

February 2020

"Have you never read, Out of the mouth of [children] You have perfected praise..." - Matthew 21:16



We took off from LAX on January 20 with seven others from California (including Jana Alayra and her husband Ron) and Japan (Calvary Chapel Iwakuni) to do outreach concerts in cities across the Philippines. Our itinerary had us stopping by seven cities as we put on eight concerts sharing the Love of Jesus with kids and adults alike! We were met at the airport when we landed in Cebu (our first stop) by a team from Simbahan sa Bukid (the church we helped plant in Himamaylan City). Pastor Bem, along with 16 youth, came to help as the back up dancers for Jana! We went right from the airport to the first concert.

Not quite sure what to expect we were quite amazed to walk into one of the largest malls in Cebu City and hear worship music playing. The center of the mall was all set up for us and a crowd had already gathered. We had a blessed time of worshiping and sharing the Gospel with the hundreds of people of who came out to attend (and countless others who just happened to pass by in the mall!)

Day 2 - Had us traveling by van 6 hours to the south to the city of Dumaguete. We got to put on a concert there at the local Calvary Chapel. We had a wonderful time worshiping Jesus with around a thousand kids and their parents! The youth from Simbahan sa Bukid were amazing as Jana Alayra's backup dancers. Pastor Nick Metroka shared a powerful gospel message! The next morning Jana put on a Childrens worship workshop for around 200 children's ministry teachers.

Day 3 - We left early in the morning to travel across the mountains that divide east and west Negros Island. Along with a change a scenery came a change of language. The east side of the Island speaks Cebuano while the west side of the Island speaks Ilonggo (the language Jen and I speak). We arrived in Himamaylan City and drove the four kilometer road passing ever more familiar scenery as we made our way up to our house. After a quick bite for lunch we hopped back in the vehicles to head over to the local elementary school where we gave out Christmas Shoeboxes that Calvary Chapel Bible Fellowship, Calvary Chapel Iwakuni, and Calvary Chapel Dickinson had lovingly put together for the kids. Cole Wear took the opportunity to share that JESUS is the greatest gift of all! That night we had a concert in Kabankalan City about 20 minutes south of Himamaylan!





Day 4 - Saw us back on the road as we drove 2 hours to the north to the city of Bacolod. It was the only day we had 2 concerts. The first was again in a huge mall. We had well over 1000 people come out to worship Jesus! The second was in a large church in downtown Bacolod. We finished off the day by driving back to Himamaylan.

Day 5-6 - Himamaylan City. We had a wonderful Sunday service and potluck with the church family (*including handing out more Christmas shoe boxes*). Then later that night we had a special concert. For several of the songs the kids had Jana sit down and sang a few special songs just for her! The next morning we went up the mountain and handed out over 600 shoe boxes to San Antonio Elementary school while we again got to tell the kids all about the LOVE of Jesus! God is so Good! That afternoon we returned to Bacolod to spend the night in a hotel in preparation for a 6am flight to Legaspi.

Day 7-8 Legaspi City. The kids were giddy as most of them had never been on a plane (*or been to a different Island*). We all loaded onto a turbo prop and headed off to the 7th outreach concert as we worked our way across the Philippines. We met up with a dear missionary and friend, Pastor Dave Matthews. He has been church planting for over 20 years! The concert there was amazing as we got to see kids from 11 churches come together to worship Jesus! The next morning we had the second and final Childrens worship workshop with around 60 teachers from the surrounding churches. We left late that night to the airport to fly to the capital, Manila.



The final two days of our whirlwind trip across the Philippines were in a city of near 20 million people! We had a fantastic time with the kids at Tabernacle of Faith school doing the last (*almost*) of the concerts. Then we got to travel by bus to see our dear friends and fellows missionaries Archie & Angie Nagtalon in Bulacan. We made quite the scene pulling up to his house in a full size bus (*more than one neighbor popped out their head to see what was going on*).

The next day we took all the youth to MOA (*Mall of Asia*) before heading to the airport. We got to bless them all with some new shoes for school. It goes without saying that this has been the trip of a lifetime for all of them! Before we left the mall we had one last impromptu concert. We were enjoying ice cream at Cold Stone. The employees there did a little show for the kids while they made the desserts (*tossing the ice cream around*). The kids (*and Jana*) replied in kind by giving them a little concert right there in the mall! One last chance to share the LOVE of Jesus before we sent them off.

Then came the hard part - a lot of goodbyes. The kids sang songs with Jana on the bus as we worked our way through Manila traffic to the airport. First we said goodbye to Pastor Glenn Phipps from CC Iwakuni. Then we had to say a tearful goodbye to Jana, Pastor Nick, and Cole Wear. Finally we had dinner with Maite Gaston and her family before they went home.

Next stop - Japan!

Love,
David, Jen, and Hallel

