

# From Our Point Of View

## the Ladies of Mission Vanuatu

A Journal Excerpt by Shawnda Brandell (July 14<sup>th</sup> to August 14<sup>th</sup>)

**Friday, July 15<sup>th</sup>** – I met Yoland and we studied at the park. Leisong (from Epau) joined us since she was in town at the market today. We studied about evangelism. I encouraged them to talk to someone who they knew who wasn't a Christian. I really encouraged Yoland to talk to some girls where she works since she knows many of them do not even go to church anywhere. While we were studying a lady walked by and looked really interested and then came and asked if she could sit down with us. It turns out that she is a member of Christ's church, but has been unfaithful for a while. I encouraged her to come worship with us on Sunday and she said she would.

I spent the afternoon unpacking and organizing which seems to be what a majority of my time seems to be spent doing these days. But believe me, I'm not complaining...

**Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>** – Worked on Bible class materials and my lesson for tomorrow. I did a little unpacking, but mostly worked on the Bible class materials. Oh, and I did a load of laundry – boy is it nice to be able to throw the clothes in the washer instead of wash them by hand! I never realized what a blessing a washing machine can be!

**Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>** – I had several kids today in Bible class – Seselo was sick, but all of the rest of them were there. Noel, Rinet, Tamata, Alfonia, and Jonah. I was glad to have a “full house” today.

Worship was nice. I always enjoy meeting with my brothers and sisters to worship God together. Stephen preached a lesson about how to be a strong Christian.

This afternoon the teens came over to play volleyball. Samson also came, along with Moses (a man from our Bislama class who works here and is from Uganda, Africa). It was a nice crowd. I spent the afternoon playing Frisbee golf with Noel. I love that kid. I sure see potential in him. Overall, we had 11 teens I think. Those who come seem to really enjoy themselves.

**Monday, July 18<sup>th</sup>** – Studied with Yoland about 1 John 1:5-9. I have been studying for this study for about 2 weeks now. I understand it, but it is hard for me to explain (especially in Bislama). But, I gave her a copy of the study and she said it was “stret” (which means she understood it). So, hopefully it will help her.

Went to the grocery store – where it is starting to feel like “home.” We know many of the people who work there. All of them know Kaela. She has opened a lot of doors for us to talk with people. I know that we will have opportunities in the future to study with some of these young ladies.

**Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** - What a wonderful day! This morning Gomon came by to tell us that RoseHannah was at the hospital and Ure was there with her. Cindy and I got ready and were at the hospital with them by 9:00. It turns out that women go to the hospital as soon as they feel something. All morning we just visited and RoseHannah rested and we waited. Ure helped another woman who was in labor and had no one there to help her. Her name is Leah

(Ure already knew her). It ended up that she had to have a C-section. She was so appreciative of Ure and the rest of us helping her whenever we could that she told Ure that she could name the baby. Ure named her Angeline Ure. Then RoseHannah's turn came – at about 2:00 this afternoon her water broke and contractions started getting intense. That's when we "flew into action." Every contraction one of us was there to help her breathe through it and rub her back. She did a great job! I was so proud of how she handled the contractions. Especially when she was surrounded by other moms in their beds with their crying babies. But, since the other moms had just gone through the same thing, they were totally sympathetic. It's amazing that the maternity ward is so social. I guess when you are surrounded by people all the time, you start to get to know them. That's how it is in the maternity ward – a real feeling of community.

When it was time, we went to the delivery room and helped her through the delivery. She was very brave and tough. She has never gone through a natural birth, Alfonia was delivered by C-section. So, she was a little scared ahead of time, but by the time she got in there she was doing great. She did exactly what we and the nurse told her. There were a few times I got lightheaded – I think because I was the one that was coaching her breathing and it was hot. But then I just left the room and went to get a drink. After that I was fine.

We were there when the baby was born and it was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. I was filled with emotion – partly because we had just come through a huge ordeal together, partly because I was so proud of RoseHannah and partly because there was this new little girl that I had a hand in helping come into this world. It was a wonderful experience. I learned that the hospital conditions are not bad – they do the best they can with what they have. They sterilize everything and keep it as clean as possible. The delivery was done by a mid-wife and she was very capable. It was not bad; it was just entirely different than anything you would ever encounter in the States.

I was exhausted when I got home – and starving. I had only had some crackers and a little soup all day. But, it was worth every minute of it.

**Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>** – Went and spent some time with RoseHannah this morning and this afternoon. She is in pain, but doing well. The baby is beautiful. She still doesn't have a name, but they don't seem to be in too much of a hurry about it. That's funny to me. But again, just a difference in cultures. Most people here don't have names picked out ahead of time (mostly because they never know if it's going to be a boy or girl).

We had Bible study this evening at Stephen and RoseHannah's. Asneth (their house girl) came and studied with us – I was so glad she did. Of course Stephen was there. Daniel, Flexon and Samson were there too. Ure didn't come, which surprised me, but we found out later that she had a conference for the Disabled Association that she volunteers for and it was all day today – until 7:00 tonight. So, that explains that.

**Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>** – We went to the hospital to see RoseHannah first thing this morning because they were to release her this morning. But, when we got there she was having fever so they told her that she needed to stay another day.

I studied with Asneth this afternoon and it went pretty well. It was hard doing the whole thing in Bislama, but she said it was good and that she never really knew that the Bible was one, big story. I am so glad she wanted to study –and she wants to again next week. She seems really excited about it.

I spent about an hour and a half at the hospital with RoseHannah this evening. I asked her about a name and she said they needed one before she could go home tomorrow. I asked her if there were any that she liked and she said, "No, any name is good." Stephen came a

short time later. We all talked and watched the baby. I asked Stephen if he had thought of a name yet and he said, “Bae yu putum nem blong hem” (You can choose a name for her). I was so honored and excited to get to name her. She was to have three names and she already had the second and third, but not the one she was going to go by. I chose Aleina as her name. I love it. She is a beautiful baby – curly black hair and light brown eyes like RoseHannah and Alfonia both have. She is gorgeous.

**Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>** – We went to see RoseHannah again this morning and she was getting ready to go home. The doctor said she could since she didn’t have a fever or chills last night. I think she is pretty excited to get home to her own bed and quietness. That will be nice for her.

I spent the morning working around the house. At noon Cindy and I went and got massages. Eric bought me a gift certificate for our anniversary and when Cindy found out that it was about half of the price a massage costs in the States, Aaron got her one too and she and I decided to go together. We wanted to wait until after the crate came and we were tired from that so we would really appreciate it. It was a nice, relaxing day for us both. When I got home I decided to watch a movie – something I hadn’t done for a while. It was so nice to sit down and relax the rest of the afternoon.

The guys met this afternoon and then all of us ate together. It was a nice evening of eating and games.

**Sunday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>** – When we got to the place where we meet, noone was there. There is usually a church that meets in the big part of Dumbea Hall that does lots of jammin’ out and “Hallelujahs” in their services and it disturbs us. But today they weren’t there. We found out when Ure and Gomon came that all of the churches combined on the Sunday before Independence Day to kick off the celebration. That was fine with us, it meant a Sunday where we could actually have a little quiet.

For a while Noel was the only child, so we just sang some songs and played “Follow the Leader” (we were studying Abraham following God). Finally about a quarter to 10:00 Alfonia, Tamata, and Junior came and I taught the lesson about God’s promise to Abraham.

Worship was nice. But, several women weren’t there. Rose is sick and RoseHannah stayed home with Aleina. Yoland and Lissie are working and Kal and Manu weren’t there either. It’s always sad when we don’t have everyone. Just like the Bible teaches about the church being a body. When one member isn’t there, you can really tell the difference.

Spent the afternoon hanging pictures and getting some decorating done. That was lots of fun. I am glad to finally see this house become “ours.” I am so glad about the pictures especially. I love seeing the pics of my family and friends. It really helps.

**Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup>** – “Mama said there’d be days like this...” I had one of those days. I am one of those people who let things build up until I just start taking it out on those closest to me. Well, it happened today. I hate days like that, but I guess we all have them. I took it out on Cindy. Later, we apologized to each other, I had a good cry, and we were fine. It sure is nice to have a good friend like her to understand when I have these days.

We went and saw RoseHannah and the baby and that made us both feel better. :o)

When we got home I made dinner and then worked at getting the other two bedrooms organized. Alsen (one of Eric’s friends who is studying twice a week with Eric) is in a band and they are playing at the Independence Celebration tonight at 10:00. So, since we are usually in bed by that time, we had to stay busy to stay awake. I got the entire back room organized and started working on the middle room. We walked down to the Independence

Celebration – which is like a small fair. Alsen’s band didn’t end up playing until almost 11:00 and they played for an hour. It was fun to hear them. Afterwards we went and talked with him and we could tell he was really excited that we came. It was late, but we didn’t mind since he is so nice and a good friend of Eric’s.

**Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>** – This morning I drove to and from the grocery store. You are thinking, “big deal,” but for me it was. I never really learned to drive a standard. I have always had an automatic. But, Cindy has been encouraging me to try, so I have been sometimes. The last time I drove was the day we unloaded our crate, there were too many people around and I got nervous, so I stalled it over and over. Since then I have been a little nervous about driving, but decided today that it was time to try again. I did great. I had to stop and start a lot and there was lots of traffic, so it was good practice. I was really happy about the success of it. I have always known I would be able to drive in an emergency, but I want to be able to just drive somewhere if I want to. It’s nice to know that I am getting more comfortable with driving a standard. Good driving experience this morning... :o)

Ladies class was good today. Ure told us on Sunday that she wouldn’t be able to come today, so we were expecting her absence. Yesterday when we went to see RoseHannah we asked her if she still wanted to have class today and she said, “Yes, Rebecca is here and Asneth likes it too.” I was glad to hear that. One of the ladies usually just shares something small that they have read this week or been dealing with this week. Well, I knew I wanted to share, so I shared Isaiah 40:30-31 and Psalm 40:1. They are about patience and waiting on the Lord. Not forgetting that God is in control, things work in His time, and we need to not grow tired, but wait patiently for Him. I needed more than anyone else today, but I thought since I was dealing with it, maybe others were too.

This afternoon I got caught up on my journal and finished organizing the middle room (which will be our child’s room when we have one) so that was fun. Then I made Eric some cookies and started preparing dinner. Daniel and Flexon ate with us and then studied with Eric. I spent the time catching up on reading and replying to emails. I haven’t gotten too much of that done lately, but now Cindy and I are able to use Mike’s desktop that he leaves here (in the office) so that makes it much more convenient. Since before we had to interrupt our husbands by using their desks, but now we can use the computer without interrupting them, so that’s nice.

**Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>** - Spent the day preparing for my Bible study with Asneth tomorrow and starting to get ready for Bible class on Sunday. I ended up going through almost all of my Bible class idea books and tore out ideas so I could file them under the proper story. Sometimes I forget that I have those idea books and don’t look through them, so I thought I’d tear them out and file them so I wouldn’t have to go through every one every time. We went to Bible study tonight. It was good. Stephen, Morris, Rebecca, Samson and Kal were there. It was nice to see them all and fellowship, but again, it was sad that so many weren’t there. Ure wasn’t there, which is really unusual, but we figure she has another meeting or something. RoseHannah came but sat in the other room with Aleina. Sometimes I don’t understand these cultural things. But, later when Cindy and I went to her room to visit her and the baby I asked her if she was coming on Sunday. She said that it was custom that she couldn’t come to church with the baby until we prayed for her and had food in her honor. I wish we would have known that earlier, we would have had that all prepared as soon as possible. But, since we didn’t find out until today, we will get a hold of Ure and get something planned ASAP.

**Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>** – The last three days have been amazingly relaxing. I have gotten a lot done around the house. I am finally feeling like I am caught up on several things. I was able to spend some time getting ahead in my preparations for Bible studies. I didn't study with Asneth on Thursday because it was a public holiday and she didn't work on Thursday. We'll study next week. On Friday I walked to the park to meet Yoland. When she wasn't there after 15 minutes, I called and she said she slept in and forgot. I'm not worried about her, but it is disappointing –especially since she didn't show up on Monday either. Somehow I think it may have something to do with Independence Celebration week. Anyway, she didn't come, but said she'd definitely be there on Sunday.

**Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup>** – This was my last week to teach children's Bible class for a while and it was the best one yet. Isn't that crazy? But, I guess that's how it goes. I am more comfortable with teaching these kids, using Bislama, and have learned their songs...it just takes time. Since Cindy has been in Bible class since the beginning (because she brings Kaela) she gets to start off with a lot more than I did. That'll make it easier for her. That's good. Today and last week Rebecca was there too – she came to children's Bible class and helped if I needed it. It was nice to have her there too.

Worship was great. I am getting more and more comfortable with hearing the lessons in Bislama and am able to understand most of what is said and get something out of it. There were lots of visitors today. That was a good change from the last few weeks where we really haven't had many people at all. I know that the number doesn't matter, but it is encouraging to see more people there being exposed to the truth of the gospel. Yoland wasn't there today and it made me worried. I hope to see her tomorrow and talk with her about it.

This afternoon we were scheduled to have the teens over for volleyball but it started raining at about 2:00 and didn't really quit until later this evening. Needless to say, volleyball was moved to next week. I have to admit I liked having the lazy afternoon. I read a book in my recliner covered with a quilt, wrote a few letters and enjoyed the lazy afternoon.

On a personal note, Eric and I have been struggling with having patience in waiting for a baby. We have been trying for quite some time and it has been a constant source of discouragement for us. We literally pray about it every day. This week though, we had a good talk and I wanted to share what a transformation has taken place in my attitude. Here are my thoughts: "It's hard to be patient, but after several months of being literally upset about not having a baby, I have decided to let it go. I really have a peace about where we are right now in our lives. I realize now that I had been so focused on what we could have, that I wasn't living the here and now to the fullest. Eric helped me realize - that as much as we want children, it will come in God's timing. Also, God has given us this time now to enjoy and work for Him. There are things I can do now in ministering to others that I couldn't do as well if I had a child to take care of. In fact, in a month I am going with the guys to a pretty remote island for a long weekend b/c they asked that I come teach the ladies about teaching children's Bible class. If we had a child right now, I wouldn't be able to go. So, I am starting to realize that where I am right now is good. It's taken me a long time to realize that, but I think now that I do, it will make my whole attitude much more effective for the work of the Lord. I know that when God does bless our lives with a child, we will both be ready, but until that time I will work and do what I can. I won't just sit and wait anymore. That was a waste of my time and the Lord's." :o)

**Monday, August 1<sup>st</sup>** – This morning Ure, Cindy and I went to see Rose. We haven't seen her in almost a month. She has been sick. Yesterday Shem told us that she had an infection in her leg. When we got there today, her foot was swollen up and she couldn't even walk. I felt

terrible for her. She is in so much pain. We asked if she was going to go to the doctor, and she said that Shem was taking her later this afternoon. We offered to drive her but she said someone was coming later to take her. We had a good visit and then left. She is so sweet. This afternoon I studied with Yoland. She told me she didn't come last week because of the Independence Celebration. We studied the first of many lessons of the Survey of the New Testament. We talked about the gospel accounts. It went well. After the study I found out why she hadn't come yesterday. She thought it was "pot-luck" Sunday and she didn't have money to buy food to cook and bring so she didn't come. I lovingly told her that that was not a good reason. I really emphasized that we are all Christian brothers and sisters and we look out for one another. I told her to never let something like that stand in the way of worshipping God. By the time we left I think she got the point. She is such a tenderhearted woman and I love her dearly. I wish she would let someone know when she needed something – but I guess we all struggle with that, don't we? It's hard to ask for help.

This afternoon Donald called and asked Eric to study with his sister. Eric told him that I could do it and set up a time and place for tomorrow. I was a little disappointed when the time was right in the middle of ladies Bible class, but tomorrow I will ask if we can start meeting on Mondays or Wednesdays instead. I don't want to miss ladies class every week.

**Tuesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>** – I didn't go to ladies Bible class because I had a study with Jennifer (Donald's sister). When I got there she was waiting for me and we went to the back room of the restaurant and studied the overview of the Bible. She was very excited to study. She said that Donald had been coming over after every study and teaching her what he had learned that day. Finally she said, "I want to study with one of the missionaries too." So, Donald called and set it up for me to study with her. It went well and we decided to meet next week on Wednesday.

This afternoon I did a few things around the house and then got ready for dinner with Daniel and Flexon. They came over and studied. While they studied I got some studying of my own done. It was a great time to work on Yoland and Asneth's studies for this week.

**Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>** – This morning Eric took Cindy and I out to Eton. Morris had asked us to come talk with the young ladies who teach the kids and give them some ideas for Bible class. We got together and shared the ideas that Cindy and I had come up with. Only one of the two young ladies was there – the other was in Vila. It went well. I was proud of Cindy and I for coming up with ideas where they wouldn't have to buy anything. That is a challenge, but it was good practice. The good thing is that as long as they have a Bible, they can teach a lesson. They don't need all of the fancy things that we use in the US. Those things are great if you have them, but these young ladies needed some practical advice and ideas that they could use with what they had available to them in the village. After we met, we ate with a couple of other Christian women. It was a good time of visiting and eating.

This evening was a great time at Stephen and RoseHannah's. We sang and prayed and then spent about an hour folding the introduction lessons for Bible Correspondence Courses. We are planning to put the introduction course in every PO Box in Vanuatu. This was really exciting for the Christians in Vila. While we folded, we all visited and we all really feel like it is a wonderful time of bonding and strengthening of our friendships. It is always good to work together on a project. It really strengthens relationships.

**Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup>** - Ure came over this morning and we visited for quite a while. She is such a precious friend to Cindy and I. We love getting to spend time with her.

Cindy and I went to town and looked around the market for a few things. We visited with several of the ladies who sell things at the market. When we speak Bislama, it always opens doors and of course having Kaela with us opens all kinds of doors too. It was a fun morning. This afternoon I walked over to study with Asneth and she wasn't there. She and RoseHannah had gone to the doctor for a check up for the baby. So, I asked if we can study tomorrow instead. Rebecca said she'd tell her about studying tomorrow instead. When I left I felt a few little raindrops, but nothing big. I thought, "I'm not going to be a wimp and get out my umbrella for a few little drops." As soon as I said that to myself...whamo...it started pouring. So, I started digging like crazy trying to find my umbrella. It was raining sheets and by the time I got the umbrella up it didn't do much good. But, thankfully I was only about a block from the house and by the time I got home I was laughing at the humor of it all. It was actually pretty funny.

**Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup>** – I met with Yoland for Bible study at the park. Some young men were sitting there close to us and were being kind of noisy. She told them not to disturb. If they wanted to sit quietly and listen they could, but they couldn't be loud. I was a little shocked that she said that (she is a little shy) but then I found out that she knew them from primary school. Anyway, some did sit and listen for a while but only one stayed the entire study. His name was Jimmy. He agreed to study with Eric next weekend. He works on a boat and travels during the week and is usually in Vila only on Friday and Saturday or Saturday and Sunday of each week. So, he and Eric are scheduled to study next Saturday.

**Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>** – Eric, Aaron and I went to the church land and met Ure. She and I filled up about 20 potting bags with plants that she brought from home. She loves to plant things and has probably hundreds of plants at her home. I really only needed a few to put in the house, but since she brought so many I didn't refuse them. I ended up bringing them home and put about 7 in the house and the rest out on the porch. I have to admit I have a brown thumb instead of a green one, but we'll see if I can keep these plants alive. She told me not to water them everyday, just when they need it (like they will tell me when they need it). Anyway, here's hoping I can keep them alive. :o)

Cindy, Kaela and I walked to town to get some fresh flowers at the market. I have heard that there are lots of flowers to choose from at the market on Saturdays and they were right. I got some red and orange ones (don't know their names but they are pretty). I love having fresh flowers in my house and since they last long here, I think I am going to try to get a new bundle every Saturday. Also, it's only 100vt a bundle (\$1). So, it's a bargain.

**Sunday, August 7<sup>th</sup>** - This morning was crazy for me and Cindy because it is the first Sunday of the month and that means – Potluck. But, we knew that two of the women were not going to be there today so we made more food than we normally would just to be sure. Anyway, it ended up being more than enough, but made for a crazy morning. (I did make a local food – kumalah – which is like sweet potatoes. The women here usually put coconut milk on top...since I don't have a coconut scraper and didn't think to buy coconut already scraped at the grocery store, I decided to put cinnamon sugar on top. It turned out to be really yummy and the others seemed to like it too.)

After church we ate and visited. Then right before we were going to leave, Eric told me that Alsen wanted to be baptized. We were all excited. We came back to the house, he changed clothes and then we went out to Malapoa and met Gomon and his family. Gomon baptized Alsen. Alsen and Eric had studied on Friday about how God saves us – through baptism – and Alsen didn't think he was ready. But, he did understand that he was lost at that point. On

Sunday he told Eric that he had been thinking about it all weekend and knew he needed to be baptized for his sins to be forgiven and that he was ready to make the commitment. It was a great time.

When we got home, Alsen, Donald (Alsen's cousin who has been studying with Eric for about a month) and Eric all headed into town so Eric and Donald could study. They studied baptism and when they got back to the house, Eric said Donald wanted to be baptized today too. So, we called Gomon and he met us out at Malapoa again. Gomon baptized Donald and it was a neat experience. Donald wants to study and learn and Eric thinks he could one day be a preacher of the gospel. Eric said that when they studied and Donald said he was ready to be baptized, he showed him the scriptures in Luke 14 about considering the cost. Donald said, "I have been looking for the truth and I studied the Bible with you because I wanted to know the truth. Now I want to obey it." He is a wonderful man who we all think is great. It was a great day. We got two new brothers in the Lord and are excited to help them grow and mature as Christians.

**Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup>** – Grocery store day today – I had some great ideas for making a pizza but when I saw that the mozzarella cheese was 750 vt (\$7) I decided to make something different. It's funny that something as simple as cheese is so expensive. If I could think of a way to make it spread over several meals, it would be worth it, but this week pizza was the only thing I had to use it for. So, maybe another time.

I studied with Asneth today since we didn't get to last week. We now have decided to start studying on Monday afternoons. During the study I didn't think I was communicating well and she didn't seem to be paying attention. But after she said it was really good, she was really enjoying our studies and that she wanted the scriptures we talked about today so she could go back over them and study them again before we met next week. So, that was encouraging. She is a sweet, sweet lady.

**Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>** – Today is Katie and Cori's birthday (Eric's sisters) and we are thinking of them. This is the first birthday I have missed of theirs since they were 7. They are 17 today. Wow. Eric hasn't ever missed one of their birthdays, so it's a little sad to miss this one. I guess it's something we are going to have to get used to. But, this is the first family birthday we have missed since being here.

This morning Cindy and I went to Ladies Bible class. It was really good today. Yoland was able to come. We were all glad that she came. Rebecca is still here from Eton, Asneth, RoseHannah, Ure, Cindy and I all were there. It was an encouraging time to be together. On the way home Cindy and I were talking about how much we love the ladies here, our friends. They have all been such a blessing to us. We can be ourselves and enjoy relaxing and being with them. It's really nice. Also, we talked about how nice it is that the Christians here take in new Christians and act like they have always been there. There isn't an awkwardness that sometimes comes in the States. The new Christians are accepted like they have always been a part. It really is a joy to watch it happen and be a part of it.

Kaela was great today. It really was like the old Kaela has returned. She was smiling and playing with everyone. She went to other ladies and enjoyed it instead of crying as soon as they picked her up. She used to be that way but then she went through a phase I guess. I don't know. Anyway, she was back to her old self today. It was nice.

**Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>** – I studied with Jennifer (Donald's sister) this afternoon. We study at her workplace (a Chinese restaurant) where she has worked since she was 14 years old (she's my age I think – so she's worked there about 15 years). Anyway, it's interesting



because there are lots of things going on around us and we just sit in one of the back rooms and study. She is very interested and wants to learn, so the business around us doesn't seem to distract her. We studied the inspiration of the Bible (the chain of authority from God the Father to Jesus to the apostles who wrote it down). It's a hard study to do in Bislama b/c it feels really repetitive. Bislama is not a specific language, so where we have many ways to say something in English so as not to sound repetitive, there may only be one way to say it in Bislama so it does sound really repetitive. Anyway, Jennifer still seemed to enjoy it and learn from it. She is excited about continuing our studies each week. Next week we will study Old Covenant/New Covenant.

I had a domesticity triumph today – I made bread from scratch. I was so proud of myself. I had been wanting to make some things that required crescent rolls and since we don't have the convenience of getting the Pillsbury ones at the store, I decided to make my own. I also used some of the dough to make pan rolls! My favorite. They didn't turn out quite as good as the ones from home, but they weren't bad for a first attempt. I also forgot to "punch" the dough down after it rose, so that probably has something to do with it! I'll remember next time though. It was a fun experience.

This afternoon Cindy and I decided to scrapbook while Kaela took her afternoon nap. It was so fun to be able to do that. I haven't worked on my scrapbook in over a year. I am going to keep the stuff out for a few days since I don't have a lot planned over the next few days and hopefully I can get some more done on it.

This evening when we got to Steven and RoseHannah's it had been raining all day so we didn't expect a large crowd, but there wasn't anyone there except Morris. We waited for about 15 –20 minutes and then decided to sing a few songs and then go home. Noone in the Felix household is feeling good (even Aleina is sick with a cold) so we didn't want to stay too long. But, Morris insisted so we stayed and folded some Correspondence Courses and then went home. It was a little discouraging since only Morris and Rebecca were there (and they don't even live in Port Vila). Anyway, I guess we just have to go week by week (especially when it is raining and people are sick.)

**Thursday, August 11<sup>th</sup>** – Today I didn't have much on the agenda. I worked on a few Bible studies and did a few things around the house. Later this morning Cindy and I decided to do a little visiting. We walked to town to see Lissie. We haven't seen her in a while and were hoping she was working today. She was. We had a nice visit and she said she was off on Sunday so she will come to church. Then we walked to the market and got a few things we needed. We tried to find the Christian ladies from Paunangisu and Epau, but didn't find them. We came home for a while and rested and cooled off – it was really hot today (after a big rain it always is). Then we went to go see Rahab at the hospital. She is so sweet. We try to go see her at least once a week so she doesn't get too bored. We found out today that most of her family lives in Santo and she has two sisters who live here, but they have their families and they stay pretty busy. The father of the baby doesn't seem to be in the picture, so she is pretty lonely, we think. We seem to be her only regular visitors. That makes it even more important to go see her. We'll go back tomorrow and take a few things she needs.

I was able to work on my scrapbook again this afternoon. I am almost finished with my Bear Valley scrapbook. I only have three more events to cover in it (graduation stuff). I am thinking that our scrapbooking is going to be done in spurts (when we happen to have some free time like the past two days!) It was a nice, relaxing afternoon and evening.

**Friday, August 12<sup>th</sup>** – This afternoon we went and saw Rahab again and took her some more reading material. Then we walked to Steven and RoseHannah's to find out about the

plans for Sunday. Then I walked into town and met Yoland for Bible study. It went well. We are doing a survey of the New Testament and today we talked about 1 & 2 Corinthians. She seems to be enjoying the book by book study. So, that's good.

It was sweltering hot again today. Probably because of the rain that has been going for the last few days. I am looking forward to going to the ocean tomorrow with Ure to swim. She has been wanting us to come with her to a place where they swim since we got here. It'll be a nice break from the heat.

**Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>** – Woke up early this morning and started a load of laundry so it could be drying while we were at the ocean. I went back to sleep for about an hour while it was washing and when I went to hang them out, it was raining sheets! In addition to that, the neighbors were cooking something or burning trash so there was smoke coming into our yard. Needless to say I was a little annoyed. But, then I came up with a plan...I had Eric hang clothesline on the front porch. The clothes still didn't dry by the time I took them down this evening, but that's okay.

Because of the rain we didn't go swimming with Ure. It was disappointing, but maybe next time it'll work out.

Cindy and I spent the day scrapbooking again. It has been so fun to be able to do that recently. She is getting close to finished on a book for Kalea called, "Who Loves Kaela?" It's got pictures of her family members holding her with their names on it so Kaela can recognize their pictures. Kaela loves it!

**Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>** – Ure and Seselo came to the house at about 9:00 and the four of us headed out to Eton. When we got there Morris, a few children, and Pascal were there, but no one else. After a little while we started singing and others joined us. Once service started it started raining. The roof at Eton is corrugated steel, so when it rains, it is really loud! Since most Ni-Vanuatu talk pretty quiet, it was hard to hear what was going on. When it was Eric's turn to preach he moved the podium so that it was right in front of the pews and talked as loudly as he could (he's been fighting a cold for a couple of days now). I understood him, but I really had to concentrate since the rain was so loud.

At the end of services, during the announcements, Eddie said that they were glad to have some of the brethren from Vila with them today. He talked about the new baby that Steven and RoseHannah had and what a blessing all babies are to us. He said that we knew she wasn't "coming into the church" like so many think, but that she was born to Christian parents and that it was their responsibility to raise her and teach her so that when she was old enough, she would make the decision to obey the gospel (be baptized into the church). He also said that we need to remember to help Steven and RoseHannah as they teach her. It was a good talk. After that Steven got up and wrote her name on the chalkboard and told where each name came from. Her name is Aleina (I gave her that name) Rebecca (the name of Steven's mother) Mejone (the name of RoseHannah's mother). Then he talked about how the sisters from Vila helped RoseHannah when she was having the baby and called us up there to give us mats as a thank you. (Cindy wasn't there so I took hers for her.) Anyway, it was a neat little "ceremony." After that, the ladies went to their separate houses and got the food to serve. There was a TON of food and not very many people to eat it (the rain had kept many at home). It was a nice day. Steven and RoseHannah seemed to appreciate us coming and being with them today.

Donnald was supposed to come study at 3:00 as was Alene (with Cindy) but neither of them came. So, Eric and Cindy were both a little discouraged – but it was raining really hard sporadically throughout the afternoon. But, a little after 4:00 they showed up. They had

walked, in the rain, from Fres Wata (an area here in town that's about a half hour walk from here). We were all impressed by the commitment that showed. After Eric and Donald finished studying, Donald told me that Jennifer said that several of her friends from work wanted to study the Bible too. I told him that was great and that I would talk to them when I go study with Jennifer on Wednesday. That's neat. This evening Aaron, Cindy, Eric and I decided to watch the movie, "The Rookie." It was a nice, relaxing evening of popcorn, movies, and fun.