

travel.

Mission Possible

Travel with purpose

ELEASHA VOS AND MEGAN TALINTYRE
PROVIDE AN INSIDER'S VIEW TO GOING ON A
SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP

For some time my friend and I have been interested in short term mission trips and travel that gives something back to the community. As we are both high school teachers the opportunity to use our skills voluntarily appealed to us, just like 'the disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea' (Ac 11:29). While considering the possibility of a trip like this, we discovered *Uplift Tours and Travel* in a Christian business directory. After looking at their website we discovered their 'volunteer then relax' trips which include a period of volunteer work with various organisations, followed by a holiday. We made contact with Uplift and a short time later they had found an opportunity for us to teach at Jehovah Jireh Christian School in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

DAY ONE

The adventure begins! We flew from Sydney to Port Vila, which was a relatively short flight. Port Vila International Airport is quaint, yet somewhat run-down. We were pleasantly greeted by a local musical group playing traditional songs. The afternoon was spent settling in and familiarising ourselves with Port Vila.

DAY TWO

We were met at our hotel by Jehovah Jireh's principal, Lloyd. She walked with us for the short trip from the hotel to the school, giving us an insight to what we were to expect for the coming week. On arrival, we discovered that the school building is owned by a church, with temporary furniture used by the students

during the week. It was a very basic building—certainly very different to most school buildings here in Australia. After being introduced to the students who had already begun their school day, we immediately started getting to know them and assisting them with their work.

DAY THREE

Our volunteer work continued. Jehovah Jireh Christian School operates on an individual, self-paced learning programme, using home schooling materials written in Australia and New Zealand. Students were very shy and hesitant to ask for assistance. Being a mission school, most of the teachers were untrained, only having a high school education themselves. Despite this, the students were very self-motivated and worked hard throughout a comparatively long school day, beginning at 8am and concluding at 3:30pm.

DAY FOUR

The school day started with a time of devotions which we had been asked to lead. Having had little time to get to know the students we decided to share our testimonies. There were considerably more students at school on this day due to it being sport day. The usual class time continued until lunch, which was then followed by the girls playing volleyball and the boys playing soccer. We had the opportunity to talk with some of the older girls during the afternoon. It was great to get to know them a little better. They shared with us what it is like to be a teenager in



Cascade Waterfall, Port Vila



Jehovah Jireh student playing volleyball





Megan Talintyre, left, and Eleasha Vos

Megan and students

Vanuatu and some of the temptations that they face, which are quite similar to those faced by teenagers in Australia.

DAY FIVE

This morning we were once again asked to lead devotions. Having been made aware of some of the apparent struggles within the students at the school, we decided to focus our devotion on spiritual battles. Student attendance was significantly lower on this day. We asked Tari, the secondary teacher, about this and he reflected on the difficulties that the students have to regularly attend school. Family pressures and a low priority on Christian education were some of the reasons mentioned.

DAY SIX

A group discussion started our final day at Jehovah Jireh. The discussion was on the topic of forgiveness. The previous afternoon Tari had set some 'homework' for the students to talk to their families about this topic. The discussion went for well over an hour as a number of students shared their thoughts. Most of the students that shared came from Christian homes.

One of the older students, Wilkinson, who had experienced preaching in his local church shared passionately about the topic. Their maturity and insight was an encouragement to us. The school day finished at lunchtime and just prior to this we were farewelled by the staff and students. It had been a great week getting to know the students and helping them with their studies. It was a blessing to watch them open up and share some good discussions with us. It was sad to say goodbye. 'If it is encouraging, let him encourage, if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously' (Rom 12:8).

DAYS SEVEN TO THIRTEEN

Feeling encouraged and blessed after our time at Jehovah Jireh we commenced our week of relaxation. This started with an early morning flight to Tanna Island to experience more of the culture and specifically to see Mt Yasur, an active volcano. Flat tyre and all, we eventually made it to our night viewing of the erupting volcano, an example of God's awesome creation. Following this we returned to Port Vila, spent a few days relaxing at our resort, concluding with a tour around the island of Efate.

The communication from and preparation by the staff at Uplift Tours and Travel was first-rate and led to a smooth and stress-free experience. Overall, we felt challenged, blessed, encouraged and thankful that we had this opportunity. CW www.uplifttoursandtravel.com

Full Travel Services ■ Unique Group Tours ■ Individual Travel ■ Schoolies ■ Special Interest ■ Event Travel ■ Volunteering Holidays ■ Mission Trips

**Looking for a new travel experience?
Book now for your premium discount**

- 18 – 35's Adventure Fiji – May 2010
- Classique Adventure Sri Lanka – June 2010
- Schoolies Safari Fiji – December 2010

Plus our unique Volunteer then Relax Holidays
– see the Travel Diary write-up on this page!

OR ... let us create your own group tour!



Uplift - Uniting People Likeminded In Fellowship Travel

P. 07 5499 3220 F. 07 5499 3226 E. enquiries@uplifttours.com www.uplifttoursandtravel.com