

What's Up With the Widups?

March 2019



15 Year Journey — and Counting!

Nabanga construction

Last month marked 15 years since we first arrived in the islands of Vanuatu! As we reflect back over all that God has allowed us to experience, people He has brought into our lives (from many parts of the world!), and how our family and team has changed and grown — we are humbled and overwhelmed by God's grace. Here are just some of the lessons we've learned along the way:

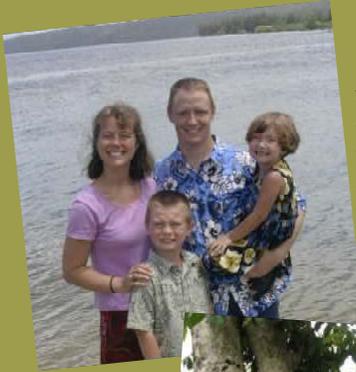
We are weak but He is strong Too many times to count, we have felt at the end of our energy, wisdom, patience. Yet as we cling desperately to the Lord, He gives us what we need to keep serving Him. He uses our fumbling steps of obedience, even our mistakes, to accomplish His purposes for us in marriage, parenting, ministry. Seeking to communicate spiritual truths to those of a different culture, and maintaining relationships over great time/distance, are just two areas where we have seen this lived out.

We must not underestimate the body of Christ Being integrated by the Holy Spirit at conversion into a fellowship with every other true believer is such a gift, and a responsibility — but how often we take it for granted, or think only of ourselves and our immediate social circle. On our mission journey we've had the privilege of partnering with spiritual brothers and sisters across the globe: through our Home Team, Field Team, Sunday fellowship group, local believers, and others on mission here and elsewhere. We are to pray for each other, sharpen, encourage, comfort and help... even if we're not on the same continent.

Involving our kids in missions is the best thing we could have done for them Raising children in a developing country, immersing them in a completely foreign environment, removing them from all that is wonderful about the USA (grandparents top the list of course!) — it has not deprived our children, rather they've *thrived!* This is NOT to pat ourselves on the back— it's not who *we* are, it's how *God* has used their cross-cultural roots to broaden their perspectives about what really matters, and to grow their character as they see first-hand how they are blessed by being a blessing to others.

There is still MUCH to be done here in Vanuatu Yes, we have seen God at work in building His church here, one believer at a time, and have seen His Word translated into a few of Vanuatu's 109 language groups. But so many languages remain without a clear gospel witness, not to mention discipleship. All facets of ministry are motivated by a passion for engaging people on a heart level with Jesus.

How We've Grown...



2004
Arrived in
country
with 8- &
4-year-olds

2009

Added two
more kiddos,
and three
teammates



2014



*For His glory. Bill & Christina. Mikaela, Maxwell
& Malachi (Marcus & Sierra too)*

On Mission With Us

We are down \$300/monthly support. We invite you to become a monthly (quarterly/annual) partner, or to make a one-time donation. *Thank you!*

Click on this link to give online. Mail checks (note "for Widups") to: Bethel Church & Ministries, 10202 Broadway, Crown Point IN 46307 USA.

Prayer Points

Bible Translation

Praise God that the gospel of Mark in *Rral* is printed and ready to distribute on Ambrym Is.; *praise* for the local men and women who play key roles getting Scripture into their heart languages and promote its use in communities

PRAY for

- Translation of Philippians into *Merei*, Genesis & Matthew into *Rral*
- Grace to persevere as they face physical, relational & spiritual trials

Team Ministry

Praise that Bill, Tony, and Lemy were able to travel with a local chief to his village on Pentecost Island and encourage the local church leader; *praise* for four women regularly attending Christina's weekly Bislama Bible study (currently in Genesis) and for two other women joining the hospital visits. *Praise* God for a record enrolment in the new school year at Nabanga Kindi.

PRAY for

- Liliord family, heading on NZ furlough in May — baby #4 due in July!
- Volunteer educator to help Maxine train teachers for the future 1st/2nd grade class at Nabanga Christian School (*email us for more info*)

Personal

Praise that our older kids are doing well with work and studies in the USA; *praise* that our younger boys are enjoying extracurricular activities with their local friends like bike-riding, ocean-swimming, and training a new guard dog.

PRAY for

- Personal balance of work/family time, so we don't get burned out
- Mikaela to find a summer job (late April-late Aug)
- Marcus & Sierra, preparing for travel to Jakarta, Indonesia in July, where Sierra will do student teaching while Marcus returns to USA for his job

Late 2018 - More teammates, more children!



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See new photos in our gallery
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