

Brandell e-Scr@pbook

A MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE BRANDELLS IN VANUATU

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✕ Transitions ✕

Our lifestyle requires a lot of transition, which can be especially taxing on our children. Including our night on the airplane, we slept in 6 different places in February. I am proud to say that the kids have reacted splendidly. They have enjoyed meeting lots of new people, and getting reacquainted with family and friends.

CATCHING UP

It's been 18 months since we were in the States last, and as I like to say, "we have lots of catching up to do" (family, friends, food, sports, shopping, etc.). So far, so good!

For starters, we purposefully chose to schedule our furlough in the winter/spring months instead of our usual summer timeframe. This allows us to miss the more



Team Update

The Baker family tied up all their loose ends and said lots of tearful goodbyes this month, before returning to the States at the end of February. They will be visiting family and reporting to supporters for a couple of months, before settling in to a new work. Their presence in Vanuatu will be sorely missed by everyone, and we wish them well in this new chapter of their life.

Mike spent the first two weeks of the month in Santo, where he continues to evangelize in Luganville (town) and work with the brethren in Shark Bay (village). After seeing the Bakers off in Vila, he spent a couple of weeks in Malekula teaching classes on Thessalonians and encouraging the brethren.



miserable heat and humidity of Vanuatu, and experience our favorite weather in the US (snow!). We have all really enjoyed catching up on our cold weather consumption, including a trip to the ski slopes with Titus. Both of the kids have loved playing in the snow.

Our first stop stateside was Ripon, California. Staying a few nights with our good friends Caleb and Valerie O'Hara was such a blessing, as it provided our entire family with a relaxing few days to get readjusted to the new time zone and the new culture. Their two sons and new baby girl kept Titus and Lexi busy the whole time. I was able to give a presentation on the work in Vanuatu to the congregation there on Wednesday night, which is where Caleb preaches.

From California we flew to the Seattle, Washington area, where we spent the weekend with the Dupont congregation. They began supporting us a few years ago, following a trip their preacher, Mike Green, made to work with us in Vanuatu. I spoke during the worship hour, and we had opportunity to be in the home of four different Christian families while there - it was a pleasure. We also enjoyed a trip to the zoo with the Greens before our departure.

Our next destination was Denver, where Mema, Papa, and Auntie Leesha all met us at the airport. Papa was proudly waving a sign that said, "Welcome Titus and Lexi - Let the Spoiling Begin!" The kids had a great time playing in the snow, riding bikes, reading and going to "the cow store" (Chick-fil-a) with Mema and Papa. Another highlight was getting to have a sleepover at Aunt Leesha and Uncle Matt's (which included another trip to the cow store). Shawnda had a LASIK procedure done, and has recovered very well. She went from seeing 20-400 to 20-15. It will be such a blessing for her to not have to worry about contacts or glasses in the village.

I made our presentation and preached at Columbine on our first Sunday in Colorado, and we left immediately afterwards for Duncan, OK to attend my grandmother's funeral. She was 84 years old and a Christian. Funerals are always difficult situations, but having the whole family together was such a blessing. And we were glad that it happened while we were close.

Upon our return to Denver, I went into school-mode, spending 6-8 hours per day at the library. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to begin the Masters program at Bear Valley Bible Institute during this trip. I took two classes the following week - John and Romans. We were in class from 7am to 7pm, and I thoroughly enjoyed it! It was a great reminder of the importance of exegetical study. I have some homework and a final to complete, and will take two more classes in May before we return to Vanuatu.

We enjoyed being with the brethren at Cherry Vista the third Sunday of the month. They asked me to preach during the morning assembly, and to make a presentation on the work during the evening service. We enjoyed sharing a pot-luck lunch together with them. I then enjoyed spending the following weekend with Wayne and Weezie Burger in Conifer (Shawnda and the kids went to Southfork with her mom while I was in class). The congregation asked me to preach at their Friends & Family Day, and also allowed me to present on the work during the Bible class time. They asked lots of good questions about the work, and it was a pleasure to get to know these brethren.

We finished up the month in one of our favorite places - Southfork, CO. Shawnda's parents have a house there that they will retire in. It is such a peaceful place, and they traditionally get the most snow in the state. We enjoyed sledding, making snowmen, roasting marshmallows, reading and watching movies together. We also took advantage of a "locals appreciation day" at Wolf Creek for a day of snowboarding/skiing. It was Titus' first attempt. He did a great job and picked it up really quickly.

Our furlough has been filled with blessing after blessing thus far, and we look forward to seeing most of you soon as our travels continue. Thank you for your continued interest in and support of our work.



