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Dear Friends,

"O God, our help in ages past our hope in years to come Our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home." A stormy blast sadly occurred this month in Ambunti. A man was shot and 15 hours later died from internal bleeding while being transported by road to medical care. Even before he died his relatives in retaliation used machetes to brutally wound the shooter's mother who also died while being airlifted to the coastal hospital. A dozen homes of folks not involved were burned and pillaged. Other people were cut and seriously injured, including two of Sandy's sewing students/ companions, Jenifer and Bevelyn. Both escaped Ambunti to receive treatment at clinic in another village, unable to stay at the Ambunti hospital because the staff also feared reprisals. The next day police arrived in Ambunti and began taking peoples' statements. The shooter turned himself over to the authorities and was moved to confinement in another city.



The lyrics of this hymn are somewhat of a paraphrase of Psalm 90. Yes, we have a sovereign God even though it seems at times as if we are living in a world of problems and chaos. Our only true safety is in Him alone. All too frequently in Papua New Guinea fighting and violence occurs between clans or tribes over their customary land even though (or maybe because) there are no official land titles or deeds. In Ambunti the smoldering land ownership issue along with other grievances exploded after the shooter who had been previously attacked by a drunk wielding a bush knife took matters into his own hands. Now in the aftermath people suffer from physical injuries, property loss and grief. Thus, we have a fragile peace-- a lull in the storm.

Lately the fuel supply situation for the province has improved and this allows more travel by PIM staff. Pastor Ray Wangimbi who works with PIM had an outreach to Nukuma district. Churches from five villages sent a total of 44 participants including pastors and church elders for training on church management and





administration. Representatives from two denominations which have had past disagreements and much different doctrines, they were at this course together. At the closing gathering several expressed their appreciation. One of them said, “this course has showed us a new road to walk, and we should not compare or compete with each other.” Another said, “the course was like a rudder, supporting stick, or like a bridge to walk over.” Pastor Ray was encouraged.

The following week at the Ambunti SSEM church there was a women’s training course to give 63 women ideas as to how to be of assistance at their ten local churches. Ray and his wife Cathreen, Merolyn and Sandy Heidema taught at the course. It’s usually males who get to have the training and we trust that such will help strength the ministry of women in these local congregations. David Kasen also held a training for church

leaders at the upriver village of Oum. One of the resources David used included a book written by the PIM mission founder, Orneal Kooyers. 70 Principles for Leadership.

We pray that the training of PIM continue supporting church pastors and leadership in spreading the Good News that can change peoples’ hearts and behavior.

Yours in Christ Douglas Heidema

Pictures

Top of first page: Some damage from the fighting in Ambunit

Bottom of first page: Course attendees

Top of second page: a large crustacean from the river

Bottom: Getting into the villages sometimes required some sweating and creative maneuvering.

