

# The Mark Zimmer Family

Serving in Yap, Micronesia



## December 2024 Update

*This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. Psalm 188:24*

Each time we begin planning to return for a furlough, we pray for the Lord to prepare the right ones to lead the ministry while we are away. Throughout the last 20 years, God has raised up several young men who have been discipled and trained and then encouraged to pastor Yap Baptist Church on their own. Rollence Lug and James Layomai stepped into that position during our previous furloughs and then went on to plant their own churches on neighboring islands. Others included Patwin Hafeleichog, who now serves as pastor of Fais Baptist Church, and Klinton Euthemar and Truly Erra who both serve on Guam.

We have specifically prayed that Yap Baptist Church could be pastored by a mainland Yapese pastor, and during the past couple of years, God has seen fit to answer this prayer. When we left for furlough in October, two Yapese men, Francis Bechey and Steven Limarag, stepped in to lead Yap Baptist Church. Francis began attending our church when he was in 3rd grade and through the years has shown a heart that desires to follow and serve the Lord. He was a soul winner while in high school, always bringing new friends to hear the gospel. Steven Limarag and Adam Yowanug were two of those friends who accepted Christ and went on to train at Harvest in Guam. Now these guys are back, serving together at YBC! This is definitely the Lord's doing and is truly marvelous!

### Wedding of Ministry Couple

Another amazing story is how the Lord guided in Steven and Allysha's lives. Allysha started attending our kids night when she was a little girl, and she and Steven were both teenagers in our youth group. They attended HBBC and after graduation both felt called to come back to their island to teach in the local public elementary schools and help in their home church. As they worked in the ministry together, the Lord knit their hearts and in September, I had the joy of marrying them. They now live in the ministry apartment on the church property and continue teaching in their local elementary schools while helping with the kids and youth ministry at YBC.



Steven and Francis, Pastors at YBC



Steven and Allysha Limarag



Christian marriage is a great testimony



### *Believers Follow the Lord in Baptism*

In early October we had the privilege of baptizing a group of believers that included a child, some teens who accepted Christ during teen camp, and some adults who were saved and wanted to take this next step of obedience.

You may remember a family in our church who was involved in a horrible car accident as a result of the father driving while drunk. Because of his wife's godly and gracious response and his children's love and forgiveness, Martin came to see his need for a Savior and asked Christ to forgive his sins and chose to follow Him in his life.

Another incredible moment was when Pastor Francis was able to baptize his own dad. Francis and his mom prayed for years for his dad to accept Christ and so it was an emotional time for all of us as he wanted to publicly show his trust in Christ for salvation and his desire to follow the Lord.

Praise the Lord for the miracle of little baby, Kaiden, pictured at the top center. He went to the Philippines to have open heart surgery and is doing well! The day they returned from the Philippines, his dad, Arron, got baptized! Diane and I also had the opportunity to do marriage counseling with Arron and his wife Charlotte.

### *Visitors and Outer Island Ministries Trip*

It was an encouragement to have Chris Anderson and Pete Hansen come to visit for a few days to get footage for a project they are working on about missions. I was able to take them to visit the ministries on Fais and Ulithi and to meet the local pastors on those islands. We were able to take Pastor Francis with us which was vital for him to see the outer island ministries that Yap Baptist Church has started and continues to support. It was a life-changing trip for him as he saw the reach our ministry has had to the outer islands and the fruit of faithful believers in those churches. Another goal for this trip was to offer encouragement to Pastor James and his family on Falalop, Ulithi, and to Pastor Patwin and his wife on Fais Island. The outer island pastors and their people always encourage us, though, through their selfless, grateful attitudes and generosity. We enjoyed delicious local food, coconut crabs, and lobster as well as unbelievably beautiful scenery. After flying back to Yap, Chris was able to challenge our teens and two young ladies accepted Christ as their Savior.



### *Pastor Francis' Dedication*

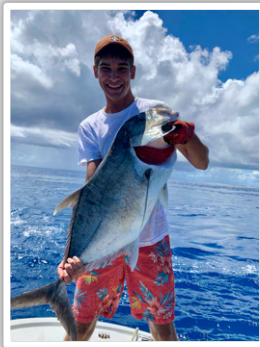
The Sunday before we left on furlough, some of the men came and laid hands on Francis and prayed for the Lord to bless his ministry. We are grateful for his humble spirit and his dedication to studying the Word of God as he seeks to encourage and lead YBC. Please pray for Francis this year that the Lord will give him strength, perseverance, and wisdom as he serves those around him.

## God Raised up a Team

This team is amazing and a direct answer to many prayers! It is a true testimony of the importance of children's and teen ministries. These young leaders have all grown up at YBC and several of them are from families where their parents were saved in our ministry. They love their home church and desire to serve their fellow islanders. Please pray for them! They are already doing a fantastic job of running all of the church services and activities as well as reaching out to their community and are planning for a Christmas service on December 20. Please pray for this service that many will hear the Good News!



From left to right: Zoelynn, Adam, Francis, Mark, Diane, Steven, Allysha



### Family News

Before heading back for furlough, our boys wanted to enjoy some time on the ocean where they both enjoy spear fishing, casting, and snorkeling. The Lord let us see some amazing sunsets and even the moon rising out on the beautiful ocean.

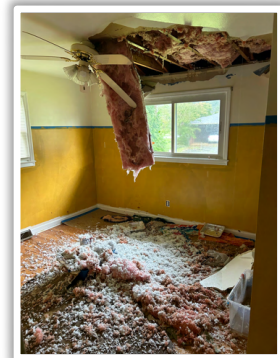
### We are Grandparents!

We were thrilled to be able to come back in time for the birth of our first grandchild, Holland Avair, born on November 8. We are praising the Lord for health and protection and for the snuggles we are getting to enjoy!



### Devastation from Hurricane Helene

Our son Joe's house was hit directly by Hurricane Helene, and it blew back the roof on his home causing the ceiling to cave in two of his bedrooms. Thankfully, he is a roofing contractor and was able to dry in his roof quickly but not before major damage was done. Because he is a roofing contractor, he has a lot of work from the devastation in the area which has been an indirect blessing.



Diane enjoyed celebrating her birthday with her Yap pals, Polly Whitmore and Sherry Zimmer. She has also been grateful for the time spent with her parents, and she was able to attend a special veterans service where her dad received the Quilt of Valor.

### *Another Koyeng Completion!*

Before we left, we worked on improving another koyeng on the back of our property. We needed to replace the wooden posts with cement posts because of water damage. After we left, Francis and Steven organized the church people to weave the thatch and then the work crew installed the thatch roofing. It was a joy for us to see all of the church people working together! Go to <https://vimeo.com/1037290750> to see a video.

### *Additional Prayer and Praises*

- Praise the Lord the new church van arrived!



- **Pray for the Outer Island ministries:** Pray for Pastor Patwin on Fais and Pastor James on Ulithi.
- **Pray for the Christmas Service** at YBC on December 20.
- **Praise the Lord for Baby Kaiden's successful heart surgery:** Please continue to pray for strength and health for this sweet little boy.
- **Pray for our family:** Please continue to pray for our adult children: Joe (owner of Generation Roofing) and his wife, Karalyn (high school English teacher), John Mark (self-employed web developer), and Cherith (Publix supervisor), and for our sons still living with us: Levi, 9th grade homeschooling, and Caleb, a college junior majoring in graphic design at Liberty University online.
- **Pray for Furlough Meetings:** Please pray for us as we travel reporting to churches during the next few months. We would love to come to your church!

We look forward to seeing many of you over the next few months as we travel reporting to our churches. If you would like for us to visit you or your church, **please let us know.** Thank you for your faithful prayer and support of the ministry here in Yap!

From our family to yours, may you have a blessed Holiday Season!

*Mark, Diane & Family*

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