

# FORD FAMILY IN PNG

## Trip to Lavora

*John Kirarata teaching the group at Lavora*



In November I traveled to Lavora, a village along the North Coast of PNG. The Christians there requested a visit as a disagreement was keeping them from worshipping for several months.

Along with three other men from town, I traveled out to Lavora. The village is actually relatively close – 2 hour bus ride and 2 hour boat ride. While we were in Lavora, we had several meetings with the church and evening sessions with the Christians there. By the time we left, the group had reconciled and had agreed to begin worshipping together again. I wrote more about that trip here.

I returned home on Thanksgiving Day. On that Saturday, we got together with several other American families (mostly with the Bible translators) and celebrated Thanksgiving together.

**Nov. – Dec. 2011**

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*Men at Lavora doing a team building activity*

## Christmas and New Years Party

Every Christmas, the church here in Alotau has a Christmas party the Sunday before Christmas. Continuing the tradition, we went to the hospital and sang carols outside the windows of all the hospital wards. While singing, the children went from patient to patient and gave them each a fruit and a gift.

After the trip to the hospital, we all came back to our house for lunch, movie, and popcorn.

This year we also hosted the New Years party. We invited Christians from in and around town. A group of about 50 people were here to

celebrate. Some kids had ice cream for the first time, so that was fun to share with them.

The New Year's party is a good option for Christians who want to avoid the immoral activities that many embrace during the New Year.



*Over the last two months we've had two baptisms. The first was a young man named Saul who I've been studying with for a month. The second is an older man named Benson.*



*Missionary Kids getting food at Thanksgiving*



*Kids enjoying Thanksgiving food*



## Family Perspective By Jeri

The end of 2011 was wonderfully busy. While the local children were winding down the end of their school year, we continued plugging away at first grade since we're sticking more closely to the American school calendar and hope to finish before we move in April. Hannah is doing a super job in school, and Caleb and Elizabeth are doing well as honorary classmates.

We were blessed to celebrate American Thanksgiving with some American (and other expatriate) friends. There was plenty of food, as always. Though the meal was not entirely traditional, we did have pumpkin pie! The price of turkey was outrageous, so we all happily settled for chicken.

The month of December was full of fun. It was a joy to see the kids' excitement as we decorated for the Christmas season. We hosted a Christmas party for three other American families in town. We enjoyed singing Christmas carols together and eating lots of Christmas goodies, of course.

For the last few years, we've enjoyed hosting the Christians for a Christmas movie and light lunch. This year we showed "Ernest Saves Christmas." Watching the New Guineans watch the movie was just as entertaining as watching the movie itself. We ended December with a feast for the church members. We have been so blessed and were excited about celebrating the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012 with our local friends. The kids love to help host people in our home, and it was a blessing to see them participate in our ministry here.

## Current Prayer Needs

1. Church land. For many years, the church has been looking at land options. Pray that God will open up some property according to his will and timing.
2. Leadership. Over the next couple months, we'll be meeting as a church to help establish a firm leadership structure.
3. Deliverance from evil. So many homes are affected by the evils of drunkenness, abuse, and adultery.
4. John Kirarata who is serving the church as a full-time evangelist.
5. Spiritual renewal. Some church members are really struggling spiritually right now. They need your prayers.
6. Evangelism. Pray that we can be open to sharing our faith with those around us.
7. Transition. Our family is currently trying to sell our home and making preparations for moving in April.

## Suffering Families

Despite all the parties and celebrations, November and December were emotionally difficult months.

In early December, Martina, a young girl from church, had a baby boy who passed away just hours after birth.

A few weeks later, Elizabeth, another lady from church, lost a 4-month-old Down syndrome son from complications due to TB and pneumonia.

In December, I officiated both the babies' funerals.

Fortunately, both mothers are turning to God for strength and comfort at this time.

In your prayers, please remember Martina, Elizabeth, and their families.

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