



JANUARY 2023 UPDATE

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31

HEADING HOME

Our flight around the world back to Yap began on September 20. We enjoyed stopping in Guam for a few days to visit our friends and students attending Harvest Baptist Bible College.



Many of the Yapese students and staff from Yap Baptist Church, Faith Baptist Church, and the church plants on Fais and Uliithi gathered for an ice cream fellowship. What a blessing it was to see what God is doing in and through these young people.



Diane enjoyed spending time with two of our Yapese students, Zoelyne and Leilynne, who made us beautiful leis, and the guys went spear fishing and caught some lobsters and husked some fresh coconuts for us! We felt like we were almost home!

Many people that we knew and loved in Yap left the island while we were away. We were able to meet our dear friend, Regina, again in Guam. She was one of the first people to come to know the Lord in Yap years ago, and we had Bible studies in her home where many of her family came to know the Lord. We have missed her in Yap.

On September 27, near midnight, our little family took off for our home island of Yap. We arrived safely around 2 am on September 28. Although we didn't get home until around 5 am, we were thankful that we didn't have to quarantine outside our home. We did stay in for about a week because we had started to feel sick during our last day in Guam. Thankfully, it was not Covid, but it was a pretty nasty cold/cough flu that went through our whole family and lasted for several weeks.



We have been so thankful for the donated minivan and church chairs and many other supplies that arrived in our 40 foot container. The items on the container have allowed us to finish the stage lighting, put in a sound system, make barn doors for the large opening in the back of the church, and finish other improvements to the property.



FUNERAL ON THE ISLAND OF RAMUNG

Soon after we returned, one of our church members suddenly became ill and went to the emergency room. He was transferred to ICU where Truly and I visited him and prayed with him. Just a few days later, he passed away. The family asked if we could speak at the funeral which was going to be held on his home island of Ramung. Ramung is separated from Yap proper, but still inside our reef. It has been called the "Forbidden Island" because people are not allowed to go there unless invited. We felt honored to be invited, and although it was a sad time, the gospel was shared, and we tried to bring the comfort and hope we find in Christ to the family. Please pray for future inroads to share Christ with the people of this island.



Traveling by boat to the funeral



Walking to the burial site.

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

God has put together an amazing team here at Yap Baptist Church. We were glad to be back to relieve some of the burden that Truly and Lency have had to bear for the past two years on their own. Truly continues to preach every other Sunday and also leads the music. Steven and Adam also returned in September and Steven works full time at the church and has been a great help with the youth and running the technical. Adam has a job in town, but the guys take turns sharing a short challenge that we call "a verse to grow on" before our Wednesday evening prayer time. They also speak to the youth and help teach the children. Allysha and Lency teach the children's classes on Sundays and Thursdays which has freed Diane up to direct the Christmas play, teach her speech class, and also teach a ladies Bible study.

We started our adult Bible studies again during the Sunday School time. Diane is studying the book *A Look Within* with the ladies, and I am going through *Every Man a Warrior* with the men.



CHRISTMAS ON YAP

Soon after we returned, Diane started working on our Christmas program. She adapted a play suitable for our Yapese audience, lined up songs that would fit the theme of the play, and started a speech class for teenagers in our church. The teens, children, and singing groups practiced for several weeks and our team helped to make costumes, props, set pieces, invitations, programs, and 250 bags of homemade Christmas cookies to give out after the play. On Christmas Eve we held our service and "A Christmas to Believe In" was performed where many heard the gospel. If you would like to see more pictures and videos of the play, you can find them on our Facebook page under MarkandDiane Zimmer.



The adorable 2 yr old "Baby Jesus" was a highlight.



250 chairs fit in the auditorium.



Steven gave concluding challenge.

As a reward for all of their hard work on the Christmas play, we took the teens to a park on the southern part of the island for a day of fun and games, swimming, kayaking, and barbecue. A guy from my brother John's church in Palau was visiting and shared his testimony with the teens.



Additional Prayer and Praises

- **Praising the Lord** that the crate arrived last week with the new projector and it is beautiful and bright!
- **Praising the Lord** that although Covid made it to Yap, when it arrived it was only a variant and so it did not cause severe cases. Several flu strains have actually caused more sickness in recent months.
- **Faithful Helpers:** Thankful for Truly, Lency, Steven, Adam, and Allysha who help in the ministry here at Yap Baptist as well as James and Patwin who continue to serve faithfully on the outer islands.
- **Church Members Health:** Please continue to pray for **Susan**, a church member who continues to battle cancer in the Philippines. Her husband, Joy, and their family have been a great help and blessing to YBC over the years, and they need your fervent prayers. Please also pray for **Alan** who recently had to go to Guam for medical help. He is struggling with kidney and heart failure.
- **Diane's Parents' Health:** Diane's mom recently had a mild stroke and spent several days in ICU with blood clots in the arteries to her brain. She is home now and doing better so we are praying that the medication she is taking will keep the blood clots from forming. Continue to pray for Diane's dad who is battling Parkinson's disease.
- **Diane's Health:** In January Diane will be having blood work done here in Yap and sent to her oncologist in the states. We are praying for good results.
- **Ministry Opportunities:** Please pray with us about a couple of opportunities to minister in our village and in the southern part of Yap.
- **Family Fun:** Our boys, Caleb and Levi, have enjoyed being back on their island with their friends and the fun activities here, like catching sharks on a kayak and shooting bats in the jungle. Caleb painted a marlin on our boat, "Old Glory."



We hope that you had a blessed Christmas celebrating our Savior's birth,
and we look forward to what God will do in 2023!

Mark, Diane & Family

Even when we are in Yap, you may continue to contact or text us on our cell phone numbers:

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