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Merry Christmas

1 message

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Merry Christmas from Papua New Guinea!!

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. **Luke 2:11**

Tale of two trees

With Christmas Day coming near, we put our Christmas tree up that we brought

from Indiana and have had tree for over 30 years! Some years are really difficult when thinking about putting our Christmas tree up as we think about how much we miss our family and as we cherish certain ornaments we had collected over the years or our children had made. This year, we were excited to put up our Christmas tree and see all of the precious ornaments and cherish the memories they brought. One family tradition for us is one my dad started. Each year we watch The Grinch. Christmas tree #1.

In contrast to PNG, we rarely see Christmas trees here. But surprisingly, Lower Bena Baptist Church does have a Christmas tree, but no decorations. We had our teammates children over for one afternoon and they helped make some handmade ornaments. We took the handmade decorations to church last Sunday and all were so excited to put them on the tree! For Lower Bena, we will have three evenings of Christmas church service which is just customary for here. We don't really see gifts given, but believers in Christ going to church instead. There is no commercialization of Christmas, we just focus on Jesus' birth. We plan to have our first ever children's play telling the traditional Christmas story. We pray many will come to hear of Jesus' birth! Christmas tree #2.

Whether celebrating Christmas in the US or Papua New Guinea, we have different traditions with Christmas. But we rejoice the same for Jesus' birth. **Luke 2:11**, tells us "**For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**" What a joyous day that must have been! And in **John 1:14** we read, "**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**" Jesus became fully human and dwelt among us. God's glory that formerly resided in the OT tabernacle, now resides in Jesus as the NT temple as God's one and only Son full of truth and grace. Thank you, Lord, we can celebrate your birth!

Awana closing ceremony and Awards for Lower Bena

It was time to wrap up Awana for the year and present awards to the children and youth for learning God's Word at Lower Bena. Each stood at the front and shared a Bible memory verse he/she had learned during Awana. Then we gave awards to the children and youth based on how many Bible verses they had memorized throughout year. The leaders also received awards because we wouldn't have an Awana Club without them!

Awana training

We held our 5-day training for new churches who would like to start their own Awana Club. We had 17 individuals attending with 12 churches represented. We had trainees coming from as far away as the very remote bush of the Sepik and Simbai. Our last day, we ran an Awana Club so our trainees would have the opportunity to gain experience. Usually, we have 100 kiddos no problem, who we borrow from the Christian Academy on our campus. But this time of year, they are out of school. We were ready to start our Awana Club and only had 7 children! Then our dear friend, Margaret, arrived with 13 children and then 25 more arrived. Then we started our Awana Club! All of our trainees were thrilled to see the children arrive! Above is the green team during game time.

We even had a puppet show during Bible Council time.

The children playing a game to reinforce the Bible verse they learned.

Phil wrapping up our time during the closing ceremony.

Awards for our trainees, Bibles and some game supplies.

Our kitchen staff did a wonderful job preparing meals for our training.

Support increase

We had a support increase! Thank you for all who make it possible for us to be here to tell so many about Christ! We greatly appreciate you and couldn't do this without you!

Youth Camp coming up in January on our campus

The week of January 5-9 will be our youth camp. As many preparations are being made, we pray for the 600+ youth to come and many to put their trust in Christ!

Tale of two babies

Our family has grown! Andrew and Heather are the happy parents of twins!

Oliver Michael and Sophie Noelle were born on December 6th. The babies arrived 3 weeks early and didn't require an extended stay in the hospital which was a real blessing! We are in love with them!

Heather in the Hospital

A few days after the twins were born, Heather's health took a turn for the worse. She needed to be re-admitted for post eclampsia and she was very sick. They are home now. But it has certainly been a difficult time for them. We are praying she doesn't need to be re-admitted as she is still dealing with this.

Plans for us

Our current plan is I, Jan, will return home to help care for the twins and Ivy on February 21 for about 6 weeks to help Andrew and Heather as they adjust to being parents of twins! This plan is subject to change in case they need help sooner due to Heather's health. Phil would go home to but its just too expensive as this will be a personal expense.

Your missionaries to PNG,
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Acts 20:24
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