

Brandell e~Scr@pbook

facebook.com/v2brandells

www.missionvanuatu.com



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Vanuatu

Family Time

This was our first December in Vanuatu in several years, as we usually take a furlough during the kids' two month school holiday. We quickly felt ourselves missing both the break from cross-cultural ministry and the opportunity to be with American family and friends, but those were greatly eased by a visit from Shawnda's parents. We enjoyed time together playing games, reading, swimming and working on projects. I was especially grateful to have Papa's help with a long to-do list which included new living room furniture, beds for Titus and Alexis, finishing out our LaetHaos kitchen area, refinishing two tables, applying metal flashing to our bath house, and conducting an old fashioned garage sale. We also enjoyed getting to take them with us to Eton, Etas, Epau and Rentapau for Sunday assemblies. This was their seventh trip to Vanuatu in the 14 years we've been here, and thus they've established strong relationships that they enjoyed building upon. It can be a bit hard to "get into the Christmas spirit" in the heat and humidity of a tropical atmosphere, but we still thoroughly enjoyed the time together, especially the eating, gift giving, and general togetherness of Christmas. We rejoice that unto us a Son has been given! Being home also meant that we were able to continue our weekly Bible study with Flexon and Fiona in Vila, in which we are currently considering texts that deal with the motif of the Christian's life as daily sacrifice following Jesus' example.

Prayer Requests:

• **Christian family issues**

We learned of at least two very discouraging issues facing brethren in Tulwei Village and Etas this month, neither of which are we able to go into detail on here. Nonetheless prayers for the families involved are appreciated, and for wisdom as we seek to help facilitate healing.

Prayer Updates:

• **Ambae Volcano Relief**

Brethren temporarily relocated to Maewo Island have returned to Ambae this month, following the lapse of the state of emergency. Though services (hospitals, airports, banks, etc.) have not yet been restored, they are grateful to return home. The government has strongly encouraged them to establish a "second home" on a nearby island as the volcano is likely to cause more problems in the future, and we are glad to be able to help. Our thanks to those who donated to the effort.

• **Preacher Training Workshop**

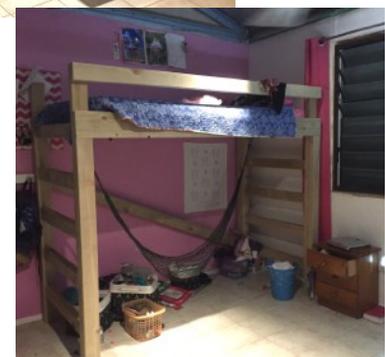
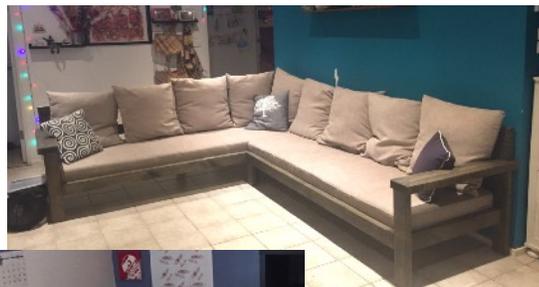
I've been greatly encouraged by positive comments from attendees who continue to reflect on our time together in Nov. Of special note is the excitement several have shared in regard to a daily Bible reading plan that was introduced. I've been pleasantly surprised by how many of the men have committed themselves to this. For most (if not all), this has been their first time to ever read Genesis and Exodus. The reading plan covers the narrative portions of the OT Scriptures and will take a full year to complete.



Christmas art from the month



Annual tradition of Christmas cookie decoration



New furniture