

MARCH 2012

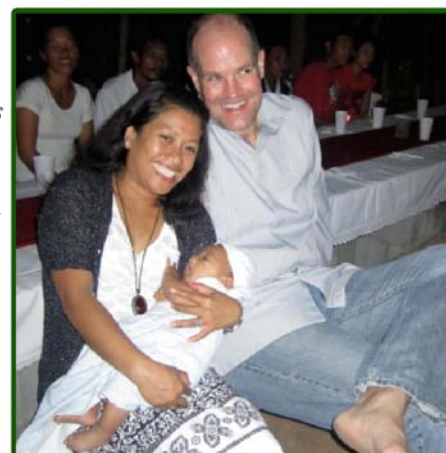
"The greatest of these is love." - I Corinthians 13:13

SUMMER IS COMING...

The month of March is graduation time here in the Philippines - it means summer time (*April and May which are the hottest months of the year*) is coming soon. It means HOT days are coming, no more rain, and all the kids will be off from school. We are already in full swing getting ready for summer camps for the kids in the church, and Vacation Bible School for the kids in the community.

RECENT EVENTS...

Valentines Dinner - Every couple knows how important and special it is to be able to get away with the one you love for a 'date night' every now and then. For most here in the Bukid that never happens. There are only a hand full of restaurants in Himamaylan and none up in the mountain. A night out is a luxury that most just cannot afford to take. For that reason every year we transform our little church into a 'Romantic get away' for Valentines day. Nothing too fancy - you still have to ignore the chickens, goats, ducks, and dogs that wander through and forgive the dirt floor - but add some red balloons, flowers, and candles and you have the making for a romantic evening for the couples in the church!



The youth were in charge of the whole evening. They did all the decorations, cooking, and served all the food. We had a number of games for the couples to play together. We finished off the evening with a teaching from **I Peter 1:3-7**. A wonderful evening for the couples in the church!

Reading glasses - Many of the older saints in the Bukid have poor eye sight and are unable to read their Bibles. A number of months ago an eye doctor from the States sent us about 300 pairs of reading glasses. We have been having fun over the past few weeks passing them out in community. The joy of the people as they try on a pair of glasses and are able to read clearly again - perhaps for the first time in years - has been priceless!



Calvary Chapel Himamaylan - We began the affiliation process last fall with Calvary Chapel. A few weeks back a couple of pastors came from Calvary Chapel Dumaguete for a 'surprise visit'. It was the last step in our application to become a Calvary Chapel. The name of the church will remain Simbahan sa Bukid but we are now officially a Calvary Chapel affiliate. We are already making plans to attend the Senior pastors conference in Dumaguete next month.



Update on Dad - His health is continuing to deteriorate. We had to go to the hospital again a few weeks back because he had a mild stroke. We are back home now but he is having a really hard time adjusting. The loss of the use of his right arm and foot to the stroke have not been easy for him to take. We have him in physical therapy - but it will not be an instant fix - recovery will take time. It means for the time being he requires 24/7 care.

The most important thing at this point is to keep his spirits up. We do not know how much longer the Lord will keep Dad around - but we want to make his time as much of a joy as possible.

ERNIE & SADIE STOCK...

Ernie and Sadie, a young couple from Calvary Chapel Bible Fellowship, came out for two months to help out with the worship and youth here at the church. During their time here they set a spark to the youth in the church. Starting this Sunday the youth will for the first time even be taking over the worship for the church! Here is a short update from them on their time with us...



Thank you all so much for your prayers and support. We would like to share with you what's going on here on this side of the world! Sadie and I spent two months in the Philippines in a city called 'Himamaylan'. It is beautiful place with all the coconut trees and tall green sugar cane fields you could ask for. We were serving in the church - Simbahan sa Bukid - which is located in the mountains along with a number of surrounding communities. There are a lot of high school students there - several that come regularly to the church. They listen to Pastor Dave teach the message on Sunday but generally do not come back till the following Sunday. There is nothing specifically in the church for them - yet.

The last two months Sadie and I had a blast with them! On Saturdays we practiced worship songs (*not easy to learn as we sing them in Illongo*) and played the guitar. Then on Sunday mornings we all led the worship! Tuesday morning we taught Bible studies at the local high school. The rest of the week we hung out with the kids till the home bible fellowships started (*which was just about every night*)!

We organized several group activities. We put together the Valentines couples' dinner at the church and used it as an opportunity for the highschoolers to serve. The following morning we surprised the youth by taking those that served up to 'Mag Aso' for a day of swimming in the clear water of some jungle falls! One Saturday night there was a 'festival', which is just a reason to drink and dance all night. Not the best hang out for a group of teenagers. So as an alternative we set up a night of movies, popcorn, and roasted hotdogs for any of the teens in the church that wanted to come.

There were a lot of opportunities to bless the kids. Sadie had a great time painting the girls nails while talking with them. While most of the guys played basketball when it got cool enough. The more we hung out with them we noticed that there is a lot of pressure on these kids to be pulled into the world (*like most teens*). But for these kids it is not just their friends that pull them in. They are often ridiculed, made fun of, and pulled down by their own parents! Parents would actually rather their kids drink and party than attend church!

We really enjoyed our time there and believe God is calling us to continue helping with the youth and worship with the desire to eventually raise up others in the church to replace us. Our plan will be to try and tie up any loose ends in California then return to the Philippines in a couple of months. Please be in prayer with us as we seek the Lord for the next step desiring to reach out and minister in the Philippines.

PRAYER REQUESTS...

- The Bible Studies - for the Word to change lives
- New Bibles studies to be taught by Filipino teachers
- The people in the Bukid (*mountain*) - to be open to Jesus!
- Strength for those families who are standing up for Jesus!
- The radio - direction with the 'franchise' - and the NTC
- Pray for the Lord to heal my Dad
- Ernie and Sadie - Lord willing their return to the Philippines
- The house in the Bukid - it should be done next month
- Our marriage - grow closer to Jesus & each other
- The doctors say we can not have children - the Lord knows
- Flexibility and humility - we would be full of Jesus!



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