

May righteousness flourish and peace abound



Epiphany

Vanuatu is ranked as the world's most at-risk country for natural disasters. As the changes in climate increase, frequent natural disasters will continue to destroy homes, farms and businesses. People like Marie are training as 'Church Champions' to prepare her village in times of disaster.

Today's Psalm points toward a future time where God's reign and God's will for the world are fully enacted. We still seek the same thing today; to see God's justice and peace enacted across all creation.

Bringing about God's peace is at the heart of the Christmas Bowl, but this peace is needed now more than ever before.

Over the past few years, Vanuatu has ranked as the world's most disaster prone nation; far from a peaceful paradise. As the changes in climate increase, frequent natural disasters will continue to destroy homes, farms, and businesses, leading to poverty and loss of livelihoods.

Cyclones are a regular occurrence for this small Pacific nation, with the country experiencing one of the most devastating cyclones ever, Tropical Cyclone Pam, in 2015. The cyclone killed 15 people and left thousands in need of humanitarian assistance. Many are still unprepared to cope in times of disaster and without support; the death toll in Vanuatu will continue to rise in future disasters.

To help bring peace in times of crisis, Act for Peace has worked in partnership with the Vanuatu Christian Council (VCC) to implement a number of disaster risk reduction programs since 2008. Your ongoing support has assisted the VCC to train communities and help them effectively respond to disasters.

Through the project, communities are provided with disaster baskets stocked with essential items that help save lives when disaster strikes, including first aid kits, solar lights, hygiene and sanitation supplies, blankets and matches.



Marie is one of the 12 Church Champions, selected and trained to help raise awareness about how to prepare for a disaster.

On top of that, 12 people have been selected and trained to become 'Church Champions,' local church members who can raise awareness about how to prepare for disaster.

"Like so many others, I didn't know much about how to prepare for or how to respond after a disaster had hit" says 'Church Champion' Marie.

"At first when we were learning about these precautions, we didn't think they were important. But now, thanks to the workshops and training we've received, we know that they can make the difference between life and death."

God's call is clear. We are called to bring justice and to bring about God's peace. We see it in this Psalm. We see it in the actions of the wise men in the Gospel reading set for today. The wise men were warned and then they changed their actions in order to help protect the vulnerable infant Christ.

Training for disaster

Vanuatu is ranked #1 as the world's most at-risk country for natural disasters. This is due to its position in the Pacific which makes it vulnerable to earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, drought, and tropical cyclones.



\$500

Lifesaving kits

\$500 can provide a disaster preparedness kit stocked with essential items that help save lives when disaster strikes. This includes first aid kits, solar lights, hygiene and sanitation supplies, blankets and matches.

This call does not stop at the end of the Christmas season and neither does the work of the Christmas Bowl.

Please continue to support Act for Peace and its partners as they tirelessly work on behalf of churches across Australia to bring about God's peace, hope and healing for all people.