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Greetings from Lae once again. My apologies for the somewhat sporadic reports. The Melanesian Bible College school year always leads to a great abundance of work and severe shortage of time. The last time I wrote we were only 3 weeks into the school year. Now we are 10 weeks in, and preparing for the 3rd year graduation (this coming Saturday), and then 6 more weeks until the end of school for 2018.

Since the last report, our stragglers students have arrived. Thanks for your prayers. Max (whose family detained him) arrived safely a few days after the last report. Joel's wife, Vero, arrived 4 weeks late! "P.N.G. time" is alive and well... We have lost one literacy student who got too far behind when her baby was admitted to hospital with diarrhea. Melissa hopes to return next year. The remaining students are doing really well. Overall, this school year has been uneventful for the most part and everyone is working hard.



Ruan (literacy student from 2014) and Vero (literacy student from 2017) at the end of our afternoon class today. A third student, Miriam, was absent.



MBC Headstart Program 2018 class party. Three of our kids (the two boys at the back, plus another who was absent) will be leaving with their parents next week.

When I last wrote, Miring's brother, Wesley, was admitted with very high blood pressure and severe pain in his left arm. He has recovered well. He was released the day after the last report, and they came and stayed with us for about a week after that while he continued to recover. Thank you for your prayers for him and his family.

My namesake's battle with breast cancer continues, and it has been a difficult few weeks for her, and all of us who are close to her. Your prayers are greatly needed and appreciated. As reported before, she had surgery on January 23rd. She then had a skin graft on February 22nd, before being released on the 27th. In the 5 weeks since her release, the cancer has started to grow back again, and there is considerable swelling through her armpit. Her first chemotherapy treatment was yesterday, and once she has completed a number of cycles of medication, she will go through radiation. In the midst of it all, she celebrated her 21st birthday on March 19th. We have enjoyed having her staying with us over the past couple of weekends.



Ruth Waine (foreground) with friend during her 21st birthday celebration

In the past couple of reports I have asked for prayers for one of Miring's relatives, who was sent back to Indagen in February after spending several months in hospital in Lae. She passed away

on February 23rd, a week after returning home. Thank you for your prayers for the family. The family wish to express their gratitude to everyone who have prayed for them over the past few months.

On February 26th, the P.N.G. highland provinces suffered through a 7.5 magnitude earthquake. The main areas of damage were in the Southern Highland, Hela and Enga Provinces. We didn't feel the quake at all in Lae, and I actually found out about it from an Australian news broadcast! One of the hardest hit areas was Tari, where I visited with my cousin last September. I was able to get through to the manager of the lodge where we stayed, and he reported damage to some of their buildings, and large cracks, but no injury or loss of life to any of the residents or staff. Ironically, he is from the Christchurch area in New Zealand, so this was not a new experience for him.

Watching the devastation on the local news broadcasts has been difficult. The initial quake was followed by several more of 6.0-7.0 magnitude, along with hundreds of tremors, and the people were very frightened and upset. In the past few days fighting has also broken out in the same area with 7 deaths reported, including 2 primary school students, and many houses burned. The army has been sent in, and the aid workers are being removed for their safety.

The last confirmed death toll (from the earthquakes) that I heard stood at 125, with many more missing as whole villages were buried as the mountains crumbled. Many of the areas are very remote, and the roads have been heavily damaged, so communication has been poor, and overseas coverage very limited. The seismic activity in the area seems to have calmed down over recent weeks, however there have been several large quakes in East and West New Britain in recent days. In Lae we have had a few very minor quakes, the kind that are easily missed if you are moving when they happen. Please pray for the church in the affected areas, as well as everyone suffering loss of family, property and lifestyle as a result.

March was an incredibly busy month. In addition to literacy and the library sessions, I have been teaching a class for the women from 1:00-2:00pm, as part of the second term curriculum. Our last class was today. In addition to the regular school schedule, we also had: our classes for the Indagen ladies, which Miring and I started in September; the first Lae City combined ladies' class for this year, at M.B.C. on the 17th; a birthday party for Rose's younger brother, Pale ("Paley") on the 25th (who turned 17 and cut his very first birthday cake!); and the One Day Youth Camp, which the 3rd year students host annually as their practical, on the 31st. This year there were two baptisms during the camp: Bikon Waia and Joelene Diring. Two new young sisters in Christ.



1 Day Youth Camp at M.B.C.

After receiving the water bill for the months of November and December, and noting that it had gone from approximately K40.00 to K200.00, we went and purchased a 1000L water tank. Miamel, and some of the students, came and did the cement work and installation, and we have been enjoying rainwater ever since for outdoor work. Hopefully it will help cut the cost, as everything continues to go up here. It will be a relief as well, the next time the water suddenly goes off for hours on end, to have water!!



The newly installed water tank. The cement base is doubling as shelving for Miring's plants!

I am saddened to say that the printing service which we have been offering at M.B.C., in order to provide song books to the church at cost, has come to a grinding halt for the past 4 months. Hopefully this is now resolved. I ran out of toner for the new machine in December, halfway through printing the latest 250 song books, and the company that I have been dealing with pretty



much lied about having ordered more for a January delivery. Turns out that they received one cartridge, which they sold to someone else. The cost at other suppliers is significantly larger (up to K195.00 difference), so the new machine has been parked in a corner. We have been using the old machine just for the teachers' materials, but it once again broke down last week. I went today to find and purchased a new drum (also not in stock in January) and the technician came and did the installation and fixed the rollers. The reason for purchasing the new machine last year was to replace the old one which we had been feeding money into in repairs. Looks like I can't escape that whatever I do!

Fund-raising for the new classroom building at M.B.C. has continued to go well, and I am very pleased to report that we currently stand at K121,579.90 (~CN\$51,420.00) with another K684.00 (~CN\$289.00) stock on hand. That means that we are K7,736.10 (CN\$3,272.00) away from meeting the cost of the frame, and K27,736.10 (CN\$11,731.00) away from meeting the first target (frame and base). Thank you, yet again, for your prayers towards this mountainous project. We sincerely look forward to the final outcome. Thank you also, if you have contributed financially. Please don't hesitate to contact us for further information. If you wish to contribute:

In Papua New Guinea:

“M.B.C. Building Project”  
ANZ Lae Top Town  
Account #: 15709384

In Canada:

Fenwick church of Christ  
765 Welland Ave.,  
P.O. Box 416,  
Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0

In the U.S.A.:

Highland church of Christ  
400 N. Houston Levee Rd.  
Cordova, TN 38018  
Att: Jackie Meadows

If you are in Australia, and are wanting to contribute, please contact us for further information.

Please make sure that your donation is earmarked "MBC Building Project" to avoid confusion, and if possible include an email or mailing address so that we can communicate with you regarding your donation and progress made. Thank you. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me ([ruthzimm@gmail.com](mailto:ruthzimm@gmail.com)) or M.B.C. Principal, Jab Mesa, at [melanesianbiblecollege@gmail.com](mailto:melanesianbiblecollege@gmail.com).

### **Prayer Points:**

1. Ruth Waine – battling breast cancer; now on chemo and soon to start radiation.
2. M.B.C. 3rd year students – who finished their classes today, and are preparing to graduate and return to Madang, Bali Island, the Waria Valley, and the Markham Valley, in coming days.
3. The 2018 P.N.G. Ladies' Workshop, April 11-15, at Onuma, Chimbu Province, and those planning to travel to it.
4. Those struggling with the aftermath of the earthquakes in Hela, Southern Highlands and Enga Provinces.
5. Bikon and Joelene, two new sisters in Christ.
6. Printing snags, including rising costs and unavailability of many imported goods now.
7. Willie, Miring's nephew, currently travelling and working on the YWAM medical ship, and an opportunity which has opened up for him to study in Townsville, Australia.
8. The ongoing ladies' class for our sisters from Indagen, that they may be encouraged and grow spiritually.
9. The classroom project for M.B.C. and subsequent fund-raising.
10. Our coming teams from Australia and the U.S. in June and July.
11. Furlough – sometime in June until sometime in October!?! - and then work permit and visa renewal.
12. And finally, after many requests, I will be holding my first ever training session for literacy teachers next week, during the week long school break between terms 2 and 3. I cut the number

off at 5, but in true P.N.G. fashion, there are 10 people planning to attend! Please pray that I will be able to make everything clear to them, and that they may be encouraged to start literacy programs in their villages, thus for the betterment of both the congregations and community.

May God continue to be with you.

With love in Him,

Ruth

**Sponsors:**

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([cofcfenwick@gmail.com](mailto:cofcfenwick@gmail.com))

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([malaga@perthchurch.net](mailto:malaga@perthchurch.net))