



Brandell e-Scr@pbook

A monthly report on our life in Vanuatu

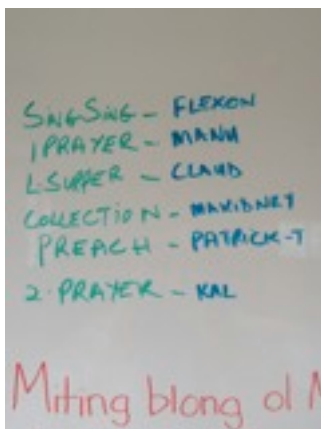


We always look forward to the month of May, because it promises significantly cooler temperatures as we enter into the “winter” season here in the southern hemisphere. That means spending more time outside in the sandbox, as above. Enjoy reading more about our month...

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SUNDAYS IN MAY



In a given month, our family worships with several different congregations.

In *Vila* this month, I was pleased to see this list of worship leaders for the morning. You'll note that there are only local Christians on the list (Aaron and I were in attendance, but were not needed)! This is such an encouragement to our team, as it is our constant goal to “work ourselves out of a job.” I was especially encouraged with Flexon and Claude this month, as they are really beginning to

From the home-front...

The big news at the Brandell house in May is that Alexis is walking everywhere! She loves being able to “hang” with the big kids. Titus thinks it's pretty neat too...I hear him regularly say, “Look mom, Lexi walking.” Titus rides his bike like a pro - swerving to miss things while going full speed, and riding with one (or no) hands. Of course he still has training wheels, he is only 2 after all!

We traveled to Etas, Emao, and Epau this month to worship with the brethren there and the kids did really well. Lexi loves people & Titus loves playing with the other kids and telling the men all about the trucks he saw on the way to the church building.

I got to visit with a couple of ladies the Sunday we worshiped in Epau and was uplifted by all that they had to say about their Christian lives and how they want to grow and encourage others. We are also starting a Children's Bible Club next month and all of the ladies in Vila & Etas are getting ready and excited about that.

Since it was Eric's birthday this month, we had a special meal, cheesecake and presents one night. The Bakers also gave him a “night of free babysitting” for his birthday so we could go out and eat just the two of us and we really enjoyed that.

- Shawnda





Kids meeting to sing and hear a Bible story before worship in Vila

take their leadership roles to the next level. Since Aaron and I are both away from Vila fairly regularly while Mike is in the States, we can see that these two men are really stepping up (even when we are present).



Sunday AM crowd in Etas Village

We were invited to go to **Etas Village** this month. The congregation in Etas continues to enjoy good attendance and 2-3 visitors every week. Additionally, they are working on their building project every Wednesday, having group Bible studies, and several are attending TBS classes in Vila. It is always a joy to spend time with these good brethren, and see the growth and maturity that is manifested by them each time we visit.



Lexi and Allan in Marou Village

We also enjoyed our regular monthly trips to Marou Village (Emao Island) and Epau Village. The congregation in **Marou** continues to struggle a bit, but we are hopeful that our regular visits to teach and encourage will be fruitful. While several of the Christians there are simply not being faithful, we are encouraged by the fact that there are two or three families who are growing and working. In **Epau**, we had a wonderful time with these brethren. They worked hard during the most recent term of TBS, as Aaron has been teaching a course every Saturday morning. These classes are a source of excitement for the Christians and it shows. I had a great talk with Bob following the worship services, and I am very confident in the fact that he will be a very effective leader in the congregation moving forward.

Please be praying for all of these brethren, and our efforts to teach and train them.

ISLAND-WIDE LADIES' DAY

For the first time in the last four years (and perhaps ever?), all the Christian ladies on Efate were invited to gather for a time of fellowship, singing, and prayer. Sisters from Vila, Etas and Eton all enjoyed a great day together in Epau, and have decided that they want to start doing this type of meeting every quarter. The next devotion is scheduled for August in Vila.

We were especially encouraged by Leisong, who did a wonderful job coordinating the event. She did not sit back and wait for Shawnda and Cindy to take the lead, but had a plan and put it into action. All the ladies seemed to have been very encouraged by their time together. Hopefully even more will attend next quarter.



FAMILY UPDATE

Our family enjoyed celebrating Mother's Day and my birthday this month. Of course, everyday is wonderful knowing that our family is healthy and happy. We are so richly blessed! One of the greatest blessings we have is the comfort of faithful supporters. Thanks so much for all you do! We never worry about our funds, and every time there is a special need it is met in abundance. Thanks for allowing God to work through your offerings here in Vanuatu!

Lexi and Titus both became more mobile this month. Lexi has taken to walking quite well, and Titus is a great bike rider. Of course, now Lexi has further to fall than she used to (on tile floors no less), and Titus secretly enjoys giving her a gentle push every time he walks by - big brothers!

Lexi is very vocal, and has learned to squeal when she doesn't get her way (she is beginning to learn that said squeal has some negative consequences attached to it as well). She loves being able to walk around and climb up onto the furniture - a true toddler.

Titus started several interesting things this month - he figured out how perfectly his pointer finger can fit into his nostril, has started smelling food before he tastes it (we have no idea where that one came from), and loves playing with "Noah's pirate ship" (is that sacrilege?). Needless to say, he's become quite fond of anything involving pirates. He has also started singing along with his shows, which is very entertaining for the rest of us.

We are looking forward to having my parents and sisters with us in June. With the conclusion of TBS, the completion of the Bislama songbook, and the finalization my English Bible Correspondence Courses, I am looking to forward to lighter schedule, and enjoying some family time.

Thanks again for all you do, and we hope to hear about you and yours as you have the time!



Happy Birthday, Dad



Happy Mother's Day (Lexi wasn't so happy)



Titus always finds his way to the sand pile, here in Etas Village

