

“For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved it is the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:18

Grace



Four years ago one of the senior girls graduated from high school. She had done well and her prospects

were good.

She left the hostel, got a job, and met and moved in with a young man. The deaf leaders advised her to think again, but she knew better. Some months later she found herself pregnant and abandoned. Her hostel family offered her a job and support in raising her little one. Grace was born recently, the youngest hostel member, and doted on by everyone.

Sewing



One hostel aim for this year is to increase the teaching of practical

skills.

Cooking skills have long been taught. Sewing skills are getting more emphasis, and work is being done to find a farm close to Suva where farming skills can be learnt.



Christian Fellowship for Deaf Easter Camp, 2017.

Deaf came from all over Fiji; over 80 attended.



The Power of the Cross

was the theme at the recent Easter camp. A team of 3 deaf people came from the UK for the event. Matthew Adediji was the leader, 20 years ago he came from Nigeria to be the first teacher at the Gospel School for Deaf. It was exciting for many of the deaf to reconnect with old friends (Matthew left Fiji in 1999). He is very skilled at using his whole body to communicate; this is ideal for the Deaf. The theme of the camp provided food for thought. It brought to mind some research I (Ruth Harland) recently heard about. The sociologist Robert Woodberry used statistical analysis to assess the “missionary effect” (we might



prefer to call it “a new way of life” or “the power of the cross”). The conclusion was *that the higher the number of missionaries in 1923, the higher the probability the nation has achieved a stable democracy....and the comparatively greater the economic development, the better the health, and the higher the educational attainment (especially for women).**

For the Deaf a key tangible effect of “the power of the cross” is their experience - through their hostel parents, through the work of their teachers, and through the CFD - of how Christ loves them, forgives them and gives them a new life. Ketia, a young Kiribati student, is returning home in 2018. She tells me her aim is to help the Deaf in her home country learn, and to set up a CFD there.

*from *How the West won* by Rodney Stark (2014), p367-377

<http://v.ht/ChristianityTodayFeb2014>

Trust Board AGM

The Trust Board AGM took place over a weekend, at the Coral Coast Christian Camp, 40 minutes drive from Suva. It is a beautiful setting, but the best thing about the event was the worthwhile discussions and the progress made. Key conclusions:

- 1) Jim Cooney will resign as Director in 2018. (*Uncle Jim* is now in his 80s and an excellent leader, but he recognises it is time to pass the baton on. Please contact us if you know of anyone suitable.) A Search Committee has been appointed.
- 2) An initial plan for the new hostel (designed by Geoff Tune, of Christchurch, NZ) was discussed. Amendments were made. The staff were so excited. “It is like a hotel,” someone remarked; it is certainly going to be much better than the current crowded situation.
- 3) Two new trustees were appointed: Dr Rick Clarkson from the USA, and Hostels manager Tema Toaisi. Tema has been a wonderful caring manager and leader for many years. Rick comes from a background in deaf education, and is keen to promote the work of the ministry.

Hostel Improvements

MMM Fiji staff and volunteers from both New Zealand and Fiji have replaced rotting showers and toilets in the main hostel. Where there was one shower and toilet in the same room, now we have two of each, all able to be used independently – so much better with the morning rush getting ready for school. MMM also discovered and replaced a leaking gas pipe and completed a number of maintenance tasks, well beyond what was asked. We are so grateful to them!

We are also grateful for all the contributions to the Ministry over the past few years that have allowed us to pay for the materials for this project. It has come from our Building Fund.

Apart from the ablutions refurbishments, we have also been able to purchase a new commercial standard washing machine and large fridge to replace broken equipment.



The Demolition



The Progress



The Team



The Old



New Shower (1 of 2)



New Toilets

Extra Ministry Update Notes

Hostels: * Planning for the new hostel is moving ahead. The next major matters are the raising of funds, and the connecting of the property/suburb to the town sewage; the Suva City Council has a current project for sewage in the Samabula area and has carried out design work but there appears to be a delay with implementation.

Staff: * In response to the findings of the Operational Audit improved documentation is being prepared for the staff, in particular operating manuals and job descriptions. A key goal is greater unity and cohesion between all branches of the FDM.

* An audiologist has visited the children and will be following up with regular checks and training of staff to help the children learn to use new hearing aids. This is a major answer to prayer, it is four years since the last audiologist visit.

Other: * The two branches of the CFD (Suva based and Lautoka based) are looking for ways of working together, they have been separated.

*New students are settling in. We often get new students during the year and not just at the start of the year.

* The keen new Parents' Group is raising money to replace the main hostel fence.

Tax Credits for Gifts through GC Aid

New Recognition of Tax Status for Donations to the Deaf Ministry through GC Aid

We have just been advised by Global Connections in Mission (GCiM) that their separately registered entity called GC Aid has been granted tax registration by the NZ Government so that donations to the Deaf Ministry through GC Aid qualify for tax credits applicable to NZ taxpayers.

GC Aid has advised that donations to the Harland Deaf Ministry Trust (otherwise operating as the Fiji Deaf Ministry or Gospel School for the Deaf) will qualify if they are for the Trust’s activities in the South Pacific for deaf people, as in:

- education
- relief of suffering
- health services
- micro-business enterprise development

In effect this means that ordinary taxpayers are entitled to include their donations to the Ministry through GC Aid for inclusion in their IR528 Tax Credit Claim Form and obtain 33.33% of the value back by way of a tax credit, using receipts issued to you by GC Aid.

New Bank Account for Payments

In order for New Zealand taxpayers to obtain the tax credits they will need to make any future donations to the Ministry through GC Aid (rather than GCiM) by sending contributions to the following new bank account. Please ensure that you continue to indicate clearly that the donation is for the Deaf Ministry and specify any particular purpose that your gift should be applied to.

Account Name: **GC Aid**
 Account No: **06 0729 0522196 00**
 Bank: **ANZ Bank**
 Branch: **Palmerston North**

Student Sponsors

In the case of student sponsors, you will need to change your automatic payments to the new GC Aid bank account but keep all the other details exactly the same (Particulars/Code/ Reference).

N.B. Gifts made to us through GCiM will not qualify for tax credits. Only gifts made through GC Aid will qualify. GC Aid has been granted Schedule 32 Donee Status.

Is anyone visiting Suva who can be a courier?

We have a small parcel of letters, pencils and bookmarks for students at the Deaf School. If anyone in New Zealand is visiting Suva in the next two months, would they be willing to take this over for us? If so, please contact us by email or letter.

If you would like to make a contribution, please make cheques out to **GC Aid *** (n.b. 7.4% to a maximum of \$200 is deducted by GC Aid before sending to us). **Please do not send gifts direct to Fiji.** Alternatively, you can make an online deposit to the NEW bank account **06-0729-0522196-00** with the Reference set to **FIJI DEAF**.

Either way, please **always** send the details below to GC Aid at **PO Box 744 Palmerston North New Zealand**, or to **admin@gc3.org.nz** so we know who it is from and the purpose.

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\$..... is Enclosed Paid Online For the Harland Deaf Ministry Trust of Fiji to help with:

Greatest need Hostel activity School for the Deaf Building Programme Teacher Scholarship

* Unlike with GCiM, gifts made through GC Aid will usually result in tax credits for NZ taxpayers