

December 2024

Cherith and I celebrated our fifteenth wedding anniversary. The Lord has blessed me greatly through my wife and our marriage is cause for much rejoicing as it grows more sweet each year. The children contributed to our anniversary supper by creating a twelve foot wide chalk-mural of the place I proposed as a decorative backdrop. Thank you for praying for our family's walk with the Lord and our physical health. God has graciously dealt with us through each season of life.

Christmas has large cultural significance in PNG. When anyone is asked their age, the answer would come in terms of Christmases rather than years they have lived. Laurenson has around 16 Christmases and his family has been a part of our church since its inception. He followed their example by placing his faith in the Lord after the Christmas service.

The church held special activities; the most popular being the post climb. We erected a smooth, bark-less tree and suspended a prize from a nail twenty feet above the ground. After lathering the base of the tree with slippery crisco men scrambled up to claim their prize. The rain further increased the challenge requiring an hour before anyone achieved success.



Since I last wrote, our evangelistic team has made trips to Iwaina Village. It has been a bountiful effort as many Christians volunteered their time and energy for the short mission trips.



Twenty people have gotten saved thus far in Iwaina.

Each person's testimony is special but I would enjoy telling you about Dan. He is a rough character. His erratic, drug-induced behavior has long held the community in fear. After hearing the gospel Dan returned late one night and expressed his desire to join Jesus Christ in heaven. He felt inclined to verbalize many of his misdeeds

and then presented his large stash of illegal narcotics. He wanted Jason to dispose of it so he could leave that lifestyle and fully follow God in righteousness. The whole team sat in astonished silence because of his candid testimony. A few moments later all were smiling as Dan called on God to redeem him from his iniquity.



The young believers in Iwaina Village decided to give a property larger than a football field to be used for a church building, a pastor's house and kitchen. The land is thick with trees, bamboo, and brush. This small core of people began clearing the area: cutting down trees, stacking lumber suitable for house construction and uprooting tree trunks. Next week I will return to Iwaina Village to get a land agreement signed so we can move forward with the necessary construction. If you are interested in contributing to this new church plant project please contact me by email.



Wemauwa village was mentioned at length in our last update. A parcel of land has not yet been decided upon. Ministry has developed quickly in Iwaina and overshadowed the fruit seen in Wemauwa. Our evangelistic team is going to split into two groups and visit both villages simultaneously next week. Please continue to pray for the believers in Wemauwa.

Rafort returned last week after graduating from the Bible School in Wau village. His family has matured in character, conversation and conviction while away. Their return has charged the entire church congregation. They are getting settled back into village life but have hurdles to overcome. The grass roof of his house is falling apart and a new home must be built soon. Their gardens have been taken over by others during his two year absence. His family no longer has a sustainable source of food. He needs wisdom in broaching the issue with the thieves without it escalating into a violent situation. Despite all of this, Rafor is eager to preach on upcoming outreaches.

Stenford is a good friend and has repeatedly contributed to the efforts of church-planting. We sat down recently and he has committed to assist with the new church plants for a year and hopes to attend Bible School thereafter. I frequently request prayer for more laborers and Stenford's willingness to serve is a direct result of those who have been praying.

I intend on completing our literacy course in January and then flying to the Bible School in Wau - filling in for a few months while the staff is out. Missionary Gary Keck has urgent medical concerns that require surgery and flew to the USA for treatment. Please do pray for his surgery, recovery and return to PNG.

Prayer needs:

1. New Christians to be discipled.
2. Men to answer God's call to ministry.
3. Funds for new church projects.

In His Service,

*Jason, Cherith, Grace, Melody, Hannah, and Josiah Ottosen*