

WHAT'S UP WITH THE WIDUPS?

MARCH 2018

The "Lesser" Roles of the Missionary

Our ministry in Vanuatu is varied — sometimes we get to do exciting stuff like sharing the gospel with sick patients and their families at the hospital, or traveling to remote villages to interact directly with unreached peoples. Other days are consumed with seemingly ordinary work, such as fixing computers, maintaining vehicles and machinery, and purchasing supplies to ship to missionaries on distant islands, or following up on correspondence..



All Christ-followers are to play a part in sharing the gospel and making disciples throughout the world. It says that Jesus will not return until every ethnos (people or language group) has had opportunity to respond to God's gracious offer of salvation by faith in Christ's substitutionary death and resurrection. Not only do we need to work together to accomplish our mission, but we must recognize that ministry often springs from the everyday or logistical tasks. Even behind-the-scenes or mundane activities can be valuable acts of service to the overall goal of proclaiming Christ and building disciples.



Missionaries can end up doing things for which they lack skill or passion, because there is no one else to do what needs to be done! We urge you to make the most of the skills and resources God has given YOU to build up the body of Christ in Vanuatu and everywhere else He has given you influence.

May we all use the resources God has given us to reflect His glory & His grace to the world!

IN THE RING OF FIRE

The archipelago of Vanuatu's 80+ islands is part of a 25,000-mile chain of seismically active sites in the Pacific Ocean. 75% of the world's volcanoes and 90% of earthquakes are in this Ring!



Volcanoes

Vanuatu has NINE active volcanoes: seven on land and two beneath the sea. Our last newsletter

mentioned the evacuation of **Ambae Island**, just east of us, due to the "firing up" of its volcano, Mt. Manaro. The most famous and most easily accessible, is **Tanna Island's** Mt Yasur. Mt Garek, on **Gaua Island**, is potentially the most dangerous and erupted in 2009 after many years of dormancy. **Marum** and **Benbow** are active on **Ambrym Island**. **Lopevi Island** was previously inhabited until 1960, but is now deserted due to volcanic activity. Bill, Marcus and Tony have explored three of these.

Earthquakes

We feel tremors on a regular basis, but they are usually harmless and not scary. Several tectonic plates (earth's crust) meet in the Ring of Fire, and earthquakes result from seismic waves traveling along fault lines as the plates are constantly in friction with one another.



PRAYER POINTS

Bible Translation

Praise God for the Dieringers, who have moved to Mota Lava Island to complement the Smith's linguistic work in the *Motlap* language— the Smiths are thrilled to finally have teammates! Christina gives praise to God for the Bible studies He has enabled her to write in *Bislama* this past term.

Pray for

- Houghton Richards as his ability to translate *Rral* is being hindered by a herniated disc in his lower back; pray that he and Laura finish the gospel of Mark and related teaching materials
- God to bring more, committed linguist missionaries to translate the 60+ languages still needing Scripture to be voiced clearly!

Team Ministry

Praise God that the Christian school our field team founded in 2011, Nabanga Kindy for 3-6 year olds has started a new year, and that Maxine is able to spend time training the teachers (in addition to homeschooling her 8-year-old and caring for two young ones!). Another school in the area is now looking to Nabanga for mentoring. Praise for opportunities to encourage, challenge and meet needs in both rural and in-town relationships.

Pray for

- Our field teammates, the Liliords, to take over responsibilities as we transition to furlough
- Other teammates, the Nacisses in the USA, awaiting Lemy's citizenship
- A willing teacher to volunteer as a trainer for the future local 1st/2nd grade class teachers, alongside Maxine at Nabanga Christian School*

Personal

We praise God that we were able to witness the engagement of our eldest son to long-time family friend, Sierra Swets, when she came to visit for the last 11 days of Marcus' time with us on Espiritu Santo Island.

Pray for

- Energy and productivity as we finish our field term
- Wisdom and grace as Marcus & Sierra plan a June wedding

Before Marcus & Sierra flew out, we shared a special meal of laplap sorsor, a cultural dish of yam, chicken and coconut milk



USA Furlough

April-May— Marcus and Sierra left in

mid-March, but the rest of us fly to the USA in April. These first months we will be traveling around the East Coast and catching up with extended family.

June-August—A wedding in June! And lots more travel: Iowa, Colorado, Missouri. We'll focus on connecting with as many of you on our Home Team as we can.

September—Packing our usual 40' shipping container of ministry & household supplies. We'll do our best to squeeze in more visits with family, friends & partners.

October—Lord willing, four of us will return to Vanuatu. Marcus (and Sierra) and Mikaela will stay in Indiana for work/schooling.

ON MISSION WITH US

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