



December 2021 Newsletter

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Over 25 years of Australians supporting children at Bushikori in Uganda

About us

The Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) 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 Acting Director is Mary Wanendeya, the daughter of the late Pastor Sam and Mrs Anne Wandendeya, the founders of BCC. 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.

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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 Pagation 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

Christmas Prayer

DEAR LORD

'The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light;'

At this time of Advent, God our Father we thankyou for Jesus Christ our Saviour who comes to all who will listen and follow him,

'Let us thank the Lord for His goodness: and for the wonders that He does.'

Through this Great Love and leading by the Holy Spirit we here are joined with the people of the Bushikori Christian Centre in Mbale, Christ is the bridge that links us together in His Name. Through this mission lives have been transformed, children have been educated and have careers, healthcare provided, we all have hope in abundance through God's promises.

'Let us thank the Lord for His goodness: and for the wonders that He does.'

You are the Light of the world and we rejoice in the gift of this Light. For a Child has been born to us, 'all of us who have lived in deep darkness, on us this Light has shined.' The testimony of God's presence and work through Bushikori continues to teach us, bless us and increase our faith and understanding.

'Let us thank the Lord for His goodness: and for the wonders that He does.'

We bow before you Lord in gratitude for the blessings you give us as we serve in this ministry.

'Let us thank the Lord for His goodness: and for the wonders that He does.'

May we all be open to and receive your gift of Peace and Hope that comes with Christmas. The Gift 'of the One on whom all authority rests on His shoulders, and He is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'

'Let us thank the Lord for His goodness: and for the wonders that He does.'

May Christ's richest blessings be with all our readers and families this Christmas and in the New Year.

AMEN

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

From Uganda and Australia

1st December 2021

Hello,

Christmas greetings to you our dear friends and partners. As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour Lord Jesus Christ, may He be a reason for the season.

Thank you so much for all the support you give to the children here at Bushikori. Every child has a smile on their faces because of you. It is such an honour to be part of the day to day efforts working with the boys and girls and witnessing the power of God transforming lives for a better future.

Each life reached with the compassion and love of God helps us fulfil the very reason God sent us into the mission field, we are grateful that we can carry it on as the Lord makes it possible.

God bless you all. Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.



Mary Wanendeya

BCC Director

Greetings: President Kerry Peacock

Christmas. A word of so many layers, so many meanings, so many emotions, and so much baggage. Yet at its heart it should be simple. Christmas is a miracle.

The birth of Jesus was an extraordinary, welcome and divine event. A miracle.

As I reflect on this last year there has been heartbreak and challenges yet I have seen miracles.

It is a miracle that we have lost no sponsored children to Covid 19.

It is a miracle that the children have continued in education.

It is a miracle that Bushikori has met its financial needs, in a year when all

normal activities have been lost.

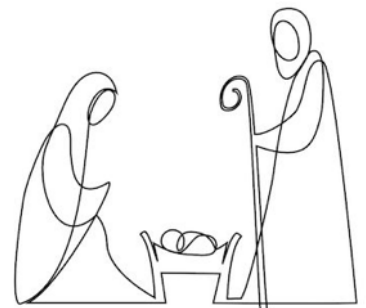
To all our supporters and sponsors, the whole family of Bushikori - both here and there - give you heartfelt appreciation and deep gratitude for thinking of us and giving.

Thank you for being the heart, hands and feet of that miracle.

As we all get engulfed in the "Christmas Season" may we dwell in the miracle of life.

You were born to be unique - there is only one you - and for you Jesus came. The miracle of love.

May joy be your gift at Christmas, and may faith, hope and love be your treasures in the New Year.



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Continued School Closure

A

"As Uganda grapples with the world's longest school closure we have been occupied with attempts to have the children continue with their education. The boys and girls have not been in school for many months so it generally is seen as a danger to the sponsors investment and to the future of these young people. Our response has been through improving access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the homebased education and home visits." - David Wanendeya

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Education

CCD (Child Care Department) was able to improve the Bushikori community library by equipping it with 16 computers loaded with study materials from the Uganda national curriculum development centre. The materials are designed for self-study so the children can come and study by themselves. The idea was to explore ideas of continuing education in the absence of the usual classroom teacher-pupil interaction. We were able to use a small donation from Maital Friedman, the lady who helps keep alive the American friends of Bushikori/Sister to Sister programme. She gave 400 USD an annual gift towards running the library.

We also used funds allocated to education for our sponsored children- as they were not in school yet we had to keep education ongoing through continuous exposure to learning materials, equipping them with basic ICT skills and in so doing keeping them up to date with the national curriculum. Through this rather collaborative effort, we have managed to run 16 computers loaded with educational materials from primary to post-secondary, and the boys and girls

come in- to study in acceptable numbers.

CCD together with Mathew Wanendeya and the Joshua Primary School teachers have volunteered to teach basic ICT skills to the children who are now encouraged to come in as often as possible. They will be awarded with a certificate at completion.

Home based education

CCD also procured 9 low-cost tablets that the home-schooling programme use. The teachers carry these along as they go into homes and will be able to show/ explain a concept to the children in places where there is no electricity.

The head teacher and his team have developed Covid recess books and use 10 portable devices loaded with study materials. The study hubs/centres have been created where sponsored children in that community gather in acceptable numbers for a few hours. The team here is optimistic that with good syllabus coverage, they can progress to the next level.

Christian Education (CET)

CCD and Joshua Primary School have worked out plans to integrate the home-based education CET. Children

can now come to the Centre and we will use this opportunity to have Bible study and young people centred teachings.

Home visits

Mary has just returned from a week of home visits to some of the communities with sponsored children. The team took with them relief items and encouragement from God's word. Thanks to the sponsors who supported this area of need.

Healthcare

The health centre has been able to stay open throughout this time offering a vital 24/7 health service to our sponsored children and the community. They have adolescent friendly services, maternal child healthcare and lately exploring the possibility of emergency surgical services. We have continued to provide health services for Compassion International and their projects within our community as they pursue their mission of 'releasing children from poverty in Jesus name'.

As we prepare for the possible reopening of the economy and schools, our prayer is that God will keep giving strength to the Bushikori mission and to all those involved across Uganda and Australia. Here in Uganda, we'd love to outgrow the limits of our culture that tend to undermine effective service in the Lord's vineyard. We hold hands in prayer together.



Rick Peacock Interview

Interviewer: Pamela Ferrar



Rick is the Treasurer of the Australian Support Committee (ASC). We thank God for Rick and his faith in Jesus Christ, passion for Bushikori and support for our ASC Chair, Kerry, his wife!

Thankyou for your willingness to be interviewed for our newsletter Rick. When and how did you first hear about the Bushikori Christian Centre?

Basically when Kerry came home from Church in 1998 and said she was going to a meeting of a group that raised money for Orphans in Uganda.

Did you ever imagine that BCC would become 'family' to your family? And that Kerry would travel to Uganda one day?

No not earlier on, it was just another thing that we did but as time went on it became more important than our other organisations that we were associated with.

When Kerry became President the "family" part was set in stone I think. I've always said to her that she is in for life and that somehow she will have to go to Uganda one day, she said no about the going. Our occupation being a contract does not give us the opportunity for holidays together other than public holidays so it seemed pretty unlikely that we would be able to visit Bushikori together. If it wasn't for Mary Crook giving Kerry the cost of her airfare, and her dad giving money for the accommodation costs, it wouldn't have happened. I stayed at home and did both our jobs, with some help from the kids. It was a long 4 weeks.

How has Bushikori impacted your life?

Well I suppose from the obvious fact that a great deal of our spare time is spent on Bushikori work and talking about it

solving problems I would say it has made me a better Christian. It was impossible to communicate with Anne, Samwiri, Grace and David without seeing their complete love of God.

We know that you are a very talented singer and performer... that's giving you away! Can you share how this gift has benefited Bushikori functions, (please don't be too modest or we may have to edit your answer)!

I remember singing at the Scottish Chief fundraising dinner organised by Libby McLean in 2000, when Anne had come for her first visit to Australia. I sang a song directly to her -as I would have done when entertaining an audience in my Theatre Restaurant days. I know she smiled a lot but I fear she may have wondered what was happening as I walked around the room singing directly to people. It is a good memory that I have of her.

I, along with Rex (Foord) and others have performed over the years at functions to add a little entertainment to fundraising nights and afternoon teas. I have enjoyed every one of them immensely.

A little bird told us that you have received an award for service to the community. We would love to know what drives you to be so involved in community activities, you bless so many, what are the blessings for you, understanding that you do not serve in order to be rewarded.

Yes, it was the Adrian Mannix Award Community Service Award, given in Drysdale to a Bellarine peninsular resident for community involvement and work.

I'm not good at saying no. Well, really I believe that getting involved in organisations whether Theatre, Agricultural Shows, Rifle Clubs or Bushikori is what keeps communities active and interesting. People get enjoyment out of seeing, hearing or participating in their communities. They just need a little encouragement to get involved. A happy place is a good start.

I enjoy everything I have done (sometimes its a bit scary) and I get a lot of satisfaction knowing that other people are enjoying it too, and sometimes its because of what I do.



Connections



On Saturday December 5, Esther and Pamela travelled to Brimbank Anglican Church, Melbourne. In 2018 when Anne and David were visiting Australia they also went to this church to see Agatha and her husband Ronald, formerly from Mbale. Our visit was to attend the thanksgiving service for Agatha who has been ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church, we believe that she is the first African Ugandan Australian woman to do so. There is such a deep and wonderful connection with Mbale, BCC and our Australian committee. Agatha is Bessie's auntie, she is one of the Child Care workers at BCC, (see article). It was so wonderful to see Agatha, Ronald her husband and her sons. Many of the congregation on Saturday are Ugandans from Mbale!

Agatha told us that in 1991 Sam Wandendeya (the late founder of BCC) needed a book keeper and employed Agatha. But unfortunately they couldn't afford to pay her so got her a job across the road with the NGO run by Sam's brother David and his wife Edith.

Ronald was present the day Sam tragically died in January 1998, he was returning to Kampala to get his vehicle after accompanying the driver of the truck with our first container sent from Australia, after months stuck in the Kenyan port of Mombasa it had finally arrived. Sam managed to get a ride in a small bus and as it was full, he acted as conductor, hanging off the outside of the vehicle, and it rolled. Sam was fatally injured, all we had to hold onto was 'well done, good and faithful servant.'

How beautiful to meet Agatha and Ronald in these circumstances, a celebration, with a lot of other Ugandans. Such a treat, swaying and clapping to great worship songs, enjoying liturgy and prayers. It felt like a bit of Uganda without the long flight.

If the opportunity arose, (availability of an affordable flight for example) would you like to travel to Uganda and what would be your expectations of such a safari?

Firstly I wouldn't go on a Safari, that doesn't interest me. I'm sure travelling around I would see enough to interest me without looking for it. I cannot see me travelling to Uganda while we still have the job we have; I would have to retire first.

Finally do you still have a smelly billy goat tethered on your property, and are you an AFL supporter, which team?

Well he's not as smelly as he used to be. He's getting older so doesn't sproose himself up for the ladies anymore. His name is Audie (after the American war hero actor) and he lives about 30 feet from us at all times now. Know's his name and loves snacks.

I've always been an Essendon supporter have stuck with them through the good and the bad. Sheeds would have to have been the best. A little story about Sheeds.

I worked at the Tivoli Theatre Restaurant and every Christmas the Time keepers used to have a get together before the finals. Sheedy and his wife came along. At the end of the night I noticed on his table about 20 of our paper placemats were scribbled all over. Ovals with lots of lines and notes regarding plays. I don't think he saw much of the show.

Thankyou so much for sharing some of yourself in this interview Rick.



Primary Leaving Results



Here in Australia we don't traditionally have Primary Leaving Exams (PLE). This is different in East Africa including Uganda and all the schools. The students in Primary 7 work very hard at Joshua Primary School (JPS) to achieve good results in this very important time of examination. It is a very formal affair, the students sit at desks in the Geelong Hall and are adjudicated, they sit an exam in each subject. (I remember this well from my time in the final year of Primary School in Nairobi). If a student does not pass the exam, they are required to remain in P7 for another year.

We are so very blessed to have such a high standard of education offered at JPS, with excellent and dedicated teachers who receive a regular and secure salary, thanks to donors in Geelong. Additionally, the students receive morning tea, a mug of posho porridge (white maize meal) and they have hearty lunch at school. Attending to the students' nutrition is quite unique in Uganda and the benefits are obvious with 38 per cent of students gaining a Division 1 pass, the highest score, and 24 per cent achieving Division 2.

We give thanks to God for His wonderful provision for BCC and the students who attend JPS.

Pamela Ferrar

We are so happy to inform you all about the good performance of Joshua Primary School (JPS). Despite the lockdown for a long time, the loss of our dear Mum Anne, the teachers worked hard to encourage and support the children in every way. Sometimes it even involved going to their homes, issuing holiday packages and assignments, and taking home tests. We give God the glory and honour. He has been good to us.

This year, our own sponsored child - Trevor Waburoko (Trevor is also supported by the Bushikori Alumni Students) was the best in the school. He scored 4 aggregates and we are so proud of him. Many other students performed so well. At the ministry of Education and Sports, we were listed as one of the best 100 schools in the country. We were number 92 according to the performance. We have over 20,000 primary schools in the country.

Blessings!

Child Care Department

Results 2021 Uganda National Examinations Board

In Uganda, pupils may start their education between the ages of five and ten at the nearest primary school (the official government recognized the age of entry is six years). In Uganda, there are seven primary school years, from primary one (P1) to primary seven (P7) and the legal age for school entry is six (Moyi 3).

Only some of the primary school graduates go on to take any form of secondary education. At the end of P7, pupils sit their first major national exams – the primary leaving examination (PLE). This is contingent upon them passing their PLE.

Subjects of PLE:

1. English
2. Mathematics
3. Science
4. Social studies

Grading System Uganda:

The best possible mark pupils can achieve is a total of four (which means one point – a distinction – in each subject), while the worst is a total of 36 (nine points for each subject, which means a fail).

Students who score between 4 to 12 points means they pass the PLE with a first grade.

Students who score between 13 to 23 means they pass the PLE with second grade.

In similar way students who score between 24 to 29 means, they pass PLE exam with a third grade.

In similar way students who score between 30 to 34 means, they pass PLE exam with a fourth grade.

MEET OUR Staff Workers

About Me: Risper Nabwire

My name is Risper Nabwire and I have the wonderful privilege of serving at the Health Center, that is the medical outreach of the Bushikori Christian Center. My journey with Bushikori started when I came to do an internship as I was completing my Diploma in Medicine and Community Health.



My involvement

As an individual, I have always been passionate about health and wellness and participating in reaching out to the needy in this context. I soon found out that Bushikori is a unique mission and so I began to see it as a place that could offer a platform for me to use my passion to serve the community.

The mission of Bushikori

The core of the mission is servitude; people coming together to bring about positive change, challenging the views of our culture with the word of God yet staying relevant through bringing vital health services in a community where availability and access to the basics of health care are limited.

What stands out for me

The highlight of my time at Bushikori has been the opportunity to grow as an individual, professionally I have expanded my network of colleagues at the work place and I honestly feel at home.

How I see the future

We are all looking forward to setting up a 'community cooperative health insurance' and the hopefully much-needed emergency surgical services. These two are the biggest projects we are working on through local innovations to address issues around sustainable healthcare.

Greetings

I would like to thank the Australian Committee, the sponsors of our children and all who are involved with various programs and I do wish them all a Merry Christmas and a Jesus filled Happy New Year.

About Me: Bessie Wabukye

My name is Bessie Wabukye, 31 years old married to David Wabukye. I work with the Childcare Department at the Mission of the Bushikori Christian Center. I am a mother of three children, two boys and one girl.



Starting at BCC

In 2016 through a student friend that I studied with at University, I learnt that BCC wanted an Assistant Accountant and I had the qualifications. Two of us were shortlisted for interviews, BCC were really seeking a fresh graduate from University but I was four years post-graduation.

Bushikori also needed a Social Worker who could manage the children's database, including the financial aspect of it. I was the best candidate as I had experience in both these areas. It is now five years since I began working at BCC.

My journey with BCC

I must say the journey has been good. I am a much better person. I have built on my social work skills as well as accounting; dealing with children and families in many spheres of life and helping them realize their potential. I have learnt to be patient, especially with the adolescents working with them as they mature and self-discover.

We have the wonderful opportunity to share in daily devotion and this helps me to share the message of Christ to my family and community as well as whenever opportunities arise. I have learnt to give freely and whole heartedly through sponsorship and the Bushikori July month.

The highlights of my time here

Celebrating 25 years of Bushikori. Meeting friends from Australia (Aunt Pamela and Aunt Laurel). We visited the children in different schools and spent time together.

Celebrating success of the 2020 PLE results. In the history of Bushikori, our own sponsored child Trevor Waburoko scored four aggregates at Joshua Primary School.

The future

Seeing the families of our sponsored children move out of poverty, through empowering them by offering access to quality healthcare and affordable education.

Sponsorship Opportunities

The Bushikori Christian Centre, Mbale, Uganda exists to fulfill the great commission of Jesus Christ in word and deed by spreading the word of God, taking care of widows, orphans and other vulnerable children.

Meet Our Students



Jacob Kato Wanderema

Jacob is seven years old. He lives with his grandmother, he is a twin. The parents are separated. They are poor, live in a mud home with iron roofing, and have one meal a day.



Jesper Masaba

Jesper is five years old. He lives with his parents, they have no secure income. They do have a small piece of land for subsistence farming, a mud home with an iron roof. They need assistance as do not have funds for schooling.



Mercy Elizabeth Wanyenze

Mercy is five years old. She lives with a relative who supports Mercy and her mother, the father has left them. The home is mud with an iron roof, they have one meal a day as the mother has no income or land to farm.



Merisa Marongo

She is 5 years old and in Nursery 1. She has been accepted as needing sponsorship as It is now three years since Merisa's father abandoned the family, her mother has no source of income and just looks for odd work to earn enough to support the family. They have no land for farming and live in a small brick home.

Monthly Sponsorship Rates

Options for 3x instalments or annual payments

Primary Student	\$30
Secondary Student	\$53
Tertiary Student	TBA

Want to learn more about sponsorship?

Contact: sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

Friends of Bushikori Fund Raising

Christmas card design

A big thank you to Gabby, a young member of one of our Bushikori families. She came forward with two designs that she had prepared for Christmas cards. Another blessing of creative thoughtfulness and love for the mission in Uganda. Only a small number were printed. Please contact us if you want to purchase this year. \$10 (Packet of 5 cards).



Sharing the story of Bushikori

Noble Street Uniting Church invited Esther to speak at their Sunday service early November.

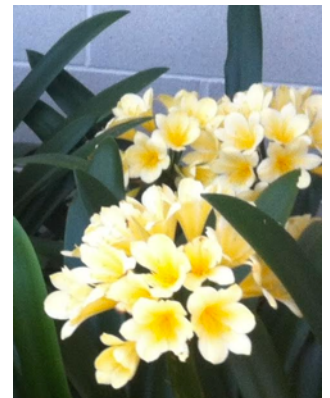
Those attending were able to hear the story of Bushikori, for many this was the first time that they had heard about the beginnings of this mission and our recent news from Uganda.

We are so thankful for the prayers and support that is growing amongst our local churches.

B "Bring some beauty into your garden... and hope into the lives of children in Uganda."

John and Helen McLean, Friends of Bushikori usually give away their Clivia plants when they reduce their patch in the garden, by the way these are the rare cream flowering type.

This time however as the plants were about to flower John and Helen decided to sell them and raise funds for Bushikori, they sold like hotcakes!



Such a good idea for a fund-raiser!

Thank you for this beautiful idea that will continue to live on!

Friends of Bushikori, Barbara, Jan, Marg and others have been sharing some of their creative talent in order to sell items for fundraising. As people start to gather again we are so blessed to receive these opportunities and the support given for Bushikori. Thank you to everyone for helping.

OCTOBER FUNDRAISERS

PROCAFFEINATING (n.) The tendency to not start anything until you've had a cup of coffee.

Not so for the Belmont Uniting Church Mission and Outreach Committee!

For the second year they have held this successful event encouraging many people to join in with a so called "coffee" fundraiser. During the month of October, whilst enjoying a morning cup of coffee or tea we have been encouraged to place donations in a collection jar and then bring these

donations to the "drive through" at Belmont Uniting Church on Saturday 6th November.

Parishioners at the Belmont Uniting Church, Sue and Bill Jennings are members of the Friends of Bushikori Group, we are so thankful to them for co-ordinating this event and also the counting of many coins and notes!

A sincere thank you to everyone who donated.

A wonderful total of \$3,008 was given to Bushikori.

Christmas Fund

Thank you to The Anglican Parish of Lara and Little River for their generous gift of \$1,020 towards the Bushikori Christmas Fund. This was raised during their October mission month giving.





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