



# Mission Vanuatu

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

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## Special points of interest:

- Group of 6 from US works with mission team, spreading the message of Christ!
- National Christians take mission trip to Marou Village.
- Tanna Island Evangelism
- Josephine baptized into Christ

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## U.S. Campaigners Help Work in Vanuatu

By Aaron Baker

A group from Colorado arrived in Vanuatu on April 7th and worked with our mission team here in Vanuatu until their departure on April 19th. These two weeks flew past, but were very successful in edifying Christians as well as preaching and teaching God's Word.

Wayne Burger, Kevin Fennelly, Wesley and Bethany Aspey (Columbine), Matt Borgelt (Golden, and Branson Hartshorn (Longmont) were the group of six campaigners to come to Vanuatu to work with our mission team. Individually, they represent congregations throughout central Colorado; collectively, they worked hard to show the love of Christ to the people of Vanuatu.

Two hours after their plane touched down in Vanuatu, this group was hard at work passing out fliers and tracts inviting people in the capital city of Port Vila to a Gospel Meeting. This meeting was held from April 8th-11th and many Christians and non-Christians alike attended. Wayne and Kevin brought timely lessons on the fundamentals of Christianity. Our mission team now has some excellent contacts to follow up with in

trying to bring the saving message of the Gospel to as many people as possible.

In addition to a Gospel Meeting, these campaigners helped preach in the local park, visit and edify Christians in Etas, Eton, Epau and Rentapao villages as well as help with service projects in Etas and Rentapao. With so many activities scheduled, our team thought that this group would be worn down and tired. However, each day they were excited to see what adventure was in store for them! Whether riding in the back of the truck during torrential downpours or trudging through the mud, this group did a wonderful job of displaying their Christ-like attitudes.

For you all reading this...are you ready to come to Vanuatu on a campaign? How about 2010?



**Above L to R:** Branson, Matt, Wayne, Wesley, Bethany, and Kevin helped our mission team tremendously in teaching, preaching and spreading the Gospel in Vanuatu.

**Below:** Mike working to prepare Natangora leaves to be woven together for the thatch roof.



**Below:** The end result of weaving the natangora was a repaired roof to help the village attract tourism to Marou



**Below:** Harry shovels the sand as Eric and Arthur carry it to where the village makes cement.



**Below:** Chief Nobat of Marou village welcomes our mission team to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ.



## Marou Village Campaign

By Eric Brandell

Though we initially planned to have 15 workers travel to Emao Island for a campaign effort in Marou Village, we ended up having only five. Six Christians from America missed their plane due to snow in the northeast, and arrived in Vanuatu a week later than scheduled! Several locals who were planning to accompany us were otherwise occupied. Nonetheless, Mike, Aaron and I traveled to this small South Pacific Island along with Harry from Paunangisu Village and Arthur from Epau Village, both of whom we thoroughly appreciated having with us. We also enjoyed having Titus and Joshua (Harry's grandson) along for the ride.

As always, the locals treated us as their honored guests. Our bellies were constantly full of local kaikai (including such local delicacies as wahoo, squid and bat!) and all the hot tea we could drink, and we were all housed in the Community Hall. Our plan was to help the village physically by taking part in service projects during the day, and help them spiritually in the evenings with public Bible teaching. We had hoped to help them continue building a seawall along the coast of the village, as recently higher-than-usual tides have caused significant erosion, but the necessary cement for such a project was not available. Instead, we spent the morning hours helping the village get ready for a visit from the New Zealand Deputy Commissioner, who would be coming the following week to inspect various aid projects financed by the NZ government. Primarily we helped them prepare 2-meter lengths of Natangora (thatch) roofing, which was then applied to the guest bungalows. We also moved

a substantial amount of sand from the beach up to near the village nakamal, so that concrete may be mixed at the appropriate time. I will be putting a video on the website of the Natangora work in process for those who are interested in seeing how this is done. Sand transfer consisted of filling up empty flour sacks (80lb. capacity) with shovels and lugging them up to the appropriate dumping place. Everyone enjoyed seeing how much sand Mike could carry in one load! Though we made a relatively small contribution physically, I believe the locals were appreciative of our willingness to work alongside them in these efforts (as a general rule, "white men" are not known in Vanuatu as being keen on physical labor). A wise man once said, "they need to know how much you care before they'll care how much you know." Our service efforts were conducted in an attempt to communicate to them that we really are concerned for their well being - both physical and spiritual.

In our three evening sessions, we each focused on the distinctiveness and uniqueness of the church Jesus established. Our experience has shown that a proper understanding of the nature and characteristics of the one, true New Testament church is paramount in reaching lost souls in Vanuatu. Mike taught the

**Below:** Our mission team to Emao included Harry from Paunangisu and Arthur from Epau village. We love working together for Christ!





(Continued from page 2)

first night, at which time he delivered a lesson that considered God's plan for the church, which existed even prior to the creation events (Eph 3:9-11). There were 31 locals present for the study, including the chief of the village and several denominational elders and deacons. His conclusion noted the fact that while God had planned for only one church, Marou (like all villages in Vanuatu) had no less than four. This point was an eye-opener for the locals, and obviously caused many of them to reconsider their previous beliefs. During the Q&A session, two of the locals became quite heated in their remarks towards Mike, but I was proud of him for keeping a very cool head and answering their objections with Scripture rather than opinion. One comment that came from the evening's discussion really set the

tone for the rest of the weekend: "I wouldn't want to join Christ's church anyway, because the members in this village do not conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion." The old saying, *the truth hurts*, was applicable. This statement, though seemingly harsh, may have been just what the local Christians in Marou needed to hear. They've heard countless lessons on proper Christian conduct from our team over the past couple of years, but only now did they realize the extent to which they truly do represent Christ in the eyes of outsiders. This prompted the Christians to conduct a private meeting at which time they all re-dedicated themselves to righteous living (especially including a commitment to assemble for worship every Sunday morning). Be praying that they will be able to let their lights shine brightly in the coming weeks, months and years!

# 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 made his first official mission trip this month, as he joined the boys and traveled to Marou Village (Emao Island). We were there for four days, and Titus was in "little boy heaven" - swimming, throwing rocks, roaming free, staying up late and eating laplap everyday (his favorite food!). Dad cherished the one-on-one time, and looks forward to more opportunities in the future. Titus endured our family's first bout with lice this month, which included a haircut (probably 6+ inches). The trim brought tears to Mommy's eyes, but you gotta do whatcha gotta do (and it'll grow back). His short hair makes him look so grown up!



paign group that visited from the States. Mom, Dad and Titus are boring compared to all that excitement!

## Kaela Sue Baker

Just as quickly as Kaela's year-round school began, the first 9 week term ended. Kaela loves school and is a very social girl. Favorite activities include singing, dancing and playing w/her friends. We are most proud, however, of what she has accomplished outside of school. Every night before bedtime, Kaela does Bible related memory work and has a Bible story. She has just completed 20 memory assignments and is beaming with pride at her accomplishment. Great job Kaela!



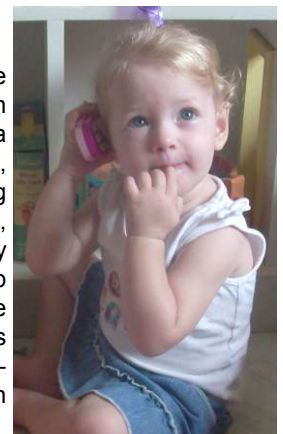
## Alexis Lynae Brandell

Lexi continues to mature by leaps and bounds. Her big news this month is that she took her first official step! There haven't been any more since, but we know that "fully-mobile Lexi" is just around the corner. She has also learned to say "bubba" and "ta" (please in Bislama), but is quick to resort to a stout yell if you miss her polite request. Lexi endured a tough diaper rash (which can get quite ugly in this tropical environment) and a cold. We are grateful to God for the medicines that are available. Lexi thoroughly enjoyed all the attention she received from the cam-



## Melia Madelyn Baker

You can practically read her mind as she thinks about who she is going to call on her toy cell phone next. To drink, Melia only wants water. No milk, koolaid or juice, just water! Favorite activities are drawing on the chalkboard, playing with Kaela, climbing on anything and repeating any words. In fact, she can now say, "up please" and also ask for a drink when she is thirsty. What a cutie! Her personality is beginning to show—as well as her frustrations when she doesn't get her way. Fun times for Mom & Dad!



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**Address Correction Requested**

**Check us out on the web!**

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

### **Mission Vanuatu Team**



**Mike Olson**

(Left side of picture)

**Aaron, Cindy, Kaela and  
Melia Baker**

(Middle of picture)

**Eric, Shawnda, Titus and Lexi  
Brandell**

(Right side of picture)