

Rick & Becky Martin

Your Missionaries in Iloilo City, Philippines since 1976

August-September 2026

Dear friends,

This newsletter covers the Radio Ministry, the upcoming Pastors and Workers Conference, and a tribute to Dr. Don Sisk.

RADIO MINISTRY

Gene Sharp, who has done so much to start radio stations around the world spent two months in the Philippines. He built a radio station in Quezon City which is part of Metro Manila. This station is operated by the La Loma Baptist Church which has sent pastors to start churches here in the Philippines and has sent missionaries to countries around the world. Pastor Ramil Olalia is the pastor. Below is their new studio.



Inside the new radio studio in Quezon City.

Pastor Gilbert Toqero, who is now in heaven, helped us so much when we were trying to get the bill passed in Congress that allowed us to start radio stations. He died during COVID. He had prayed and dreamed that one day his church would have a radio station that would reach people in Manila. We were good friends and I know that he is happy as he looks down from heaven on the radio station which God will use to see many saved.

Brother Sharp also got the tower on the island of Guimaras operational for our radio station here in Iloilo City. This will give the station a potential coverage of over 2 million people. This project has taken years to finish, and I want to thank those who helped with it, especially Bro. Sharp. This was a very difficult project for several reasons and I am thankful he had the persistence to get it done.

The signal can be heard on the next island over, Bacolod City, which has 500,000 people. The island of Guimaras blocked the signal before but now it is very clear. It is amazing what that tower can do in reaching people. Many more towns on Panay and Negros can hear the station.



One of our staff members, Bro. Edgar, climbing the tower



Work on the radio tower

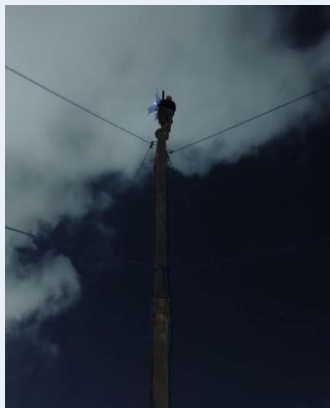
Working on the tower can be difficult, dangerous and tiring. They would stay on this 145-foot tower for as long as six hours without coming down.



They liked to work at night as it was very hot in the afternoon.



Working on the tower in the cooler evening hours



Working high on the tower at night



Brother Sharp installing the transmitter



Brother Galyean's church



Brother Sharp went to Bohol Island where Pastor James Famador and his church operate a station. It was the third station started back in 2013. Brother Sharp built a studio where they could record video content for the church to use on social media. About 25% of his church members were reached through the radio ministry.

Brother Sharp trained the tech team to install equipment, climb and work on towers, and handle other aspects of the radio station. This team is planning to set up the equipment and handle other tasks when Brother Sharp cannot be here. This is a big step toward making this ministry sustainable.

Brother Sharp also built a radio station in Pangasinan for Missionary Ed Galyean.





Climbing inside the tower



Radio studio and ministry team



Pastors And Workers Conference



45th Annual Pastors & Workers Conference - October 7-8, 2026

This coming October 7-8 (Wednesday-Thursday), Iloilo Baptist Church will be having its 45th Annual Pastors and Workers Conference. The purpose of the Pastors and Workers Conference is to encourage and challenge the attending delegates.

"Jesus is the Answer."

Our theme is "Jesus is the Answer." As born-again believers in Jesus Christ we know that He is the answer! He is the answer to eternal life. He is the answer in finding our purpose in life, in finding peace in our hearts and true satisfaction in our lives. Only He can do all these things and more.

On Wednesday night we will honor pastors who have served for 25 years or longer. Thursday night World Missions will be highlighted and emphasized. The most important part of the conference is the preaching. The pastors preaching this year are men who have been faithful in serving the Lord.

From Monday afternoon to Wednesday noon there will be seven workshops to help equip workers in the ministry. Also on Thursday afternoon there will be a distribution of Bibles from four ministries that have sent Bibles. These Bibles are for pastors and Bible college students. Please pray for this event.

Tribute To Don Sisk

Most of us had mentors when we were young—people who helped guide, challenge and encourage us. My father and mother were my mentors growing up. I owe them everything.

My pastor, Jack Hyles, and also Jim Vineyard were my mentors when I was at Hyles Anderson College. Don Sisk was the person who mentored me as a missionary. Recently the Lord took him home at the age of 94. In my last newsletter I mentioned that I would share some details about his ministry in Japan and the lessons I learned from him.

Brother Sisk became our field director shortly after Becky and I arrived in the Philippines. For the first four years he visited our church and home every year. He had been greatly used as a missionary in Japan, a very difficult country in which to reach people. His ministry is often used as a model. When he visited the Bible College here in Iloilo City and saw these poor students he went back and sent 175 reference Bibles for them. If you ever had the privilege to be around him you couldn't help but love his spirit and attitude. He was a lot of fun. Back in 1982 he visited Becky and me. One day, I decided to take him along with my four-year-old son Ricky to see the Extension Bible Classes for the children in the poorest area of the city. After the classes, I took him to see a local market. Then we got on a jeepney and headed back to the church. When we got off the jeepney we both had a feeling something was wrong and we said, "We forgot Ricky."

We went back and found little Ricky talking to the fish vendors. I made Bro. Sisk promise that he would never tell Becky that I accidentally left our son at a public market.

On one of his visits to Iloilo we went to another church on a weekday to meet another missionary. When we arrived we found out he would be delayed, so I decided to interview him about his early life as a missionary in Japan. For about two hours I asked question after question about his ministry, especially the start of his church and this is what I learned.

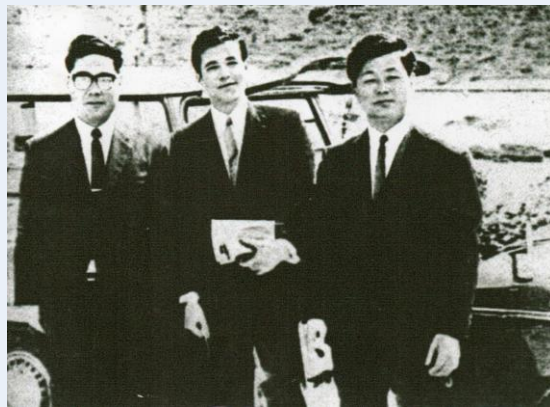
In early 1966, after being in Japan for about a year, Dr. Sisk decided it was time to start a church. He didn't speak Japanese well enough to preach, so he began looking for an interpreter. He also didn't know where he would start. One night at a fellowship meeting with a group of Christians, he happened to sit next to a 22-year-old Japanese man. This young man was saved and spoke English fluently, having recently returned from studying in the United States.

Brother Sisk mentioned that he was looking for a place to start a church, The interpreter said he was praying that someone would go to his home city of Senri Newton and start a church. It was a city of 80,000 people and was expected to grow to a half-million people. They went to survey the city, and when Brother Sisk saw row after row of new high-rise apartments, he knew the Lord wanted him to start an independent Baptist church there. The American missionaries and their families attended his first service because they didn't expect many, if any, Japanese to show up. On February 10, 1966, 45 Japanese and 15 Americans came to the service! I asked Brother Sisk if he believed many Japanese people would attend his opening service. He said he did.

One of the Japanese visitors was a 23-year-old man named Sogoro Ogawa, who was a student at Kansai University where he was earning a master's degree in English. He walked up to Brother Sisk before the service and said, "I don't have any interest in becoming a Christian." He went on to say that he had come so that he could hear the missionary's English as it had been announced that Brother Sisk would speak in English using an interpreter. That certainly didn't do much to encourage the young missionary!

That evening, Brother Sisk preached a simple salvation message and gave an invitation. That young man walked forward and said, "I've never heard that story." Sogoro Ogawa received Christ as his Saviour, but that was only the beginning.

Sogoro's desire to learn more was intense. Almost daily, Brother Sisk spent time with him. He would teach him about the Christian life and take him door to door trying to win people to Christ. In nine months' time, Brother Ogawa was preaching the Gospel. Incredibly, 78 new converts were baptized in the Senri Newton Baptist Church during the first year. This church grew to become the largest independent Baptist Church in Japan, averaging about 400 in attendance. Below in the middle is Sogoro Ogawa during that time.



Sogoro Ogawa (center) during the early years of the ministry in Japan

The young university student became the pastor of the church, and now 60 years later, is still faithfully preaching the Gospel. Recently his wife went home to be with the Lord. His two sons serve as assistant pastors.

The first meeting place was a public meeting room in an apartment complex. There were not supposed to be any religious services held there so Brother Sisk asked the person in charge if he could "teach English" there. He went on to

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say that they would be singing Christian songs “in English,” and that the Bible would be taught “in English.” The official was very sympathetic and gave his permission for a very small fee each month.

The church was able to secure the use of eight more rooms in nearby apartment complexes. Six weeks after the church was started, Brother Sisk had his new converts teaching Sunday school to children in these rooms. Some might question the use of such new converts as Sunday school teachers so soon, but Brother Sisk said it helped his Christians grow, and I agree! Brother Sisk said that the best time to give responsibility is when one first gets saved. Some of these first Sunday school teachers went on to become some of Japan’s finest Christians.

One-and-a-half years after the church was started, Brother Sisk started his Bible school with Brother Ogawa and two others. More than 70 pastors and other full-time Christian workers came out of that Bible College from 1974 to 2000. During those years his church sent foreign missionaries from the congregation to Peru, Hong Kong, China, Bolivia, Cambodia, and Brazil. Here are some important lessons my missionary mentor taught me:

- Training men for leadership is the most important aspect of a missionary’s ministry.
- God blesses hard work and faith. Brother Sisk did everything possible to prepare for his first meeting, and he expected God to bless it.
- God’s hand will be upon missionaries because of their attitude and character.

When Brother Sisk went to Japan, other missionaries told him all the reasons why he would fail. There is no doubt that Japan is and was an extremely difficult field, even in 1966 when Brother Sisk started the church. Brother Sisk didn’t dwell on that. To him, Japan was the best field to work in.



Bro. Sisk with Billy Caalem, one of the best graduates of IBC

I was blessed the day Don Sisk crossed my path. Like so many others, I will never forget the impact he had on my life.

God bless,

Rick and Becky Martin.