



# Mission Vanuatu Minutes

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

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## Special points of interest:

- Three week PIBC classes held in Vila and Eton village.
- Another soul added to the Kingdom in Etas village.
- Eric, Shawnda and Titus enjoying their time in the States.

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## Pacific Islands Bible College on Efate

By Mike Olson

In order to meet the need of educating, training, and equipping the saints in the South Pacific, a school has been established and working for many years now. Pacific Islands Bible College (PIBC) originates from Forest Park, Georgia and sends teachers throughout the Pacific to fulfill the great commission, "baptizing them...teaching them to follow all that Jesus has commanded" (Matt 28:19-20). People in these island countries cannot afford to go overseas for training, so the school comes to them. Vanuatu is a frequent stop for teachers, this being the seventh year for PIBC in Vanuatu. This year brought some folks who are veterans of the work in the Pacific but first-timers to Vanuatu. Stacy Ferguson, who coordinates much of the work for PIBC, came with his wife Kathy and teenage son Nathaniel. They were accompanied by Kathy's parents, Gene and Loretta Russell. This year's classes on the book of John and Christian Evidences ran from June 13<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There are two separate challenges when it comes to an effort like PIBC. First is the teaching of the classes, handled by Gene and Stacy, and the second is getting the arrangements made and especially getting the students to



Above, L to R: Kathy, Stacy, Loretta, Gene and Nathaniel receiving gifts of appreciation for running PIBC courses and working with the brethren.

the appointed places. Classes were held in Eton Village and in Port Vila this year. Christians from Epau and Paunangisu villages also participated in the classes in Eton village. The teachers had the mornings off, but from about 1:30 in the afternoon until 10:00 at night they were on the go.

Every day we had a group lunch before going to Eton which gave us the opportunity to fellowship and learn more about one another. The road to Eton village is paved with bumps and more bumps. Fortunately, I am an experienced driver, able to hit nearly every one! Actually the road and travel time really take their toll on you after a week or so and the teachers had to tough it out for over two weeks. We had arranged a transport for the

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**Above:** Phillip, Tom, Aaron and Nathaniel canvas Etas village with fliers for the upcoming Gospel Meeting in July.

*"If island folks can do one thing, they sure can let you know that they love and appreciate you!"*

**Below:** Combined worship services for Vila and Etas saw nearly 50 people in attendance!



## Pacific Islands, cont.

Epau village folks and it came nearly every day despite some mechanical problems. The classes ran from 3:00 to 5:00 pm and anywhere from five to sixteen people participated depending on the day, but we averaged over ten people. Ten students took the test on the last day which was about what we had in Epau village last year. We returned on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and the brethren showed their appreciation to the teachers and their families with tea, food and gifts. If island folks can do one thing they sure can let you know that they love and appreciate you!

The courses in Port Vila were held at the Christ's church building from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Both Port Vila brethren and the brethren from Etas village participated. Several visitors also took the classes which was an encouragement to all of us. We had a high of twenty-four students, a low of fifteen, and averaged about 18 per night. This is a real commitment for the locals

who have to work all day and then come to the classes at night. We praised them for their effort and for their toughness. We were transporting them in trucks and even though it rained several times it did not deter their attendance. The course on Christian Evidences is the most difficult for the island folks. The big words, strange concepts, and the overall amount of teaching that they have never heard before makes them scratch their heads and ask a lot of questions. Trying to answer those questions is not easy either. However with some help in Bislama they managed to do well on the tests.

Events in Vanuatu are notorious for starting late and this has been the case in past years. But we did learn that to start on time (which we did every day) you must transport all the people and start when they sit down. This worked well and we will continue in the future. All in all it was a successful time and we are looking forward to next year's classes.



**Above:** Gene Russell teaching the book of John to PIBC students in Vila

By Eric Brandell

# Brandell Furlough

**W**e arrived in the States on June 2, and flew directly from Los Angeles to Orlando to join my family for the last few days of their Disney World trip. Titus traveled fairly well, and adjusted to the time change quickly. This was the first time for the Brandells and Grays to meet their first grandchild!!

Our first month was spent in Oklahoma. I have delivered presentations on our work in Tulsa, Perkins and two congregations in Duncan. We have thoroughly enjoyed visiting our family and friends, and especially like introducing everyone to Titus.

We have a few more days here in Oklahoma, and will be traveling to Denver to spend the month of July in Colorado. We are scheduled to return to Vanuatu on August 13. You can view our entire furlough schedule at [www.missionvanuatu.com/schedule.html](http://www.missionvanuatu.com/schedule.html)



**Above:** Titus enjoying his time in the States.

## Working Together

By Aaron Baker

**W**hile the PIBC courses were in full swing, in the afternoons we used the time in the mornings to canvas the Etas village area promoting an upcoming Gospel Meeting. Stacy, Nathaniel, and Aaron worked together with Tom, Phillip and Timothy (local Christians) to pass out fliers advertising the meeting. The result was that in two days everyone in the village not only had a flyer, but also knew of the upcoming meeting.

In addition to passing out flyers, Aaron and Nathaniel teamed-up to study with people from the Etas community. We covered critical topics such as "How God Saves Us" and "The Steps Of Salvation." As a result, a man Aaron had been studying with for about two months now said, "I want to be baptized." Especially touched by Nathaniel's (from the U.S.) great example of living for Christ, Miswell Tom said, "I want to be like that."

Though our team helped facilitate Nathaniel and Miswell meeting, Nathaniel's example spoke louder than words. Miswell admitted, "knowing that Nathaniel is only 16 and seeing how he is living for Christ makes me want to live my own life better." This was Nathaniel's first time to baptize someone into Christ and both young men came out of the water grinning.

Working together for the Lord we made spiritual progress that resulted in growth of the Kingdom. We are grateful for our opportunity to work with this group from the States.



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[www.missionvanuatu.com](http://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)