



# Interconnections

Ministry Update from Rene and Lani Quimbo serving in the Philippines with PMI

Dear faithful friends and prayer partners,

We are now finishing up the preparation of VBS materials for 5 venues. The VBS teachers and assistant teachers have already met and studied together the teaching materials, songs, activities, and have discussed the goals of the VBS. **Pray with us for dedication of our VBS team and God's blessings upon this ministry.**

The youth and children outreach ministry in Opol that our team started early this year gathers more than 40 participants most meetings. We are so excited because a number of them have started to worship with us on Sundays. The **Portal Christian Fellowship** has decided to move its Sunday worship service to the **House of Hope Ministry Center** in Opol beginning the first Sunday of March. The reason for this decision is to encourage new believers from the adult outreach ministry in Opol (holding daily Bible study) and from the youth and children outreach in Opol to come to church on Sundays and become part of the



life and work of a local church. The distance and location of the **House**

**of Hope Ministry Center** is a bit inconvenient for our Cagayan de Oro City based worshippers but they are willing to make the sacrifice in order for the Lord's work in Opol to prosper. On a sad note, one family decided to move to another church.

Four Bajau families regularly worship with us in Opol. Six other Bajau families have committed to join us in Opol once their houses in Opol which is still under construction are completed.

The **House of Hope Ministry Center** construction was finally completed and we are grateful to Midway Presbyterian Church for their gracious generosity which made this project possible.

At **Hillside Learning Center** up in Lacolac, our prayer walk team was able to visit 89 households during our recent ministry. We continue this ministry despite being rudely turned away by several families (adherents of tribal religion worshipping Diwatas 'forest gods' and those members of a cult). We pursue the opportunity to proclaim God's word in households that do not come to church, and be able to bring them to God's throne of grace through prayers. We also recently held the closing program of our lunch break Bible study for elementary students for the school



year. *One point of joy is the fact that most of our students have memorized the required memory Bible verses.*

Just last week, the baccalaureate for the graduating elementary students in Lacolac was held at our church. As always, we look forward to this ministry opportunity because parents of graduating students, including those belonging to the tribal religion and cult, are required to attend. The messages are always evangelistic and we can just hope to God to bring His gospel of grace into the lives of His chosen people.



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This quarter will see us extremely busy with the repairs of the **Hillside Learning Center** courtesy of our faithful ministry partner, Central Presbyterian Church, who from the beginning 19 years ago have been a constant blessing to the Lord's work here in Mindanao.



Since the beginning of the year, we experience dry spell weather and as it continued, we now have El Nino throughout the country. Drinking water is scarce, and community people who go down to the river to bathe and do laundry are saying that the water level is very low. The rains that come far in between at least give much needed relief to trees and crops. **Please pray with us as our church is spearheading the reporting of an incident to concerned government authorities** involving the eldest son of a family who worships with us here since we started the church in 2004. The son who is emotionally and mentally disturbed (though is able to take care of himself and can run errands) was seen repeatedly molesting a very young sister and farm animals. The people who are eye witnesses are also members of the church. The church council met the parents (only the mother came) to discuss the matter. We encouraged and insisted that the parents get involved in this process. When the mother refused (the family was made aware of this by the church when this first happened, but did not do anything to prevent this from happening again), we decided to report it ourselves

(represented by a community police who is a member of the church council) to the Department of Social Welfare and Development town office. There is much fear of the parents in our church that their young girls could be abused.

We also covet your prayers regarding the funds needed to purchase a second hand vehicle for this mountain ministry. The one that we are using for 17 years now (a 22 year old pickup) is about to give up on us. Last week, while driving back to the city, the vehicle would suddenly stop, and the brake smells. The mechanic who looked at it said he wonders how we were able to make it back to the city since the problem was not only about the broken handbrake cables but the wheels were already out of alignment due to the broken under chassis. Not so long ago, while going down the road on our way to the mountain ministry center, we lost brakes and had to drive into the side of the mountain. Thank you for praying with us.

In Zamboanga City, at the **Mampang Ministry Center**, young Sama and Tausug girls and boys in the congregation are getting married causing us great concern. Recently, a member of our church youth group got married even before the school year is over (she is in 7<sup>th</sup> grade), and another younger sister (also in 7<sup>th</sup> grade) is going to be married soon. It is not considered illegal by the authorities since their tribal culture allows this. Our son Iking and a friend who is also a nurse have conducted seminars before concerning physical, emotional, and mental preparation for marriage. However the parents also married very young and do not see this as a problem. Please pray that the Lord will open the mind of the parents concerning the pitfalls of young marriages and to stop arranging marriages of very young children.

Since early February, the government has declared chicken pox and measles epidemic in the country. Almost all members of the Mampang congregation including our co-worker, **Roxan**, has had chicken pox. Before she was infected with the virus, she was assisting members of the congregation in and out of the hospital.

The fence (made of coconut lumber and bamboo slots) around the **Mampang Ministry Center**, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year, is too weak to remain upright, most parts of the fence is already down on the ground. Due to rampant stealing activities of people in the community (remember about 2 years ago our water containers disappeared, and the center was broken into), we hope to construct a fence of sturdy materials (cement posts and fence wire) as soon as possible. *Thank you for considering to be involved in this much needed project.*

Dear friends, as always, our heart is filled with beautiful praises to our mighty, loving God whose divine providence frees us from anxious thoughts that can paralyze us from beneficial decisions and opens us to His faithful care. We are forever grateful to your ministry of prayer and financial support to us and the people we serve in the various ministries. In many instances we find God makes a difficult path before us a thing of wonder **because of your thoughtful encouragement** that meet us right where we are---**thank you all.**

*Rene and Lani*

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