

www.mmuk.net

2023 - 2024

Annual Report



The
Melanesian
Mission

Prayer, People, Giving



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Melanesia: the other side of the planet, yet part of me.

Melanesia has been part of my life from an early age: in childhood, I remember waving goodbye to the boat, 'Ebb Tide', as she set sail for Honiara via the Panama Canal. Basil Le Pine Williams went to serve as the first Provincial Secretary for ACoM and then returned home to be a Stewardship Officer and Reader in Chester Diocese. Here he worked with my father in Malpas and then over the border in Whitchurch, Shropshire.

As a young incumbent in Chester Diocese, the visit of two Melanesian Brothers had a striking effect on me and the church youth group. Ice skating for their first -and possibly last- time, the Brothers engaged brilliantly with the young people in the minibus. My regret was in leaving Cheshire for Somerset just before Bishop Willie Pwaisiho arrived in the Diocese. Bishop Willie has been a great help to MMUK and I have always enjoyed his lively company.

In 2005, I was glad to be Diocesan Missioner in Devon when Richard Carter led The Passion of Christ pilgrimage with 25 Brothers, Franciscans, Sisters of the Church and Melanesia. Their witness to over 9000 people in six weeks was joyful, profound and

beautiful. It had a deep impact on Exeter Diocese. Then, as Bishop of Shrewsbury, in Lichfield Diocese where Bishop Selwyn served on his return from New Zealand and eventually was buried in the Cathedral. This, like Feniton, is a destination for Melanesian pilgrims. In truth, I have never been able to escape the pull of Melanesia and felt honoured to be asked to become Chair of MMUK in 2016.

As Chair, I have had a personal aim to try to broaden our supporter base, increase visits and find some younger trustees. My reflection was on the deep effect that contact with the church and people of Melanesia has had on individuals (such as Chris Liley, Alex Leger, John Pinder, Esther Langrish, Simon Franklin, Richard Carter, Katie Drew and many others), the way it has fired and enthused their witness and discipleship, inspired others and helped make a difference. If we could get the next generation out to Melanesia to be infected by the joy, passion life and faithfulness of ACoM, surely that would be good for the UK Church!? It has been a desire to see how the Church of Melanesia could help us in our witness and mission.

So, trustees and others have made visits to theological colleges, school links, Selwyn College Cambridge –engaging with the younger generation of Christians and potential Christian leaders. Some visits to Melanesia resulted and these folk have come back inspired. The Pandemic, despite putting a stop to physical visits, compelled us (via Zoom) to improve our communication with Church leaders. Paradoxically, we talked more with Melanesia during the pandemic than we had before, through clergy bible study links and groups set up by Katie with Honiara. Since 2022, the visits have started again –certainly from UK to ACoM but also from ACoM to UK, too. I am encouraged that recently the trickle is becoming more like a two-way flow.

As I step down as a trustee, together with Jane Brooke and Cath Duce, I am hopeful. Our friendships and bonds with ACoM remain

strong; Archbishop Leonard knows us, and Chester Diocese always a loyal partner diocese, is in the process of renewing its Melanesia link group. Now with two Chester senior staff as MMUK trustees- Bishop Sam Corley as Chair and Archdeacon Mike Gilbertson continuing as Vice-Chair – the communication between MMUK and Chester will hopefully flourish. In the last 8 years our capital investments have increased by 50%. There are, however, some challenges ahead in maximising the income from our investments and releasing finances to enable more visits. I have had the very good fortune of having Katie Drew as a superb Executive Officer and now promoted to Executive Director. It has also been a huge pleasure to work with such an enthusiastic, wise and prayerful group of trustees –the yearly residential at Foxhill being a highlight. MMUK is in good hands and I now look forward to continuing to support the work of the charity in different ways.

+Mark Rylands



THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF MELANESIA
 (The Anglican Church of Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia)
 Church Headquarters
 P.O. Box 19, Honiara
 Solomon Islands

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Office of the General Secretary
 Email: hauriiasi_a@comphq.org.sb

Your Ref: Ms Katie Drew
 Melanesian Mission UK

Our Ref:
 Date: 20 June 2024

Dear Katie,

MMUK – ACoM RELATIONSHIP FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

Greetings to you, Trustees of the Melanesian Mission UK and all the UK supporters and friends! We give thanks to God as another year of fruitful partnership drew to a close.

We thank God that our relationship continues to flourish with on-going exchange of personnel between the United Kingdom and Melanesia and efforts to strengthen the links between our peoples, in particular our young people and donations to our community groups. Our links has also been demonstrated tangibly through various support for our disaster appeals and donations to our community groups. This includes donations towards those affected by Tropical Cyclone Lola that affected parts of Vanuatu and Solomon Islands in 2023.

During the course of the year, we had several visits from personnel from the MMUK. We welcome the Executive Officer of the MMUK in May 2023 when she attended the Oceania Region Anglican Alliance (ORAC) in Honiara and Lydia Cook and Marie Schlenker. Katie also visited the ACoM in Vanuatu March 2024 following her participation of the ORAC meeting in Cairns, Australia.


Marie visited sites of our Environmental Observatory project, a Climate Change related initiative that is currently jointly funded by the MMUK and the ACoM. Both Marie and Katie did a wonderful presentation to members of the ORAC about the findings of Marie's research on the impact of climate change at the observatory sites.

In October 2023, we also hosted Revd Jacky Wise in Melanesia for several weeks including attending some sessions of the ACoM's General Synod.

We continue to thank the MMUK for always at the forefront of organising ACoM personnel's visits to the UK. In the second half of 2024, we are expecting the visits to the UK by the Archbishop of Melanesia and a couple of other bishops to attend the new bishops' training at Canterbury and visit other supporters in the UK.

Through these exchange visits, we continue to encourage and support each other in our Christian Pilgrimage. It is also through these that we can learn from one another and how we can support one another through prayer and in other ways. It is our sincere hope that the future, there can be more people exchange amongst our young people, our youths, school children, so they can better understand what people in our churches and cultures are going through.

Yours sincerely


 Abraham Hauriiasi General Secretary



The Melanesian Mission's 2024 Annual General Meeting & Festival Day

On the 21st of September, the Chapel of St Michael's Within Bath, hosted the Melanesian Mission's Annual General Meeting (AGM). The event saw a gathering of over 40 supporters from across the UK attending in person and online. The Archbishop of Melanesia, the Most Revd Leonard Dawea and the Anglican Church of Melanesia's General Secretary, Dr Abraham Hauriasi, sent specially recorded greetings and blessings for the meeting.

The AGM marked a significant transition in leadership. Bishop Mark Rylands, Canon Jane Brooke, and Revd Catherine Duce stepped down as Trustees, having served with dedication and passion. Their contributions were warmly acknowledged by all present. Stepping into their roles and additional vacancies, Rt Revd Sam Corley, Revd Dr Arabella Milbank Robinson, Revd Dr Sam Rylands, and Mrs Jen McIlveen were elected as the new Trustees, bringing fresh perspectives and energy to the mission.

A key highlight of the meeting was the acceptance of the charity's accounts for the 2023-2024 financial year. The need for additional funding for activities, was highlighted in the ongoing search for a Fundraising Trustee.

Following the formal proceedings, a Eucharist service was held, providing a moment of spiritual reflection and unity with our sisters

and brothers in Melanesia. This included the admittance of Bishop Sam Corley as a Companion to the Melanesian Brotherhood. In the afternoon guest speakers shared reflections from their recent placements in Solomon Islands, offering insights into the spiritual life and mission in the region. Trustees outlined future plans for the charity, aiming to expand and deepen its reach, including more placements both ways, increasing supporter numbers, and raising funds for the Mothers' Union and the ministry to women in the region.

The Still Waters group led a time of silence and reflection, allowing attendees to contemplate the mission's work and their personal connection to it. The day concluded with Compline and with a heartfelt invitation to next year's AGM, scheduled for the 20th of September.

Many thanks to our guest speakers for their invaluable contributions to the day's success and to our supporters. Special appreciation also goes to our host, Revd Jacky Wise, and everyone at St Michael's.

Films and presentations from the day are available to watch on the Charity's YouTube Channel.

www.youtube.com/@TheMelanesianMission

Election of Trustees

At the charity's 2024 AGM, Revd Kate Pwaisiho was re-elected to serve a second term of three years as Trustee, a testament to her invaluable contributions and dedication.



Jen
McIlveen

Sam
Rylands

Arabella
Milbank Robinson

Sam
Corley

Additionally, new Trustees were elected to fill further vacancies, ensuring the continued strength and diversity of the board. The charity warmly welcomes and thanks Mrs Jen McIlveen, Revd Dr Sam Rylands, Revd Dr Arabella Milbank Robinson, and Rt Revd Sam Corley for their commitment to the mission.

Jen McIlveen lives in Liverpool, with her young family and is a committed Christian, actively serving in her local Church. A primary school teacher for 20 years, she began supporting Liverpool Diocesan Board of Education as a consultant in 2012, working specifically with their RE subject leaders. In 2018, Jen took the role of Christian Character and training officer in Chester Diocesan Board of Education. As part of this role, she has worked with departments across the diocese, particularly around Growing Faith and most recently sitting on the Partners With Mission group. Jen has been actively supporting Chester and ACoM school partnerships over the last two years, liaising with Katie Drew & Colin Butler.

Sam Rylands is the Vicar of St Andrew's Church, Fulham Fields and Chair of Youth Ministry in Communion. During an eventful visit to the Solomon Islands that coincided with the global pandemic, Sam spent time with the Melanesian Brothers, learning from their everyday holiness and the vibrancy of the Melanesian church. More recently, Sam completed a doctorate asking how the Church of England can engage faithfully as a politically established church through the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Rowan Williams. Sam's other passion is sport- mainly football, cricket, and rowing.

Arabella Milbank Robinson is currently the Dean and Chaplain of Selwyn College, Cambridge, and Chaplain also at Newnham College. Her academic background is in literature, beginning with a degree in English and Modern Languages (French) at New College, Oxford and she has a PhD

in Medieval Literature and an MPhil in Theology from Cambridge. She trained for the priesthood in Lincoln and at Westcott House, Cambridge. Arabella is married to another priest, James Robinson, who is the Vicar of Grantchester and St Mark's Newnham. After seven years working in Grantham and then in and around Louth in the Diocese of Lincoln, they returned to Cambridge in 2022 with their two children, Aubrey and Ivor.

Sam Corley is the Bishop of Stockport in the Diocese of Chester. After studying Theology at University, Sam trained to be a history teacher and then taught in a secondary school in South London for three years before moving to Nottingham to train for ordination at St John's College. Sam served his curacy at St Thomas', Lancaster before he became Priest-in-Charge of Ellel and Assistant Missioner in the Diocese of Blackburn. In 2011 Sam became Canon Precentor at Bradford Cathedral and Chaplain to the University of Bradford. He became Rector of Leeds in 2015 and was consecrated bishop in July 2021. Sam is married to Claire, who is herself ordained, and they enjoy the fun and challenge of parenting their children and looking after an ever-increasing menagerie of animals. Sam has been the trustee of various charities, including an NGO working in a number of countries overseas. Having visited India and East Africa frequently in the past, he was privileged to visit Solomon Islands for the first time this summer.

There is still one open position for a Fundraising Trustee, and the search for the ideal candidate is ongoing.

End of Year Accounts

The charity's accounts for 2023 – 2024 were formally accepted at the charity's AGM in September 2024 by members and trustees. For a full copy of these accounts, please contact the charity – mission@mmuk.net

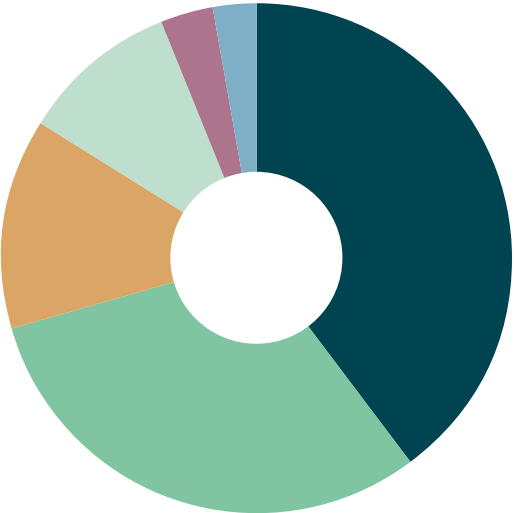
MMUK's work is funded through investment income, regular donations from parishes and individuals, one off donations, grants and legacies.

In the year to 31 March 2024 the charity's income was £157,937.



Income 2023 - 2024

- Appeals & Donations
£36,506
- Legacies
£7,500
- Investment Income
£113,931



Expenditure 2023 - 2024

- Staff Costs
£57,484
- Grants to ACoM
£57,161
- Trustee & Staff Visits to ACoM
£25,866
- Support Costs
£18,859
- Short Term Placement Grants
£5,500
- Publicity & Equipment
£5,048

Unrestricted Funds 2023 - 2024

Income	2024	2023	
Donation	£17,385	£19,121	
Legacy	£7,500	£0	
Investment	£112,300	£111,608	Investment income static
	<u>£137,185</u>	<u>£130,729</u>	
Expenditure and Transfers			
Activities undertaken directly	£31,949	£6,026	2024 costs include 3 visits & part funding for visit to observations
Grants	£46,521	£69,527	2023 costs include £19k cost for Lambeth conference
Support costs	£76,344	£60,827	
	<u>£154,814</u>	<u>£136,380</u>	
Deficit	<u>£(17,629)</u>	<u>£(5,651)</u>	
Funds held at end of year	<u>£52,306</u>	<u>£72,935</u>	

Restricted Funds 2023 - 2024

Income	2024	2023	
Donations	£19,121	£34,001	2023 £11k received for St Patrick's, Vanuatu
Expenditure and Transfers			
Activities undertaken directly	£4,754	£6,211	
Grants	£15,139	£30,992	2023 £11k paid for St Patrick's, Vanuatu
Support costs	£0	£7	
	<u>£154,814</u>	<u>£136,380</u>	
Deficit	<u>£(772)</u>	<u>£(3,209)</u>	
Funds held at end of year	<u>£10,037</u>	<u>£6,020</u>	

Funds held 2023 - 2024

Unrestricted funds	March 24	March 23	
General funds	£52,306	£72,935	
Investment reserve	£3,287,960	£3,395,556	Value of unrestricted investments
Designated funds	£6,083	£3,083	Lambeth etc
Other funds			
Restricted	<u>£10,037</u>	<u>£6,020</u>	Funds held for specific purposes
Endowments	<u>£44,512</u>	<u>£44,417</u>	Funds held where capital cannot spent

Review of the Year

Throughout the year, MMUK has united supporters, parishes, schools, associates and companions to the religious orders, as well as Mothers' Union members, in closer fellowship with the people of Melanesia. This has been achieved through dedicated prayer, active engagement, and generous giving. Here are some of those activities -



April

Head Brother Augustine and Elder Brother Harry completed their six-week mission to the UK visiting Bath & Wells, Chester, Exeter and London Dioceses, hosted by MMUK.



May

Consecration of the Community of the Sisters of the Church replacement chapel at Verana'aso. MMUK sent funds of £1,510 this year, and in the last three years funds totalling £12,523, from supporter donations.

June

Ini Kopuria, founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood remembered at services in Chester & Exeter Dioceses.



July

MMUK Trustee Kate Pwaisiho was ordained Deacon in the Diocese of Chester and began her curacy at St Wilfrid's Grappenhall. Kate arrived in the UK from Solomon Islands in 1997 with her father Rt Revd Willie Pwaisiho, mother Kate and her two brothers. Kate is the second Melanesian woman to become a priest.



August

MMUK celebrated Mary Sumner Day with MU groups in Exeter Diocese collecting sewing machines for women's groups in Melanesia.

September

The Annual General Meeting was held at Chester Cathedral in recognition of 35 years of the link between Chester Diocese and the Province of Melanesia. This month also saw MMUK supporters, trustees and staff make a pilgrimage for environmental projects in Melanesia.

October

Cyclone Lola was one of the earliest recorded tropical cyclones of the season to sweep through Vanuatu and Solomon Islands on 24th October. MMUK sent £2,300 in emergency funds.



November

MMUK Trustee Revd Jacky Wise attended ACoM General Synod at TNK in the newly opened Retreat House, which had received funds of £6,930 from MMUK supporters.



December

Advent Reflections filmed by the Community of the Sisters of the Church.

January

The Diocese of Temotu witnessed the Consecration and Installation of Reverend Pateson Nibeo as their seventh Bishop on Sunday 14th January.



February

Prayers said for Revd Anthony Ling who became Bishop of the Diocese of Banks and Torres. Lent reflections were recorded by the Society of St Francis.

March

MMUK's Executive Officer, Katie Drew visited some of the 20 church run schools in Vanuatu, and to learn about the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and living with earthquakes, volcanoes and cyclones.

Your support is vital in continuing this meaningful work, fostering connections, and making a positive impact both in the UK and Melanesia.

Care for Creation

MMUK has remained committed to addressing ACoM's concerns with respect to climate change and environmental degradation in Melanesia. It strives to care for creation and fight for climate justice in line with the 5th Mark of Mission.

Over the last year, MMUK has successfully expanded its adaptation, education and awareness raising activities with respect to climate change in Melanesia.



Students at Paibeta High School in Savo with their new rain gauge

ACoM Environment Observatories

The ACoM Environment Observatory is a community-based environmental monitoring initiative bringing together local knowledge, faith, and science to empower island communities to address environmental change. The project was established as a collaboration between the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACoM), The Melanesian Mission UK (MMUK) and UK universities, in response to the rapid environmental changes taking place in Melanesia in recent years due to climate change.

At the observatories, local people learn to monitor changes in their local environment over time, with respect to temperature, rainfall, coastal water levels, and extreme events. In 2023, MMUK set-up 6 new observatory sites (two on Savo, four on Guadalcanal), bringing the total number of sites to 10, with further sites being planned for 2024/25. Thanks to our supporters' generous donations, MMUK was able to send equipment for 20 more observatories to Solomon Islands. The equipment will be used to set-up new sites at ACoM's secondary schools and households of religious communities.



**6 new
observatory
sites installed**



**Equipment for
20 more sites
delivered**

Environmental Networking

In November 2023, MMUK ran a 3-week course on climate action for Otter Vale Mission Community in Exeter Diocese, in collaboration with Revd Lydia Cook. In two online sessions, attendees learnt about the theology and science of climate change, impacts in Melanesia, and options for mitigation and adaptation. Following the online sessions, the community made their own eco-pledges during an in-person service at Ottery St Mary. These included inspiring people to care for the environment, rewilding their churchyards, exploring renewable energy generation for their churches and engaging with local politicians.

In February 2024, Marie and MMUK Trustee, Kate Pwaisiho, visited Selwyn College, Cambridge, to foster dialogue and understanding about the critical issues of coastal hazards and climate change faced by island communities in Melanesia. Marie and Kate engaged a diverse audience comprising of university students and staff, with an engagement talk on Fanalei Island, sharing insights into the pressing challenges faced by local people in terms of sea-level rise and

associated coastal hazards. As a powerful conclusion to the day, Kate Pwaisiho delivered a compelling mini sermon during the college's Evensong, highlighting the connection between the college and Melanesia and reminding us of our shared commitment to positive change. We would like to express our gratitude to Selwyn College and Chaplain Arabella Milbank Robinson for welcoming Marie and Kate and providing a platform for meaningful dialogue on the issues faced by our friends in Melanesia.



3-week course on climate action developed and delivered for parishes



Engagement talk and mini sermon delivered at Selwyn College, Cambridge



Marie (left) and Kate (far right) with Revd Dr Arabella Milbank Robinson, Chaplain at Selwyn College, Cambridge

Prayer Diary

Sunday

Pray for the Anglican Church of Melanesia and all the staff at the Provincial Head Office in Honiara. For Dr Abraham Hauriasi, the General Secretary, as they celebrate the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Province of Melanesia in January 2025.

For the New Zealand Trust Board and its directors, as they support the Anglican Church in Melanesia.

Monday

For the Diocese of Temotu and for Bishop Patteson Nibeo and all the staff working at the Headquarters at Lata.

For the chaplain to seafarers, the Revd Bobby Chuchuni and his mission to visit, pray and share the Good News.

Tuesday

The Community of the Sisters of Melanesia and their work with women throughout the islands. For their new leaders Head Sister Everil and Assistant Head Sister Mary who were elected in September 2024.

We give thanks for the support the community receives from Associates in Melanesia, Australia and the UK.

Wednesday

For the Diocese of Ysabel, Bishop Ellison Quity and the staff at the diocesan headquarters at Jejevo, Buala.

We give thanks for all those who give their companionship, time and financial help to support the Anglican Church of Melanesia, the religious orders and the Mothers' Union.

Thursday

For the Diocese of Vanuatu & New Caledonia, Bishop James Tama and the staff at the diocesan headquarters in Luganville on the island of Santo.

We lift up in prayer those enduring non-communicable diseases in Melanesia, and we ask for blessings on the awareness programs aimed at promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

Friday

For the Society of St Francis throughout the world, including Melanesia and for their work on environmental justice.

For communities affected by climate change and for the work ACoM is undertaking in monitoring weather patterns, coastal erosion, and other environmental changes.

Saturday

For the Diocese of Malaita, and their Bishop Michael Sau Bebeu and for the new Diocese of Southern Malaita and Sikaiana, and its first elected Bishop Rickson George Maomaoru.

For church schools, rural training centres, the theological colleges and John Coleridge Patteson University, staff and pupils.

Sunday

For the Archbishop, the Most Reverend Leonard Dawea and all his staff in the Diocese of Central Melanesia, including Assistant Bishop Othnielson Gamutu.

For ACoM's Mission Secretary Fr Nelson Bako and the Mission and Evangelism team. For the Communications Department led by Aldrin Peloko, and the new church radio station, bringing the Good News to communities across Melanesia.

Monday

For the Diocese of Guadalcanal, and their Bishop the Rt Revd Benedict Loe. For the long-awaited completion of their Diocesan offices.

We pray for the Provincial Cathedral of St Barnabas, in Honiara, as they wait for a new Dean to be appointed.

Tuesday

For the Community of the Sisters of the Church, and for Revd Sr Veronica, Provincial Sister for Solomon Islands Pacific Region. We give thanks for their mission with families and children around TNK and their retreat ministry.

For the Christian Care Centres on Guadalcanal, Malaita and Temotu. For the Sisters' work on gender-based violence with police and community leaders.

Wednesday

For the Diocese of Central Solomons, Bishop Steven Koete and the staff at the Diocesan Headquarters in Tulagi.

For the shipyard at Taroaniara and all those who travel by sea around

Melanesia, including those who work and go on missions. We pray for the Southern Cross and for safe passage and warm welcomes wherever she goes. For the printing press in Honiara.

Thursday

For the Diocese of Banks and Torres and the staff at the Diocesan Headquarters in Sola, their Bishop Anthony Ling and the 55 priests across this remote diocese.

For the Mothers' Union in the Province, their President Sandra, and for their work with sewing workshops, literacy programmes, couples counselling, the Girls Friendly Society, savings clubs and the Positive Parenting programme.

Friday

For the Melanesian Brotherhood in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, PNG, Philippines and Australia and their Head Brother Ini. For all the preparations for the 100th anniversary of the Brotherhood in October 2025.

For ACoM schools, school chaplains, teachers and pupils, and for school partnerships linking children and teachers in the UK and Melanesia.

Saturday

For the Diocese of Hanuato'o, Bishop Arthur Stanley Abui, and the 15 parishes and 32 priests.

For closer diocesan links, bringing Christians around the world closer together in unity. For all those called to be missionaries in the past, now and in the future. For those who have given their life in service to God.



The Return of Visits & Placements

With great joy, two-way visits and placements resumed this year. Staff and Trustees were able to make visits to Solomons and Vanuatu and attend Pacific conferences. These were the first visits to the region since 2019, due to COVID. The first placement organised by MMUK since the pandemic, was for Revd Lydia Cook, from the Diocese of Exeter.

REVD LYDIA WRITES

If I ever needed a reminder that ours is a relational faith, then the two weeks I spent in May 2023 in Solomon Islands was a good one.

One of the strengths of MMUK is that it is a small charity, able to reach into the smallest communities through one-to-one meetings. There is real power and impact in personal greeting, in time spent listening and being alongside, and it was a wonderful privilege to be visiting with MMUK staff, Katie and Marie, and to see their work in action.

The main focus of my visit was to spend time with the Melanesian Sisters and I spent five (very hot) days with them at their headquarters at Verana'aso. Their new chapel was due to be dedicated two weeks later, and I'll admit to being a "ye of little faith" as I could not see how it was ever going to be ready on time. I was so glad to be proved wrong and to see the photos of the new "Blue Chapel". While it is certainly a challenging place to stay, it was a fantastic experience to be part of the community even if only for a short time. Early morning prayers at 5am, sitting in chapel first in silence, and then in singing and praying together, I found very moving. There were times to be serious and times to have a lot of fun particularly as we shared hymns from across our different cultures. I did find it slightly surreal during a break from teaching, to find myself singing "Father Abraham" with a group of novices and sisters. I also added my own contribution to their repertoire so there will now be a whole generation of Melanesian sisters singing "Our God is so big"....

If you would like more details of MMUK's Placement Programme for clergy, ordinands, teachers and volunteers, and the opportunity to receive part funding for a placement, please contact the charity.

3 Staff and 1 Trustee visit to Solomon Islands & Vanuatu, to meet key contacts & review projects

1 MMUK placement planned & undertaken in 2023-24

6 placements planned for the next financial year

2 visits to the UK by Melanesian Brothers planned & undertaken in April 2023

5 visits to the UK planned for Melanesian guests in the next financial year



Katie visiting St Barnabas Primary School, Vanuatu

In March 2024 MMUK's Executive Officer, Katie Drew, went to Vanuatu to visit some of the 20 church run schools, and to learn about the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and living with earthquakes, volcanoes and cyclones.

Vanuatu is an archipelago of 80 islands, 65 of these are inhabited by the 336,000 population. The citizens of Vanuatu are referred to as Ni Vanuatu or Ni Van, and 95% are Christian. The Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACoM) has two dioceses in the northern part of the country.

Katie had firsthand experience of the challenging climate, with torrential rain making it impossible to visit some schools, due to flooded roads and cancelled flights between the islands. Children were also struggling to walk to their schools along

flooded paths, missing valuable learning time. Buildings and school resources were also being battered by storms and cyclones. People spoke to Katie about how the climate is getting hotter, with less crop yields, and how the weather was unpredictable, with too much rain and other times not enough.

Katie returned to the UK with news that ACoM Schools are eager to renew and establish partnerships with UK schools, fostering joint learning between pupils and teachers. However, challenges exist—only select Vanuatu schools have internet access, and climate-related issues may limit communication with Education Officers.

If you would like more information about establishing a school partnership, contact the charity.



MMUK Trustee Revd Jacky Wise at ACoM's general Synod with Archbishop Leonard

MMUK Trustee, Revd Jacky Wise, reports on her visit to Solomons in November 2023.

I was invited to Solomon Islands to represent MMUK at the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACoM) and to deliver clergy training on Ysabel. Before heading to Ysabel, I also attended the Melanesian Brothers Great Conference at Tabalia, which included services, beautiful singing, and cultural dancing.

In Ysabel, I worked with Bishop Ellison on training which focused on Leading and Preaching at Occasional Offices, Marriage Preparation, and a retreat on Peace and Reconciliation. Despite initial concerns about being a woman in a church that does not yet ordain women, the clergy warmly welcomed and appreciated the training.

I missed the first morning of the General Synod due to flooding on Ysabel. The week of the General Synod at TNK with Sister Veronica was filled with prayer and worship. Key issues at the Synod included a motion for the ordination of women and a proposed reduction in Mothers' Union representatives, both to be discussed further in each Diocese.

Flooding at TNK and unusual climatic events highlighted the impact of the Global Climate Crisis on the region, underscoring the importance of MMUK's advocacy and data collection efforts.

Read Jacky's full report on the charity's website www.mmuk.net

Education & School Partnerships

School Partnerships have benefited from the expertise of MMUK's Care for Creation Officer and the appointment of a Trustee to oversee School Partnerships and Education. A termly newsletter was sent to schools in Chester and Exeter Dioceses, and talks and resources were offered.

CHESTER DIOCESE

In June 2023 MMUK's Executive Officer, Katie Drew spoke to GCSE Geography students at Woodchurch High School, about the impacts of climate change in Melanesia, and invited the school to set up its own Environment Observatory.

In February 2024, MMUK's Care for Creation Officer, Marie Schlenker, engaged Year 5 and 6 students at Bollington St John's Primary School with a virtual school talk on the challenges of coastal hazards faced by island communities in Melanesia. Marie talked to students, highlighting the unique way of life in this remote region and the fascinating interconnectedness of islanders with their local environment. The talk also shed light on the critical issue of climate change and associated challenges faced by local people, such as sea-level rise, coastal erosion and extreme weather events, which threaten the livelihoods of the local island communities.

"The children thoroughly enjoyed the session- it helped them to see the clear impact of climate change. [...] We have also been able to link this learning to work we have been doing on courageous advocacy - for example, writing letters to local MPs to ask for support."

Ellen Watson, Class teacher of Year 5 and 6 at Bollington St John's



1 virtual and 4 in-person school talks delivered



Teaching resources for Key Stages 2-5 developed

EXETER DIOCESE

In March 2024, Marie and Education Trustee, Colin Butler, visited three schools in Exeter Diocese, bringing impressions from Melanesia into the classroom. Marie engaged the Year 5 and 6 students at Feniton Primary School and Tipton St John Primary School with interactive workshops on coral reefs and the impact of climate change and pollution on these fragile ecosystems. Furthermore, Marie shared her subject knowledge on climate change and first-hand experiences with the GCSE and A-Level students at The King's School Devon in Ottery St Mary.

"Marie both challenged and developed our understanding of the impacts. The students described the talk as interesting and inspirational but also really eye-opening especially when Marie started to discuss how this was not just a threat to isolated parts of the world but a threat to all coastal communities."

Neil Abbott, Head of Geography at The King's School



Marie at The King's School Devon

Teaching Resources

Throughout the year, MMUK has developed teaching resources on Creation Care for primary and secondary schools. These teaching materials focus on impacts of climate change in Melanesia and are designed to be integrated into the Geography curriculum. The resource packs include a guide for teachers, lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations and handouts. All resources are available upon request.



MMUK Waterway Pilgrimage

From 24th to 29th September 2023, a group of MMUK pilgrims walked and unicycled 60 miles from Bath to Glastonbury to raise awareness about the climate crisis and fundraise for the environment observatories. Starting in Bath with a sending off from Mary Magdalen Chapel and a blessing at Bath Abbey, our pilgrims travelled along the Glastonbury Waterway, praying at churches and speaking to people they met along the way. The pilgrims were very grateful to everyone who welcomed them on their journey, as well as their generous sponsors. In total the group raised £2,736 for MMUK's work on climate change adaptation in Melanesia.



60 miles walked along the Glastonbury Waterway, over 6 days, praying in 15 churches



£2736 raised for the environment projects in Melanesia



Encountered 100 people along the pilgrimage



MMUK pilgrims at Bath Abbey



MMUK Pilgrims with the Bishop of Bath & Wells, Rt Revd Michael Beasley

Plans for the Year Ahead



The trustees have identified important areas of work for the year ahead, including:

-  Develop the strategic objectives of the charity into achievable work packages for staff and Trustees
-  Ensure a smooth handover from the Care for Creation Officer to the Environment Observatory Project Manager
-  Develop ideas for a future PhD researcher at Southampton University to investigate flooding preparedness in Melanesia
-  Increase supporter numbers in the UK, including volunteers to assist with areas of work, including fundraising, social media, giving talks and raising awareness for the charity
-  Continue to update and resource the website, to include a prayer board, school resources and advice for placements
-  Review the communications strategy, moving away from printed materials to a solely online presence
-  Recruit Trustees to fill vacancies and skill shortages, including a Fundraising Trustee
-  Support and develop school partnerships, including teacher exchanges
-  Develop meaningful placements in Melanesia for UK clergy and lay people, for the mutual benefit of the visitor and the hosting church, school or religious order
-  Fundraise for a Mothers' Union project in Melanesia
-  Organise a pilgrimage to pray for and raise funds for the Ministry to Women in Melanesia
-  Deposit the charity's archive at suitable, accessible locations

Staying in touch



New website launched in February 2024 www.mmuk.net

With rising costs and a commitment to environmental sustainability, this year MMUK transitioned its supporter communications online. The new website www.mmuk.net was designed to provide the latest prayer requests, news, blogs, films, and resources for supporters, churches, and schools. Additionally, it included a new online donations page with details of appeals and projects.



Last printed magazine published in autumn 2023



Online events held throughout the year



Email newsletters issued in May, June, September, November 2023 and January 2024



Talks given to universities, schools, parishes, Mothers' Union Groups



New website launched in February 2024



2023 AGM held at Chester Cathedral



2023 AGM Festival Day at Chester Cathedral

During the year, the email newsletter had a steady circulation of around 350 contacts. The charity continued to organise online events, and also strived to provide speakers for Sunday services, parish, and school talks. Based on supporter feedback, the AGM and Festival Day was held at Chester Cathedral, with the option to join online. As a Christian community and family, MMUK cherished every opportunity to meet with supporters.

MMUK is a Christian mission agency working in partnership with the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACoM) through prayer, companionship and giving. The charity's objectives:

Partnership

MMUK seeks to develop living partnerships between ACoM and religious communities in Melanesia and churches in the UK, for example through two-way visits, mission and theological training.

Financial Support

MMUK seeks to provide financial support for ACoM and its chosen projects.

Advocacy

MMUK seeks to work in solidarity with ACoM

and to speak out on issues that affect Melanesia and its people.

Education

MMUK seeks to facilitate connections between schools and colleges in the UK and Melanesia and to support ACoM in its educational work.

Prayer

MMUK seeks to resource and encourage prayer with and for, the church in Melanesia and for the communities it serves. MMUK also seeks to learn from and be refreshed by the riches of the spiritual life in the church in Melanesia.

In all of this, MMUK seeks to grow creative and constructive friendships in Christ.

Visit the charity's website for the latest news, blogs and prayer requests from MMUK and ACoM. The charity's extensive film archive features an introduction to the charity by the Most Revd & Right Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, President of MMUK, along with films on the religious orders and climate change.

To receive the charity's regular email newsletter subscribe via the charity's website www.mmuk.net. You can also follow the charity on X (formerly Twitter) www.twitter.com/melanesianm and Facebook www.facebook.com/melanesianmission

If you would like more copies of this annual report, leaflets on the work of the charity or would like to book a speaker for public gatherings, please contact the charity.

Many thanks to all who have contributed articles and photographs for this 2023 2024 Annual Report.

O Jesus,

Be the canoe that holds me up in the sea of life;

Be the rudder that keeps me in the straight road;

Be the outrigger that supports me in times of temptation.

Let your Spirit be my sail that carries me through each day.

Keep my body strong so I can paddle steadfastly

on in the voyage of life. Amen

Trustees of the Melanesian Mission 2023 – 2024

Mr C Butler (appointed 16 September 2023)

Canon J Brooke

Revd M B Cox (resigned 16 September 2023)

Revd C Duce

Ven Dr M R Gilbertson - Vice Chair

Mrs D Jordan (resigned 12 October 2023)

Revd K Pwaisiho

Rt Revd M J Ryland - Chair

Mr S Scoffield

Revd J J Wise

Secretary Katie Drew

MMUK President – The Most Reverend and Right Honourable the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby

Charity Registration Number 1104551

Company Registration Number 05101167

The charity is incorporated in England and Wales.

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