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We are excited to report two baptisms in March! We are so grateful that God was able to use us in some small way in His Kingdom. All praise, glory and honor is to be given to Him!

This month we introduce you to a brother in Christ named Patrick. Read about his quest to find the true church of the Bible.

In addition, we also introduce you to a new sister in

Christ, Meriam. Her brother, Patrick Tasso, helped teach her about becoming a Christian despite her speech impediment and hearing difficulties.

March was also a busy month for building projects. Our team worked in both Port Vila and Etas to build places where the Christians could meet.

Read all about it in this month's issue!

A New Brother In Christ By: Eric Brandell



Above (from L to R): Patrick, Eric and Flexon pictured just after Patrick was baptized into Christ.

Below: Flexon going into the water to baptize Patrick



I met Patrick during our fifth edition of Preaching in the Park, which was November 30 of 2005. Patrick showed great interest in personal Bible study, and inquired as to where we worshipped here in town. He and a friend of his showed up to worship the first Sunday of December, which proved to be a good Sunday to visit because the Vila congregation was holding our monthly fellowship meal that day. In addition, everyone stuck around for a couple of hours playing games. Patrick enjoyed playing soccer, and interestingly spent almost an hour talking about spiritual matters with Flexon (who was himself a new convert at the time).



...A New Brother In Christ, cont.



Patrick and I studied regularly on Tuesday mornings for a little over a month, and he was regular in his attendance to our worship services as well. Near the beginning of January, he got a short-term job that kept him from our normal studies and from attending worship services (I got a little nervous because I didn't know why he quit coming, and didn't have a reliable way to contact him). Thankfully, he and his wife showed up to worship services the first Sunday of February (this was the first time for us to meet her), and we all got to know them both better during our fellowship meal. It was at this time that Shem, a local Christian, invited Patrick to study with him. They studied together two or three times before Shem and his family went to their home island of Ambrym to help the church there. When Shem left, Patrick and I resumed our weekly studies.

Following an in-depth study of salvation and counting the cost (over two hours) on Tuesday, March 21st, Patrick stated his readiness to be baptized for the forgiveness of his sins, and join the body of Christ. I asked him when he wanted to do it, and he responded with a nervous shoulder-shrug (being denominationally-minded, he assumed he would have to wait until we had a "baptismal Sunday"). We quickly looked at the Ethiopian eunuch's conversion story in Acts 8, to show the biblical response to a proper understanding of the truth. When I (sarcastically) asked if he could wait until next year, he responded

"longwe tumas" [too far in the future]...I asked about next week, "longwe tumas"...I asked about tomorrow, "longwe tumas"...I asked about right now, "hemia nao" [that's right]. At that, we walked down to the lagoon near our house and Flexon (who happened to be at the house helping Aaron with his car) baptized him into Christ.

We are very excited because this was truly a congregational conversion: our Preaching in the Park ministry contacted Patrick initially, Flexon spent an hour talking to him about the church and our mission team (when he could have been enjoying

the games with everyone else), everyone welcomed him at our monthly meals, and Shem took the initiative to befriend him and conduct a few personal Bible studies.

Patrick has been a member of more than five denominations here in Vanuatu (including a seven-

year stint as a Mormon elder), and stated very clearly that he left each one because they were engaged in some practice that was not in harmony with the Bible. He has repeatedly stated his gratefulness for our "Bible-only" approach to study, worship and conduct. Another positive attribute possessed by Patrick is his invitation policy – he almost always shows up to worship, studies and fellowships with a friend or family member alongside him. Please be praying for Patrick's new life in Christ, and also for his wife whom we hope will begin studying the Bible with us soon.



And both...went down into the water... (Acts 8:38)



One of your first concerns after you have been baptized into Christ is the spiritual well-being of friends and family members. Such has certainly been the case for Patrick Tasso since his baptism back in December. The native of Tanna island has worked hard to teach friends and family of his new life in Christ. He has taken me to meet and study with several family members and more studies are on the horizon.

Part of his work is his sister Merriam. Merriam is a typical island woman except that she has both a speech and hearing impediment. She speaks only the local Tanna dialect and is never far from the help of family members. Patrick has been teaching her and she has been attending worship with he and his wife. Like many people in Vanuatu she has been baptized five different times into five different denominations. Sprinkled, immersed, coerced and generally confused. People are convinced and re-convinced of their spirituality so they

baptize again and again hoping to get it right in the next denomination. Patrick told her the message of one church, that Jesus will save one church, and there is only one way to get into that church. Baptism with the proper means (immersion) and the proper understanding (for forgiveness, entrance into the church, and salvation). After a little help from me she was ready to begin her **real**, new life in Christ.

On the 18th of March I had the honor of baptizing her into Christ. It was a simple act with such a great meaning. The angels rejoiced this day as a new child of God was born. Now she will have the support of her brother and sister-in-law in her new and true spiritual walk.

One of our goals is to teach the people here to teach others. Patrick is doing this and his work is just starting. We all don't need to "go into all the world," sometimes family is the best mission field of all.



...and he baptized him... (Acts 8:38)

Construction for a building in which the Port Vila congregation could meet began on February 25th, 2006. Antony Raine from Wellington, New Zealand arrived on the 25th and we set to work securing the town planner's approval for our building plans. On Wednesday, March 1st, Todd O'Donnell (NZ) and his father-in-law, Danny Rader (US) flew into Port Vila to donate their time and expertise to lay the foundation.

Once we located all the equipment we needed, we set to work. First, we built the forms for the foundation. Next, we placed gravel into the forms as a pad for the foundation. Then, we set the steel into place for the footing and base to strengthen the concrete. Once we completed all this, the concrete was ready to be poured.



Initially, we had arranged to have a cement truck come and deliver the concrete. However, all the cement trucks on the island were working on other building projects and there were none available. Our only other option was to rent the largest cement mixer available and mix the cement ourselves.



We divided the foundation into four sections and poured two sections per day. Despite the high temperatures (102 degrees) mixed with heavy, sporadic rains, we accomplished our goal and finished pouring the foundation by March 10th.

We worked together as a team as members of congregations in Port Vila, Eton and Etas came to help. Even the Ladies of the congregation pitched in to help keep the land clean and debris free.



It truly was a team effort to complete the building of the foundation. Despite sore backs and sunburned arms and necks, we did pretty well for a bunch of amateur builders. We truly thank God for blessing the Port Vila congregation with a building that will be completed in July. It truly will be a great tool for us to reach out to the lost. We would like to thank all who have been involved in the building project thus far. This has been a building project that has involved hundreds of people working behind the scenes from various congregations around the world.

Thank you all!

A Shelter In The Time Of Storm



Since January of this year our team has been working with the new Christians in Etas to encourage and build them up. On March 20th, Eric, Morris and Aaron went and worked in Etas village to construct a place where the Christians could meet.

Every month Aaron has been going on Sunday mornings to Etas to bring the Christians to worship with the Port Vila congregation. While this has been a good experience for all, the Christians from Etas were always looking forward to the time when they could worship God in their own community. They were excited for the day when they could learn how to conduct worship themselves and proclaim Christ in their own community to their families and friends.

In constructing a shelter in which to meet, first we had to secure a location. Pbles, a Christian in Etas, willingly allowed us to construct the shelter on his land. Next, Sam donated 9 hard-wood posts for the project, Christians from Epau village donated bamboo poles for us to use and Eric donated a large tarp. Finally, we had gathered all the construction materials together and we set to work.

The shelter measured 24 feet long and 16.5 feet wide – a great size with plenty of room. Once we set the posts in place we then put bamboo poles across the top and secured everything with nails and rope. Lastly, we stretched the tarp over the top of the structure and fastened the sides of the tarp with rope. We were sure tired after building this structure in one day. Working in 100 degree heat will sure tire you out quickly!

After putting up this structure, we did receive some resistance from the community in Etas. It seems as if some people in the community were against the structure. They wanted to know where we got the right to build such a structure. The denominational influence is strong in Etas and many people from the community wanted to know which Diocese, Bishop or General Assembly gave us the authority to build. We had to explain that God gave us the right to build a place in which to meet as He expects His people to meet. A tarp-covered structure is just as biblically acceptable a place to meet as houses were in Acts 20:20. Satan will be fighting strong to keep all who are his and to make others fall down. As we work through the obstacles that lie before us, please pray for the Christians in Etas. May God be glorified through the Christians in Etas.



Mission Vanuatu Minutes

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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