

# FORD FAMILY IN PNG

## Spiritual Struggles

*Craig and Joel getting ready to travel to a church meeting in Mount Hagen*



On furlough, several people mentioned that they want to hear about the things that are going well and the struggles, too.

Upon our return from furlough, we found that many Christians were spiritually struggling.

So many Christians come from broken and dysfunctional homes. Many women experience spousal abuse, and there are frequently child abuse issues in the home. These evil events cause people to get discouraged and lose hope.

Within one compound area over the last two years we've had eight baptisms. Currently, only one woman is still consistently at worship with us.

It is a sign and a reminder that we are in a spiritual struggle. It is a reminder that being transformed into

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the likeness of Christ isn't like the process of turning on a light switch. It is a sign that the old things must pass away for the new to come.

Yet we stand confident in the promises of Scripture that we will be victorious in Christ.

## Mount Hagen Kibung

A few weeks after returning to Alotau, I was once again on the move. This time I was flying up to Mount Hagen for the annual churches of Christ kibung (lectureship).

There were a few experiences that I found particularly noteworthy:

After reading a blog post on my blog a manager from a guest house in Mt. Hagen said he wanted to meet me. He picked me up from the airport, took me dinner, and helped me arrange a room for the night at the guest house. It's a shrinking world!

On the first day of the kibung,

I found my way to the market and managed to get on the right bus. I had no idea where the kibung was - only the village name. It's much like trying to find a house only knowing the subdivision name. Anyway, just as I was getting off the bus, one of the Christians was driving by and recognized me. He picked me up and drove me to the venue.

God is good.

I arrived in the middle of the first morning session and enjoyed challenging myself to see how much Melanesian



*The baptistery! There were four baptisms during the kibung and about a dozen who repented of their backsliding.*

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## Kibung Pictures



*Preparing Food*



*Preaching 'shelter'*



## Family Perspective By Jeri

We're in a groove again here in the Ford household. With the occasional exception, most days we do school in the morning and naps in the afternoon – with household chores mixed in there, of course. On Tuesday mornings, Hannah and I go to Alotau International School to teach Religious Instruction to about 40 students. She likes being in a 'real' classroom, and I enjoy being back in the classroom, too! Hannah is about 1/3 of the way through grade one now. Caleb is learning his letters and numbers. Elizabeth is potty training now, so that keeps me on my toes.

In September, we spent a Family Day at WagaWaga Beach. It was nice to have a picnic, do some swimming, and build sand castles together. We're trying to take advantage of the beautiful things we'll miss here once we move.

Our family hosted a little Fall party at the end of October for some of our American friends in town. The kids loved playing games with their friends and eating some sweet treats.

The shops here began decorating for Christmas in October, so the kids enjoy seeing Christmas trees and lights when we go grocery shopping. It is definitely hot this time of year, but we are refreshed with all kinds of delicious fruit – pineapples, mangoes, watermelon, papaya, passion fruit... We're thankful for our many blessings.

## 8 Greatest Prayer Needs

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1. That Christians struggling with domestic issues will renew their faith and become an active part of the body of Christ.
2. God will continue to equip the men with the wisdom and understanding necessary to help serve the church.
3. Christian marriages. May God teach the local Christians how to honor, love, and respect each other.
4. John Kirarata who was just asked to join the church as a full-time church worker.
5. Strength, vision, and clarity as our family finishes off our last five months here.
6. Studies with non-Christians who are seeking the truth.
7. The church at Sineada, as they are building a church building.
8. Members struggling with financial needs. That God would provide a way to help them.

Pidgin I remembered. It's a good thing, too, because as they were starting the second session, they asked me to teach the class. I tried to explain that my Pidgin was rusty, but to no avail. I taught a 45 minute class in Pidgin with 3 minutes warning.

The event was such an encouragement for 8 Christians from Alotau who travelled to the event. Seeing 800+ Christians joining together in praise and worship was a cause for joy.

Later in the week, I was also given another session where I shared about the need to pass the church on to future generations.

After sleeping five nights in my tent, eating kaukau (sweet potato) for five days, bathing in a river, and using a pit toilet, I was sure glad to be on a flight home. I had to overnight in Port Moresby on the way, and I must say it was the most comfortable place I think I've ever experienced. From village life to a hotel where you have a soft pillow or hard pillow choice is amazing. It took two showers before I finally felt clean.

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