

MAF & PNG NEWS

Dominating conversations in PNG at the moment is the 7.6 strength earthquake that struck in the early hours of the morning on Monday 26th February. In Mount Hagen, about 100 miles from the epicentre, the shaking was severe and caused everybody to get out of bed and their houses as quickly as possible.

More information can be gained on the MAF Papua New Guinea Facebook pages.

The death toll is mercifully low, much less than if a quake of that strength had impacted an urban area. Nonetheless, remote communities have been affected by landslides and collapsed houses, killing or injuring some of the people. Water courses have been blocked in a number of places making clean water unavailable. Some gardens have been destroyed, so some communities are also in need of food.

Unhelpful rumours have been propagated on social media which have fuelled people's fear, and also blamed the event on the mining and oil industries.

MAF PNG's Flight Coordinator, Sharlene Coker, is trained in disaster response procedures and has been coordinating work between the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and other interested organisations. Her workload is high, intense and stressful.

Despite best efforts and for reasons beyond the control of MAF, the ADF and other relief organisations, help is not reaching the communities at anything like the speed that is needed.

Please pray:

- For the communities most affected. These appear to be mostly to the south and west of Tari, close to the epicentre.
- Pray that aid will reach those who need it as quickly as possible.
- Pray that the Lord will give Sharlene, and others in MAF involved with our response, wisdom and strength.

On a less urgent note, Michael was part of a team of MAF senior staff who attended a Mission Aviation Conference at Ukarumpa, SIL's PNG HQ. As well as ourselves and SIL, New Tribes Mission, and That They May Know, a small mission that uses an aircraft, were all represented.

Do you remember us asking you to pray for John Leedah, an NTM pilot who was badly injured in a motorbike accident and who subsequently had his right leg amputated?



You can see him sitting next to Michael in the front row, complete with prosthetic leg. His story is amazing and a wonderful testimony to God's grace and provision. John has a tremendous sense of humour and his description of how local people respond to his false leg was hilarious. At least one person has come to faith in Christ through his testimony, which, as John says, is another example of God's grace and using bad situations for his glory and purpose.

We discussed many different issues of common interest and concern. Conferences like this are hugely valuable in the way they build relationships and enhance cooperation between the missions.

- Give thanks for the conference. Please pray that we'll continue to work together well and that we'll be able to make headway with the issues that we face.

PERSONAL NEWS

We leave PNG on Saturday 10th March and will arrive back on Friday 29th June. The primary purpose of our time in the UK is to visit supporting churches, as well as to spend time with family. It'll be necessary for us to stay in contact with events in PNG (as if we wouldn't anyway!) as Michael will be covering the Flight Operations Manager role on our return as Brad Venter, who has taken on the FOM mantle, will be on leave until November.

- Please pray that our travel will go smoothly.
- Please pray that the Lord will guide us as we prepare for the church meetings.

Early in February we learnt that Philip's & Tina's daughter, Rosalie, our first granddaughter, has been diagnosed with Rett Syndrome, which means that she will need care all her life. Philip and Tina will be running a half marathon in support of www.rettuk.org and www.reverserett.org.uk on 10th March.

- This diagnosis is obviously very hard for Philip & Tina. Please pray for them and for Rosalie.

ITINERARY


Sunday 18 th March	Christ Church, Chineham, nr. Basingstoke, 09:00 & 10:30
Tuesday 20 th March	Limes Avenue Baptist Church, Aylesbury, 14:00 Tuesday Fellowship
Wednesday 21 st March	Limes Avenue Baptist Church, Aylesbury, 19:30 Mid-week fellowship
Thursday 22 nd March	Fleet Baptist Church, 14:15 Thursday Fellowship
Sunday 25 th March	Dawlish Christian Fellowship, 10:30
Sunday 8 th April	Church Crookham Baptist Church, morning service
Sunday 15 th April	Ashley Baptist Church, 10:30
Sunday 22 nd April	St George's, Deal, 10:30
Sunday 6 th May	St Lawrence's, Hungerford, 10:00
Sunday 6 th May	Ramsbury Fellowship/Church on the Rock, Hungerford.
Sunday 27 th May	St Mark's 09:15; Keighley Shared Church, 10:45, Keighley

Due to other things crowding in this News has been put together in a bit of a rush, so I hope that nothing serious has been omitted.

Thanks very much for your prayers, particularly for the consequences of the earthquake.

We hope to catch up with many of you in the near future.

With our best wishes in our Lord Jesus.

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