



## June 2024 Newsletter

Celebrating 30 years of partnership | Thanksgiving Month | Health Centre Update | Sponsorship Opportunities





## 30 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.

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 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](http://www.bushikori.org.au)

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Facebook: Bushikori Christian Centre

We would like to thank:

- Stephen Davey at Pagation for hosting our website.
- Christian College, Highton, for printing 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](mailto:president@bushikori.org.au)



# BUSHIKORI THANKSGIVING SERVICE

21 July 2024 | 2:00pm

## St. John's Anglican Church Highton

When I stop to think on what 30 years means, I picture bare patches of ground superimposed with solid buildings. It is a fleeting impression. What floods my emotions are the memories of the people. The people of Bushikori past and present. The people, the relationships, the caring, the kindness, the love. The Holy Spirit promptings, the love of Jesus, the wisdom, guidance and providence of God.

The Bushikori Christian Centre exists as a wonderful example of the abundant grace of God. That same grace and love that connects us all to each other. It has been through God's faithfulness that I have seen the gaps and differences between our people become less great. I can confidently say Jesus is our bridge.

I remember a conversation I had with Anne Wandendeya, I was reflecting on the fact that it is not until we look back at life that we realise how great some burdens may have been. I said I was sorry. Anne smiled and said, "It is past. It was a season", and she changed the topic. The unspoken was that now we are in a new season. Rejoice!

Inevitably Anne's words would lead me to scripture - in this instance the words of Solomon: Ecclesiastes (3:1- 22). 'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.... A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance....' (Who hears the song Turn Turn by the Byrds in their heads)?! I won't go through it all - look it up - both the Scripture and the song. Always useful verses upon which to reflect.

Solomon speaks of God wanting humans "to be joyful and do good as long as they live" and that "whatever God does endures forever". The physical work of Bushikori flows on yet what will endure forever is my spirit changed and enriched with each passing year.

In celebrating I wish to take time to remember, honour and give thanks for all those involved with Bushikori, whose hearts have been opened, those who have encouraged, those who have taught us tolerance, those we have loved and those whom we have lost, those who were with us for a season and those still here.

Thank you to every volunteer worker, committee member, supporter, donor, sponsor and friend for your part in building Bushikori and being part of God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Kerry Peacock (President of the Australian Support Committee)

# A MESSAGE FROM...

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We praise God for his ongoing grace and provision for the Bushikori Christian Centre and the Australian Support Committee as **we celebrate 30 years of partnership** between Geelong (Australia) and Mbale (Uganda).

The articles in this first newsletter for 2024 are excerpts of reports received from Uganda in their 2023 Annual Report. This report offers a Ugandan perspective on the mission of Bushikori to our Australian team, supporters and sponsors.

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## ... Thomas Odoi

*Chairperson of the BCC Executive Committee*

### Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ,

I thank God for the distance he has brought us as an organization and for helping us register many successes as you will see in this Annual Report of 2023. I am delighted to mention that there is a very big difference between now and 29 years ago as far as organizational growth is concerned. This year has been a remarkable year for all of us here at Bushikori Christian Centre. We emerged more resilient and revived, and our confidence in our capabilities is reflected not only in our numbers but also in the trust that the community has placed in us.

Last year, we were able to steer through the challenges and effects of COVID effectively and achieve strong growth. We did this by aligning with God; our vision and mission, focusing on growth, and maintaining a strong operational rigor. This is a demonstration of the unwavering determination of our teams to help our communities succeed in their respective livelihoods. While the pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions, it also taught us some life-changing lessons. We learned the importance of protecting our families, sponsored children and our communities. As a result, we embarked on home outreach school programs and practices to connect with our sponsored children as well as Medical Centre clients and the communities, always assuring them of our unwavering support.

During the year, we acquired a new Girls' Hostel Structure which is helping us house more girls in the school, a post-natal ward at the Medical Centre

including hospital equipment, for example a fridge used specifically for blood products and hospital beds. We are so grateful for the donors.

However, we still have a long road ahead to ensure a better and brighter future for the next generations. Giving back to society has never been more important, and I'd like to thank each member of the Bushikori Family for their active support and unshakable trust in our abilities to deliver on our promise. You have motivated us to unleash our potential for the next phase of our growth. May God take the lead in this Ministry for us to achieve the mission of the Organization.

## ... Mary Wandendeya

*Executive Director of BCC*

I wish to thank God who has guided us through this year 2023. He has been so gracious to us throughout the year and blessed us with so much. Thank you to all who prayed and gave resources in different ways. God bless you. Through the support from the Australian Support Committee, we have been able to achieve several projects through this year. The major projects being the Anne Leah building extension, refurbishing the old beds to make ready two rooms for use in this medical wing, and the Girls' Hostel now accommodating 146 girls since May 2023.

2024 we are looking forward to an amazing year with growth for Bushikori, improving operations in the various departments as we grow the vision and mission of Bushikori both in word and deed.

# July

## THANKSGIVING MONTH



July is Bushikori month for Thanksgiving. Bushikori has dedicated this month to thank God for every step made, every milestone, and each year that comes and goes with an amazing impact through the work we do. We thank God who has enabled the organization to achieve so much. The sponsorship, Joshua Primary School, and the Medical Centre have all expanded because of God's provision. July is an exceptional month at Bushikori. The Child Care Department includes children from nearby schools during this month's celebration, they are brought to participate in the prayers every Friday leading praise and worship and testifying of the Lord's goodness. Through this, we have seen children grow spiritually, preaching the word of God to people and participating in the end month activity where we share a meal and clothing with community.

### ASC heading to Uganda

Later this year ASC Chair Kerry Peacock, Treasurer Rick Peacock, Child Care Coordinator Pamela Ferrar and IT support Rex Foord will travel to Bushikori with each of the group self funding their trip.

Aims for the visit:

- To give thanks to our Lord for this amazing partnership and mission that has been sustained over 3 decades despite many obstacles and challenges along the way.
- To deepen our relationships with executive and staff at BCC with time to discuss the finer details of the mission and their future hopes and plans.
- To increase our understanding of Ugandan culture, this helps us to bridge the gap between the countries and give up to date information to our sponsors and supporters.
- To celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at BCC together with our Ugandan colleagues, this will be a BIG day.
- To give all at BCC the opportunity to meet again with Kerry who has been chairperson of ASC for 21 years, and meet her husband Rick for the first time.
- On our return we will communicate our experiences and learning through the newsletter, and are also available to visit churches and other venues to share information with supporters and sponsors.



# EXCELLENCE AT JOSHUA PRIMARY SCHOOL

## From mango tree to registered primary school

JPS has been providing quality accessible and affordable education to children since 1993. The famous mango tree that offered a sheltered outdoor classroom for children still stands today, at that time the school was called Mabanga PS.

JPS is now a fully fledged Nursery and Primary School registered and licensed by the Uganda Ministry of Education.

We have maintained high academic standards in the Mbale region and at times posted the best performance outside Mbale City schools. We have recorded a steady improvement in performance in the national examinations. In the 2022 Primary Leaving Examinations, Joshua Primary School maintained the lead in the district. We registered 88 candidates. Out of these, 48 passed in division one, 38 in division two, and 2 in division three. The school is the main enrolment point for the sponsorship program that also has sustained the cost of teaching and instructions for a long time. Thanks to the Covenant College team that has consistently contributed to partial teachers' salaries. Our pupil numbers have continually grown stretching the available infrastructure; to manage this we have had to improvise to accommodate the need. The school teaches the Uganda-based curriculum for primary schools.

We are blessed to have been able to offer tours and excursions for the students. These include a visit to the source of the River Nile, near Jinja, the students were able to see this wonder of the longest river in Africa. They have also visited Wanale Falls near Mbale, the Entebbe Airport (the main international airport for Uganda) and the Zoo. These excursions are one of the best methods of teaching, giving the students experiences to travel within Uganda and see and touch what they are learning about.



# STUDENT STORIES

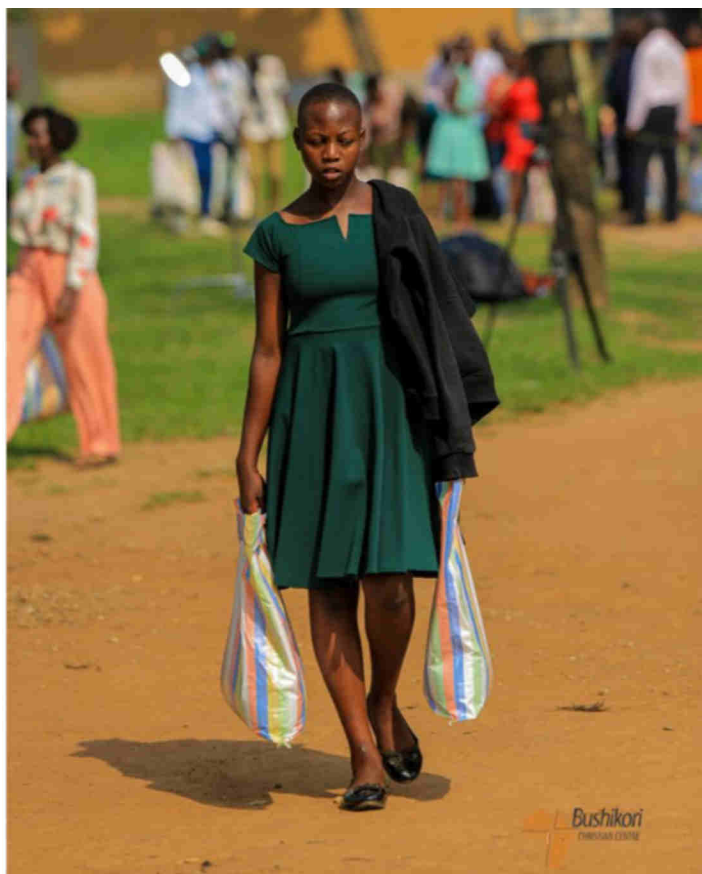
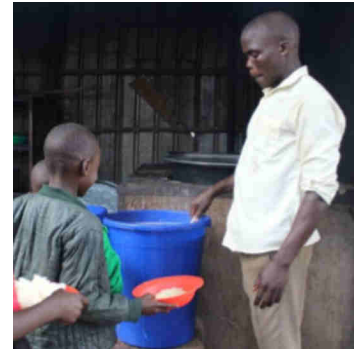
## Samson Kuloba



Samson is in Senior 3 at St. Paul's College, Mbale. He receives regular welfare support from his sponsor. CCD regularly follow him up to ensure proper use of the resources. Samson has been investing the funds into income-generating activities at home. CCD visited and were amazed, he has a piggery project, 5 pigs, sow and piglets; 4 turkeys and 2 goats. He chose these animals because they multiply rapidly and are easy to manage. Samson is actively involved in these projects during the holiday, while he is at school his family manage the animals. Through these projects, the family has been able to top up Samson's education with ease (school fees top-up and scholastic materials). They are hopeful that as the project grows, it will become an investment for future sustainability. It is amazing to see Samson use the little he gets, save it, and invest it for multiplication. Thank you sponsors for giving to children like Samson.

Tony Wandawa completed his secondary school level in 2022 but did not score enough points to allow him direct admission to a university; he also missed the March 2023 intake to a vocational institute due to personal challenges. Our Social Workers supported him in repurposing his career path through mentorship, encouraging him to rejoin education. Tony will return to school in January 2024 to pursue a certificate in electrical installation. What is unique about Tony is he agreed to provide services to Joshua Primary School ranging from supporting the kitchen team, supporting the cooking, and serving of meals to Joshua students. He is given a small allowance to furnish his basic needs; he is a happy young man and loves what he does as it has shielded him from bad peer group influences that had at one time affected him. He is assured of 3 meals a day and he uses his time productively. We look forward to Tony resuming his education in 2024.

## Tony Wandawa



## Christmas Gathering

Every year we send funds for the Christmas gathering, we are grateful to all those who support this special event. In this report we are encouraged to read how this special event is appreciated by the students. - The ASC

The theme for the Gathering in 2023 was Isaiah 9:6. We were honoured to host 229 children and 28 parents. The students conducted the program and led the event excellently with a Christmas drama, special presentations, preaching the word of God, special communications from the Director and Child Care Department, lunch, cake, and gift hampers. The preacher, our very own student Steven Wambi, emphasised the need for the greatest gift of God - Jesus Christ who is Love quoting from John 3:16. He told parents present to always work hard and support the children and for the children to remain in school and persist with their education. He encouraged the students to continue to serve the Lord and learn the Word of God.

# Health

## AT BUSHIKORI

### From humble beginnings

From a humble First Aid Post Bushikori now has a Health Centre Level 3 (classification by the Uganda Ministry of Health). Services offered include general medicine, surgical procedures, immunisation, maternal/child health care, laboratory services HIV testing and care, TB screening and treatment, ultrasound services, blood transfusion services. Initially there was one nurse, now 18 staff are employed, both clinical and non-clinical. This team of dedicated young people serve the community with passion. We provide continuous medical education to improve skills and clinical knowledge to all staff regularly. Due to improved services, 2023 posted very positive trends that include reduced onward referrals, zero maternal deaths recorded, cured TB patients with complications under the care and management of the medical team; managed two-twin deliveries by caesarean section, increased antenatal and delivery services through the provision of free 'ante-natal' coupons. Our efforts are supported by partners who supplement the needs of low-income clients surrounding the facility. Our services are highly subsidized thanks to the generous support of our major supporting partners within Uganda and Australia.



### Anne Leah Women's Wellness Centre

The Women Wellness Centre has been established in honour of the late Mama Anne. L. Wandendeya, Executive Director who served BCC for over 25 years. She was passionate about women's health, dedicating most of her time to ensure both women's access to health services and economic empowerment. The Wellness Centre Project continues the mission that was started by Mama Anne. The intention therefore is to increase the survival chances of women and (men) seeking medical care at Bushikori Medical Centre by improving patient care.

The Maternity Unit has been upgraded by a volunteer team in Uganda using funds raised with the assistance of Dr Barry Edwards and team in Australia. Specific upgrade activities include re-modelling the Maternity Unit to house the Operating Theatre (Surgical Department), equipping the Operating Theatre and operationalizing it, and the Construction of the Post-Surgical space. The facility can now offer emergency surgical procedures and safe maternal deliveries.

# CHILD CARE

the Annual Report

# DEPARTMENT

## Graduation of Sponsored Students

The Child Care Department (CCD) is the backbone of the sponsorship program at Bushikori Christian Centre. Since its inauguration over 26 years ago, many success stories have been documented. This year 2023 has provided us yet another opportunity to share the journey of sponsorship through education for children through to adulthood.

These young adults are now celebrating their achievements as they have completed both tertiary and vocational education. They have been entirely supported by BCC. Our interventions include education, medical, spiritual, and psycho-social support. With 276 (at the time of writing) students in active sponsorship, we are keeping track of each child's progress in real-time. Our social work is committed to achieving the planned outcomes of

the sponsorship program.

This sponsorship journey for the student begins with Social workers identifying needy children through community networks and churches—some children come in through referrals. We often have a long list of needy children joining the 'waiting list'.

Currently, all sponsorship is coordinated by the Australian Support Committee (ASC). Our program (Individual Sponsorship Model) links children to sponsors who dedicate a long-term commitment to ensure that education and health outcomes are met to completion, predominantly education (usually graduation at either the university or any higher institute of learning). Many of our students at completion will have

been in the program for over 15 years! This is a great commitment of resources from the sponsors. We have documented many children who have passed through the sponsorship program in the past 29 years.

This year 2023 we are pleased to welcome 19 graduates in various disciplines who have completed their courses. 53% graduated with certificates, 26% with degrees, and 21% with diplomas. The students qualified in hairdressing, beauty, cosmetics and skin care, the hotel and hospitality industry and business administration. It has been a very long journey of endurance for them. Our staff, parents/guardians often attend the graduations – a very joyous moment for the Bushikori family, always.





# SPONSORSHIP

## Meet Our Students



**Nelvin Musamali**

Nelvin is a six year old boy who lives with his parents who are living with HIV/ Aids. They have no secure income and struggle to support and educate their children. They have a brick home with an iron roof and have two meals a day.



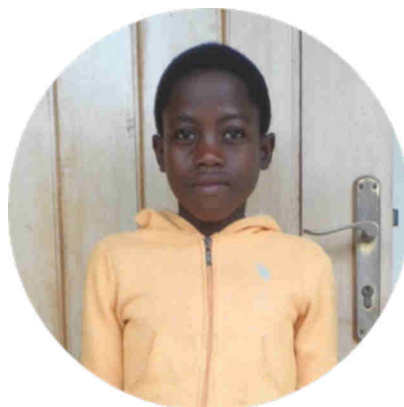
**Jackline Muyama**

Jackline is an eight year old girl who lives with her parents who are subsistence farmers. The land is too small to earn enough to support the childrens' education.



**Jabeth Wambewo**

Jabeth is a five year old boy who lives with his single mother in the home of relatives. His mother has no income.



**Mercy Mutonyi**

Mercy is a ten year old girl who lives with her grandfather who has many dependents. Her mother died without disclosing who her father was.

If you would like to sponsor, email: [sponsorship@bushikori.org.au](mailto:sponsorship@bushikori.org.au)

*The construction of a home indicates the level of poverty of a family. A mud and wattle home is constructed using local soil and branches, with an iron roof that hopefully does not leak. A brick home is a more secure construction. All of these children do not have food security and education is an absolute necessity to change the circumstances of the family and their future. We thank God that with sponsorship lives are transformed, as testified by all the students who have completed their studies and are living well, with secure homes and food security assured. This is the hope we have for these children. The photos are from 2022.*

## Monthly Sponsorship Rates

Options for three instalments yearly or once off annual payments

Primary Student **\$30**

Secondary Student **\$53**

Tertiary Student **TBA**

## OUR WORK

*Bushikori is a Child Sponsorship Program*, empowering children in poverty to be educated, growing up to become an agent of change in their own country. Care is taken to ensure sponsored children live with suitable guardians. The committed Ugandan staff at Bushikori provide a much-needed service to the impoverished farming community; particularly the vulnerable children (regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, tribe). From nursery to tertiary/vocational, sponsorship covers school fees, uniform, scholastic materials, medical care and welfare. All of the sponsorship fees go directly to Uganda.

*Bushikori is Joshua Primary School*, providing quality education to students from Nursery to Primary Seven. Classes are taught in English. Every Student at Joshua Primary receives two meals a day, which for some is the only food that they eat each day.

*Bushikori is a Community Library*, established through a support group from the United States of America providing much needed textbooks, recreational reading books and a space for training.

*Bushikori is a Health Centre*, providing a 24 hour service to a population of 23,000. The healthcare service includes maternal health, HIV/AIDS clinic, adolescent health, immunisations, diagnostic services and the training of traditional birth attendants.



## Donate to a fund



*Bushikori Centre Fund*: Each month the Australian Support Committee must send funds to keep the Ugandan Centre running (i.e. power, fuel, Ugandan staff wages).



*Health Centre Fund*: Support to employ staff at the medical centre which serves the surrounding population of approximately 23,000 people.

*AnneLeah Fund*: Support the Surgical Services Operating Theatre project.



*Richard Stone Memorial Fund*: Helps to support the payment of tertiary/vocational education of sponsored children. Funds are distributed at the Australian Support Committee's discretion.



*Welfare Pool*: Used at the discretion of Ugandan staff for children who have a special need (i.e. roofs, goats, bedding, seeds, food).

*Christmas Fund*: Helps to support the annual Christmas gathering and gifts of rice, cooking oil, flour, sugar for the sponsored children and families.



*Joshua Primary School*: Support for infrastructure and to employ teachers.

## If you would like to support Bushikori Christian Centre please:

Email your interest to:

**[sponsorship@bushikori.org.au](mailto:sponsorship@bushikori.org.au)**

Or, call Sponsorship Coordinator, Pamela:

**0407 576 441**

Or, write to us: **Bushikori Christian Centre, PO Box 42, Geelong, 3220**

For direct deposit:

**BSB 063858. Account No. 10077253.**

Cheques made payable to Bushikori Christian Centre



If undeliverable, please return to:  
Bushikori Christian Centre  
Newsletter  
PO Box 42,

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