

Wakatipu Presbyterian Church: Vanuatu Trip 2017



A team of 8 people went from Wakatipu Presbyterian Church to partner with Santo Bush Mission in June-July.

This was an exploratory trip to see the work of Santo Bush Mission and how Wakatipu church and future teams can support this ministry. We spent the first few days on the mission farm itself in Luganville. Pastor Tueni provided some orientation to the work and

its history. We got to know some of the team that would be taking us into the villages and they taught us some basic Bislama.

Most of our time was spent up in one of the mission stations, Urulu just below the large village Morakauri.

Here we built relationships, learned some Ni-Van cooking, helped making seats for the new church, played with the kids and lived in the rhythms of village life.





Our church raised money before we left to contribute to the rebuilding costs of some pre-schools and school classrooms that had been damaged in one of the cyclones. Cromwell Presbyterian joined us in giving to this cause. It was great to see these classrooms and meet some of the teachers and the important role the literacy ministry play in the villages.

Parent's from Holly's pre-school in Arrowtown donated books and toys for us to take.

There were certainly challenges (sleeping conditions, food) as is to be expected. The team meet these with great resolve and maintained enthusiasm throughout our time there. It was challenging and formative for the team used to full and busy lives back home learning to simply "be". Many conversations happened because we were simply present and available.



The team shared stories of their faith journeying with God and the Ni-Van's shared their stories with us. In this way Paul's words to the Romans reflects our experience when he writes about wanting to see them to encourage their faith as well as be encouraged by them.

The generosity and kindness of the people in the villages and the mission workers was a great blessing and encouragement to us.

We will be taking a team back next year to develop the partnership further and deepen relationships and friendships.

