



# Mission Vanuatu

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

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## Special points of interest:

- 2 week PIBC classes on Ambae
- Port Vila training school begins second term
- Brandells return from trip to the States.
- 3 souls converted to Christ!

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## Ambae Island

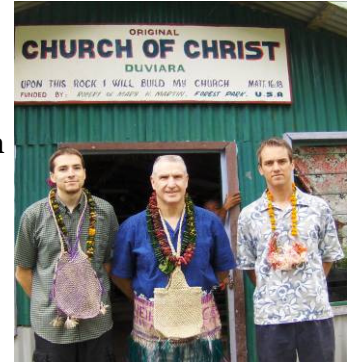
By Aaron Baker

**T**his month, I had the opportunity to travel to Ambae Island, also known as “Bali Hai.” Each year the Pacific Islands Bible College (PIBC) holds classes in Duviara village on Ambae island. I was lucky enough on this trip to be able to accompany Robert Martin, director of PIBC, and Stacy Ferguson, assistant director of PIBC, to Duviara village.

The PIBC program has been held in Duviara village each year, for several years now. Christians travel great distances just to attend the courses. Some walk over an hour-and-a-half just to get to the village for the classes. In addition to Christians attending, the classes are a great tool to reach out to the community and teach God’s Word.

PIBC classes lasted two weeks with Robert teaching a class on the Minor Prophets and Stacy teaching on Christian Evidences. Each day, PIBC classes lasted from 8am to noon. Following a one hour break for lunch, classes then resumed at 1pm for another hour long session. During this afternoon session, I was able to teach on several different topics that the brethren had requested

such as:  
How to teach the youth, Youth Ministry,  
How to study the Bible, and  
How to prepare a sermon.



**Above:** L to R—Aaron, Robert and Stacy are honored by the congregation for coming to teach the Bible.

Following the break from classes each afternoon, students would use the time to go to their gardens and harvest, plant, cut firewood or just study their lesson for the day.

Though it may seem that taking classes like these is a simple matter, this is not the case! Being in a village with no running water or electricity, we would have to gather firewood, make sure there was enough food from the gardens and get enough water for cooking and drinking each day. Such a busy schedule took its toll on students and teachers alike. We were all worn out at the end of our two weeks on Ambae.

Though we were tired in body, our spirits were high as we thoroughly enjoyed our time together with the brethren on Ambae island, in Vanuatu. I speak for all of the brethren in Ambae when I say, “Thank You” for sending us to Ambae and making their study of God’s Word possible.



## Term 2 in Full-Swing

By Eric Brandell

The Truth Bible School started its second term in May, with Mike teaching a class on the Old and New Covenants and me teaching a class on the church. We have 10 full-time students this term, and each class period enjoys several visitors. We are glad that Christians from Epau and Etas Villages have joined several from Vila for the classes. We are again providing funding for the students' transportation, which runs about \$100 per week.

This being my first term to teach in the school, I must say that I am very excited by what I have experienced

thus far. The students are attentive, ask good questions, do good work, and seem like they are really growing in the word. Please continue to pray for these students, as they prepare themselves to be active servants for the church in Vanuatu.



**Above:** Stacy Ferguson preaches in Port Vila after teaching PIBC classes on Ambae Island.



**Above:** Kaela and Titus were so glad to see each other after 3 months apart while the Brandells were in the States. Hugs all around!

**Below:** L to R, Elseva, Janet and Emina are baptized into Christ on May 10th, 2008.



## Back at Home

By Eric Brandell

Our family thoroughly enjoyed our time in the States, but like anyone else we were anxious to get back home to Vanuatu. We said our last goodbyes in Denver and headed to Los Angeles (3 hours) to Auckland, New Zealand (12 hours), and finally to Port Vila (3.5 hours). We arrived on a Sunday morning. Mike picked us up and we all headed straight for church.



Eric settles in with Titus for the long flight from LA to New Zealand.

The flights went quite well, thanks in part to Mema's presence. We were blessed to have Shawnda's mom travel back to Vanuatu with us. She will be here for two months (Shawnda's dad will be joining her for the final three weeks of the trip). Titus and Lexi love having Mema

around, and of course Shawnda and I really appreciate her help.

It always takes a few days to get back into the swing of things, with bags to unpack, rooms to straighten, and a new language to become reacquainted with. Too, we sold our truck before we headed to the States, which means we are also currently without a vehicle. It's always a pleasure to be back with our team and the local Christians, who make the transition much easier on us. A week after we arrived, I started teaching a class on the church in our new Bible school here in Vila. It has required a lot of preparation, but it has been well-worth the effort and a very rewarding experience.

Thanks so much for all your prayers and encouragement! We look forward to seeing you all again next time.



Shawnda's mom, Nancy, spending quality time with Titus.

## Three Souls Turn to Christ

By Aaron Baker

**M**y trip to Ambae with Robert and Stacy was fruitful, indeed. Three souls were added to the Lord's body in Duviara village. Here are their stories:

### Emina Meta

Emina is Paul Vuhu's sister. Paul was one of the first Christians on Ambae island. Emina had been attending the Duviara church of Christ quite regularly, but after hearing a study on the identifying characteristics of the church, she began to question her own background. She realized that she had been baptized before, but that was to join a denominational group. Emina wanted to be baptized for the forgiveness of her sins and to be added to the Lord's body, which is the church, on May 10th, 2008.



### Elseva Simeon

I had studied with Elseva on previous trip in to Ambae. She grew up in the Presbyterian church and was baptized as a baby. When she discovered that neither sprinkling nor the baptizing of babies is a practice found in the New Testament, Elseva was baptized into Christ on May 10th, 2008.



### Janet Vuhu

Janet had been listening to our Bible studies from the outside of a window. She believed the Bible and wanted to do what the Bible said. Janet was baptized into Christ on May 10th, 2008.



# 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

May 24 was Titus' 18 month birthday. He continues to flourish in every way. He is on the verge of running, LOVES playing with Kaela, eats like a champ, and has learned lots of new words: hot (learned that one the hard way), Diego, thank you, Lexi, Mema, and banana.



### Kaela Sue Baker

After two weeks off from school, Kaela is now returning to class. She enjoys writing and painting her ABC's as well as dancing to music. Kaela will be 4 in July and is looking forward to being a big 4 year old! One of Kaela's favorite things to do is play with Titus. Both are pictured here playing on Titus' truck.



### Alexis Lynae Brandell

What a difference a month makes! Little Lexi is sleeping a lot less these days, but still does very well at night (usually only wakes up once). She took breast milk from a bottle a few times this month, which means mom isn't quite so tied down. Her favorite toy is her Baby Einstein Gym, which she inherited from big brother Titus.



### Melia Madelyn Baker

Melia is now 7 months old and is growing fast. She can almost sit up by herself, but does need a little help. Melia is now big enough that she can sit in a highchair. She loves to chew on hard breakfast crackers and enjoys rubbing the chewed up crackers all over her face!



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\* Mike Olson**

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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)