



Mission Vanuatu Minutes

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

Women's Prison

By Mike Olson

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Special points of interest:

- Mike ministers at the women's prison
- Vila member, Claude, leads evangelistic studies.
- Mike spends 2 weeks with the brethren on Ambae island.
- Alice baptized into Christ!

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The old saying goes, "one thing leads to another." This is how I began teaching at the women's prison here in Port Vila. Back in March I was at my regular study at the men's prison, when one of the officials of the women's facility, Anna, saw me teaching. She spoke with the director of prisons and he called me to his office one day to ask if I would begin also teaching at the women's prison. Of course I welcomed the opportunity and later I spoke with Anna about a time to meet and study. After discussing a time and a program of study, I went for the first time in late March.

Of course I didn't really know what to expect as I walked into the small yard, but I was soon greeted by the ladies and I jumped in with both feet. The women's facility has three detainees, Vanessa, Nicole and Meliana, all of them very nice people and willing students. I soon realized that I would really enjoy teaching these ladies. Teaching at the men's prison is a challenge because

most of the guys have little education and many can't read. Not so for these ladies. They all read English and have no problem comprehending the lessons. They all take lots of notes and ask good questions. We have been studying God's scheme of redemption with the intent of opening their eyes to the message of the whole Bible. They have thoroughly enjoyed the lessons and learned many things they never knew. The good thing about teaching prisoners is that they have all the time in the world to study and consider the lessons. The bad thing is that they are inundated with denominational teachings and you spend as much time trying to refute error as you do teaching truth. However, each week I have 3 to 4 hours to teach so I can cover lots of ground. Eventually I will be leading the lessons to matters of Jesus, His church, salvation and the proper manner of Christian living.

Please join me in praying for these ladies that they will one day obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ambae Island

By Mike Olson

The apostle Paul gave the church a pattern to follow for evangelistic and follow up work in Acts 14:21-22 and 15:36, 41. He mentions strengthening the brethren through the teaching of the word, and encouraging them to remain faithful. Paul also states that Christians will enter the kingdom of God through tribulations.

After my last visit to the church in Ambae it was clear that they had need of strengthening on particular subjects and encouragement to remain on the straight course. I went to Ambae on the 12th of May for two weeks of classes, en-

couragement and challenges. I taught on the requested topics of church problems and parent-child problems/relationships. Also, based on my last trip I wanted to teach on the Lord's Supper, giving and money use, custom, culture and the Bible, and the Holy Spirit. These are some heavy topics but I tried to stress the basics and I tried to help them weed out the denominational thinking. The time was a success for the brethren and I was able to do some evangelistic work. There are 2 or 3 ready to be baptized into Christ and hopefully this will happen soon.

Below: What's that, a house? Not in Vanuatu!

What looks just like a regular house with a regular fence is really the Women's Prison. Mike runs Bible studies here each week on Wednesday.



Training the Body

“...Train yourself for godliness” - 1 Tim. 4:7b

Spiritual training is not easy. Just as physical training can be challenging and difficult, so can spiritual training.

This month I set up a Bible study with a young college student, named Kelly. Instead of teaching the study myself, I asked Claude, a Christian in the Port Vila congregation, to lead the studies.

This is the first time Claude has led evangelistic studies with anyone. Claude is sure to practice the studies before he teaches. I am right there with him during the studies, and after the study is complete, we discuss what he did well and where he could improve.

By Aaron Baker

Claude has only been a Christian for two years, but is showing great potential. He has a true desire to share his faith with others. With some practice, Claude can be a great leader for the Lord, a wonderful voice for the church, and an evangelist to lost souls. Good job Claude, keep up the good work!



Above: Claude (L) and Kelly (R) after their Bible study in Tagabe

Building up the Body

Growing as a Christian takes time. It certainly doesn't happen overnight, but takes a lifetime to accomplish. The Word of God is deep enough that all the truths cannot be unearthed. There is always more one could learn. Still, we cannot let this prevent us from trying.

From May 1st through June 5th, Christians in Eton and Epau villages gather each Saturday morning to attend Truth Bible School (TBS) classes. I am teaching the topic of New Testament Survey in order to give these Christians a well rounded view of what the New Testament is all about.

My day begins with my departure from Vila at 6:45am, with a stop in Eton village 45 minutes away to pick up students for class. By 8:30 we arrive in Epau village and are ready for classes to begin. Each of the six Saturdays that these classes are held, we must cover

By Aaron Baker

about 4 books of the NT, which is no small task!

On average, there are 7 students each week. A smaller number than I would like, but these Christians are the “cream of the crop”.

With time for questions, we finish this TBS class around 11:30 and begin our trip back to Vila. By 1pm I'm back at home ready for a break from the hectic morning, yet excited about the next time I can help teach these TBS students so that we might continue building up the body of Christ in Vanuatu.

Below: Miswel immerses Alice to wash away her sins and add her to the body of Christ. One more soul added to the kingdom!



Added to the Body

By Aaron Baker

Since February, Cindy has been studying with a lady from Etas village named, Alice. Formerly with the Seventh Day Adventist group (SDA), Alice felt like she didn't know what she was doing in life and was looking for direction. Her sister Salome, a member of the church and also living in Etas, often brought her to worship. When Cindy asked Alice to study the Bible with her, Alice was excited.

To describe Alice in one word: committed. Each week Alice was ready to study the Bible. She only missed two studies, but that was because she had a baby!

Throughout the studies Alice asked good questions with a sincere mind and heart, searching for the truth. You could see in her a hunger for God's Word and a desire for Truth.

While only educated through the sixth grade, Alice did not let this obstacle keep her from learning the truth. It did, however, present challenges in teaching someone who was nearly illiterate. Cindy worked hard to create a series of studies that were short, simple, and to the point. These studies contained hand-drawn pictures which were used to communicate the Gospel message so Alice could make her own decision to become a Christian.

Even though Alice's husband is not a Christian, she could wait no longer and wanted to secure her eternity by being joined to Christ in baptism. On May 18th, Alice was added to the body of Christ.



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 travels half way around the world to the US and what does he choose to play with?!? Mud! Titus did great on the 11 hour flight over the Pacific, and has enjoyed every minute of his time in the States. He's made lots of new friends and become reacquainted with old ones. Lots of time with grandparents is a pleasure too. His new favorite food is Fruit Loops.



Kaela Sue Baker

Kaela loves it when the mail comes and there is something in there for her. This month she received Fun Dip and was thoroughly pleased with herself as she ate the powder AND the dipping stick. She even managed to do all this while on swinging on the rope swing out on the back porch!

Kaela is also advancing in her reading skills. Though only in first grade, she can read fairly well. Each day she brings a book home from school to read to Mom or Dad.



Alexis Lynae Brandell

Alexis braved the "Tilt-a-Whirl" for a few minutes at Kiddyland, but the operator did have to stop it early for her. Lexi has attached herself to lots of new grandpas and uncles, just like she does in Vanuatu. She has also enjoyed play dates with cousins and new friends, and being spoiled by the grandparents. Her new favorite treat is chocolate milk.



Melia Madelyn Baker

Being trendy and dressing up is a favorite activity for Melia. While Kaela got Fun Dip in the mail, Melia got fancy sunglasses.

Melia loves to ride Kaela's bike (w/ training wheels of course), swing on the rope swing, play with dolls, and help Dad wash the truck...all the things a typical two year old girl loves to do.



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Address Correction Requested

Check us out on the web!

www.missionvanuatu.com

Mission Vanuatu Team



**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)