

**Sunday 1-15-06** – We ended up not having as many for worship from Etas as we had expected. Sam, Pbles and Ruth all came, but they only brought 4 kids with them this time. That was a little disappointing after the big crowd that we had last week. Worship went well, all though it was a little frustrating because the History Maker's church was blasting their music so loud again you could barely hear who was leading prayers and all. I will be so thankful to be settled in our new church building. Construction begins in March! After the video, we all came back to the house, Aaron changed and gathered up the Etas group and headed to take them back home. They were supposed to be having some kind of New Year's singing celebration too so he went for that. (Kaela and I stayed home.) However, once he got out there the people who were supposed to be doing the singing never showed up so Aaron ended up having a 3 hour question and answer/Bible study with some of Sam's family. He got home about 8pm.

**Monday 1-16-06** – Grocery day again. It always comes so quickly! Shawnda and I had 3 different plans for getting our shopping done today. It got changed twice and we finally settled on plan number 3. Our first plan was to leave late morning and do our shopping as usual. But, then Aaron told me that he had to take the car in to get some quotes on the damage this morning so we had to change and we planned to leave right after lunch. Aaron left, and then he got home earlier than anticipated so I did a quick run over to Shawnda's and we decided to leave about 11:30. I had 30 minutes to shower and get ready so I really had to book it. We stuck with that plan of action. We were only able to go to the supermarket and then we had to come home and make lunch. Then we left again at 2:15 after Aaron came back from his errands. We had planned to buy dog mince (food for the dogs) at the Boucherrie, however, they didn't have any available so we had to go back to the Supermarket and buy that. Then we saw Mike walking on the road on our way home so we picked him up and drove him to the French prison where he had to meet with a man. (Mike does a weekly Bible study with some of prisoners). It turned out to be a busy day. I also washed diapers, worked on coloring pictures for Bible class and went over my lesson for Etas. I will be teaching the ladies for the next 2 weeks on the responsibilities of women in the church.

**Tuesday 1-17-06** – Sometimes it is so hard to be away from home that is heartbreaking. My best friend, Rebekah, and her husband Josh live in Altus, OK. They have an adorable 4 year old boy, Jackson, and a sweet little girl, Janea. Janea suffers from infantile seizures and a number of other health problems that are very serious. This morning Aaron checked the website that keeps updates on Janea and the news wasn't very good. She is having a very rough time right now and as a result our dear friends, Beck and Josh, are having to make some of the most difficult decisions of their lives. My heart and soul goes out to them. It is so hard to be away from home when things like this happen. I want so much to be there with them right now, to offer a small measure of comfort, love and support. And I can't. I knew that

moving to Vanuatu would mean that I would have to make sacrifices. And most of the time I am okay with that. However, there are times like this when the sacrifice is a struggle. I want nothing more than to jump on a plane and be there with my best friend. From the time we met at York College we have been there for each other through many different struggles in our lives. And that is what makes being away now so difficult. So, please, if you are reading this – please, say a prayer for my best friend Rebekah, her wonderful family and sweet baby Janea. “But now indeed there are many members yet one body. And if one member suffers then all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ...” 1 Corinthians 12:20, 26-27

**Thursday 1-19-06** – Yesterday Aaron and I left for our Bible study at Etas at 4pm. Kaela was down for her nap with thirty minutes left to go and Shawnda on duty. First, we headed out to Shem’s house to pick him up to go with us. However, when we got there Rose told us that he left with some men to go take care of some of their family that were sick. Shem is a bush doctor – kind of like a naturalist doctor. Aaron and I waited for him for about 10 minutes and then we decided it would best to leave and go see if Morris could go with us. So, then we headed to the Vansec House to pick up Sam from work and then over to Steven’s house to see if Morris could go with us. He was glad to go and went to get ready and we left for Etas about 15 minutes later. When we got there Leimawa said that she had some things to finish up at home and would meet us down at Pbles’ house later. So, the four of us went ahead and went to Pbles’. The men loaded 4 long wooden 4x4s in the back of the truck to haul to Pbles’ house. Sam donated them for the use of building a shelter so they will have a place to worship when they begin worshipping out at Etas. When we got to Pbles’ house he told us that Ruth had gone into town to make market and wouldn’t be back until the next day. We were sorry to miss out on seeing her. He had boiled some manioc in coconut milk for us to have for dinner. It was very good! About sundown we were getting ready to start the study when Alice, an SDA woman that has been coming to the studies for a while, and Leimawa, came. I was glad that the two of them came! Aaron got me all set up with a light inside Pbles’ house so I could do my Bible study with them on Women’s roles in the Church. The study went really well and they were very perceptive to what I was teaching and how clear the Bible sets out the roles for Women in the Church. I answered various questions that they had and then we rejoined the men outside for a closing prayer. We will study even more in-depth next week on ministries that women can hold within the church. Also, afterward, I talked with Alice and asked her if she wanted to study one-on-one with me and she did! We are going to start studying next Wednesday right after we arrive in Etas, before the study with everyone at sundown. It turned out to be a great night!

On to Thursday...today I spent the morning doing very exciting chores, which included the surprise job of defrosting the refrigerator. What fun and what a pain. I am thankful that I can haul my food to Eric and Shawnda’s when I have to defrost, but it doesn’t make it any more of a convenient job to do! I also started reviewing my

material for my Bible study next week with Alice. I will basically begin at the same place Aaron did and go forward from there. Alice came to almost every study that Aaron held, however, she has a young child (about 3 years) that comes with her and I have a pretty good idea that she only was able to catch about half of each subject that we studied. Tonight is mid-week fellowship night at Steven and Rose-Hanna's house, although Gomon and Ure are hosting it.

**Friday 1-20-06** – The fellowship last night was HALARIOUS! We had our devotional, sang some songs and then some of the men prayed. Then afterwards we had cookies, chips and juice for snacks. It was a fun night for Kaela because not only was Aleina, Steven and Rose Hanna's little baby girl, there but, so was Joana's (new Christian) little boy. He is about 9 months old and his name is Lorenzo (they call him Lolo for short). Anyway, while we were all sitting around eating and talking, Gomon started playing with Lolo and Kaela. In Bislama a shortened form of "Thank You" is "Ta". Gomon was trying to get Lolo to give him a little plastic play mirror so, he kept saying "ta" to Lolo. However Lolo wouldn't give up the mirror and Gomon soon found out in his repeated "ta's" that if he said it with kind of a beat then Lolo would dance/bounce to the beat of the "ta's". It was so funny!!!! Gomon just kept saying "ta" and Lolo just kept right on bouncing to the beat of it! It was so funny that at one point I thought Flexon was going to fall off the couch he was laughing so hard!

Tonight was team night. A great time as usual! We had stir fry for dinner (this is our fajitas off-week) and played Presidents (cards) in which I was in the lead with the office of President for most of the game! Yea for me! Today was a nice day because we woke up to rain and gray skies. It rained all day and was nice and cool. I knew this was coming since Wednesday and Thursday were incredibly hot and humid.

**Saturday 1-21-06** – Today would have been called spring cleaning day – only it is summer here and about 100% humidity! It was so hot today! That is because today the sky couldn't decide if it should continue raining or let the sun come out. So, the temperature fluctuated between hot and hotter. I chose this particularly sweltering day to clean house. I worked up enough of a sweat sweeping the floors and cleaning the bathroom that I am sure that it counts a workout! Anyway, it was good to get a few things done around the house. Before lunch Aaron, Kaela and I went to Nambatu supermarket to get some last minute groceries to get us through till Monday and diapers (a necessity). Speaking of diapers, I am sure some of you are wondering what we spend on disposable diapers. Well, not too much since we brought some with us and I supplement with cloth diapers. However, there are times when disposables are a must (at night and when we go places) so I do have to buy them from time to time. I have found an Australian brand of diaper called SoftLove that I can get for a fairly reasonable price (at least here in Vanuatu). I get 54 medium sized diapers for 1300vt. (about \$13). They aren't exactly Huggies, but they really aren't too bad. You can get Huggies here. They are about \$30 for 5 diapers...okay not that

bad...I think there are about 40 in a package for Kaela's size. I'm not a brand fanatic and those are way outside my budget so SoftLove works fine for me!

**Sunday 1-22-06** – Today was kind of an uneventful day other than worship and Bible class. I wasn't feeling well last night and still am not today so I have been taking it easy and trying to get better. Akisa and I had 15 kids in Bible class this morning. 4 of them were our Vila regulars and the rest were all visitors from Etas and Eton. The men used today to start training Patrick and Pbles (both new Christians). Patrick assisted Eric with communion and Pbles assisted him with the giving. They both did a great job. It is so important for them to learn these simple and yet important parts of worship so that when they have worship at their own homes (Pbles at Etas and Patrick on Tanna Island) they will be able to make sure everything is done according to scripture.

This morning a strange thing happened...when I got up and opened up the front doors to our house there were all these little leaf looking things all over our front porch. We have a large front porch and they looked like they were sprinkled from one end to the other. When I bent down to inspect them to try and figure out where they came from (because we don't have a tree or plant that bears small leaves) I realized they looked more like individual wings rather than leaves. I couldn't figure out where they came from or why they were there. So, later I asked Pbles what they were. He told me that they were from a kind of ant. I still am not sure what that means or why they are all over our porch and not Eric and Shawnda's. It was unlike anything I had ever seen.

**Monday 1-23-06** – Grocery day again. It always rolls around so quickly and I especially feel that way on Sunday night as I am trying to come up with something new and wonderful for my menu. Kaela has been extremely cross and cranky today. I think that is partly due to her teething and partly due to the excessive heat. I feel bad for her – she has a heat rash on her shoulders and arms. I have looked in all my medical books and they only offer the advice to “keep the area as cool as possible”. Yeah...well. Great advice if you don't live in the tropics. I keep bathing her in Pine-tarsol (good for rashes) and kick on the fan in whatever room we are in. The rest is beyond my control. We had 2 earthquakes today. Just small ones. They are always a surprise and since they are small we all find them exciting rather than scary. I am sure we would feel differently if we were ever in a major earthquake.

Today I have been trying to work on my Bible study for Etas on Wednesday. I have two. One with Alice about the Inspiration and Authority of the Bible and the second one with all the women on Women's Roles in the Church.

**Tuesday 1-24-06** – I thought maybe the sun was going to make it out today, however that didn't happen and it has been raining off and on all afternoon. It has made for some nice cool temperatures and we are enjoying it! I worked this morning going over my Bible study for tomorrow night for the Ladies and then again this afternoon

on my study for Alice. This afternoon while Kaela was down for her nap Shawnda and I braved the rain and walked to a nearby Chinese store to look for some school supplies. Miriam, Sam and Leimawa's 10 year old daughter, starts back to school next Monday. She goes to school on a different island and only comes home for summer break, to my knowledge. I have really enjoyed the time I have gotten to spend with her these last 2 months. She has the sweetest heart and I just love her. So, we wanted to get a few things for her to take back with her so she can start her school year off right. January 30 begins a new year of school here. I bought her a new backpack, and various supplies that I thought she could probably use, as well as some flip-flops (always a necessity). Gomon and Ure and their kids are coming over tonight! We invited them over to watch some episodes of *The Cosby Show*. They have never heard of it and knowing how comically-minded their family is we knew they would find it HALARIOUS! So, we invited them over for snacks, TV and fun! Sounds like a great plan for this rainy cool evening!

**Wednesday 1-25-06** – Today was an exceptionally busy day! Preaching in the Park was scheduled for 11:30 to 1:30pm so Shawnda, Kaela, Fiona (new Christian) and I headed down to the park at about 11am. Things were looking sunny for once this week and we were all glad for that! However, half way into Aaron's lesson the sky was getting dark and there was a cool breeze with the promise of rain. Although, we lucked out and it moved on away from us and the sun was blazing full again! We set up 2 Bible studies today. Eric and Shawnda have one with one family tomorrow and Aaron and I have one with another family. It was a very successful day! After we got home, I gave Kaela a bath, put her down for her nap and then fixed a late lunch for Aaron and I. Then I reviewed my studies for tonight and took a 30 minute nap to get me through the rest of the day. At 3:30, I got up and hurriedly got ready to leave for our study at Etas. I met with Alice about 5:00pm after we got to Etas and we studied for about 30 minutes. It went well. However, it is difficult to study un-interrupted because she has a 3 year old girl that is a bit distracting. We made the best of it though and we will study again next week. Between Leimawa and Ruth we had quite the feast for dinner. Ruth had made manioc laplap and Leimawa made banana simboro (cooked banana wrapped in island cabbage) and also some breadfruit that she roasted on the fire. It was my first time to try breadfruit and it was pretty good. Not much flavor and the texture is very soft. It isn't at all like bread or fruit. Just different from anything I have ever eaten before. I enjoyed it though. I have wanted to eat breadfruit ever since I was about 10 and read *Pippi in the South Seas*. Only when I was 10 I figured that I would never have the chance to eat breadfruit – ever! And here I am now – eating breadfruit and swinging from the coconut trees (figuratively instead of literally) just like Pippi Longstocking!

**Thursday 1-26-06** – This morning I worked hard trying to finish up my coloring pictures for Bible class, however, my project got delayed a few hours because Kaela insisted on "helping" me. Coloring is not something I can do in her presence if I want

it to look nice because she is only interested in what I am working on instead of her own colors and paper. Our Bible study was scheduled for 2pm, so I put Kaela down for her nap at 1:45 and had Shawnda in charge of keeping an ear out for her. Then we left and went to Malapoa (an area of town about 15 minutes away) and met the family for our Bible study. The father's name is Charlie and he is a chief in a village on Tanna Island and is now living in Vila with his family. As usual, the family lines are a little blurry and the best I can figure is that he and his wife Rose have 4 children: 2 girls that are 18 and 21; a boy about 11 and a little girl about 4 or 5. They were a very nice family and have in the past been attending the Apostolic church, however, Charlie had some disagreements about things within the church so they quit attending church. He came to Preaching in the Park yesterday, listened for a while and was intrigued because the message that the men were preaching was different than many churches. So, he talked with Aaron and asked if we would come study with His family and teach them about Christ's church. Our Bible study with them went very well and we are going back next week at 2pm to study again. I have a problem in that it is very hard to commit to a Bible study "outside the home" because of Kaela. She is my main responsibility and in truth my "ministry" at this time in my life. Right now Shawnda watches her so I can go to Etas every Wednesday evening and I don't feel good about asking her to watch Kaela an additional time because I know that she is very busy with her Bible studies and class preparations. I have thought about asking someone to come stay with Kaela for the 2-3 hours that we are studying, however, I would ask a local Christian. And while in essence that would solve my problem it might not solve Shawnda's because whoever I would ask (and I have a particular person in mind) is good friends with Shawnda and would want to go over to her house (because it is so close) and talk to her during Kaela's nap. Which technically is fine, but it defeats the purpose of me trying to free Shawnda up to get more work done. I told Aaron on my way to this study that this would be the only one that I attend because it is just too difficult for me to be gone from taking care of Kaela. However, I ran into the problem that I went and met this family and talked with them and just loved them and want so much to be there and study with them and see them grow. This a good problem to have - yet still - a problem. I will talk with Shawnda about all this tomorrow and see if we can come up with a solution that fits us both.

**Friday 1-27-06** - You can lead horse to water, but you can't make it drink...or in our case...you can give a baby a piece of toast, but you can't keep her from licking the butter off of it!

**Saturday 1-28-06** - The guys left at about 12:30pm to go to Eton, Epau and Paonangisu villages. They will be spending the night tonight and then coming home tomorrow evening. This is their monthly trip. Next month Aaron won't be going to Paonangisu. Instead, he is planning to go with Harry (one of the Christians from Paonangisu) to his home island of Nguna (Nu-Nah), to teach and preach there. Right now the plan is

to spend about 2 weeks there. I am sure this plan will change several times before the time comes.

Akisa came to spend the night with us. She got here about 3:00pm, not long after I put Kaela down for her nap. We played Rummikub and watched movies and talked. She is just so nice! It is always fun to have her come stay with us and it is an extra plus that she knows English well enough that all three of us go back and forth between Bislama and English when we are talking.

**Sunday 1-29-06** – Since Preaching in the Park was on Thursday, I knew we had the possibility of some visitors so Shawnda and I had to load the sign in the car to take with us to Dumbea Hall. The sign is made from wood, covered in white board type material and has “Christ’s Church of Port Vila” printed at the top. It is a sandwich board type sign. And it weighs a ton. Getting it in the car is definitely a 2 person job and one that takes enough effort to break a sweat. How nice. We ended up only having one visitor, but I was happy to see that it was Christine, one of the girls that Aaron and I studied with on Thursday. We had a small crowd for worship, which was a little discouraging. However, it did give me time to reflect on the fact that sometimes a small crowd is a blessing. It is a blessing in that it makes me realize how important *I* am in my getting something out of worship. People always talk about how they just “didn’t get anything out of worship”. Well, I wonder, “What are they putting into it?” In a larger congregation it is easy to worship half-heartedly because everyone else can just carry you right along and your voice may not seem to be that important. And while that isn’t a proper attitude towards worship – none the less, it is all too common – and an attitude I have been guilty of having in the past. However, with only a few of us there today, I was reminded that *my voice* is important. If I am not singing and participating with a whole heart – it matters. It is obvious. And I realize that what I put into it – is what I get out of it and it directly affects my brothers and sisters in Christ. Not only are we “making melody in our hearts to the Lord”, but we are also “speaking to one another” and encouraging one another in our singing. (Ephesians 5:19-20)

**Monday 1-30-06** – Never a dull moment around these parts. This morning I got up at 6:30am and worked on my Bible study for Alice that I am doing on Wednesday. Then Kaela was ready to get up, we folded diapers and read some books while we waited for Aaron to wake up. He was completely exhausted from his trip to the village. Then, we ate breakfast and I did my morning routine including washing and hanging clothes. We had plans to meet Eric, Shawnda and Mike at Jill’s café about 12:30 to report on the guy’s trips to the villages and Shawnda and my stay in town. After that, Shawnda and I headed out to do our grocery shopping. She had to go to the market so we did that first, then we went over to Seaview Takeaway to see Yoland and tell her that we missed her yesterday. After that we went to Nambatu Supermarket. We forgot that we meant to go to the Boucherrie before Nambatu to check and see if they had dog mince (dog food). We can get 1 kilo of dog mince, which is just the more

unsavory parts of beef with lots of fat in it, for 150vt. However, if they don't have any we buy #2 mince (about 20% fat) for the dogs at 375vt. for one kilo. The boucherrie has #2 mince, but it is more expensive so when we have to get it we buy it from Nambatu supermarket. Are you confused yet? I am. Anyway, we decided to check with the boucherrie first about the dog mince and then go back to Nambatu supermarket if need be. After our trip there, we went home to unload the groceries and put Kaela in bed and then Shawnda and I headed out to the boucherrie to check about the dog mince and to the chicken shop. The boucherrie didn't have dog mince so we were going to have to go back to Nambatu supermarket to get #2 mince. However, first we had to go to the chicken shop to get chicken breasts. Only they didn't have any in and told us to try back on Wednesday afternoon. On our way to Nambatu, the car was riding a little bumpy (which isn't unusual with our wonderful car combined with the roads here). Then, all of a sudden the right front tire got very bumpy and I knew we had a problem. We pulled over and sure enough we had a flat tire - more than a flat tire - it was completely stripped - the tread just gave out. Thankfully one of our other errands was to take Mike his cell phone that he left at the house and we hadn't done that yet. So, we called Aaron and Eric and they came to pick us up. We drove the truck home, they changed the tire and then met us at the house. After all that we STILL had to take Mike his phone and go get the dog food - so back in the car we went and headed to Nambatu and to Mike's. By the time we got home we were tired and hot and ready to rest! Kaela had about 40 minutes left of her nap and I used those precious minutes to cool off! What a day!

**Tuesday 1-31-06** - We had some major winds come in last night and I got up and pondered the possibility of a cyclone. Which turned out to be true! The good news is that it is going to hit near one of the islands far south of us and continue southeast. So, we will just get the wind from it. And windy it is! That doesn't bother me though! With impending rain in the air - all this wind keeps us cool! We listened to the weather bulletin on the radio and I felt like they were talking in Chinese rather than Bislama. They kept using all this terminology about cyclones that I don't have a clue about and then add that to using kilometers and knots and other things that I am not very familiar with and I have a real problem! The only thing I did understand was the directions - only it is still a problem because I don't know my directions here and have no idea what way I am facing at any given time. I had better get busy learning that!

I have been working hard on my Wednesday Bible study today, some BCC work, and keeping in touch on my emails! It seems like I have tons of computer work to do and not enough time to do it! That's all right though, I will just switch some things around and make the best of it!

Tonight Aaron, Kaela and I went to Seafront Park to see the waves. With the cyclone in the nearby area the wind has been strong today and Eric told us that the waves at Seafront Park were coming about 5 or 6 feet in the air when they hit the sea wall. So, we went down to look at them (from a safe distance, of course). It was

amazing how hard the waves would hit the wall and send the spray up in the air! It was very neat to watch and the sunset was beautiful too, lighting up the sky a very deep, dark pink.

**Wednesday 2-1-06** – Just as I was dozing off to sleep last night we had an earthquake. Not a huge one but, big enough to wake me up and take me a while to relax and go back to sleep. I never like it when there is an earthquake at night – it jars me out of my sleep, gets my blood pumping and my heart beating wildly and it takes a while for me to calm my body down even though my mind knows that everything is fine. Crazy.

Today I wrote my sister a letter, got a package ready to mail, and did some copying of Bible studies for Aaron. We go to Etas this afternoon about 4pm for our Bible study. I meet with Alice around 5:00 and then we all study at Pbles' house when the sun goes down. It should be a nice night and hopefully no rain will make an appearance.

**Sunday 2-5-06** – Well...at least this time I have a good reason for my gap in journaling. I spent most of Thursday, Friday and part of Saturday sick in bed. The flu. How lovely. And it made me so productive too. I lay comatose and tried to keep Kaela occupied with as little effort as possible. Aaron helped around the house and was just the BEST HUSBAND EVER in making sure we didn't get buried under dishes, dirty clothes and dust! He watched Kaela when he had opportunity, however, that was harder to do since he had a lot of work to get done this week preparing lessons and classes. I don't even remember what happened on those days. Nothing of significance I guess. At least in my world. I got up this morning and felt much better. Thankfully I had my Bible class (it's my month to teach the kids) prepared on Wednesday so all I had to do was review it. It went great! One of the best and most successful and fun classes I have taught. I tried something new. I drew parts of my story on a white board before hand. Then as I taught the lesson I drew in pictures and numbers that were important in the story. I taught about the 12 spies in Caanan. --- Did I spell that right? I want to spell it in Bislama – Kenen. Bislama is wrecking my English spelling because it is so phonetic that I forget we have all kinds of crazy English spellings for things. --- Anyway...For my review I erased some of the pictures I had drawn and then I asked a child a question and let them draw the picture in the place where it was supposed to go and answer the question. They had fun and it really helped them remember the story.

We had 4 visitors at worship this morning so we were all excited about that. The fellowship meal was at our house afterward and it went great. We had a really good turnout and it was a lot of fun! It was severely hot today and everyone headed home about 1pm. Which is much earlier than usual. I think everyone was hot and tired and ready to get home and sleep. Usually I try to catch a short Sunday afternoon snooze, however, I didn't today. I read my book and then graded Bible

correspondence courses. It is now 9:21pm and I am still working on BCC stuff, updating my journal and checking emails from that last 3 days.

**Monday 2-6-06** – We got kind of a late start on our grocery shopping today. After fixing Aaron’s lunch and grabbing a quick snack for myself and Kaela, we headed out the door at 12pm. We made it to Nambatu supermarket and home before we had to stop and fix ourselves some lunch. Then, Shawnda came over and we all left again at about 1:30 to go to the butcher and chicken shop. By the time we finished at the chicken shop we realized that we forgot to go to the market first and then opted to put it off until tomorrow afternoon. When we got home we realized that we forgot to go back to Nambatu to get meat for the dogs. Oops. However, I am just too hot and tired to hit the road again just for the dogs. Maybe I will try to go after dinner tonight when the sun goes down and things are cooling off. By then Aaron and I might even feel like walking if it is cool and breezy enough. We’ll see. I have some copying to get done for my BCCs so I am working on that while I also do my computer work. What a multi-tasker I am!

**Tuesday 2-7-06** – This morning I was in a rush with time trying to get myself and Kaela ready to go to Ladies Bible study at Rose-Hanna’s, washed and hung the laundry, and cooked my food to take. Wow. And it is hot. Very, very hot. So hot, in fact, that Aaron and Eric both abandoned the office to work in the houses. I wanted to go swimming, however, it wasn’t meant to be. Shawnda and I went to pick up Fiona and Joana for Bible study. Once we got to Rose-Hanna’s house we realized that we forgot the Bislama songbooks which we really needed this time since Fiona doesn’t know English. So, I headed home to get them and since I figured that I had a few minutes to spare I also ran by Nambatu supermarket to pick up some bread crumbs so I could bread my eggplant for dinner tonight. Normally, in the States I make my own breadcrumbs. However, in Vanuatu I have to buy them because my bread never seems to dry out. It just gets moldy. Rose-Hanna was the only other one who came to the devotional. Rebekah Felix was busy with some visitors that they had at the house, I’m not sure where Rose was and Ure couldn’t come because Sesky was home sick. Even though it was a small group it is nice to be back to meeting together every Tuesday!

**Thursday 2-9-06** – Aaron had to make a trip around the island today so Kaela and I decided to go with him. We left about 10:30am, went to the gas station and I ran over to a little nearby Chinese store to pick up some cookies for tonight. Tonight is the mid-week fellowship and it is on schedule to be at our house. We drove to Eton first and stopped to talk to Eddie. He wanted to go with us to Paonangisu so we took him along. Then his wife’s sister, Rosie, wanted to ride with us to Epau village where she lives. At Epau, we dropped Rosie off, looked at the progress of the building project there, ate lunch and talked with some of the Christians for a while. Then, Aaron, Eddie, Kaela and I got back in the truck and headed on to Paonangisu. On the way

there Aaron told Eddie about a man that had just moved back to Paonangisu that is a Christian. Apparently Eddie baptized him over 10 years ago on a trip that he made to Pentecost island. So, we went by his house so that Eddie could see him. It was kind of neat to think that so long ago Eddie baptized him and never knew what happened to him and now he has moved back to this island. Aaron and I stopped and talk to Harry for a while. Eddie had gone to visit some friends so we waited for him to come back...and we waited...and waited. Finally, at 3pm we HAD to go since it was a guaranteed near 2-hr. trip back to Vila. We found him at someone's house, loaded up, said goodbye to Harry and then drove to Epau. - Where we picked up Rosie, talked to some more people and drove back to Eton and dropped both of them off. We got home a little before 5pm and all 3 of us were dead on our feet from the events of the day. However, Aaron and Kaela both took naps while I made dinner. I then went ahead and ate mine alone so they could sleep a little longer. Not long after Aaron and Kaela got up Ure came for the fellowship. So, I fed her dinner too and we visited while we waited for the rest of the church members to get to our house. The fellowship went really well and we had a good turn out even though half the people arrived Vanuatu-late.

**Friday 2-10-06** – Today was a rough day for me. On Wednesday I found out via email that my friends, Beck and Josh's little girl Janea, was put in the hospital again with severe breathing problems. I have been so worried about them for the last two days. I emailed some of my good friends from 29<sup>th</sup> and Yale in Tulsa to ask them for some favors. Janea was sent to Tulsa because there wasn't room for her in the ICU in OKC so they sent her on to St. Francis in Tulsa. Maybe its because I have been feeling some homesickness that it has hit me so hard. Sometimes I just feel so helpless here in Vanuatu. So far away and my only means of reliable communication is email. Praise to God because some of my dearest friends in Tulsa went the extra mile to check on Beck, Josh and Janea and make sure they weren't in need of anything. They prayed with them and loved on them – simply because I asked them to. The family of God is a wonderful thing. It is times like these when friends of mine reach out to people they don't even know that I realize how great and awesome it is to be a part of the family of God! Even with this knowledge I was still having a hard time being so far away. It took lots of tears and Aaron reminding me that I have to trust God that there are other people who can be there for the Kidd's right now. Even though I can't be there – that someone else can be there to give them the love and support that I would give if it were me. Sometimes lessons of faith are so hard to learn and yet giving that over to God has made me feel so much better and I know that He will use my friends from 29<sup>th</sup> and Yale to give Beck and Josh the love they need right now.

On a very positive note – Eric and Shawnda have a possible baby to adopt! There is a lady at the hospital that Shawnda has been talking to that has a sister who is pregnant and 16 years old. She doesn't want the baby and the girl's father said that if she has a boy Eric and Shawnda are for sure getting it! This is so exciting! Now it is

time to exercise some real patience and wait to see what she has! Many prayers are being said on behalf of this possibility!

**Saturday 2-11-06** – Spring cleaning day! Aaron and I hustled and bustled today to get our house in order for Steve and Samantha’s visit. They are friends of ours from 29<sup>th</sup> and Yale that support us and the Brandell’s. We are SO EXCITED that they are coming! How fun it will be. They only get to stay a week though so it will be a fun FILLED week.

**Sunday 2-12-06** – Wow. What. A. Day. True to Vanuatu style our plan for the day didn’t quite go exactly as we had intended. However, it did end up being a great day! This morning Aaron and I hopped out of bed at 6am and got ourselves all ready to go to Etas. We were supposed to pick up the Etas group to take them to worship at Eton village. Our plan was to leave at 7:45am. I got Kaela ready and we headed to the Brandell’s truck to leave. Except it wouldn’t start. The battery was dead. So, Eric pushed it down the drive while Aaron tried to start it and it still wouldn’t start. So, I got in driver’s seat and Eric and Aaron pushed the truck so it could go down the hill from our house. And it still wouldn’t start. Then, Eric pushed it down the hill to the hospital (a pretty steep hill) and Aaron tried again to start it. It started!...and died. Now, we were at the bottom of the hill with a dead battery and no where to go. So, Eric got on the phone and called Gomon and asked him to bring his jumper cables by the hospital on his way to church. Eric met up with Akisa at the house and she gave him the jumper cables and brought them back to us. Aaron found a man that was willing to use his car to jump start the truck, however, it didn’t have enough power to do the job. So, finally a big truck came available and it gave our truck the needed start. We were supposed to pick everyone up at Etas at 8am and didn’t get there until 9:30. Wow. Already a long day.

We got to Etas and loaded up at both Sam’s house and Pbles’ house. You will NEVER BELIEVE how many people we had crammed in the truck. It was unbelievable! We looked like a clown car! The truck is a double cab. There were 5 adults and 6 kids all inside the truck. That would be ELEVEN of us in the front! Before we left for Eton, Aaron got out and counted SEVENTEEN more people in the bed of the truck! There were so many of them that almost everyone had to stand the whole way there because there wasn’t room to sit down. It brings new meaning to the phrase, “standing room only!” 28 of us brought a good crowd to worship at Eton. Afterwards, some of the women had prepared some food: laplap, breadfruit, roast beef, boiled fish and bread for us to eat. It was all very good and we had a great time!

We loaded everyone back up at about 1:30 and headed over to Eddie’s house to change clothes so we could go swimming at a nearby beach. It was a beautiful day to go swimming at the beach and a great time to relax and fellowship with everyone from Etas. We swam for almost 2 hours. (Aaron and I took turns sitting under a tree with Kaela because she was scared of the ocean waves). We headed back to Etas at about 3:45pm (It took a good 15-20 minutes to get everyone loaded up and ready to

go!) Then, they all wanted to stop at the river so they could bathe before going back home. So, we did that. Finally, we were on the road and headed to Etas. Just in time too! The rain rolled in right after we dropped everyone off at Pbles' house. We finally made it home at 5pm.

Tonight is Shawnda's b-day so we are going to celebrate it with her favorite meal, poppyseed chicken, open presents and watch a movie. Should be a fun night!

**Monday 2-13-06** – Kaela started coming down with a cold of some sort on Saturday. I didn't think much of it on Sunday since this is cold season here with all the weather changes. She and I both slept in this morning until 8am which was wonderful! It felt great after yesterday's busy day! However, this morning she got up and her voice was hoarse, she was wheezing slightly and coughing. So, I added a trip to the hospital to my plans. At 11am I took Kaela to the hospital to the children's clinic. However, I found out that it is only for vaccines and weighing. All sick children have to be taken inside to the outpatient clinic. It was PACKED! I always try to go close to the lunch hour or late in the afternoon to avoid the crowds. But, I guess since it is Monday the place was buzzing! I took one look at the waiting room and the 50+ people milling around and decided it was worth it to try back later. I came home, made lunch for Aaron and then Shawnda, Kaela and I headed out to do our grocery shopping. We only made it to the butcher and the market before Kaela was showing obvious signs of fatigue. So, we brought her back home and I put her to bed. Then, we headed out again to Nambatu supermarket. I came home, washed my sink full of dishes that I didn't have time for this morning, cooked the dog's hamburger and rice and then not long after that Kaela was ready to get up from her nap. She and I left again to go to the hospital at 3:30pm. When I got there about 25 people were still hanging out in the waiting room. I was given number 29 by a nurse and the last number called was 13. It was going to be a long wait. Several more people came in and out of the room where they examine children. Then a lady comes out and says that the doctor who sees the kids is tired and isn't going to see any more patients today. I guess she had been on duty since 7:30 this morning. Okay, plan B. Only I didn't know what plan B was since it was my first time to take Kaela to this part of the hospital. Thankfully, there was a woman there with her 2 kids that recognized me. She works at my favorite duty free store and she has seen Shawnda, Kaela and I a lot. She left her kids with me and went in search of a nurse to help us. It took some time, but she finally found a doctor that was available and could see our kids. From then on – seeing the doctor and then taking Kaela to get her shot in a different room – it was chaos for me. I didn't know what was going on and no one else seemed to either. That hospital is about as organized as the closet in my spare bedroom...and that's not saying much! Finally, thanks to the help from my friend I ended up in the right place and Kaela got her shot. I am supposed to go back tomorrow to the pharmacy and pick up some medicine for her. Never a dull moment.

**Tuesday 2-14-06** – Since Kaela was still sick today, I decided to stay home with her instead of going to Women’s Bible study at Rose-Hanna’s house. However, Shawnda and I are supposed to pick up Fiona and Joana and take them to the study with us. So, I left Kaela with Aaron and we went to pick them up. When we got to their house Fiona told us that Joana had left yesterday to go home to Pentecost island and visit her mother. She will be there for about two months. I dropped them off at Rose-Hanna’s and then came home to watch Kaela so Aaron could go back to work. After Bible study Shawnda, Ure and Fiona came back to the house and then we left to take them all home, dropping Ure by Shem and Rose’s house so she could pick up some ginger root medicine that he had made for her. On the way back home, Shawnda and I dropped by Lissie’s work to see her. Tomorrow is her last day at work before her maternity leave. Her baby is due on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and Lord willing we will know ahead of time and be able to go be with her at the hospital and through the birthing. We also picked up a cruise ship schedule from Lissie. With Steve and Samantha coming into town we have tentative plans to do some “touristy” things. It is our goal to schedule all this on days when cruise ships aren’t in town! Today I have also been trying to make last minute adjustments to my outline for my Bible study with Alice tomorrow.

**Wednesday 2-15-06** – Another busy day. Lissie’s husband, Kalman, came to the house this morning at the crack of dawn (6am) to tell us that he just dropped Lissie off at the hospital. I got up, showered, dressed and ran down to see how she was doing. I didn’t wake Shawnda up because I figured she wasn’t that far along and like Rose-Hanna might have a good 8 hours to go. However, when I got there her contractions were coming pretty strong and about 4 minutes apart. I talked with her for a while and then ran home to wake Shawnda up and give Aaron the good news that he is in charge of Kaela for the day. I gathered a few things to take to the hospital and then we went back down to be with Lissie. Unfortunately, being daytime the security guy was on the warpath (just doing his job, I am sure) and wouldn’t let us stay in with her during her labor. I felt so bad for Lissie because this is her first baby and she was already scared because she didn’t know what to expect. Shawnda and I kept sneaking in to go be with her and then he would come along and tell us to leave again. I guess we had a mutual understanding. We were intent on staying and he was intent on kicking us out and we were all very congenial and polite through it all! FINALLY, 11:30 came and it was visiting hours so Shawnda and I both got to go in and be with her. Her contractions were coming strong and the head nurse took her into the delivery room to check her again. Shawnda and I waited in the hall although we were both unsure about what was going on. I was for sure that Lissie still had some time to go and then about 20 minutes later we heard the tell tell cry of the baby! It was a boy and everything had gone fine. We were just sad that we didn’t get to be with her for the birth, but also glad because Kalman came on his lunch break about 5 minutes before the baby was born and got to be there for the birth! We finally left about 1pm to come home. I came home to a very tired Aaron and a sleeping Kaela. Even though Kaela is sleeping and I feel like I should be relaxing after the crazy morning, I

have too much work to do. So, I am updating my journal, printing my Bible study for tonight and making BCC copies.