



Mission Vanuatu

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

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Special points of interest:

- Bible training-classes in Port Vila completed.
- Alexis Lynae Brandell born Mar. 9th
- Land update for Etas Village.
- Sharing between American and Vanuatu culture.
- Kids from Vanuatu Mission Team grow up fast!

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Classes Completed

By Aaron Baker

Last month we reported on how our team began classes to educate and train local Christians through a program we call, Truth Bible School. For six weeks Mike and I taught classes to an average of 18 students on the topics of the Scheme of Redemption and How to Study the Bible.

Our team is glad to report that the classes were an overwhelming success. Granted, we cannot judge the value of these classes based on only one quarter completed, but our feedback from the students was very positive.

In all we had 13 students pass the courses, attending 12 classes with 24 hours of instruction. This is a great step in the right direction and a testament to the desire of Ni-Vanuatu Christian's desire to grow.

Our classes were held at night from 6—8:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, to allow those who work, time to attend the classes. In particular we were very impressed by Patrick Kasso. Each day Patrick works from 7 am to 5pm on a farm located 45 minutes from town.

In order to attend the TBS classes in Port Vila, Patrick arranged with his boss to start work earlier on Tuesdays and Thursdays so he could be off work in time to attend these classes. When Patrick finished work at 3pm he would

hurry home to shower, grab his books, and start walking down the road to meet his ride.

I would drive 45 minutes to pick up Patrick, meeting him at around 4:30pm and bring him to Port Vila to attend the classes by 6pm. Patrick would attend these classes from 6—8:15 and then get a ride home from Mike. Often, Patrick would not reach his house that evening until 10 or 11pm on nights he took the classes! On days Patrick would attend our classes he would put in a 15 hour day (7am—10pm) just to be able to study the Bible. What a dedication to learn God's Word!

The next quarter of classes is scheduled to begin on May 20th and will end on June 26th. Mike and Eric will teach on the Old and New Covenants and the Church, respectively. Students are very optimistic about the upcoming classes and are already excited to begin. Please pray with us that this effort to teach and train Christians in Vanuatu will bear fruit for the Lord and bring glory and honor to His Name.



Left: Patrick returns home after many hours of work and study. He does all his Bible study by the light of a lantern.

Brandell Family, Mission Team Grows

By Aaron Baker



Above: Titus Brandell displaying the appropriate message after his new sister, Lexi, was born at 1:24 am on March 9th, 2008.

Below: Eric spends some quality time with Lexi. What a cutie...Lexi, that is.



Pictured above: Shawnda Brandell with new daughter, Alexis Lynae. What a bundle of joy!

Now welcoming the newest member of the Brandell family and to the Vanuatu Mission Team: Alexis Lynae Brandell. "Lexi" was born on Sunday, March 9th at 1:24am, weighing in at 6 lbs. 10 oz. and measuring 18 inches. Lexi is quite a blessing!

Eric, Shawnda and Titus departed Vanuatu for the USA on February 3rd. After a brief stop in Denver, CO they headed to Duncan, OK, where the baby would be born. Duncan is the same town where Eric and Shawnda are from and where Eric's parents still reside.

Scheduled due date for Lexi was March 26th, but due to some pregnancy complications, Lexi decided to come into this world via C-section on March 9th.

Shawnda is recovering just fine after undergoing surgery and Lexi is growing quickly. Titus is learning to be a big brother and is getting used to this new addition to the family. Eric, of course, couldn't be more proud of his two kids.

Eric, Shawnda, Titus and Lexi Brandell are scheduled to return to Vanuatu on May 11th after visiting family, friends and supporters in the US. Please pray with us for the continued safety and health of the Brandells as they have many travels ahead of them.



Above: Alexis Lynae Brandell, born March 9th

Land Update for Etas Village

By Aaron Baker

Due to several several generous individuals and congregations in the States, the Etas church of Christ in Etas village will be able to purchase land on which to meet. We met our target last month for funds needed (\$10,000 USD) and even exceeded it! The additional funds will be used to help the Christians in Etas build a small shelter in which to meet.

Uniquely, this village is very poor. Christians in Etas do not own land and few work. With minimum wage at \$200 per month, it would be

nearly impossible for the Christians to procure land without outside help.

I was able to negotiate with a local land owner to sell a plot of ground to the church (we negotiated a price of 1/3rd of the current market value). Now we are in the closing process where all the land title documents are transferred into the name of the church. This will probably take over a month, but we are excited that the congregation in Etas will soon have land where the church can meet, unhindered. Thank you all for your help!

Sharing of Cultures

By Aaron Baker

We have a unique opportunity here in Vanuatu. We are able to learn the culture of the Ni-Vanuatu people and, in addition, share our own culture from the U.S. with them. On March 23rd, or Easter Sunday, we had such an opportunity.

The majority of people here in Vanuatu view Easter as the celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead. We took this opportunity to teach the congregation how the word "Easter" is not even in the majority of Bible translations today and how this word was incorrectly translated in Acts 12:4 in the KJV Bible.



In addition, during Bible class on Sunday, Cindy incorporated into her lesson about an American custom where adults hide "Easter" eggs and then the kids find them. We took plastic eggs and filled

them with chocolates and hid the eggs in the grass for the kids to find (pictured right).



Cindy used this opportunity to explain our American custom of hiding the eggs, which the kids loved.

While we do enjoy learning about Vanuatu customs and culture, we also enjoy showing Ni-Vanuatu people our American culture. Sometimes we are laughed at and deemed "strange," but we enjoy the activities and discussion all the same.

Kids Korner

This section of the newsletter is dedicated to the children on the Mission Vanuatu Team. We hope you enjoy these updates.

Titus Taylor Brandell

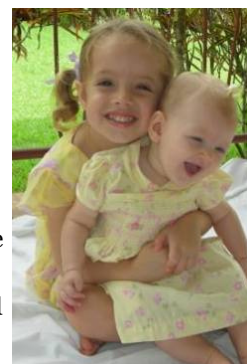
Titus is enjoying his time in the states getting "reacquainted" with his grandparents, aunts, uncles and the like. He really enjoys going to the park, playing outside, going for walks and just being active.



Kaela Sue Baker

Kaela is enjoying pre-school at Port Vila International School (PVIS). She is always making new friends and learning letter and number recognition, too.

Around the house Kaela likes to read books, play with her dolls and ride her bike (with training wheels). If daddy is working outside though, Kaela loves to help out and is fascinated to see how things work.



Alexis Lynae Brandell

Born on March 9th, 2008, Lexi is a cutie just waiting to be held and snuggled. She has really been growing quickly and now weighs in at just over 7lbs. She has been eating great and sleeping well at night, to which the Eric and Shawnda are grateful.



Melia Madelyn Baker

Melia is now 5 months old and is starting to eat baby food. She has tried green beans, apples, pears, papaya and even avocado. The picture here is to show how big avocados get here in Vanuatu—larger than Melia's head!



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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)