



INTERCONNECTIONS

Ministry Update from Rene and Lani Quimbo - Philippines



Dear friends,

Praise God with us! Five months of challenging work and we finally held our first Sunday worship service at the newly repaired church in Lacolac on October 23. Most of us cried tears of joy thanking God for this wonderful blessing.



We are grateful to God for our brothers and sisters at Midway Presbyterian Church for their generosity and for making all this possible. What made the repair work challenging was not just the transportation of materials making sure that they were available at the time they were needed (several times the trucks were stuck on the muddy roads, prompting them to decide to transport only when the roads were dry), but more so the work ethic of our carpenters. But God encouraged us to persevere by fixing our eyes to that very day when the building work is done. We sing of God's faithfulness and His praise is always on our lips.

On the first week of November, we made a quick trip to Zamboanga City. We made sure that the area where we can stock some of our building materials is ready. We also made arrangements for our accommodations and for our carpenters from Cagayan de Oro (CDO) City for the entire duration of the rebuilding work of the Arena Blanco Ministry Center. We also purchased the building materials that the carpenters needed first and had them delivered and transported to the stocking

area. Then we went back to CDO to fetch our carpenters. We brought 6 people with us and started work on November 16. As of this writing, the foundation is estimated to be completed on the third week of December.



Quite slow because we work with the tide the building being built on water. We also encountered problems with the attitude of our head carpenter. Those who are working under him at that time wanted to physically hurt him and two of them were considering going home. But thanks to our good Lord who is working in all of us enabling us to understand each other's shortcomings, He is keeping our team of workers intact until now. Our limited stocking area (we even resorted to requesting our neighbors to allow us to put some building materials under their houses) contributed to the hassle of making materials available when needed.

The second week of December, we decided to canvas wood in Basilan, a province known to be home to several Muslim rebel groups. Wood here in Zamboanga City is not only expensive but is always short of supply. We rode on a pump boat going there covered with much prayer for some fishermen told us that pirates may rob you of your boat and leave you floating on the sea. It turned out that going to Basilan was a wise decision for we found all the wood that we needed at less than

half the price of similar wood here in Zamboanga City. The transportation cost was a bit expensive but the outright availability and the price difference more than covered it. It is good to belong to God.



We have decided to remain here over Christmas and the New Year. This is also what the carpenters wanted. We hope we will get done with the rebuilding within the month of January next year. Thank you for praying with us. We have a Muslim neighbor here who is bent on making trouble for our carpenters and for us. He even threatened us in front of many people. A Christian friend who is a high ranking official of the Philippine National Police who is from Zamboanga City but currently assigned in Cagayan de Oro City offered help to settle the matter. While appreciative of the offer, we thought it would be best to keep the police out, and deal with it in a neighborly way. Knowing that God has set the course for us, we endure through problems, troubles, and challenging circumstances because there is a finish line. These, too, will be over.

Other ministry programs here in Arena Blanco continue such as the day care classes, tutorial classes for primary, elementary, high school and

college students, prayer meetings, discipleship classes, counseling, and worship services.

Alpad just finished the first semester of his Bachelor of Arts in Theology degree at Ebenezer Bible College and Seminary this month of December. We remain grateful to God and to Christ Enrichment Church for their faithful support. On the other hand, the Bible school will start offering courses for the master's degree this second semester. This schedule works well with us because Eugene is busy helping out in the rebuilding work.



Ongoing ministries under the Portal Study Center include outreach programs in Kiraba, Molugan, and Camp Evangelista. A special activity has been planned for these 3 outreach ministries this Christmas. We are grateful to God for raising up two additional volunteers to these outreach ministries.

The prayer walk on November 23 in Lacolac brought our prayer team to 86 homes. Praying is a challenging work. But to labor in prayer on behalf of others is God's will for each one of us. We pray and watch God work in our midst.

Work for food program in Lacolac keeps several families busy working in the rubber, fruit,

and rice farms. By the third week of December, we should be finished transplanting rice seedlings in the rice fields.

The House of Hope Ministry Center continues to serve the Bajaus in its current location. We hope to start construction of the new ministry center in its new location in the town of Opol in the month of February next year.

Dear friends, thank you for the encouragement to hold on to the vision that God has given us to reach out and to seek the lost with His gospel of grace. Thank you also for your generous investment for the spiritual prosperity of the people we serve in the various ministry centers. Thank you for your faithful prayers. May you have the joy and peace of God and may you know the power of His love now and always.

“For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all people, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel” Luke 2: 30-32. Merry Christmas!

Rene and Lani Quimbo

