



# Mission Vanuatu

A newsletter published by Aaron and Cindy Baker \* Eric and Shawnda Brandell \* Mike Olson

November 2007  
Volume 4,  
Issue 11

## Special points of interest:

- A trio from the States visit Vanuatu
- Karol Ben makes commitment to Christ
- Titus turns 1 year old!
- Bakers work on getting a passport for Melia

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## An Encouraging Visit

By Eric Brandell

Our work has been blessed by visits from several brethren since our arrival on the field almost three years ago. These visits are inevitably a source of encouragement to all involved: the team, the local Christians, and the visitors themselves.

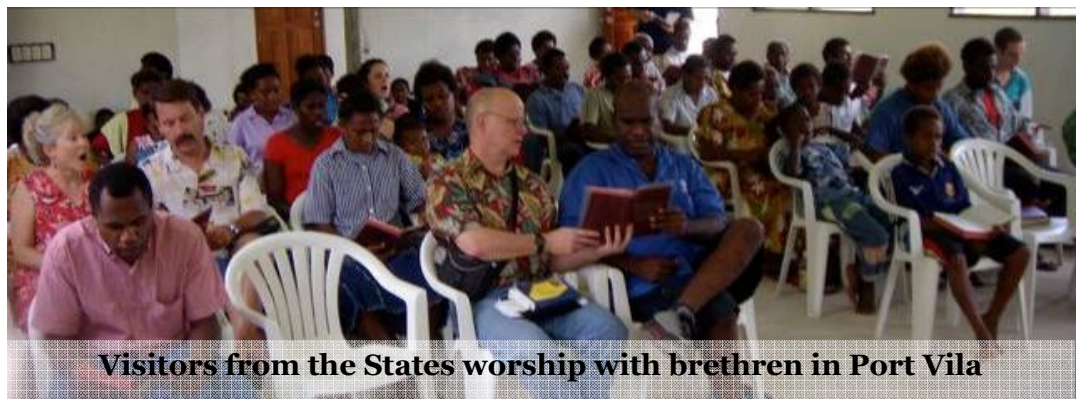
We experienced such a visit this month from three Christians who work with the Columbine congregation, the sponsor of our work in Vanuatu. George and Brenda Robison traveled with Mike Ewing, arriving in Vanuatu at the very end of October. George has been preaching for the Columbine congregation for the past seven years, and Mike has served as an elder there for the past eight. They were able to be with us for 10 days, and together we were able to accomplish a lot.

George had traveled to Vanuatu back in 1999, spending the majority of his time working on the island of Espirtu Santo. He was interested in returning to that island to see how things had changed, and meet up with those he

had worked with. Mike Olson accompanied George on that 3-day trip. Mike and George met up with a Christian from New Zealand, Paul, who had been staying with us in Vila for a few months. They were able to contact several of the folks George knew, and encouraged those Christians to be faithful to God and His word. There are only a handful of Christians on Santo, and none of them are located close enough to worship together. Though it was a quick trip, it was also a beneficial one.

While George and Mike were in Santo, Mike Ewing and I were scheduled to travel to Emao Island, which is located just off the northeast coast of Efate, the main island. However, when I called on Wednesday evening to confirm our transport, I was informed that the Christians were simply not ready for us – one of the leaders was in Vila for the rest of the week, and several of the Christians were tied up with funeral arrangements due to

*(Continued on page 3)*



Visitors from the States worship with brethren in Port Vila

## Karol's Baptism

By Mike Olson



**Above:** Titus, Shawnda, Carol and Mike all rejoice at Carol's decision to become a Christian.

Some personal evangelism studies are to say the least, difficult, but then again others are a joy to conduct. Don't get me wrong, I am always eager to study with people, but sometimes the person on the receiving end can make the time a pure joy. Karol was such a student.

We first met Karol back in October when she began bringing a large group of kids for Bible class. She stayed for the worship and was regularly attending. Our initial attempts to get a study set up failed but with the help of some local Christians encouraging her, she asked for personal study. Shawnda Brandell had already gotten acquainted with Karol, and knowing that having a woman present would be more comfortable for her, Shawnda joined me for the studies.

We began meeting on Tuesdays and it became apparent that Karol was not only interested in learning but very sharp as well. She easily grasped the lessons and asked good questions. She could see the error of the denomination she had been attending and see the correct teaching

about the Lord's church. As time progressed we looked intently into biblical truth until her time to make the decision to obey the gospel or to stay as she was. Both Shawnda and I spoke frankly about the need for commitment and counting the cost. After a week of consideration she was ready to obey the gospel.

Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup> was the day of Karol's new birth. I went and picked up one of our local leaders, Claude, because he needed to do the baptism down at the ocean. We picked up Karol and headed for the baptizing spot at the area called Malapoa. Claude took her confession and baptized her with some of her brothers and sisters present to witness the life changing event. Baptism is small and quick as far as an action but extremely significant spiritually. It is the belief in the working of God at baptism which makes it the significant event that it is. She has "put on" Christ (Gal 3:27) and now embarks on a new life with her new Lord. Please pray for your new sister in Christ.

## Happy Birthday Titus

**Below:** Karol (L) unites herself with Christ by being immersed by Claude (R), from the Port Vila Congregation.



It was a joyful day at the Brandell house on November 24, as we celebrated Titus' first birthday. We made a trip to the beach, one of Titus' favorite adventures, and then returned to the house for hamburgers, watermelon, cake and ice cream. The Bakers were sorely missed, but we enjoyed sharing these events with Uncle Mike. Titus' favorite part was getting to feed himself cake and ice cream. Here's to another great year!



## Encouraging Visit, continued

the death of a friend in a nearby village. Though we were disappointed, such an episode provided a good sense of life and work in Vanuatu: you never what's going to happen! Instead, Mike and I took advantage of the down time in Vila. We spent several hours talking, which I thoroughly enjoyed. We discussed the Vanuatu work, the goings on at Columbine, and other general topics. We also took some time to work at the Vila church building, mowing the grass and caulking the windows.

Brenda and Shawnda stuck together while we men were running around for a few days. Since Cindy has been out of the country since September, Shawnda was very excited to have Brenda to visit with. They spent many hours talking about the life of a Christian woman. Brenda helped out with Titus, housework and cooking, which was a special treat for Shawnda, especially since she is pregnant. The ladies met with a young Christian named Leila about teaching the children's Bible

class in December, and also visited Selina in her nearby village, who has been ill for several months and unable to attend worship services. On Saturday they conducted a Ladies' Day in Vila. After a time of singing and study, Brenda taught the local ladies how to make cookies. Yum!

As a group, we studied with the Etas congregation twice (with both George and Mike bringing encouraging lessons), worshiped in Vila on Sunday morning, and visited Christians in Paunangisu, Epau and Eton villages. We also teamed up to pass out 450 introductory Bible Correspondence Course lessons in the downtown area. George and Mike helped us with several small projects including installing a ceiling fan, working on our diesel generators, and truck maintenance. For fun, we shared meals, laughed, played cards, and topped it all off with a trip to the Mele Cascade Waterfalls. We felt like the group gained an accurate perspective of Vanuatu and the work

## Bakers Awaiting Paperwork, Enjoying Time With Family

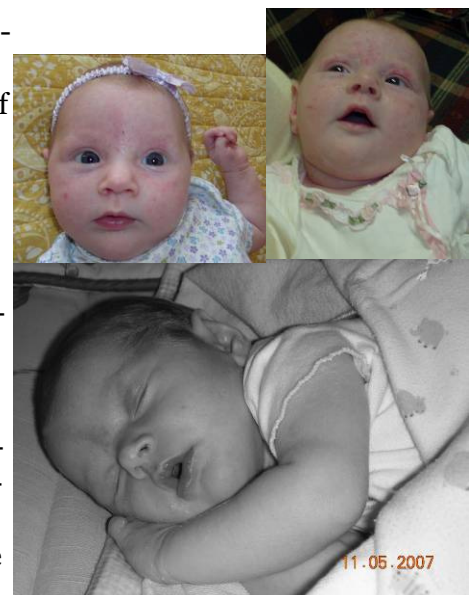
By Aaron Baker

**B**efore we can return to Vanuatu, we must have a passport for Melia. Even though she will soon be one month old, she cannot enter Vanuatu without a passport. The delay in such a process is in getting her birth certificate. According to the Vital Records department in Little Rock, AR., a birth certificate takes 4-6 weeks after the baby is born. We don't have that kind of time!

When we finally did receive the birth certificate (4 weeks after Melia's birth) we set out applying for a passport. We need this in order to travel as well as get Melia on Cindy's residence permit. Our request is that you pray with us for all the necessary papers to fall in place so we can leave for Vanuatu on our planned departure date of Dec. 9th. Though we now have the birth certificate, now we need a passport for Melia

Meanwhile, Kaela has been enjoying her new little sister. She enjoys reading to her, showing her many dolls, jumping for her and many other fun activities. Melia, while only about 6 weeks old has learned how to smile—a welcomed sight by the parents to see such a sweet smile. In all, our girls are

Pics of Melia Madelyn





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\* Mike Olson**

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**Address Correction Requested**

**Check us out on the web!**

[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)