

Mission Vanuatu Minutes

Volume 2, Issue 7

July 2005

A newsletter published by: Aaron, Cindy and Kaela Baker • Eric and Shawnda Brandell • Mike Olson

PREACHING IN THE PARK

-By Aaron Baker

IN THIS ISSUE:

Preaching in the Park	1
Good News Meeting.	2
July 4 th Celebration.	5

The month of July was a very busy month for us. After last month's venture into the village of Epau, Aaron, Eric and Mike turned their focus to the Good News Meeting to be held July 5th, 6th, and 7th in the capital city of Port Vila. Our focus for this month was to spread the Gospel and tell as many as could be reached about Christ's church in Port Vila.

This month, we had 4 friends visit us from the United States. Wayne and Weezie Burger, Ken Smith, and Betty Henderson all traveled thousands of miles and many hours to come visit our team. Wayne and Weezie are from Denver, Colorado. Wayne is an instructor at the Bear Valley Bible Institute and preacher for the Columbine church of Christ. Ken Smith is from Anchorage, Alaska and was a Gospel Preacher for the church of Christ for many years. Now, rather than filling a pulpit for any one congregation, Ken travels all over the world teaching and preaching the Bible. Betty Henderson is a friend of the mission team and one of our supporters. She is from Texas and has a heart as big as the state itself. All four of these Christians were welcomed by our team and the Christians in Port Vila to help teach, preach, and work in the Lord's kingdom in Vanuatu.

While we were glad to have guests come to Vanuatu, we didn't want to let so much talent become idle. So our team decided to hold a Good News Meeting during the time of their visit. To kick off our main event of this Good News Meeting, we searched for a way to reach the public to get true teachings of the Bible in front of them and to create interest in our meeting. Our team felt the best way to reach the public was to go where the people are and make the message available to them. I mean, if Jesus went to where the people were to preach and teach, couldn't we do the same?

Since most people travel to the market to buy their daily food, we decided to look for a place that would catch people going to or from the market. We found the seafront park close to the market, which is an open air pavilion, which would serve our purposes perfectly. The lunch break in town is from 11:30 to 1:30, Monday through Friday. We decided the best way to reach people was to get as close to the market as possible, while preaching during the lunch hour.



Sound equipment was rented and on July 1st, the Friday before the Good News Meeting, our team was busy setting up for the preaching in the park that was to kick off the meeting. Eric helped set up the sound equipment, while Mike, Aaron, Cindy and Shawnda prepared the fliers to promote the meeting. Wayne and Ken were busy polishing their lessons they were to present, and Weezie and Betty were also gathering fliers and preparing them to hand out.

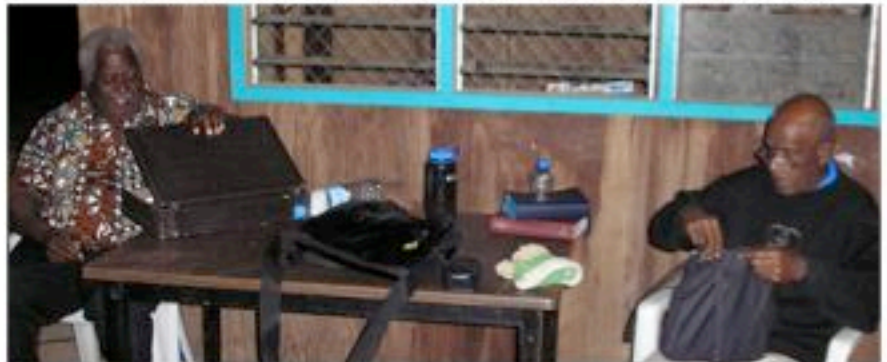


We were set up and ready to preach at 11:30, and preach we did. Wayne, Ken, and Aaron all spoke that morning on various Biblical topics. What surprised the group the most was not the number of people listening, which was an average of about 50, but the quality of the people listening. What we found was that the people who stopped to

listen to the message were those who were genuinely interested in learning what the Bible says. While the speaker was busy giving out important Biblical truths, the rest of the team was busy handing out fliers inviting people to the Good News Meeting, studying with promising prospects, or simply talking with people to promote Christ's church in Vanuatu.

Eddie and Morris preparing to speak at the Preaching in the Park

Our plan was not only to make a push during the lunch break, but also to reach people getting off of work that evening. We planned to end at 2 pm and resume the preaching at 5 pm and go until 7 pm. Unfortunately, the weather turned cold, at least by local standards, reaching a low of 68 F. The crowd was smaller in the evening, but still many of the people that were in attendance that morning returned to hear the preaching again. In the evening, we scheduled some of the preaching to be done by the locals. Eddie Karris and Morris Felix both came from the village of Eton and preached one lesson each. Eddie spoke on the topic of salvation, and Morris spoke on the one true church. Both did an excellent job and communicated well in the local language of Bislama.



GOOD NEWS MEETING

Since the group from the U.S. was scheduled to come in the month of July, our team thought, "what better way to reach people with the saving message of the Gospel than with a Good News Meeting." As mentioned earlier, this was to be our main event to spread the Gospel and name of Christ's church in Port Vila.

The meeting was planned for the 5th through the 7th of July. Each night beginning at 6pm lessons were taught on the Holy Spirit. One of the largest problems in Vanuatu is the misunderstanding on what the Holy Spirit does and



does not do today in the lives of Christians. After the lesson each night a question and answer session was held, which typically lasted one hour. All questions were handled by the speakers with help translating the questions by the team.

In attendance every evening were Christians from Port Vila, Eton, Epau, and Pounagisu. Since Wayne has been to Vanuatu before and knew many of these Christians, they were excited to come learn and help spread the name of Jesus in the community. On Tuesday the 5th there were 48 in attendance, followed by 30 on Wednesday the 6th, and 39 on Thursday the 7th. Again, several in attendance were Christians, but there were also many visitors from the community who came because we handed them a flier or because they heard our preaching in the park.

As a result of this Good News Meeting, 10 Bible studies were set up with people ready and willing to study the Bible. Please pray for these people that they would be willing to see the truth and submit their lives to Jesus.

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION



For many months our team had been planning to have a celebration on July 4th to recognize America's independence. The idea was actually brought to us by Eddie Karris, of Eton. His idea was to celebrate July 4th by using this time to reach out to the community of Eton. Our goal through this effort was to celebrate the joining of the American culture with the Vanuatu culture with an informative and festive party.

On July 4th our team loaded up in Eric's truck and Aaron's car and headed for Eton. This was to be a big celebration for which Cindy and Shawnda made American food for the locals to try. While our team was hard at work planning for the party and making

the barbequed beef sandwiches and spaghetti, the locals were making various kinds of lap-lap.

To begin the celebration, we sang the national anthem of the United States. After we sang our national anthem, the locals sang the national anthem of Vanuatu. Following the singing of the anthems, we taught on several topics related to the independence of the U.S. such as: 1) History of independence 2) Meaning of the constitution 3) Meaning of the flag, and 4) How Americans celebrate the 4th of July, and 5) The pledge of allegiance.

To tie all of this together and remind people of the importance of their spiritual citizenship, the final lesson covered Philippians 3:20. Our goal was to get Christians and visitors alike to recognize the importance of not only physical citizenship on earth, but also the important bond that those who are "in Christ" share with a citizenship from heaven.

After teaching on the topic of the 4th of July, it was time to eat. Our team had plenty lap-lap, rice, bananas, yams, and island cabbage. The locals especially liked the barbequed beef sandwiches that Cindy and Shawnda made as well as the brownies. Following the meal, we had a small gift to give the children of Eton. Mike and Nancy Gray, from Denver, Colorado, donated glow stick bracelets that the kids could play with. After the sun set, the fun was ready to begin. In addition to the glow bracelets, we purchased sparklers from a store in Port Vila. We distributed the glow bracelets and the sparklers and told the kids how to use them. At first they were afraid to even touch either toy. However, after Eric lit the first sparkler, all the kids were excited to have theirs lit also.

The downside to these toys was the fact that once the sparklers were lit, the kids decided to turn a harmless sparkler into a flaming rocket. They would hurl them through the air, landing close to tall grass. I guess it's a good thing that Vanuatu is a tropical climate with plenty of rain, or we could have been responsible for an international incident. Needless to say, Mike and Nancy's idea of a glow stick bracelet was a far better and safer idea in the long run.

This was a great way for our team to bond with the people of Eton, as well as teach about the U.S.A., and more importantly to teach a spiritual lesson that all could grasp.

MISSION VANUATU MINUTES

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

IN THIS ISSUE:

- † Preaching in the Park
- † Good News Meeting
- † 4th of July Celebration

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Check us out on the web at: www.missionvanuatu.com