



global news

stories and news from Scripture Union around the world

Preparing the next generation for leadership
Page 2

A life-changing year in New South Wales
Page 5

Bringing youth into the boardroom
Page 8

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In at the deep end



Scripture Union all around the world is hugely dependent on volunteer leaders. Most of them are young, sometimes barely a year or two older than the children and young people they are serving. But we truly believe

that committed young people can share the love of Christ with their own generation and beyond. They can be transformational leaders if God has called them into this role. They can make a difference in the life of a child or a young person. They can influence their own generation for the good.

"We truly believe that committed young people can share the love of Christ with their own generation and beyond."

Some of the key questions are: How do we train young leaders? How do they get the nourishment they need - the support and encouragement, the mentoring and the feedback? Or do we just throw them in at the deep end and let them either sink or swim?

I remember being thrown in at the deep end of ministry with children as a 13-year-old, trying to survive and to share whatever little I felt I had to give. By the grace of God, it did not stop me from carrying on serving, but I wonder how much more effective I could have been if someone had given me a proper induction and regular feedback!

In this issue of our Global News we have collated a number of good practice models from across the world. I am praying that we, as a global movement, will train young leaders in such a way that they will never stop serving God, wherever they are.

Monika Kuszmierz
SU International Director

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Cover image: Young people on a young leaders camp in Malaysia in January 2020.



A vision for growing leaders

Nana Yaw has spent his life building up young leaders. He explains how it all began when he was a schoolboy in Ghana and attended a Scripture Union youth rally...

As a teenager, my sense of self-worth, identity and life purpose had been completely crushed. I tried to mentally cope with my broken family background and failure in a major school examination, coupled with luring temptations from reggae music and a heavy weight of hopelessness. When a fellow passenger in a taxi pointed me to the promise in Psalm 32:8, it stirred a deep searching in my heart.

It was hearing the clear promise of the gospel at a Scripture Union youth rally which gave me the answer I was yearning for and led me to find a personal faith and commitment to Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Such was the significance of inner peace, hope and purposeful living, that I began

to discover each new promise in the Bible brought me deep life and light. The inductive Scripture Union Bible Reading method strengthened these precious foundations. It was then I made a silent commitment to spend the future leading young people to discover peace in Jesus and their life purpose from within the Bible.

"I made a silent commitment to spend the future leading young people to discover peace in Jesus and their life purpose from within the Bible."

This personal journey as a young boy and my current engagement in global mission with the Lausanne Movement challenges me, as I think about the future of the global church and the church in Africa in particular.



Children and young people at a refugee camp in Northern Uganda where SU is working



GROWING YOUNGER LEADERS



Nana (pictured left) with Ibrahim, a Lausanne young leader from Ghana

UN agencies predict that by 2050, 1.8 billion of Africa's population will be under 18 years of age and most of them will identify as Christian or Muslim.

I believe hope holds hopelessness in tension for the future of our children, young people and families. It all depends on what develops within the Church, communication, culture, economy, education, employment, health, conflict, natural resources, technology and trade ... but most significantly, it depends on the values and vision of the next-generation of leadership!

What will be the role of Scripture Union in preparing the next generation of younger leaders for the future of the global church?

In 2016 I met Peter Aloro Santimon (pictured right) from South Sudan in Indonesia at the 3rd Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering (YLG 2016). Peter and I are enjoying a deepening friendship. He is one of over 800 carefully selected younger leaders from some 150 countries connected by The Lausanne Movement. I serve this emerging new generation of leaders around the world through the Lausanne Younger Leaders Generation (YLGGen) – a 10-year intentional intergenerational leadership investment. We work through whole-life mentoring and discipleship, equipping

emerging leaders with cutting-edge missional resources and inspiring catalytic collaboration for global mission through peer interaction with national and regional groups and gatherings.

Peter is a volunteer with Scripture Union. As a result of his time at the Lausanne



“God was at work shaping my heart ... giving me vision to approach discipleship and leadership development.”

conference, he developed a deep burden for the broken hearts and homes of family and friends now scattered from their beloved country of South Sudan into one of the largest communities of refugees resettled in north western Uganda. God has fuelled Peter's burden

into a significant Scripture Union ministry among his people in the refugee camps. He is working in over 60 schools amongst children and young people in these camps, bringing hope in Christ to a new generation who have lost hope!

I visited Peter in December, alongside two other dear friends, to serve at the IMVEPI Refugee Camp. He had invited me to share God's Good News at their pre-Christmas Scripture Union Camp on the theme 'Remain United in Faith, Hope and Love for Jesus'.

When I was at University, little did I know that God was at work shaping my heart, preparing me with a passionate big picture strategy and giving me a vision to approach discipleship and leadership development.

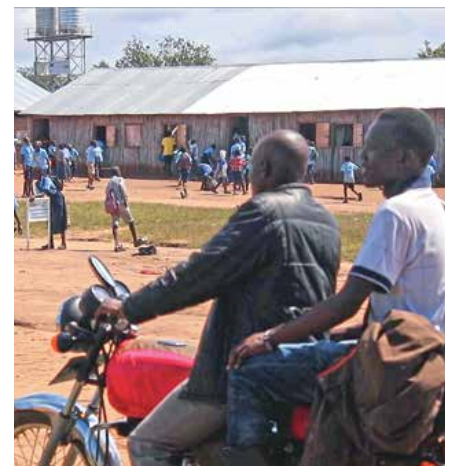
Over the past 20 years serving as a fulltime Scripture Union staff member in Ghana, God graciously matured and blossomed these seeds as I have had the privilege to lead national field ministry staff and strategy development. My greatest joy however, through all these years, has been to see countless numbers of high school students find Jesus and be formed into strategic leaders, serving both church and country.

Do you want to help us train young leaders? Find out more on our website: <https://scriptureunion.global/training/>



Nana Yaw Offei Awuku serves as the Director of the Lausanne Younger Leaders Generation initiative (YLGGen). He was previously the Lausanne Regional Director for English, Portuguese, and Spanish-speaking Africa. Nana was on Scripture Union Ghana staff for over 20 years and currently serves on the Senior Management Team as the Director for Field Ministries. His primary ministry includes evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development.

Nan met his wife, Beth, at university. Along with bringing up their three children, they have been foster parents to four university students and mentored two full-time ministry staff. They live together and joyfully gather each morning round the table for Bible reading and breakfast.





GROWING
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Leaders who listen – LE 2020

How a leadership training program is transforming ministry with children and young people.

When Joshua Anguyo from Scripture Union Uganda was accepted for the Leadership Experience (LE) 2020, he joined three other successful Scripture Union applicants: Ben from Australia, Peter from South Sudan and Trang from Vietnam, writes Wendy Strachan.

Joshua is a Regional Director in northern Uganda – a region with more than 1500 schools and over 1 million refugees. Although he has already taken advantage of training opportunities that exist in Uganda, Joshua recognises in LE he will gain a unique experience to extend his thinking and practice as a leader in children’s ministry. Pivotal to this decision was that Scripture Union International has been deeply involved in this collaborative program since its beginnings.

Even before he attends the program, Joshua has been interacting with LE 2020 participants through an online group and began research into the hopes, fears and spirituality of children and adults in his community – the first LE assignment.

In March, Joshua, Ben, Trang and Peter will meet the rest of the LE cohort in South Africa for a 5-week residential course.

Facilitators drawn from child-focussed organisations around the world will take them on a learning journey that is biblically-robust, creative, challenging and fun – and intentionally provides time and space to listen to what God is saying.

On his return to Uganda, Joshua will work on a supervised ministry project which will address Scripture Union’s ministry focus in Arua through the lens of insights and strategies gained through LE. And he’ll

continue learning through online forums and mentoring.

What will the impact of LE be on Joshua and on SU Uganda?

Each person’s experience is different but overwhelmingly, the pattern has been that LE has been instrumental in people deepening their relationship with God, re-shaping their ministries, becoming more innovative and courageous, and leading with greater confidence.



Former LE participants described their experience on the program

Leanne Dunlop (on the right), now Field Ministries Director in SU Northern Ireland, said: “Because of what I learned in LE, I have stepped more confidently into a new role within Scripture Union and gained a greater understanding of global perspectives on children’s ministry.”

- “My way of ministry to the child is no longer the same; I now serve children with ‘ears on the ground’, a strategy learned through Community Listening and other themes of LE 2018. We have now integrated Child Participation in our ministries.” – **Paul Muoki**, SU Kenya
- “I now have a complete framework for thinking about my work with children and Scripture Union have given me a staff role in training and equipping volunteers and staff for ministry with children and families.” – **Brendan Petty**, volunteer with SU Victoria (Australia)
- “I’m praying that it would be a really life-changing experience... and I’m really excited!” – **Ben Howes**, volunteer with SU Victoria (Australia)

The prayer and intention of the LE Facilitation Team: *that the Leadership Experience will play a part in God’s work in transforming individuals and ministries for his glory.*



Carri Clark (on the right) with Roberta Dingelaitis from Lithuania.

Lessons on leading with SU Croatia

Carri Clark (28) is a paramedic and massage therapist from Michigan, USA. She attended a programme with Leadership Lab International (LLI) which taught her new lessons in leadership.

“I had been leading a bible study group of girls 12-16 years old for about 5-6 years before I came to LLI,” said Carri. “It was one of the main reasons I came to LLI. I wanted to gain more skills and increase my knowledge of how to lead a bible study and better serve Christ in ministry. I also had a lot of my girls graduating and moving on the next year

so I wanted to spend time with God and praying about if I needed to build a new group.”

Time at LLI taught Carri about how to teach different types of people within a group it also helped her see the signs of burnout, the danger of leading others without support and without relying on God.

Carri said, “After attending LLI, I was able to bring back the skill of debriefing, which made discussions in bible study much more fruitful and deep. I learned about leaders and teams and, once





A lifechanging year with Scripture Union in Australia

Jeremy Kidd took part in an internship programme with Scripture Union in New South Wales. The year was an opportunity for him to grow in his faith and learn to lead others...

Jeremy (20) attended a public school in Australia where SU New South Wales (NSW) supported a Christian lunchtime group. He said, "The lunchtime group was massive in helping me to be public about my faith and recognise the need to share what I believe. It gave me opportunities to step into leadership, in sharing things from the Bible or sharing my faith or just running games. Through high school, Scripture Union also ran a leadership conference in NSW and that taught me about how to grapple with God's word and get really in depth with it. It also trained me in dealing with apologetics."

Jeremy described himself as being "hooked on SU" as a teenager and in his final year at school he began to wonder if God might want him in some form of Christian ministry.

He said, "Three months down the track the director of the NSW conference sent me an email asking if I'd like to do an internship. God's hand was involved there I am sure. I got to do an incredible year at the internship."

The highlights of the year for Jeremy were taking part in the Leadership Encouragement and Development program (L.E.A.D). This is a training program for young Christian leaders designed to encourage and equip them for group contexts by exploring key foundational, practical, pastoral and sustainable aspects of Christian leadership.

"Scripture Union has created in me a deep desire to make disciples. I really want to continue being involved in the Great Commission of Jesus."

Jeremy said, "It's an SU NSW resource that goes through seven sessions on training young lunchtime group leaders in schools I got to run that training session with two budding Christians of about 14 and 15 years old. It was so encouraging hearing them grapple with their faith and how they could be public about it and take on leadership roles in their school. It was so exciting being part of seeing their faith develop. I gained a real passion for discipleship, seeing more than just doing one on one evangelism and trying in all that I do to think about how I can be empowering and equipping others."

"We did beach missions as well. I love that in the SU internship I got to do so much of that – building the connections with people and equipping them with SU resources. These resources are God's word based, so God was doing the work:"

Being part of an SU SUPA club in a local school was the other highlight for Jeremy.

"SUPA club stands for SU primary age club," Jeremy said. "We got to go in every week and meet with this group – they were really, really interested and would come up with the most amazing questions like, *Why does the world hate Christians & Jesus? Where do you go when you die? Where is God now?*"

The most valuable things Jeremy learned during his year were training others, the value of discipleship and the variety of ways and places that you can serve God in ministry.

He said, "The year grew within me a deeper love for God and for His people. The year also led me to choose to study at Sydney Missionary Bible College, so that I could know and understand God more by understanding his word more deeply."

"Scripture Union has created in me a deep desire to make disciples. I really want to continue being involved in the Great Commission of Jesus."

my original group of girls moved on to college and life, I started a leadership group for 17-20 year-olds that incorporates a lot of what I learned through LLI. I am teaching these young women about biblical leadership qualities, not only in a bible study group, but also in life. Then they are applying it while they teach a young girls' bible study. It is fun to see them continue to grow."

"I hope to lead this group for at least two years, and then see where God leads me. Whether

the same ministry, a new one or even moving on to women's ministry.

Carri says, "I am super thankful to LLI. God led me to it at the right time and knew exactly what I needed to learn and let go of that summer. He glorified himself so much by sanding and shaping me into what he wanted me to look like and planted me in the place where he wanted. I was broken, repaired, stretched and filled through my experience with LLI."






**GROWING
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Young people are trained and encouraged during the week of mission

Growing young leaders through mission in Botswana

Sixty young people from more than 10 countries across Southern Africa arrived in Botswana last March to be part of a special mission. The aim was to give them the opportunity to learn about sharing their faith in local schools and discover how to mentor others, while also growing in faith and as disciples. Director of SU Botswana, Albert Tamado said, “The week-long experience not only changed young lives in the schools where they were placed, but it also transformed the lives of the young people themselves. They were encouraged by one another and grew in confidence through stepping out and putting their faith into action.”



South African youth worker, Qhamani Martin Magugu, was part of the school mission in Botswana. He said Scripture Union had made a huge impact

on him after getting involved with an SU holiday club and that his volunteering with SU gave him a deep fulfilment, which led him back to work with SU after university. “SU has shown me that I can worship God and be a disciple and be myself – I don’t

“Young people can be disciples and can make other disciples.”

have to be anyone else. It has also shown me that young people can be disciples and can make other disciples. And that’s

amazing because in my context young people are put in the background, with people saying you need to get to a certain age before you can understand this kind of faith and the Christian life. But Scripture Union has said, ‘No, there’s a different perspective’ and that young people can serve God, young people can seek God and young people can live a life that pleases God.”



Ontlametse Putu from South Africa was also one of the young volunteers.

He said, “We had a day of training on how to interact with the kids and speak to them. It was amazing and we did some drama and learned how to present our testimonies. On the first day of visiting schools, I was very anxious – but it was a lot better than I thought it would be. I resonated with a lot of the kid’s stories and about what they were feeling.”

“We focused on self-esteem and character building, the foundation of any human contact, trying to understand the way children think. We talked to them about daring to be different, in a good way; going in the opposite direction, but in the right way.”

“We’ve seen things happen even this week. There was a kid heavily involved with a bad crowd, who felt he didn’t have a choice because that was where he felt welcome. I had a talk with him and he told

me that what I’d said the day before had stuck with him. He said, ‘I don’t have to be a bully to others and drink and smoke.’ In just one day there had been an impact.”



Aldrigde Kalenga from Zambia said he would find it hard to leave at the end of the week. “I’m really going to miss a lot of people – even the different team

members. I’ve made a lot of friends and hope I get to do something like this again”.

“Each time I’m teaching children, I really feel like I’m learning.”

Talking about presenting a message in the school assembly, he said, “My scripture was based on 1 Timothy 4 v 12 which says we shouldn’t look down on the young just because they’re young. I told them life is like that and they should be like the cyclist controlling the situation, not just the wheels that are turning to any direction.

“Each time I’m teaching children, I really feel like I’m learning. I feel like I’ve learned a lot from the children. I’ve learned a lot from my teammates and about myself as well as from the experiences of others. I feel like I’ve grown on a whole different level. When I go back home evangelism will be so much easier for me because of what I’ve learned here.”






**GROWING
 YOUNG
 LEADERS**



Raising a new generation of leaders in Malaysia

“I want to bring 100 friends along to get to know Jesus in 2020” declared a young camper from Thailand.

Many other campers at the 8th International Students Camp (ISC8) also committed themselves to pray for their family members and friends and to make an effort to reach them in 2020.

Scripture Union Malaysia Peninsular was privileged to host 85 young people and 33 officers from 12 countries from Scripture Union’s East-West Asia Community Group at the ISC8, from 26th December 2019 – 1st January 2020. The camp was held at the 7 ½ acre SU campsite in Tapah, Perak.

The theme of the camp was *Raising the next generation of leaders* and its aim was to inspire and train young leaders who will serve God in their respective countries. Earn Soo, Executive Director for SU Malaysia Peninsular, said, “Even though not everyone was able to communicate

well in English, the young people were able to bond fairly quickly. It was heart-warming to see the young leaders play together, help each other and work

“We’re praying that the young leaders will continue to meet with God daily through His Word.”

together during the stream-trotting, caving and leadership activities. The oneness in Christ was evident when we saw how the young people ate, laughed, shared stories, fellowshiped and studied God’s Word together.”

The young people learnt about various aspects of leadership including:

- The three characteristics that God looks for in a leader

- The impact that a leader can make
- The witness of a leader
- The importance of stamina in a leader

It was not all theory and teaching though. The campers were also inspired and challenged by the testimonies of the various speakers who are practitioners of what they taught.

Another major part of the camp included learning the importance of Bible Engagement – how to engage God’s Word using five simple steps, and a study on the book of Colossians.

Earn Soo said, “We’re praying that the young leaders will continue to meet with God daily through His Word. At the end of the camp, almost all the young people, if not all, made a commitment to serve God and expressed their desire to live for Christ. Glory be to God.”

Youth led transformation project in Honduras



Scripture Union Honduras has been rolling out a new program which is training and enabling young leaders to play a key part in holistic mission, which embraces evangelism and social action, alongside the local church.

The *Transforming Youth – Honduras* program hopes to tackle the problems in the country caused by corruption, which has led to huge ethical, moral and spiritual challenges. Working with youth leaders, the program aims to promote a more just society where the most vulnerable are looked out for and where no voice is silenced.

Building on experience from programs in Argentina and Peru, SU started a program with 40 youth leaders from Central America. In 2015 the program continued with 50 young leaders from Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. SU Honduras is now putting it into operation with backing from Tearfund and other Christian partners.



One participant, Willfredo Perdomo, said, “Each of the program’s work sessions provides an open and trustworthy space where teamwork is essential. The training process will undoubtedly be of great impact on my personal life as well as on the young people I work with.”

The program aims to encourage local churches to adopt a holistic approach to mission and offer a clear vision to their young leaders. It consists of six modules which enable participants to analyse needs, identify resources in congregations and communities, and to build an action plan.

“I feel blessed to have participated in the beautiful experience of transforming young people,” said Olga Évora. “I have learned new things. The enthusiasm to serve those who need it most and the dynamism to do it, as well as how to get to where the need is around us, has been so exciting.”





Bringing youth into the boardroom

Meredith MacKenzie, a member of Scripture Union New Zealand’s governing board, talks about how they have kept young people engaged in the movement’s strategic leadership.

How do you attract young members onto the SU board?

“Although we have always had some younger members of our governance group, about 10 years ago we changed to an elected board and we continued to seek a diverse group, particularly looking for people who understood SU NZ and were interested in governance.

SU NZ has always been a family of every generation, for both staff and volunteers. We have been strong in including young people in all areas of the work. For example, involving recent school-leavers as leaders on camps, and inviting some to our Camps’ Working Groups then giving them exposure at National Policy Group meetings to the senior SU NZ Staff and Council. These personal connections have led to board members hearing about SU volunteers who have an interest in governance. Then we follow a process to assessing their skill and suitability for joining the board.

What have been the challenges?

Our biggest challenge has been finding people of any age who have the skills we want and the time to commit to being on the board. Some board members are only able to give us two to three years, which is often the case with our younger members, but they are still extremely valuable over the time they are available. It does take time for new board members to feel comfortable to fully contribute, more so with younger members, but with good process and a strongly inclusive board communication style, it is an excellent training ground for first-timers.

What have been the gains from the ‘youthing’ of the board?

Our younger board members are usually still involved in ministry or have been very recently, so they bring a deep awareness of the joys and challenges of ministry. They also ask good questions (when they gain confidence to do so).

“Younger board members bring a deep awareness of the joys and challenges of ministry.”

What advice would you give to other SU Boards or National Directors who would like to have more young people involved in governance?

- Listen to young volunteers, to pick up on anyone who is interested in governance and strategy. It is an excellent training opportunity, beneficial to the board and to the young people.
- Prepare well – have board information packs and a defined process for inviting



someone on to the board. We make a plan for the potential board member to meet a current board member for an informal chat, then we invite them to observe a board meeting or two. The board members then decide if they want to continue and the Chair or another member talks to the potential board member to see if they are still keen. If everyone is in agreement, we co-opt them onto the board.

- Be deliberate in explaining the process to new board members. One person needs to check in with them and answer any questions at or between meetings.
- Encourage participation in discussions – help them feel valued for whatever they bring.
- Emphasise the value of asking questions – this is the primary skill of governance!
- Be open to short-term commitments – many younger people are making big decisions and changes in their lives and may not be able to stay involved for more than a few years. They will potentially be back in the future with even more wisdom to share.
- Be deliberate about building relationships. We have dinner together on the Friday night of our face-to-face board meetings with a short business agenda afterwards, then a full day on Saturday. Out of town board members stay with locals. It might be easier to start with two young board members rather than just one.



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