



April 2024 Update

***And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.
Romans 8:28***

In February we were shocked to hear the news that our long-time ministry partner and friend, Rollence Lug, suddenly passed away. His wife Chelyn was with him on Fais island at the time and his son RJ was staying with Rol's brother James Layomai in Ulithi attending the outer island high school on Falalop. The heart attack came without much warning, and we quickly gathered materials to take to Fais to build a casket. The next morning, Diane and I flew with Pacific Mission Aviation to Fais, carrying food, flowers, lumber, and tools. Our message of encouragement was difficult to deliver that day as we were grieving the loss of a dear friend and partner. Diane cried with and comforted Chelyn as I worked with the men to build a casket in which to bury Rol.



Pastor Rollence Lug



Men help build casket and ladies prepare food for the funeral



(L to R) RJ, James, who translated for me as I spoke; RJ and Chelyn beside Rollence's grave

RJ and James and his family flew in from Ulithi, and Rol was laid to rest in his back yard. Although the people there in Fais were grieving at the loss of their pastor, they sang with hope knowing they would see Pastor Rollence again. Our hope is in the Risen Savior as He showed us that death has no permanent hold on those who know Christ. "Death could not keep his prey, Jesus, My Savior . . . up from the grave He arose!"

Please continue to **pray for Chelyn and her children**, RJ and Angel. Angel is in the states right now attending her senior year of high school. RJ and Chelyn came back to Yap a couple of days ago and they are praying for wisdom about their future plans. Chelyn is from the island of Chuuk, but most of her family lives in Washington state. Patwin, Rol's brother, pictured in our last prayer update, will continue to lead the church in Fais.

Southern Ministry Disappointment

In January we were given the go ahead from the landowners in the southern part of the island to begin clearing a piece of land that we hoped to use to start a Bible study and youth activities in the south. We rented an excavator, and the driver began clearing the land. Within a couple of hours, a relative showed up and stopped the work. It was discouraging to say the least and the families involved have not yet been able to resolve the issues for us to proceed with the work again. **Please pray** that if it is God's will for us to start a ministry there that **He will open the right doors**.

The Goodness of God through Protection & Providence

A few days later, while Steven was dropping children off after kids' night, our minivan was hit by a drunk driver head on. Thankfully, all the kids were out of the vehicle and Steven and Allysha weren't injured badly.



While on Guam for a missions conference, I went with Jackson to a junk yard to look for parts to repair the van. There we met a man named **Steve** who was searching for the truth. We talked to him about Jesus the whole time we were taking parts off the car. We invited him to come to church at Harvest and that Sunday he walked in with his wife and sat in front of us. After the service, he talked to one of the pastors and **accepted Christ!** Because of a crash that happened in Yap, a man in Guam asked Jesus to save him! God works in ways unseen, always for our good and His glory. The van is currently at the shop here in Yap being repaired.

Another **family** in our church was also in a **horrible drunk-driving car accident**. Sandra and her children were thrown out of their truck and received serious injuries. For a couple of days, the doctors weren't sure if the children would make it because of the internal injuries, but **praise the Lord, they healed** and have been back to church for the past few Sundays. **Please pray for Sandra's husband** that he would turn from his sin and to the Lord **for salvation**.

The Goodness of God through Blessings

In March we were able to attend a missions conference in Guam at Harvest Baptist Church. It was a great opportunity to see our HBBC students and friends in Guam, as well as other missionaries. As always, Harvest was a huge blessing to our family, providing for many of the needs we had.



Harvest in Guam honored us for serving in the islands for 20 years--It was great to see guys who worked with us in Yap, Jack & Edwin, serving faithfully in Guam--Some of our Yapese friends who live in Guam--Diane with some of the Yapese girls wearing the local outer island skirt

We were also privileged to be a part of HBBC's Freshwater Retreat to encourage and challenge the students to serve the Lord in their islands. It also encouraged our hearts to see some of our Yapese friends who have moved away to Guam continuing to be a light there.

Family Visits!

While we were visiting in Guam, two of our older children, Johnny and Cherith, flew in from the states for Levi's 14th birthday. We spent a day together in Guam and then they returned to Yap with us for a 10-day visit. We had a great time fishing, swimming, snorkeling, and reminiscing of their growing up years here in Yap. It is always a huge boost to our spirits to have our children visit! Although it's hard to say good-bye, we are thankful they could come.



(L to R) Cherith, Caleb, Levi, & Johnny --Thankful to have our kids visit us here in Yap!

Koyeng Project

We are currently working on repairing the front koyeng. The thatch and bamboo roofing is in need of repair and we are also replacing the wooden posts with cement posts, which our son Caleb will paint to look like wood.



The process starts by cutting down Nipa palms in the swampy areas-- We then cut the leaves off and stack them--Then they sew the leaves around a split bamboo pole--Making approximately 400 5-foot pieces is a very time-consuming process. To watch a video of the weaving process go to <https://vimeo.com/931367178>.

This past week we finished up the cement work and next week we will begin replacing the wooden rafters and bamboo before tying the thatch to the roof. I'm thankful for a few young guys helping me with these projects. These koyengs serve a lot of purposes here in Yap as they are a breezy place to sit and visit, and most Yapese have them at their homes. This koyeng faces the interior of our church building so when people are new and possibly uncomfortable sitting inside the church, they feel more at ease in their familiar setting of the koyeng while still being able to hear the message.

Resurrection Sunday

Blessings abounded as we prepared for a special service to celebrate our Risen Savior. It was encouraging to see so many getting involved in serving, preparing, and participating in the special day. Ladies came to fill eggs, bake cupcakes, and then serve ice cream, pancit, and ampangs (Filipino favorite snacks here), while the kids ran around searching for eggs. The teens sang a beautiful special and the Gospel was shared.

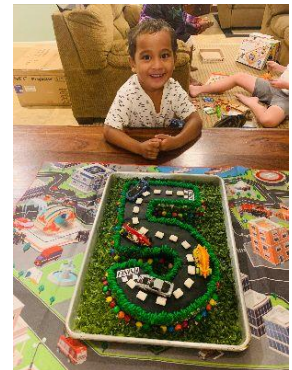


Additional Prayer and Praises

- **Praise the Lord for a new projector:** In January our church projector suddenly stopped working. We tried everything we could to fix it, but finally had to package it up and send it back to the states since it was still under warranty. Praise the Lord, the company will be sending us a brand-new projector! Thankfully, Harvest in Guam gave us a smaller projector that we have been using in the meantime and it is perfect for using in our prison ministry as well.
- **Pray for Rain:** Yap State is going through a horrible drought right now and it has become a state of emergency especially for the outer islands where they depend greatly on rainwater for many of their basic needs. On parts of Yap main island, they will be turning off the city water for 14 out of 24 hours to conserve. Please pray for rain for our islands!
- **Pray for those who are sick:** So many have been sick here in Yap and there have been many funerals. Please pray for healing both physically and spiritually. Pray for Bobby Nepomuceno, a faithful member of our church for many years, who had a stroke and is now getting treatment in the Philippines.
- **Pray for Bible Studies:** Please continue to pray for a couple with whom we are doing a marriage and family Bible study. Also, please pray for Diane as she has been meeting with several different ladies individually, some who are unsaved and searching. We continue our ladies and men's Bible studies on Sunday as well as the prison ministry on Sunday afternoons.
- **Pray for Harvest Grads holding Village Bible study:** Francis, Steven, Allysha, and Jodie started a Bible study for children down in a section of the island called Fanif. We are thrilled for their initiative to reach their own people for Christ. They are all faithfully serving in the church as well.
- **Pray for Summer Activities: VBS and Teen Camp** are right around the corner, and we would so appreciate your help again this year with prizes, candy, toiletries, jewelry, and used clothing and toys for our "store." It was such a blessing to us last year to receive the boxes from the states!
- **Pray for Truly and Lency Moving to Guam:** We are sad that on May 5, our long-time ministry partners will be moving to Guam. Truly desires to work with his own people from Chuuk who live on Guam. We will greatly miss them. Their son Hunter turned 5 in February and Diane made him a race car cake.



Praise the Lord for piggies! Our mama pig, Fiona, gave birth to ten piglets! We kept 1 and gave the others away!



- **Pray for our stateside family:** Please continue to pray for our adult children in the states: Joe and Kara, John Mark, and Cherith.

Thank you for your faithful prayer and support of the ministry here in Yap!

Mark, Diane & Family

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