



ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION

Working for Love, Hope & Justice

ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION - AUSTRALIA

INTRODUCTION

The Anglican Board of Mission-Australia is constituted by a Canon of the General Synod and since 2001 has been incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. ABM's vision is to see people everywhere experience the wholeness of life God offers in Jesus Christ, and to this end works with Anglican Church Partners to develop and provide for the spiritual, social and material needs of people, both overseas and within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia. ABM helps the Anglican Church and the wider community realise and respond to the call for each of us to be a part of God's mission.

ABM's understanding of mission is holistic thus it also supports Partners as they care for the physical needs of their communities. Support in this area specifically targets areas of disadvantage and recognises initiatives which address discrimination, the effects of climate change and gender inequality. Furthermore, there is a strong commitment to activities which seek to build peace and reconciliation in contexts of political, social, cultural or religious conflict.

ABM's work is guided by the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Consultative Council, which, adapted by ABM in 1998 and further modified in 2012, are as follows:

- Witness to Christ's saving, forgiving, reconciling love for all people;
- Build welcoming, transforming communities of faith;
- Stand in solidarity with the poor and needy;
- Challenge violence, injustice and oppression, and work for peace and reconciliation; and
- Protect, care for and renew life on our planet.

The recent World Council of Churches statement on Mission and Evangelism, *Together Towards Life*, affirms that mission is not a distant activity to which we are witnesses, but a movement of God's Spirit alive in the church.

ABM'S BOARD

The Primate, the Most Rev Geoffrey Smith, is the President of ABM. The Chair of the Board is the Rev'd Andrew Sempell, and the other Directors of the Board at the time of writing are: the Rev'd John Baldock; Dr Colin Bannerman; Mr Peter Burke; the Rev'd Jan Crombie; Ms Sarah Gowty; the Rt Rev'd Dr Keith Joseph; the Rev'd Victor Joseph; Mr Edwin Porter; the Ven Canon Angela Webb; and the Rev'd Dr John Deane (Executive Director). The ABM Board is supported by a Finance Committee, chaired by Mr Edwin Porter, and a Fundraising & Marketing Committee, chaired by Mr Brett Collins.

ABM'S PARTNERSHIPS

ABM regards partnership as the primary modality for its engagement in God's mission. It has active partnerships both locally, in particular with dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia, and globally. In the financial years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, ABM had program work with the following Anglican provinces: Central Africa (in Zambia); Jerusalem and the Middle East (in Gaza, the West Bank, and Cyprus); Kenya; Melanesia (in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu); Myanmar; Papua New Guinea; and the Philippines. ABM also maintains active relationships with the following Anglican provinces because of historic links and deep bonds of affection: Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia; Hong Kong; Japan; Korea; South-East Asia; South Sudan and Sudan; and with the Anglican Church of Ceylon.

ABM's commitment to the principle of local ministry by local people means that it encourages Partners to harness their strengths and develop their own capacity for witness in ways which are the most effective within their own contexts. ABM aims to help dioceses and parishes which desire to be in a companion link with counterparts overseas. The modality of partnering which ABM has adopted is set out in *Suggested Guidelines for Successful Church Partnerships* – which is available at <https://www.abmission.org/resources/guidelines-for-successful-church-partnerships>

ABM meets regularly with its partners to discuss ways in which our work together can be improved. In this regard ABM has a long history of bringing visitors from Partner Churches to Australia in order to meet with the Board, staff and supporters, and to share their story of the life and ministry of their home church. In the last two years, Covid-19 has significantly impacted the form of these meetings which are now conducted by internet but occur more frequently. ABM seeks through its partnerships to serve the Church by bringing together Christians from Australia and overseas to learn and share with one another. Pilgrimages allow Australians to visit and experience Christian community in a different culture.

ABM works directly with its Partners by means of three distinct programs:

- Reconciliation
- Church to Church
- Anglicans in Development

Reconciliation

ABM's work is guided by its Reconciliation Action Plan. In the past year ABM has continued to place high priority on leadership development and theological education through our support of Wontulp-Bi-Buya College and Nungalinya College. ABM continues to provide financial assistance to the Diocese of the Northern Territory, the Diocese of North Queensland, St Andrew's Cathedral Gawura School and the Rev'd Gloria Shipp.

ABM's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission priorities are determined in consultation with NATSIAC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council). At their last Gathering (2019) NATSIAC selected 14 projects to receive a total of just over \$100,000 in funding. The projects included chaplaincy in an Aboriginal school, musical instruments for a new ministry engaging young men in the Northern Territory, funding for an Aboriginal Anglican Leaders' conference, help for the establishment of the new Torres Strait Regional Council for the Anglican Church, help for newly established Aboriginal churches, Bible camps, breakfast programs, an event to connect with the families of school children involved in Religious Education, publication of curriculum resources, copies of Kriol prayer books for Aboriginal churches, and help to investigate the viability of a new commercial enterprise for one Aboriginal church.

Church to Church (CtC)

Through its CtC Program, ABM continues to assist Partners in strengthening their capability to evangelise and to minister within their communities, through theological education; capacity building; and leadership training. Among activities recently supported by the CtC Program are the following:

- **Asia:** ABM continues to engage with the Church of the Province of Myanmar. Projects which were recently supported by ABM include the construction of a two-level dormitory for the full-time staff and their families at St Peter's Bible School in Taungoo, and more recently the ongoing construction of the Holy Cross Theological College's Anglican Training and Resource Centre. Sadly, due to the political crisis and the pandemic, St Peter's Bible School is unable to function in the 2021-2022 academic year. Although Holy Cross is closed as a residential college, it is managing to continue its work through an online platform.
- **Africa:** ABM supports St John's Seminary, Zambia to train ordinands and clergy, strengthening the leadership of the Anglican Church in the country. The last cohort of students enrolled via North-West University have all been ordained deacons and are all working in their respective dioceses. There are currently eight students enrolled in the four-year-in-house programme of St John's.
- **The Pacific:** PNG - Bishop Jeffrey Driver continues as the Acting Principal of Newton Theological College, although Covid-19 has prevented him being in country. There have been significant improvements over the last few years. The college is finally connected to the power grid, water tanks have been installed, the library collection has been updated and other college facilities have been renovated. There has been an intake of new ordinands in 2021 after the college delayed it the previous year in order to initiate a new curriculum. A bridging year has been established for students without a Year 12 certificate to complete it in conjunction with a local high school. The Deputy Principal, Fr Giles Motisi, is ensuring that students are learning and praying in a Covid-safe environment.
- **The Middle East:** One of the projects funded by the Good Friday Gift (GFG) is the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf, at As-Salt, Jordan (the Diocese of Jerusalem covers Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan). Of the Institute's eight departments, funds from the GFG went towards the school: It provides four levels of education, from kindergarten through elementary and preparatory to secondary school. The Institute serves as a second home for many children who were incredibly sad when the school had to be closed for the second time due to Covid-19. However, IT platforms, materials and tools were made available for parents and family members of the deafblind students for distance learning. Laptops and internet access were organised for the children whose families could not afford them. Finishing secondary school successfully will qualify deaf students for college or university.

Anglicans in Development (AID)

Over the last three decades ABM's AID has developed an international profile as an Australian community development agency. ABM's development program, which is conducted through AID, has as its primary aim the alleviation of poverty and disadvantage. AID is accredited by the Australian Government and receives annual government funding for some of its activities.

In recent years AID's community development engagement has been broadly focused in these areas:

- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH);
- Gender Equality and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence Education and Training;
- Economic Empowerment and Food Security;
- Disaster Management and Climate Change Adaptation;
- Institutional Strengthening; and
- Humanitarian Response, specifically Covid-19 (in the last 2 years)

In FY 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, ABM's community development program activities covered seven countries including Kenya, Myanmar, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Zambia., ABM's work in this program area is extensive and more details may be found at <https://www.abmission.org/projects-map.php>

Over the last three years ABM has responded to specific emergencies in Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, Lebanon, Vanuatu, the Philippines, Fiji, Gaza, Madagascar (famine relief project through the Council of the Anglican Provinces of Africa) and more broadly in respect of Covid-19.

AID continues actively to engage and collaborate with 'network' partners to ensure efficiencies and continuous learning, as well as ensuring that our program-funded partners benefit from these relationships. Our partners at this level include: the Anglican Alliance, the Mothers' Union, the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund (ERD), the Church Agencies Network (CAN) & CAN Disaster Operations unit, the ACT Alliance, and Micah Australia among others. In 2020 and 2021, ABM AID received more than \$500,000 in DFAT funding via CAN DO for disaster responses in PNG and Vanuatu.

Covid-19

Although the full impact of the coronavirus pandemic on AID's overseas programs is yet to be seen, there have already been significant effects from the massive lockdowns and continuing uncertainties due to Covid variants in the countries where our eight development partners are operating. Since March 2020, ABM has advised all partners to utilise available program funds to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 in the communities where ABM has projects. Prevention activities included health messaging to prevent the spread of Covid-19, distribution of basic PPE (e.g. masks, soaps, hand sanitisers etc), and construction of handwashing facilities. ABM funds were also applied to the distribution of food relief packs to communities as well as to clergy and staff. In addition, ABM was also able to access DFAT funding for Covid-19 response activities in PNG and Vanuatu. However, there is still much education and advocacy work to be undertaken with partners who work in countries where vaccination rates are low, and a greater focus on economic recovery for people severely affected by lockdowns has begun to be prioritised.

AID incorporation as a Public Benevolent Institution

In 2021, after several years of review and planning, Anglicans in Development was incorporated by the ABM Board as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI). The Chair of the AID Board is the Rev'd Andrew Sempell, and the other Directors of the Board at the time of writing are: Dr Colin Bannerman; Ms Sarah Gowty; Mr Pei-Onn Lee; Ms Lisa McMurray; Mr Benjamin Shepherd; and the Rev'd Dr John Deane (Executive Director).

Bushfire Assistance

In late 2019 and early 2020 ABM was able to respond to the bushfires which devastated many parts of Australia. Through the generous donations of Anglican churches and organisations overseas, ABM has been able to provide bushfire relief to vulnerable families and communities in Australia heavily impacted by the bushfires. ABM partnered with Anglicare NSW South, NSW West and ACT, the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland and Anglicare SA. Relief activities included the re-building of a public school's orchard and vegetable garden, seed savers support, trauma sessions and community yoga in the South Coast community, provision of firewood for heating through winter to vulnerable people in the Snow Valley's region whose houses were destroyed or damaged by the fire, well-being workshops, assisting farmers in remote communities with the provision of fencing material, and distribution of pre-paid cards to affected individual and families in Adelaide Hills Community and Kangaroo Island Community. ABM is very grateful for the support of church partners from other parts of the Anglican Communion including Japan, Canada, the US, the Philippines, New Zealand and the Solomon Islands. In the future it is proposed that appeals from these forms of domestic emergencies will be managed by AID and be eligible for tax deductibility.

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Through its Education work, ABM seeks to bring contemporary missional theology to life by connecting theory to the lived experiences of the Australian church and our Partners across the world. Moreover, ABM takes seriously its role in reminding the wider Anglican Church of the importance of Partnership within the Communion to address issues of Love, Hope and Justice. Among current resources are the following:

- ABM's video page <https://www.youtube.com/user/AnglicanBoardMission/videos> has the eight National Reconciliation Week conversations recorded by the Rev'd Jazz Dow, along with National Indigenous Bishop Chris McLeod's 'Black Lives Matter' statement and interview.
- ABM's 2020 Lenten study, 'Where Do We Go From Here', was added to the three existing resources and widely distributed across the country, challenging the church to face the future with prophetic confidence, particularly emphasising the Anglican Marks of Mission.
- With the support of the Oikoumene Foundation, and a generous private donation, ABM has been able to publish Climate for Change, a series of studies authored by Russell Rollason. These are available for free download and are ABM's contribution to the essential work of acknowledging and managing climate change.

2021 marked the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first missionaries in the Torres Strait Islands. This event has become known as 'The Coming of the Light' and is now celebrated annually. Over time ABM has come to appreciate that 'The Coming of the Light' is not a single timebound historical event with an essentially one direction benefit but rather a phenomenon of more profound and mutually enriching significance. Consequently, ABM has committed resources to ensure that there were opportunities in this anniversary year for the Australian Church to Come, to See and to Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church and where the Spirit is calling the Church. This begun with studies during Lent on the theme '*God was on both sides of the Beach.*'

ABM also continues to raise awareness of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development which were endorsed by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia in 2017.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

With the help of ABM's Fundraising & Marketing Committee a new fundraising and marketing strategy became operational in 2021. Donors and parish supporters are a vibrant part of ABM's mission and are encouraged and supported to experience 'doing mission together' through giving, study, prayer, and volunteer participation and leadership. In 2020/21, the Supporter Engagement team worked closely with the Fundraising and Marketing Committee, Provincial Diocesan Representatives and ABM Board members to steward and nurture long-term supporter relationships. In addition, ABM successfully launched and completed a new fundraising initiative, the ABM Larapinta Challenge, which nurtured new ambassadors for ABM's work through a shared experience of fundraising over \$124,000 and walking 66km along the Larapinta trek. For more details of the trek experience, see: <https://www.abmission.org/get-involved/make-a-pilgrimage>.

The Marketing team has recently produced the 2021 Annual Report (which may be downloaded from the ABM webpage and contains details of ABM's financial performance) and the 2022 Project Book. In January 2022 the new ABM/AID website was launched. The website features easier navigation and clearly communicates the nature of ABM's work and its commitment to mission. The new website also hosts an archive site where information from years past is now stored within the resources area. Appeals and Campaigns undertaken in 2021 have been mildly impacted by Covid-19, in particular by the closure of churches, but this has been compensated to some extent by an increase in support from individual donors. In late 2021 ABM conducted a major supporter survey, with over 750 supporters responding. The results of the survey will be used to inform future activities and engagement. ABM is truly grateful to those who took the time to tell us their ABM story.

Gifts in wills continue to be a significant source of financial support for the ABM. The personal histories of mission within the Anglican church leads individuals to leave a considered portion of their estate to support ABM and its aims. The reasons that lead and compel an individual to make a bequest are many and varied. Gifts in wills oblige ABM to tell and re-tell the story of mission in apt ways, and this is seen for example in the telling and retelling of the stories of the New Guinea Martyrs: amongst a trove of stories across the 170-year history of ABM. One practical expression of this commitment has been the development of the 'Coaldrake Award', which recognises the significant contribution of missionaries, volunteers and staff and continues to be well received by the church.

LEARNING AND EFFECTIVENESS

The Board, and ABM's various committees, engage in missional reflection to ensure that ABM's work is grounded in contemporary missional theology which is inspirational and reflective of the Anglican tradition. Furthermore, ABM remains committed in all its activities to observe the highest standards of administrative and financial accountability, and continually to learn and improve on its ability to serve the Anglican Church through partnerships in mission. As a signatory to the Code of Conduct of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), and being a fully-accredited development agency with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), ABM has demonstrated its sound stewardship of resources, both human and financial, and has been rigorously scrutinised by external review. Since 2013, ABM has employed an Effectiveness Coordinator to assist the organisation to focus more clearly on measuring the effectiveness of its development programs and on sharing learnings, in order to continually improve how ABM works with its Church Partners. The ABM Effectiveness Coordinator also engages in networking tasks, particularly with the Church Agencies Network Disasters Operations (CAN DO) unit which focuses on CAN's work around emergencies and disaster preparedness.

MOVING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

ABM continues to grow and change as the context in which we are called to witness to the Gospel evolves. ABM will continue to strive to be a strong and effective organisation which participates in the mission of God through supporting the Anglican Church's witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ABM will continue to assist the Church in serving the poor, feeding the hungry, teaching and preaching the Gospel, healing the sick, and building strong communities of faith.

ABM has much to be thankful for, especially for the foundations in the past upon which the organisation, with God's blessing, continues to build. We remain appreciative of the dedication of the ABM Auxiliary, the Diocesan and Provincial Committees and Representatives and other volunteers, who help us to find new ways to call the Church into mission.

Finally, ABM is grateful for the ongoing and increasing support of Australians across the country through prayer and financial giving, and through involvement with ABM's activities and events. ABM recognises that it is the steward of the generosity of Australians and seeks to execute that responsibility with diligence. ABM welcomes feedback and communication with all who are interested in the work and witness of ABM. Please feel free to contact ABM on (02) 9264 1021 or info@abmission.org.au or visit ABM's website at www.abmission.org

The Rev'd Dr John Deane
Executive Director, ABM-A