



Mission Vanuatu

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

September 2009
Volume 6,
Issue 9

Special points of interest:

- Mike spends 2 weeks in remote village of Duviara, Ambae
- PIBC classes on Ambae and Efate islands going well
- Weekly Bible Hour program in Etas a hit with the kids!

Inside this issue:

Ambae Island	1
Pacific Islands Bible College	2
Etas Bible Hour	2
Kids Korner	3

Ambae Island

By Mike Olson

My first trip back to Ambae island in nearly four years was spiritually successful for both the brethren and myself. Aaron Baker asked me to take his place as he is busy with a wife and two small kids and trips to another island. The trip was in jeopardy for a while as my traveling partner, missionary Rocco Pierce from American Samoa, had to cancel at the last minute because of more pressing matters at home. I inquired about teaching his classes for the Pacific Islands Bible College (PIBC) there in Ambae. As it turned out I was able to teach a course on Denominational Doctrines for PIBC, and I added a class on God's Scheme of Redemption from our Trutok Baebol Skul. The bonus for the students was that I could conduct the classes in Bislama, thus aiding the students in their understanding.

Duviara village is at the top of the hill in the Northeast of the island. Needless to say, things don't change much up there. All looked as it did four years ago. The great part of the trip was being reunited with the brethren I had met before and meeting the new Christians. As usual I had to feel bad for the women as they are saddled with the majority of the work in looking after me. My pleas of "don't worry, I don't need that" fell on deaf ears as they slaved away in the kitchen and elsewhere. I tried to repay them with good classes and I helped them in their gardens on several afternoons. Seeing a white person do physical work is not in their realm of comprehension so I was a big topic of conversation. I told them

that the Bible says "if you don't work you don't eat!" (2 Thess 3:10). Actually, I spent every evening in the kitchen with the women, eating and talking about things. I got the straight scoop on the way things were from the women.

The two courses I taught turned out to be very popular. In the Denominational Doctrines class, I was able to focus on particular aspects of church doctrine in each class period to build up the brethren's understanding, and to teach some non-Christians the truth. Nearly every person commented that the classes in Bislama were better than English, and I heard the phrase "now I understand"



Above: Ladies write down notes from Mike's lessons in Duviara village, Ambae.

over and over. These folks had been taught these truths before by Aaron and others, but now they were sinking in. The Scheme of Redemption course was also very popular and challenging for everyone.

My visit also included a men's meeting with the local leaders. I intended to challenge them on their lax approach to leadership and to challenge them on their examples before their families and the community. Mission accomplished! The reactions were a mixed bag but overall they admitted that I was right and things needed to change. I im-

(Continued on page 2)



Above: Mark and Simeon, from Ambae, enjoying some sun during an afternoon break from Mike's classes in Duviara village. This is the first time many are hearing the Word taught in a language they fully comprehend.



Above: Paul Vuhu, pictured with his daughter, Janet, are both enjoying PIBC classes. Paul is the first person to ever graduate PIBC classes in Vanuatu, yet he still comes to classes, inviting others to come and join. Great job reaching out to others, Paul!



Above: After Bible hour each week in Etas, all the kids load into the truck and Aaron drops them off at home. Some weeks the truck is very full, as you can see here in the picture. The more the merrier, right?!?

(Continued from page 1)

plored them to start fresh, move forward, and not point fingers about what has happened in the past.

By the end of the two weeks part of me

Pacific Islands Bible College (PIBC)

Tom Bailey, from the Elm and Hudson church of Christ in Altus, Oklahoma, arrived in Vanuatu on September 29th to teach in the PIBC program.

Each year, teachers from the US come to Vanuatu to teach classes for two weeks in both Eton village and Port Vila. This year, Tom is teaching the book of Romans. Our very own Mike Olson, is co-teaching with Tom and will be covering the Major Prophets (Isaiah—Daniel).

Classes began September 29th and will end October 13th. Each morning Tom and Mike teach in Eton village from 9-noon and then again in the evening from 6-9pm. With travel time involved to and from both teaching locations, teachers work hard for two weeks to strengthen, encourage and train Christians in Vanuatu to deepen their faith. In addition, visitors from Port Vila are attending classes and this is yet another opportunity to reach out to the community with the truth of God's Word.

In order to kick off this year's PIBC session, our team held a "Preaching in the Park" event at the local seafront stage located in the heart of town near the market house. Since the local custom is a lunch break from 11:30 to 1:30pm, we took advantage of these two hours to 1) preach God's Word 2) to invite people to attend the PIBC classes

was not wanting to go, but I needed to head out and pursue other works. I was as encouraged as I have ever been after spending some extended time with a group in Vanuatu. Here's looking forward to going back!

and 3) to invite people to study the Bible one-on-one or through the mail. Overall, we passed out over 300 tracts and invitations.

Although he just touched down (from the USA) that very same morning on the 29th of September, Tom was more than willing to preach at the park. Despite being exhausted from the 24 hours + of travelling, Tom did a good job in teaching the lunch crowd gathered at the park.

Our mission team (Aaron, Eric and Mike) also preached in the park several lessons designed to peak interest in PIBC as well as to challenge the listeners to look to the Bible for answers to our Bible questions and our lives today. Reaching people going to and coming from the market is a good way to put good, Biblical materials into the hands of people in Port Vila. May God bless these efforts and cause the increase!

Below: Mike teaching the *Major Prophets* in Port Vila in the Bislama language.



Bible Hour in Etas

By Aaron Baker

Each Friday, I pick up Kaela from her school and travel out to Etas Village where we have a weekly Bible Hour class. The focus of this time is to teach the kids basic Bible facts and familiarize them with Bible characters. For many of these kids, this is the first time they are learning how many books are in the Bible, the OT and the NT. This hour spent each week is an investment into the future of the church in Etas village.

Kids love singing songs, playing games, and devouring any snacks I happen to bring. We have already studied the life of Joseph



any snacks I happen to bring. We have already studied the life of Joseph

and are currently learning about Moses. One of their most favorite songs is "Roll the Gospel Chariot" as the kids love to "Roll" over Satan!

Our prayer for the children of Etas is for them to grow in their knowledge of God's Word that one day they will have the opportunity to obey the Lord, putting Christ on in baptism. Until then...we'll keep studying each week about Bible characters and learning Bible lessons to grow in knowledge. We thought you'd like to know what the kids are doing in Etas. Learning God's Word is fun!

[Pictured] Kids from Etas gather each week for our Bible Hour program.



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 had lots of fun this month - play dates, play group and Fun Factory. His best friends are Senuj and Charlie, and they all play really well together. The city did some work on our road this month, which meant lots of construction equipment right outside our front door. Titus spent lots of time on the front porch, having a front row seat to all the action. We also learned this month that Titus has a great arm (all that rock-throwing has paid off). He and Daddy have lots of fun playing catch.



Alexis Lynae Brandell

"Lexi-girl", as she is affectionately known around these parts, is really living up to that name. She loves her stuffed animals, purses and shoes. She can often be seen carrying as many purses and "babies" as she can get her chubby little arms around. The scene is really completed when she adds her sunglasses to the mix. And every time we get her out of bed, she immediately starts chanting "sues, pues, pues" - and continues until she has shoes on her feet. New words this month include come, Titus, and milk.



Kaela Sue Baker

Kaela's third term of Kindergarten ended this month. That means only one more to go until she will begin 1st grade in February next year! In her mind, she is ready for the transition...NOW!

Dad was very proud of Kaela this month as she helped pass out tracts to people at our Preaching in the Park program. Though Kaela was a bit too shy to talk to people, she did a great job of passing out tracts and helping Dad to tell people about Jesus. Thanks, Kaela!



Melia Madelyn Baker

Melia is growing quickly and her vocabulary is rapidly expanding. Her most favorite phrase these days, much to her parents' chagrin, is "I do it," meaning, "No thanks. I'll do it myself." Her second most favorite phrase is, "Look at me". Melia is not starved for attention by any means, but will take all she can get.

Melia loves to play peek-a-boo and enjoys chasing daddy around the house. Oh yeah, she also likes it when daddy chases her around the house, too!



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

Mission Vanuatu Minutes
A ministry of the
Columbine church of Christ
7453 S. Zephyr Ct
Littleton, CO 80128

Please send address changes and
inquiries to:
Kevin Fennelly
kfenn10987@msn.com

**Spreading the Gospel in
the South Pacific**

Columbine church of Christ
7453 S. Zephyr Ct.
Littleton, CO 80128

Address Correction Requested

Check us out on the web!

www.missionvanuatu.com

Mission Vanuatu Team



New Team Picture

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

(Left side of picture)

Mike Olson

(Middle of picture)

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

(Right side of picture)