

Nearly There...

"When people ask us: 'How are you able to build such a big church?', we answer them: 'God is doing it.'" one of the many people from the community who helped build the church, told me. And that is true. God orchestrated the project and used many people and churches to uplift, enthuse and inspire the very isolated community of Waisisi. The project did not only enable them to build themselves a church, but gave them hope, strengthened their faith, was a strong witness to those without a relationship with Jesus Christ, and enabled new imaginings of growth and making a difference in their community. It was a great privilege to spend the first week of July with the community of Waisisi. The generosity and warm way in which we were welcomed into the community was inspirational. The way in which everybody engages with the build blew me away!



Last roof plate going on



Now waiting for timber for window and door frames, cement to plaster outside and paint.



People in the community with building experience gained in Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand took the lead and the whole community got behind the project. The blocks were made using sand hauled up the hill in bags from the beach, and the two moulds that were available. Everything done manually. Great care was taken to strengthen the



structure as much as possible. The roof is probably painted by now. It is important to protect the roof from the acid rain created by the active volcano, Mount Yasur (about 15km away). As more cement, timber and paint are sent by Neville Jones from Port Vila, the outside is going to be plastered, the windows and doors made and the whole building will be painted.

The plan is currently for the church to be commissioned on the 25th of August before the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu's General Assembly starts on the 26th just up the hill from Waisisi.

Jonah Robert (leader of the community standing in right of picture below) writes: "On behalf of Moderator and the Congregation of Waisisi Presbyterian Church, we greet you all Master's greetings. We want to share our deepest heart of appreciation, for what you have done for us. We thank God Almighty for the seeds planted in your heart, Rev, and also extended to other hearts, for the financial assistance to supporting the New Church building, 10m x 20m. We have nothing to give in return but our sincere prayer that God will double portion you his blessing from heaven above. Once again, a million thanks for supporting us, in one way, or the other. Before we end, we also wanted if we continue our relationship between both of us, strong in future to come."



Mixing cement to plaster the inside walls.



The congregation has already established a committee whose task it is to work towards putting in a ceiling and maintaining the building.

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work Neville and Gloria Jones are doing in Vanuatu and for their logistical support and hospitality during our recent visit.

A deep felt thank you, once again, to every person who contributed to and is involved with this wonderful work of God in Waisisi, Tanna Island, Vanuatu.

Rev. Dr. Jaco Reyneke