

"For ten years we have lived under a dark sky. In the middle of 2009 we began to feel that darkness was lifting." Leo Marcal.

Prepared to lay down his life for his flock.

After the 1999 Referendum, in which the vast majority of Timorese people rejected integration into Indonesia, militia groups rampaged throughout the country. Many people lost their lives. Many were traumatised. It is estimated that more than 70% of the county's infrastructure was destroyed.

The district of Aileu, high in the remote mountains south of Dili has some of the county's most spectacular scenery. Today it seems like a place of tranquillity but this area was not excused from the post referendum troubles.



Pastor Rob & Pastor Manuel

As the militia groups moved up the mountains towards the Paulos

church, Evangelist Manuel gathered his people with their belongings into the building.

The militia arrived. The people prayed.

Manuel is less than 5 feet tall, but with a heart like the young King David before Goliath, he stood at the door of the church and confronted the armed bandits. His challenge to them was, "please be gentlemen and leave us alone", or if they could not bring themselves to that, then the only way to get to the church folk was through him. "Shoot me and you will have access to the church! Otherwise, No! But I have only one request. If you shoot me, please bury me in front of the church as a memorial to what you have brutally done. I will be in the presence of the Lord. You will face the judgement seat of God for what you have done. Your decision!"

After consultation they left.



The Paulos congregation in Aileu now numbers about 600 people.

Until recently, Evangelist Manuel walked for hours through very steep terrain to minister to his people. When the Timor Leste committee heard of this we wondered if we could raise funds to purchase a motorbike for him. He felt his countryside was too steep for a motor-bike, so with a gift from Australia, we provided money to buy him a horse instead.

The spectacular site of the Paulos church has also left it exposed to the elements. Late last year a freak storm hit the building and much of the roof was destroyed.

Fortunately there was money which had been given for general purposes in Timor Leste, so we were able to respond quickly and provide them the necessary funds to make repairs.

Scenery near Paulos Church



Dili de-housed.

Until recently the Dili congregation met in one of the Universities in Dili. This was a good location for them, but recently the University decided



Open air pulpit, Dili

that they could no longer meet there. Because of the destruction of Dili's infrastructure in the aftermath of the 1999 referendum, there are very few buildings which are suitable for a meeting of up to 100 people.

Since the beginning of May, the church has been meeting in the driveway of a private home underneath a tarpaulin.

The Sunday School meets at a near-by house on the porch.

We are very thankful that this did not happen in the Wet season

when torrential rain falls on most days, but we do need to pray that they will find somewhere to meet before the next Wet sets in.

Motorbike for Pastor Carlos.

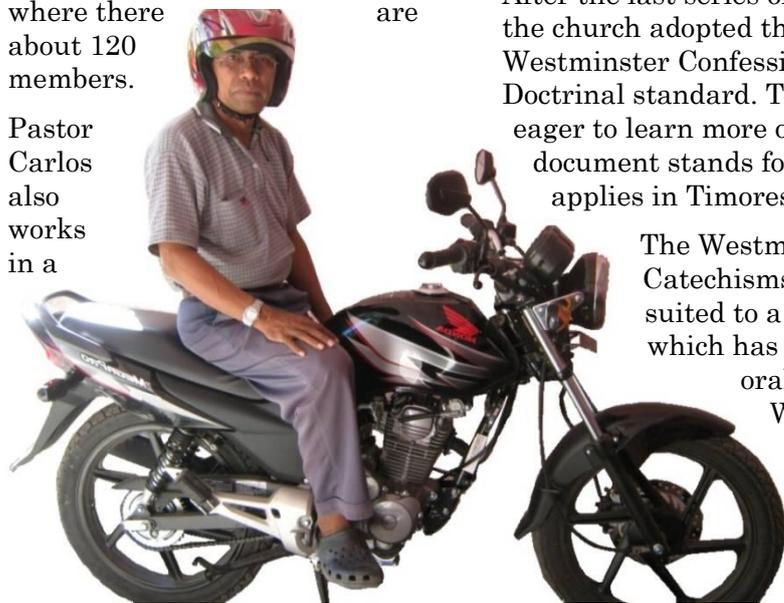
Motorbikes are one of the main means of transport around the city of Dili. Sometimes they carry three or even four people!

Pastor Carlos is the most senior pastor in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Timor Leste (IEPTL). He was ordained as an Evangelist in 1985 before he

and his family went to Indonesia to study theology. He was ordained as a pastor in 1995. In 1999 he was black-listed by the militia and fled to Kupang (Indonesia) where he served Timorese people in the diaspora.

He now serves as the pastor in Dili where there are about 120 members.

Pastor Carlos also works in a



team to translate the scriptures into the local language of Tetum. Until recently Pastor Carlos rode an old motorbike which he kept running by means of prayer and loads of electrical tape!

PWMU branches from throughout NSW started to raise funds for a motorbike for Pastor Carlos at the beginning of 2010, and already sufficient has been raised for the purchase!

This has not only been a great encouragement to Pastor Carlos personally, but also to his congregation which has undergone some difficulties recently (see article above).

We hope that the PWMU ladies will be encouraged by the blessing they have brought and will perhaps be able to provide money for a second pastor's motorbike.

Teaching visit

Plans are well under way for a teaching visit to Timor Leste for October 2010.

It was a thrill last year to have the teaching team so enthusiastically

received, and to hear the plea for more teaching times.

With the disruption of society for a whole generation there has been little opportunity for consistent Bible teaching so this is a high priority.

After the last series of workshops, the church adopted the Westminster Confession as their Doctrinal standard. They are eager to learn more of what this document stands for and how it applies in Timorese society.

The Westminster Catechisms are ideally suited to a society which has a history of oral learning.

We hope that by the time the teaching team reaches Timor

Leste, that this will be available in Tetun.

Rev Chris Balzer will be the keynote teacher.

Pastor Arlindo Marcal to Visit Australia

We are delighted to let you know that the Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Timor Leste will be visiting Australia from August to September of this year.

The first edition of *"Bondia Timor Leste"* gave a brief outline of this remarkable man who is highly esteemed throughout both the Timorese Church and society.

Pastor Arlindo will be visiting Darwin, NSW (including the General Assembly of Australia), South Australia and Western Australia.



"Bondia Timor Leste" – the name means, "Good Morning East Timor". It is produced by a sub-committee of Mission Partners. The publishers of this newsletter pray that it might be used to awaken interest in the Presbyterian Church which is nearest to Australian shores.

IF YOU WANT TO SUBSCRIBE TO THIS NEWSLETTER, please contact the Editor.

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If you would like him to visit your church / missions group please let Rob Duncanson know as soon as possible.

If you get the chance, go out of your way to hear him as you will be thrilled to hear of the Lord's work in trying circumstances.

You will develop a greater longing to see the gospel proclaimed in all places.

Kupang Calling

Recently Pastors Carlos and Arlindo visited the Western part of Timor including Kupang. This part of Timor is a part of Indonesia, but there are many East Timorese who are still there after fleeing from past fighting in their own country.

"We have not had a visit from a Pastor for more than eleven years" was the response of some people who would love to be a part of the new Evangelical Presbyterian Church of TL.

Brazilian Connections

Timor Leste was colonised by Portugal for 400 years up until 1974. Portuguese language was banned during the Indonesian occupation, so although it is one of the official languages of Timor Leste, it is spoken by less than 5% of the population.

Portugal's biggest colony, Brazil, has great input into Timor Leste, including through missionary workers from the Presbyterian

Church of Brazil. Through their common coloniser, they have natural cultural and limited language connections with TL.

This church is very much like ours (although much bigger). They trace their history back to missionaries who were sent to Brazil by John Calvin. These missionaries had barely set foot upon Brazilian soil before they were all martyred. Their seed, however, has sprung forth 100-fold into what is now the Presbyterian Church of Brazil. This church is growing rapidly, and sending missionaries throughout the world through its mission organisation APMT (Agencia Presbiteriana de Missoes Transculturais).

Celso and Leiliane Dias Alves work in Dili. They have a large children's work going and play a significant supportive role within the local congregation.

Marcos and Priscila Napoli work in the district of Liquiçá, about 45 minutes to the West of Dili.

We are excited to see the selfless work they are doing in TL, and hope to continue to develop an ongoing partnership with them which will benefit the advance of Kingdom work in Timor Leste.

ESL

Pastor Marcos writes:

"The pastors here in Liquiçá, want me to ask you about a possibility of sending one person to teach English for one semester. People from the church and outside the church will follow the course. The idea is to teach English and Bible together. Some kind of evangelistic English course."

Are YOU that person?

Do you know someone who may be interested?

Financial support would be very limited, but the person would get to live in one of the world's most beautiful areas for a few months, and would do work which could pay great dividends into eternity.

What has happened so far?

Major highlights include:

- ✓ 1 Exploratory /introductory visit to TL.
- ✓ 1 teaching trip completed and 1 more planned.
- ✓ Many students helped with scholarship money.
- ✓ 1 Motorbike provided.
- ✓ 1 Church repaired.
- ✓ 1 Horse provided.
- ✓ Trip to Kupang for local leaders sponsored.
- ✓ Travel for all church leaders to a Synod meeting sponsored.
- ✓ 2 Children's books produced.
- ✓ TL Moderator's trip to Australia planned.
- ✓ Bibles and Scripture portions supplied.
- ✓ Planning under way for our first building maintenance trip.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. **Pray**
2. **Pray**
3. **Pray** (see below for prayer points).
4. **Give**

All monies should be sent to Mission Partners in Sydney and clearly marked for Timor Leste. Address below.

Mission Partners will provide a receipt for every payment and the EPC will account to Mission Partners for all gifts they receive.

PLEASE PRAY

1. For the planned teaching trip October 2010.
2. That the EPC-TL will have a firm foundation upon which to build a solid Biblical Church.

3. For the church leaders who serve self-sacrificially for the sake of the gospel work in TL, that the Lord would provide for all their needs.
4. For many folk who are living in poverty.
5. For many Timorese who are showing an interest in the gospel, that they would be encouraged to repent, follow Jesus and that they would then be well disciplined.
6. That the Dili congregation would find a new place to meet which will be accessible for all who may wish to come along.
7. For someone to teach English in the Liquiçá district.
8. For people who continue to struggle to come to terms with past traumatic experiences.
9. That the EPC-TL will be able to minister effectively to many isolated groups of Christians in TL and beyond.



Tais Seller,
Dili

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If you would like to **GIVE** towards gospel ministry in Timor Leste, please send donations to Mission Partners, and clearly designate them for this work. Address: 8 Sylvan Grove, Picnic Point NSW