



November 2025 Newsletter

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Over 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.

Editors: Esther Cohen & Pamela Ferrar
Graphic support: Alysha Morrison

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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Geelong, Victoria, 3220, Australia

General email: president@bushikori.org.au
Sponsorship email: sponsorship@bushikori.org.au
Website: www.bushikori.org.au
Facebook: Bushikori Christian Centre

We would like to thank Stephen Davey at Pagination for hosting our website and Christian College Highton for printing services.

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

Let us pray

Guided by Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again, rejoice!

Dear Lord,

We come before you in deep gratitude for who you are and what you give and how you lead and guide us when we seek you,

Let your gentleness be evident to all,

Thank you Lord for teaching us how to live and work, rejoicing in your provision and love and especially in our calling to serve you through Bushikori,

The Lord is near,

Your presence with us is tangible Lord as we remember what you have done and are now doing for the poor and needy at Bushikori, when we are tired and struggling and wondering, may we always remember that you are near.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests.

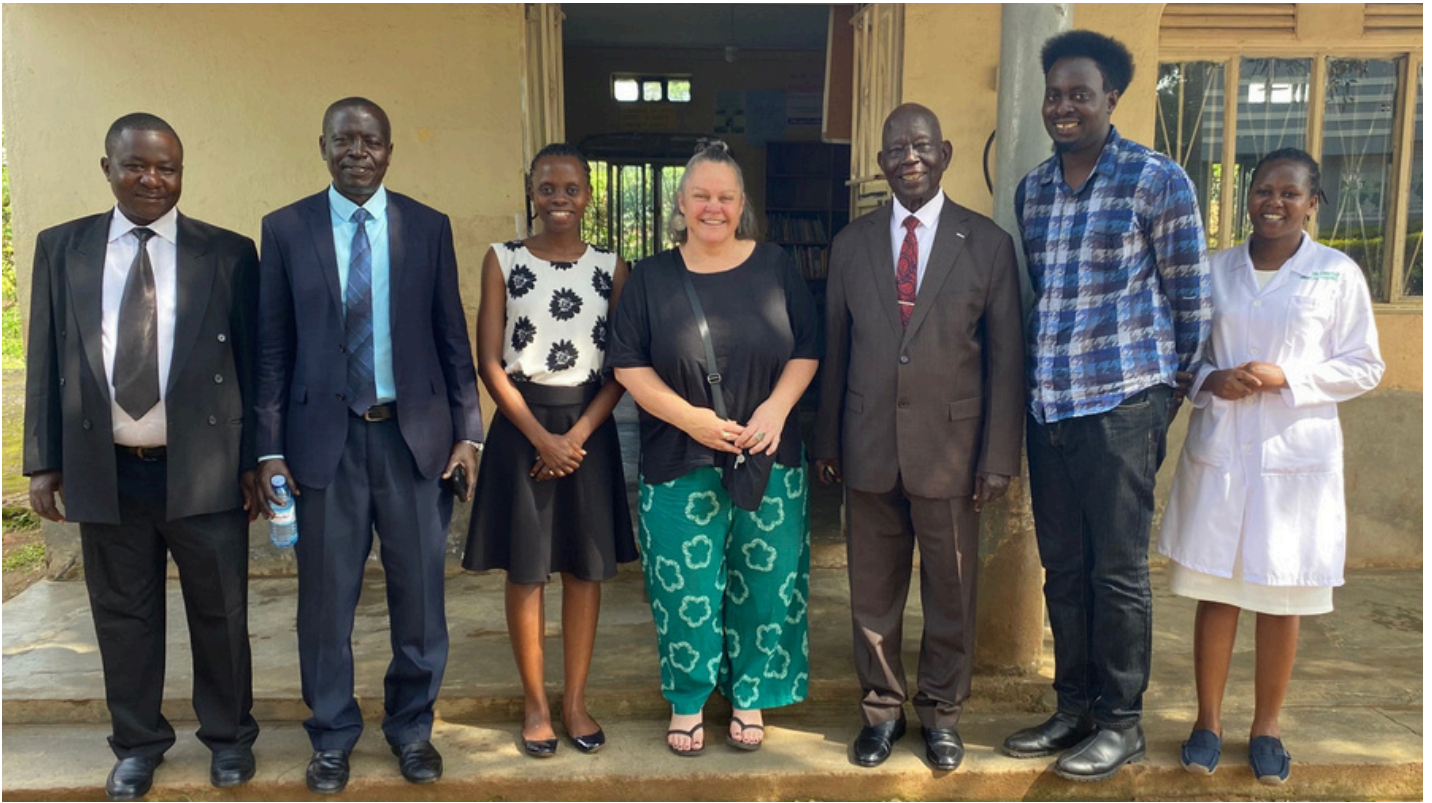
We thank you for the gift of prayer, of community, for the blessing of connection with staff and students through Bushikori Uganda and here in Australia with our supporters and sponsors.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Thank you Lord for this promise, this gift of life we have when we believe in Jesus, we will rejoice in the Lord, always.

Amen

A visit to Bushikori



From left to right: Headmaster Robert Wambomba, Michael Wangwe (Executive member) Mary Wanendeya (Director), Jane Blakston, Chairman Thomas Odoi, Matthew Wanendeya and Risper Nabwire (Clinical Officer)

Witnessing Bushikori's dedicated work first hand

Jane Blakston: Long term supporter

I heard about Bushikori in my early years of teaching at Covenant College. John Duffield would tell our staff stories and give us progress updates. I loved hearing about Joshua Primary School and how it was growing. Through John's reports I felt a connection to the teachers there and God prompted me to start giving something from each pay to support them in their work.

Now, almost 30 years later, I am still a staff salary supporter and I have just recently become a student sponsor after attending the 30th anniversary of the Geelong (Australian) Support Committee.

Last year God called my brother and his family to South Sudan to support the work our church is doing there. I realised that I could 'kill two birds with one stone' and visit Bushikori on my way to see my brother. The Australian Support Committee (ASC)

were so helpful in my planning. They gave me advice and encouragement and really made me feel excited to go. Director Mary Wanendeya was helpful too. I was very thankful for her speedy replies to my questions and her support for my trip.

My experience of visiting Bushikori was wonderful! Very brief but so wonderful. I was very warmly welcomed and very well looked after. During my visit I was able to see Joshua Primary School, the hostel, the hospital and the home of the student I sponsor. We did so much in just a few short days - it was marvellous!

Morning Glory with the staff was a real joy and I 'felt right at home' sitting amongst the staff as they sang, prayed and read the Word together. It was a privilege to be able to sit in a few classes at the school and hear the teachers teaching Christianity and to see the children learning and running chapel. I was so happy to

sit in the Geelong Hall and listen to the students sing about standing firm on God's promises. Such a special treat!

I was also glad to be able to spend time talking over lunch at a beautiful mountain retreat with Director Mary, Human Resources manager Moses and Bessie from the Child Care Department. God has blessed Bushikori with some very wise and dedicated staff.

It was lovely to see how much Mary and her siblings reminded me of their parents whom I had met at Covenant College many years ago. The Wanendeya siblings were kind, hospitable and generous to me and I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to spend time with them.

I pray that God continues to give Mary, the board and the staff at Bushikori wisdom and strength in the days ahead.



SPONSORSHIP

Bushikori Child Care Department are aware of the needs of poor and vulnerable families in their catchment area.

We welcome all who would like to sponsor a student with us. Please contact us through sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

There are children who need sponsorship.





The Impact Fund

Australian Support Committee Excerpt

BCC Uganda requires funding for a broad scope of needs for families that come to Bushikori for assistance. During our visit to Bushikori in 2024 staff asked, where could they share stories of Impact, of where the small amount of welfare fund made such a difference. Together we decided to rename the gift/welfare fund to the Impact fund because that's what it does – makes an Impact! The results have been very successful, here are the stories of three families whose situations have been radically improved from the support they received. Here is the edited report we received from Uganda.

Bushikori Uganda Report

The Child Care Department (CCD) exists to support the neediest families in different communities through quality education, access to medical care, psychological support, and spiritual support. Many homes are still struggling with difficult and stressful situations such as poverty, disease and death.

The Impact Fund is used to provide for the physical, psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual needs of children and their relatives. This has been a great blessing and many families have received support that has changed and improved their lives.

Children are emotionally healthy which has improved their self-confidence, school performance and created mutually respectful relationships. When CCD staff visit the students' home they are able to assess living conditions and any issues the family may be dealing with. Following are the stories of three very disadvantaged students, Irene, Emmanuel and Esther.

Christmas Gathering in Uganda

The Bushikori Annual Christmas Gathering will be held in early December. Sponsored children and their guardians come from far and near with great excitement to join in a day of celebration at the Bushikori Centre. As the year draws to an end all are encouraged to share about the meaning of Christmas, to have a meal together and to take home a Christmas gift to share with their families. The children are treated to a hearty meal of rice, meat, fish and a small bottle of soda! They each receive a gift hamper of cooking oil, sugar, flour and rice to share with their families to keep the Christmas spirit alive.

We welcome your prayers and support for this Christmas giving.

If you would like to support this ministry, please direct your donation towards the Christmas Fund.

Beneficiaries of the Impact Fund



Irene

Orphaned at an early age, Irene lives with her grandparents who are vulnerable and elderly. She is in Primary four class at Perfect Upright Primary school. Her grandparents have many dependants but no secure source of income to support the big family. Irene was fortunate to be among the children sponsored by the Bushikori Christian Centre, these funds pay for her education and medical care.



When the Child Care Department (CCD) visited Irene's home recently, it came to our attention that the family were living in a parlous state lacking adequate shelter, bedding and clothing and other necessities. This situation was placing emotional strain on the whole family. To help address this issue and meet the physical needs of the family, the CCD provided Irene's family with new bedding (see photo bottom left) to help ease the strain placed on the family at this time.

Emmanuel

Emmanuel, abbreviated Emma, lost his father at a tender age after relocating from their home district to where they are now. Cecilia, his mother, has struggled on her own for many years to provide for her family's survival. Two children are sponsored by CCD, Emma and Florence. The Impact fund was used to renovate the roof of their house and support them with an Income Generating Activity with pigs.

CCD has always supported this family with food and other necessities. Through the Impact Fund, CCD procured maize seeds for the family to plant. We thought it would be helpful if the family planted more seed than needed for one season, by God's grace and through Cecilia's hard work, they now have enough food to sustain them for a long time. Now she is able to concentrate on buying other necessities.



Esther

Esther is the eldest daughter of Zabina, a single mother who has stood firm to support her family. Zabina lives with the disabling results of burns from a house fire, her hands are without fingers, but this does not stop her courage and zeal to work. Her husband and a child died in this tragedy. Zabina ensures that her two children and one grandson are well taken care of. She has always found help from Bushikori when she is not well.

A few years ago CCD, through Australian friends, secured a block of land and built a house for her. She now has a permanent and safe home for her family. Zabina has a small business selling vegetables and charcoal to sustain the family.

Zabina's children are both in boarding school. She is currently living with her grandson, and the family is complete again during holidays. Our prayer is for her to grow her business so that she can be able to support her family and live an independent life.



The Australian Support Committee annual review

Cecilia Bell

Secretary of the Australian Support Committee

Meeting minutes

As I read over the minutes of the past year's meetings (from which this report is drawn) it gives me cause for great thanks to Almighty God who has prospered the work of Bushikori beyond our expectations and small efforts.

The Australian Support Committee meetings have been held in Committee members' homes again this year. Thanks to Pamela Ferrar, Althea Abraham, Esther Cohen and Lucy Stone for hosting and providing afternoon teas.

Meetings opened in prayer, bringing our grateful thanks to the Lord as well as the needs of the mission in Uganda. Following prayer, a scripture devotional was brought to us - thanks to Glenda Salmon and Pamela Ferrar. Reports from the Treasurer (Rick Peacock) and Child Sponsor Coordinator (Pamela Ferrar) make up a significant part of the monthly minutes, representing much detailed and careful documentation. The bulk of other minuted discussions arises from the continuous flow of communication between Uganda and Australia mostly facilitated by our hard-working President (Kerry Peacock) and also by our Vice President (Esther Cohen) and others. A prayer meeting was held in January 2025 in lieu of the regular ASC monthly meeting. In Uganda, BCC also set aside July as their Prayer month. Prayer is key to all that is done in the Lord's name.

A new project

The idea of a sustainable project at Bushikori being partially funded by Rotary International has come to fruition this year thanks largely to the inspiration, persistence and hard work of Committee member Althea Abraham. Several project ideas were considered,

and rain water tanks were chosen. These will help greatly in having a reliable and cheap water supply onsite at Bushikori. Many thanks to Althea, to the sub-committee of Kardinia Rotary Club, and to Kerry and Rick Peacock for finalising the details for the application to go ahead. The construction of the Water Tanks is hoped to take place early next year in 2026.

Newsletters

Our long-serving and wonderfully capable friend Elke, who had prepared and printed our newsletters for many years, retired from Christian College at the end of 2024. We are very grateful to the new Christian College Principal Dr. Mathilda Joubert for her whole-hearted support in authorising the continued printing of our newsletters. It is such a blessing to our small volunteer committee to have this cost covered so graciously. Newsletters are a vital way of communicating the progress, needs and triumphs of the Bushikori mission to our Australian supporters. Many thanks to Esther, Pamela and Kerry for writing informative and inspiring articles and to Alysha Morrison for her continued support in editing the newsletters so professionally.

Impact of prayer

One of our prayer points at the end of 2024 and throughout this year was to increase the number of new sponsors. We had a list of 10 students who had been waiting to be sponsored since 2021. Kerry came up with some catchy phrases - nine in nine months; six before 2026; five in 2025; etc. By July 2025 five students were still waiting, and the list was given to the Rev. Will Orpwood with an appeal for new sponsors from St John's Highton. We were overwhelmed by the immediate response - not only were the five students sponsored within a couple of weeks, we had to ask Bushikori for 10 more students and then some! It was not until a few months later that we learned that the focus of Bushikori's July Prayer and Fasting Month had been a specific request for new sponsors. Our grateful thanks to Rev. Will for his unwavering encouragement, to the generous people of St. John's Highton, and to Jesus who cares for his lambs and answers the prayers of his servants beyond our expectations!

Marriage wishes

A highlight in May this year was the marriage of BCC Director Mary Wanendeya to Dickson Twinamatsiko. We wish them every blessing for a fruitful life together serving the Lord.



ASC visits

Visits were made to various churches and schools by Committee members this year to talk about the work of Bushikori (thanks to Pamela, Rick, Althea and Esther). These include Trinity Uniting Church Anglesea, Belmont Uniting Church, Lara and Little River Anglican Churches, Covenant College Geelong, Rotary Kardinia and a mission update to St John's Highton in the form of a video prepared in Uganda by Mary Wanendeya. These occasions provide valuable connections and highlight the prayer and financial needs as well as the great work being done in Uganda to feed, clothe and educate children and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Notably, Pamela and Rick's visit to Covenant College served to strengthen the longstanding partnership between Covenant College staff and Joshua Primary School.

Refreshed website



Our Bushikori website has long been over due for a freshen up, and thanks to Esther and Kerry, the process is under way with professional advice and assistance from Stephen Davey at Pagination - thank you so much Stephen. Feel free to explore our refreshed website!

Fundraising

We have been amazed at the creativity and energy of the Friends of Bushikori in their fundraising efforts this year! Events have included the very successful Mega Garage Sale at St. John's Highton, the Kalkee Christmas Stall (run by Lucy Stone and her daughter Fiona Allchin), Belmont Uniting's 'Pause for a Cause' (run by Bill and Sue Jennings), a wonderful High Tea and musical afternoon held at Belmont Uniting Church, a Sound of Music Singalong and supper held at St. John's Highton (raising funds far more efficiently than Movie Nights at Readings in previous years), and the St. John's Highton Trading Table bringing in a steady trickle of funds. Thank you to all in the Friends of Bushikori, particularly the tireless Helen McLean and Bill and Sue Jennings.

Ongoing needs

Ongoing needs at BCC include some building maintenance projects such as the rebuilding of the Joshua Primary School Margery Block (it has water seeping up the walls), shifting and updating the kitchen which serves the whole school community (it is unsafe, smokey, and not in the best location), repairing the roof of Anne's old house (it has termites and a big crack); the appointment of an administration staff worker; and health issues of various Ugandan staff and board members.

Special thanks

Our special thanks are expressed to Helen McLean for her enthusiastic role within the Friends of Bushikori, and to St. John's Church Highton, Belmont Uniting Church, Covenant College, Christian College Geelong, The Lions Club Geelong South Barwon, and Kardinia Rotary Club for their continued support of the work of Bushikori this year.



Fundraising spotlight

A couple of highlights from a busy year of activities

High Tea

**@ Belmont Uniting Church
29 June 2025**

A very pleasant Sunday afternoon was experienced by all who attended our High Tea. With 88 tickets sold, it was exciting to meet many new people and to have an opportunity to share with you about the Bushikori mission and child sponsorship opportunities.

It was a welcoming environment to catch up with friends and we all enjoyed warm hospitality provided by the Friends of Bushikori group. Such a happy time was had sharing delicious food, listening to musical entertainment, watching a film presentation with highlights of the past 30 years of our work.

We also reflected on a short message about the positive outcomes that the journey of education provides as we take our Bushikori students through to a tertiary or vocational qualification.

Singalong Film Night

**@ St Johns Anglican Church
Highton**

On the 16th of August this year we held a fundraiser with a twist. With excellent musical expertise from MC's Rick and Gabby Peacock the film 'Sound of Music' was enjoyed by 67 keen Bushikori supporters who sang along with familiar songs. A good time was had by all with Gluhwein or fruit punch before the film while tea, coffee, apple cake, Austrian biscuits and candied almonds (Gebrannte Mandeln) kept us busy in the interval. We are thankful to our Lord for the funds raised: \$2145.

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.



Impact Fund 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

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:
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Geelong, Victoria, 3220
