



Ruth Zimmerman
PO Box 1112, Lae 411,
Papua New Guinea
Phone: 011 675 7248 1267



24/07/22

Hi Brothers & Sisters

Greetings from 'cool' Lae. It is 30C as I sit down to start writing this (and 86% humidity). It is the 'wetter' season here right now, but it hasn't been very wet this year. All of the rain seems to be hitting Australia instead.

This will be my last newsletter for a while because I'M GOING HOME!!!! (the Canadian one, not the Heavenly one!). Thank you for your ongoing prayers. After a lot of Covid-related hoops and frustrations, and not a little amount of prayer on my part and by others, I'm set to travel to Port Moresby on August 7th and to Brisbane the next day. Looking forward to time with friends there before continuing the journey on August 15th, arriving in Toronto on the 16th. In all of my outbound trips (this will be #12), I've never been more ready for some time out. July marks 4 years since the start of my last leave, and 30 years since I arrived in P.N.G. the very first time!

The 31st graduation of the Melanesian Bible College took place on Friday, July 15th, and nearly all of our students are now gone. One is caring for a family member in hospital, and the family from Indagen are having to make alternate travel arrangements due to election-related violence which has stopped the boat from traveling to Wasu and has also blocked the road from Wasu to Indagen.

The 2022 literacy teacher training session, which I told you about in the last report, was held on June 7-8 and went well with 8 M.B.C. students attending. The last block (5-week term from June 13-July 14) at M.B.C. was busy as always, but more so as I made travel arrangements and did extra printing (250 more song books and 30 copies of a newly translated booklet about the church). Literacy class was split into two during the last week of block 2 and continued as two classes throughout the final weeks of school, with a 30-40 minute combined period between classes. All of the students did well and the two older boys did English literacy for the last two weeks of classes in preparation to return to primary school next year. By the end I was teaching literacy for 5 hours each day and was glad to see the end of school! Sadly, we had to send one of our 3rd year families home just after the start of the 3rd block, due to illness. Please hold Philip & Ruth in prayer as Ruth receives medical treatment.



Literacy class on the last day. Back: Raqawec, Sere (Raqawec's daughter, who came for the last two week for the English segment), and Branzo; Front: Roni and Jaikabi



Literacy training grads (left to right): Vani, Uyuk, Sere, Lioni, Rita, Sent, Roy, and Kenneth.



The 3rd year graduating class for 2022 with teachers Arthur (far left) and Miamel (in the centre at the back).

On July 1st, brother Jacob Yadasuk (former roommate Rose's father) arrived with a surprise in the form of another 'meow'. She was about a month old, and I named her "Timbit" (the Canadians reading this will understand 😊). After a bit of a rocky start - big brother Oreo thought she was a rat and tried to kill her – things have settled down and Oreo and Timmie are now best friends. I'm enjoying having cats again (even when they climb the mosquito net at 4:30am) and will miss them while I'm away.



Oreo and new little sister, Timbit.

Voting in the national election has been ongoing for most of July, with the return of writs scheduled for the 29th. In Lae, things have been peaceful, and the sitting member has been returned. However, two districts in Morobe Province (as mentioned above) – Markham and Kabwum - have seen ballot boxes burned. In the highlands and other areas, schools have been burned down (I haven't figured out the logic in that one) and fighting has seen many deaths. Transparency International has already declared this election the worst in P.N.G.'s nearly 47 year history (due both to violence and to the failure to update the common roll). Please hold the country in prayer. There is a tribal fight currently raging in Enga Province which saw at least 18 people massacred a few days ago. It is centred around the Pogera gold mine, and started before elections, but they used the opportune time to start fighting again while the police and defense force are busy with the elections.

On July 8th, we were very sad to learn of the death of brother Tui Kasao here in Lae. Tui was one of the first Christians and was involved in establishing congregations in the Waria Valley. His funeral will take place tomorrow.

On March 17th I sent off the application for an international Covid-19 travel certificate to the P.N.G. government. At that point Australia was requiring it for entry. They have since dropped the vax requirement, but it is still in effect for Qantas flights. Our locally issued vax cards don't have enough information, so a second card is needed. After many, many emails (none acknowledged), much prayer, and much stress, finally I have the card in hand as of yesterday. It's a relief to know I will be able to board the flight from Port Moresby! God is good, even when we stress out!

Please hold me in prayer as I wade through the long list of things to wrap up in the next 2 weeks. The final work at the library is progressing well and should be finished in the next few of days. And I have several projects ready to take home with me. I hope to see many of you in my travels, and as always, thank you for your continued interest in the Lord's work here in Lae, as well as your prayers and support.

Prayer Points:

1. Ongoing struggles with Covid-19 around the world and the war in the Ukraine.
2. Continued healing for Abraham Mesa, and for his family as they care for him.
3. Continued healing for Taylor David, who continues to go to physio each week while they look for answers and solutions to his situation.
4. The ongoing elections in P.N.G. and the violence taking place in several areas of the country, election-related and otherwise.
5. Our remaining M.B.C. students (and the ones who are now safely home) – for healing for Rita's mother in the hospital, and for Muri, Raqawec and Aitang as they make alternate travel plans to get back to Indagen.
6. Brother Tui Kasao's family as they mourn his passing and prepare to send his body back to their village.
7. For my upcoming trip to Australia and Canada in 2 weeks times and for no more unforeseen travel-related hurdles.

Love and blessings 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)