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05/12/17

Hello from steamy Lae. We once again have daily temperatures in the 30°C's (90°F's), and the humidity right now is 85%. We had a freak windstorm two weeks ago that took big branches out of the surrounding trees, and dropped a large tree on 2 houses at 2 Mile. A couple days later we had a fantastic thunderstorm that went on for hours. 3-4 cold showers per day are normal, as is heat rash, and sunburn while hanging the laundry out. Anyone want to visit?!

The past month has been fairly quiet. The school year is coming to a close, and many elementary and primary schools have had their graduations and the kids have been set free. Bugandi, our closest secondary school, where one of my roommates, Rose, attends grade 11, closed two weeks ago due to insufficient funds to remain open. The other high schools will also be done soon.

Progress has been slow but steady with the library work, but song book printing has run into yet another obstacle due to not being able to purchase toner. Hopefully it will be available again soon. There are a couple of shops still selling the cartridges, but the cost at both is excessive (nearly CN\$80/cartridge more than where I purchase it from). The goal is to keep the cost low as we are printing materials and selling at cost, without profit or pay. I am therefore loath to pay more than I have to, especially as other costs continue to rise. I recently discovered that the cover paper I've always purchased at K17.00/100 sheets is now K35.50/100 sheets. That wasn't a gradual rise, just one great unexpected leap!

The ladies' class, that I have mentioned in the past couple of reports, continues to go well, and the number in attendance continues to grow. This class has been both a blessing and a challenge, as it means a lot of extra work in preparing lessons. Our next class is this Saturday.

As quiet as November was, it wasn't without issues. It has been a trying few weeks, and I appreciate your prayers. Some things happened that I am not able to mention, but it has been a faith-building time. There was also a serious accident a week ago, involving a brother in Christ. Jon, whose family I lived with in Chimbu Province, 15 years ago, was involved in a high speed, single vehicle accident here in Lae. He went through the windscreen and landed on his head and rolled, while the Toyota 10-seater he was driving also rolled and was totalled. We continue to

praise God that Jon survived with injuries that could have been much, much worse. Please pray for him. He has a large gouge out of the top of his head, and has lost vision in his left eye. He has many scrapes and scratches, but is now up and walking, and his speech is no longer slurred. I continue to visit him in hospital every couple of days, and see progress with every visit.



Jon Waine, with his sister, Bogel, a few years ago

This past Sunday, the Tampawi congregation met together as a congregation for the last time. After a year of prayer and consideration, they decided to disband. This is not the result of a church split, but due to several factors. The customary land that they have been meeting on for more than 10 years is under dispute and they have been given several eviction notices. Several families relocated to another congregation as a result of the eviction notices, leaving a small group still meeting at Tampawi. Of the small group, a couple of families are moving to other areas of Lae and plan to place membership at a congregation closer to where they will be living. Many of the remaining members are high school/uni students who are also moving away from the area. This leaves 13 congregations meeting in or near Lae: Bishop, Boundary Road, Gabensis, Kamkamung, Malahang, M.B.C., Nawae, Niuroks, Situm, Ten Mile, Tent City, Tikeleng, and Wagan (Sipaia).



Brother Wesley Wosse presenting the final lesson at Tampawi this past Sunday.



Brother Martin Maralul, Tampawi's full time worker, leading singing.

We continue to see God's hand in the fund-raising for the new M.B.C. classroom building. As of the end of November, we have over K99,000.00 including stock on hand (packaged biscuits and canned drinks). We now have K30,000.00 (approximately CN\$12,000.00) to go until the purchase of the building frame. As mentioned in the last report: The cost to purchase the custom cut frame, etc. for the building is currently K130,000.00 (CN\$51,800.00). Another K20,000.00 will be required for the cement pad and posts. This means that we are currently working towards the first stage: K150,000.00 (CN\$59,800.00) to see the building frame completed. The overall goal of K400,000.00 (currently CN\$159,400.00) is still in place, and is required to complete the

second stage: the walls, flooring, electrical work, and furnishings (the old desks are termite-ridden) for the new building; maintenance of the remaining classroom building; and new fencing for both the main property and for the dormitories, which are located in the settlement behind the school. All of the fencing is in poor condition, and we have ongoing problems with vandalism and the dorms being broken into when the school season is out.

We sincerely appreciate everyone who has sent a financial contribution so far – from Canada, the US, Australia, and P.N.G., as well as each of you who have prayerfully lifted this endeavor up to God. Please continue to pray, and if you are able to help financially, please see the following information.

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

Please make sure that the 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) or M.B.C. Principal, Jab Mesa, at melanesianbiblecollege@gmail.com. If you are in Australia, and are wanting to contribute, please contact us for further information.

Prayer Points:

1. Jab & Becky Mesa will be travelling to Bali, West New Britain Province, tomorrow. Becky's Mum passed away in September, and they will be spending time with her family, as well as holding a Gospel Meeting with the church.
2. A young man, Jason, who was a visitor with the M.B.C. congregation, was killed a few days ago by a falling coconut. Please pray for his family.
3. Jon Waine (pronounced "wine-eh"), recovering from a bad car accident.
4. The Christians from the Tampawi congregation and their move to other congregations around Lae.
5. Last month I asked for prayers for Miring's niece, Betty, her husband, Timothy, and their newborn baby. Thank you. The baby has recovered well, and they were released from hospital a couple of weeks ago. They are still in Lae, staying with family.
6. Thank you also for your prayers for the families at 2 Mile. After several days of trouble, the police were able to get the fighting under control and have been keeping a close watch on the situation.
7. One of my uncles, battling the last stages of cancer; Another aunt and uncle as they deal with their recent move as well as ongoing health issues.
8. A couple of weeks ago, the chief pilot for our local airline – the company that we use regularly when flying into the villages – died suddenly of malaria and a heart attack. Thomas was in his 30's, and is related to my roommate, Miring. Please pray for his family, as well as the many rural areas that came to know him over the past few years as he has flown in and out of their villages. Many people here are greatly saddened.

9. The new ladies' class for our sisters from Indagen, that they may be encouraged and grow spiritually.

10. The Manus Island refugees, as mentioned in the October report. After 3 weeks of refusing to leave the closed detention centre, without food, clean water, electricity, sanitation, etc., the police went in and forcefully removed the remaining 300+ inmates. The details have been a bit sketchy. They have been relocated to other buildings around Lorengau, and their futures are very uncertain.

11. The classroom project for M.B.C. and subsequent fund-raising.

I want to take this time to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, 2018! May this holiday season be filled with His blessings and joy.

With love in Him,

Ruth

Sponsors:

Fenwick church of Christ, P.O. Box 416, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 Canada
(cofcfenwick@gmail.com)

Malaga church of Christ, P.O. Box 105.
Ballajura, WA 6019 Australia (malaga@perthchurch.net)