, preparations commence early by budgeting, purchasing items and mobilizing the children for the function before the proposed date.

Historically, our celebrations are filled with partying, dancing, fellowship and gathering together as a family. However, our 2020 celebrations looked a little different due to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) implemented by the Ugandan government and the Ministry of Health to curb the spread of COVID-19. They include, but are not limited to; gatherings of no more than 200 people, wearing masks, washing hands or sanitizing with alcohol based sanitizer, limited time spent in large gatherings. Therefore, we decided to divide the children into smaller groups and met for a limited time.

The day was bright, with children arriving from as early as 7:00 am. We ran multiple sessions of about 70 children in the Geelong Hall, so that a total of 298 children attended the function. As usual, God is the reason why we still exist, therefore we started with an opening prayer followed by praise and worship by a team of our children. after which, the Christmas sermon was preached on the theme of Psalm 119:9 of living according to God's word. The preacher encouraged the children to honor God by keeping God's word and reading the bible, respecting parents, observing the law and abstaining from sexual immorality. He further emphasized the children to stay in school and involve in church activities. He concluded with Psalm 139 which speaks of God's love for us and the miracle of how he knits us together in our mother's womb.



Watch



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9zNTnO3DKs&feature=youtu.be>



This event also provides opportunity to emphasize the Child Care Department's (CCD) principles and expectations of the next year. After which, we cut the cake and everyone enjoyed a piece. After the closing prayer was said, we distributed the gifts, had a group photo and lastly shared a snack. In previous years we would share a meal, but to comply with SOPs we were unable to do so.

The children and parents were very happy to receive their gifts - five kilos of rice, one packet of wheat flour, one litre of cooking oil, one kilo of sugar, and one bar of soap. We thank God that the items distributed were more than previous years.

The Child Care Department's (CCD) has a special interest group comprising of children: born with HIV/AIDS; suffering from malnutrition; abused by their families and communities; born with disabilities and other vulnerable children. For these children we gave them a special treat of a box of milk to boost their immunity and to encourage them that we care and support them as they are.

Lastly we are grateful and very appreciative to our Australian community for their generosity and support for the welfare of our children. We have seen God's hand change lives amidst this pandemic, you can't imagine the smile you put on the faces of the children.

May God abundantly bless you.



Lance Matheson

Tribute to Lance Matheson

**Founding Member of the
Australian Support Committee**

In the September 2008 edition of the newsletter President Margery Hobbs wrote "Lance and I are the 'old ones' on the Australian Support Committee (ASC), everyone works very hard and I extend my thanks to all of them. Lance and Ella are retiring from doing the Orphan Administration, Pamela Bregman has taken over the role. How God provides!

"And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus"
Phil: 4:19

In our last newsletter we farewelled Margery Hobbs, one of the Foundation members, and in this edition we farewell another foundation member, Lance Matheson who died on Sunday 13th December 2020. His funeral was held at Belmont Uniting on Monday 21st December.

Lance, and his wife Ella, became involved with Bushikori when they had the pleasure of meeting Pastor Sam Wandendeya when he came to Geelong in 1994 to visit Margery Hobbs. Sam was a very godly man with a very deep faith committed to serving His Lord; he touched many lives as he gave his testimony and his commitment to making a difference in the lives of the children orphaned by the effects of war and HIV/ AIDS in Uganda. Many people were drawn to Sam's vision and made donations then and there when they met him. Sam would come back to Margery's home with his pockets full of money. Such amazing generosity from people. One day there was a pile of money on the table when Lance visited so he counted and organised it. When the Australian Support Committee (ASC) was formed to support Sam's work, before he returned to Uganda). Lance became the Treasurer and Orphan Administrator. Over the years as the support for Bushikori grew the positions were separated and Lance and Ella became, solely, the Orphan Administrators. They held this role for 13 years.

In those early days there was no computer database, all details were on paper. A card file system tracked the sponsors information, and interaction with Bushikori while each child had a 'plastic pocket' in a large lever arched file where copies of letters and photos were kept. Sponsors were kept up to date through mailed letters or phone calls.

Lance would always find time to talk to new committee members or sponsors/ supporters and make them feel welcome. Lance knew many people in the Geelong community having moved to Belmont when he was nine years old. At 16, he gained employment at the State Bank of Victoria, retiring as a Manager after 41 years to the day.

Lance was a valued member of the committee for 22 years, until 2016, when ill health meant he could no longer attend committee meetings. Lance kept in interest in Bushikori and continued to be one of our prayers, a role which is greatly needed and cherished.

The wisdom, kindness, and deep faith Lance had will be greatly missed.



Lance at a 2004 Australian Support Committee meeting



James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...



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