



Mission Vanuatu Minutes

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

April 2007
Volume 4,
Issue 4

Special points of interest:

- 3 New Christians in Etas
- Etas congregation's 1 year anniversary
- Eric takes Morgan to Marou village on Emau Island
- Mike returns to Vanuatu

Inside this issue:

Baptisms in April	1
Etas' 1 year	4
Mike's return	4
Marou Village	5

Baptisms in April

By Aaron Baker

April was a busy month for our team. While some months seem more "fruitful" than others, we are constantly encouraged when men and women turn their lives over to Christ. Here are the stories of three people who committed themselves to Christ in April.

Iata Tabawa



Iata (pronounced ya-ta) is the father of Sam Tabawa, a Christian in Etas Village. I met Iata the first time I went to Etas, back in 2005. Until recently, Iata has had no real desire to study God's Word or become a Christian.

Iata began to feel that his life was missing something. He described, "the sun is setting on my life. If I am going to do anything good with my life, it has to be now."

On April 2nd, I began my studies with Iata in Etas village. On April 8th, Iata was present for worship when I preached a lesson on "God looks at the heart." At the end of the lesson, Iata was struck by how we re-enact Christ's resurrection (tying in with the Easter theme) through Baptism. At that point, Iata approached me and said, "I'm lost. I don't know how many more days I have left on this earth and I want to be with God when I die. I'm ready to be baptized."

Despite our only just beginning to study together, Iata is a very smart man. That afternoon, I spoke with Iata about baptism and it's meaning. He understood very well what he needed to do and said he was ready.

Iata was baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of his sins on April 8th, 2007.

(Continued on page 2)

Baptisms, continued

Jake Long



Last year our team met Jake through several Bible studies held in Etas village. A Good News Meeting was being held in Epau village (45 minutes down the road) in which Eric would travel to Etas each night and pick up a truck full of people and head to the meeting. Jake attended each night of these meetings and we thought last year he was going to make the decision to become a Christian. Jake, however, was not quite ready.

Common in the islands of the Vanuatu, is the cultural tendency to be shy. It is difficult to get people to speak up and ask a question. Often times, people are just shy and/or afraid to talk in front of other people if there is a crowd or people, especially those they do not know. This was the case with Jake. Not that Jake was

afraid to speak, but Jake was shy. Jake's fear of becoming a Christian stemmed from his fear of talking in front of people. Jake thought that once he became a Christian, he was going to have to preach or teach right away. To do so, struck fear into his heart.

Though Cindy and I visited Jake often, it was not until nearly a year later that Jake finally felt he was ready to become a Christian. He knew that in order to be saved, he had to be baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal 3:26, 27). He could no longer let his fear hold him.

The funny thing is that Jake was too shy to tell me this until after he had decided he was going to do whatever necessary to become a Christian, even if it meant speaking. After I spoke to Jake for a few minutes, it was communicated to him that he would not have to do anything (like speaking) that he felt he was not ready to do. Jake breathed a huge sigh of relief and said, "in that case, I'm ready."

We jumped into the truck (despite it raining) and drove

(Continued on page 3)



Above: Peter (R) maneuvers through the coral to baptize Iata in the ocean.

Below: Timothy (R) catches his balance while Jake does his best not to fall before being baptized.



Baptisms, continued

to the ocean where Timothy proceeded to immerse Jake.

On Sunday, April 8, 2007 Jake Long was baptized into Christ.



Marina Timothy

Marina (pictured left with daughter Mary Beth) is the wife of Timothy Pbles, a Christian in Etas village. Upon Timothy's conversion to Christ in April 2006, he immediately turned his at-

tention to sharing the Gospel with his wife. Marina agreed to study, but wanted a woman's perspective and so began studying with Cindy in September of 2006.

Marina's roots were strong in the Assemblies of God (AOG) denomination, but her desire for the truth was stronger. Marina was not satisfied to simply "follow her husband to church," but she wanted to develop her own faith and not simply ride the coat-tails of her husband's faith.

As Cindy and Marina continued to study together, Marina began to recognize that what she was being taught and what she was seeing in regards to worship was right

out of the Bible. She recognized such a gap between what she practiced and believed and what the Bible actually taught, that she proclaimed, "I am tired of following the teachings of men."

In one of Cindy's final studies with Marina on April 25th, 2007, Marina said boldly, "I understand and I want to be baptized, tonight." Marina did not want her faith to be that of her husband's, but she wanted her faith to be her own. She wanted to strongly stand with her own faith and know that she had done what God had asked of her (Mk 16:15,16).

Marina made it clear that tomorrow was too late. She could not wait until the next day to become one with Christ. Though it was already dark and we had studied for several hours with the Etas congregation, we loaded up the truck and headed for the ocean. With only a few flashlights to light our path, Marina and I waded into the water.

Unfortunately, low tide had left only a few pools close to the shore in which we could seek a suitable place to baptize Marina. In fact the largest pool we found was only three feet deep. I had Marina sit down in the small pool of water and then leaned her back to baptize her.

Marina was baptized into Christ on April 25th, 2007.





Other News:

Mike, returning from the States, is greeted with open arms by our team, but mostly Kaela. When Kaela saw Mike, she shouted, "I missed you Uncle Mike," and all of our hearts melted.

When asked what Mike missed most about America, he replied, "flavor," comparing the cuisine of Vanuatu food with that of the States.

Etas Congregation Turns 1 Year Old!

The planting of the Etas congregation has its roots in the conversions of four key people from Etas: Sam, Leimawa, Pbles and Ruth. The studies culminated in January 2006, these four were the first Christians in the village of Etas, a small community just outside of Port Vila.

By April of 2006 a humble shelter was built in Etas which began with a tarp covered structure. April 9th, 2006 was the first meeting of

the church in Etas.

We celebrated the one-year mark of the Etas congregation (Sunday, April 8th) with a fellowship meal. Many people from the community were invited and we had a great time celebrating what we prayerfully hope to be a continued pattern of growth for years to come.

Thanks be to God for making this possible!



By Eric Brandell



During this month's regular trip to Marou Village, the 13th through the 15th, I was pleased to be accompanied by Morgan. Morgan was converted in December of last year, and worships with the congregation in Etas Village. This was his first trip of this kind, and he served as an encouragement to the locals in Marou. He immediately

began conversing with the local Christians, and by the end of the weekend knew everyone by name. On Saturday morning, he spent an hour or so helping George in his garden. Later, the kids enjoyed playing with him in a local canoe out in the ocean (who knows how many times it tipped over or sank).

Morgan really seemed to have enjoyed our time together, and I was glad to have the opportunity to get to know him better.

We prayed together each evening and morning, and Morgan lead prayers for our meals as well. I hope that this trip and future ones will serve as a spark to interest the locals to commit themselves to sharing the gospel and encouraging their brethren whenever the opportunity presents itself.

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

Mission Vanuatu Minutes
A ministry of the
Columbine church of Christ
7453 S. Zephyr Ct.
Littleton, CO 80128

Please send address changes and
inquiries to:
Shane Moore
samlpam@msn.com

**Spreading the Gospel in
the South Pacific.**

Columbine church of Christ
7453 S. Zephyr Ct.
Littleton, CO 80128

Address Correction Requested

Check us out on the web!

www.missionvanuatu.com

Mission Vanuatu Team



**Aaron, Cindy and Kaela
Baker**

(Right side of picture)

**Eric, Shawnda and Titus
Brandell**

(Left side of picture)

Mike Olson

(Back row, middle)