

RICK & BECKY MARTIN

Missionaries in Iloilo City, Philippines since 1977

Iloilo Baptist Church/Iloilo Baptist College

January-February 2023

Dear Friends,

The Lord has opened the hearts of many people in this country who formerly lived in darkness, trusting their religion not the Savior. I am amazed how God has such grace and mercy to reach people from many different religions.

Here are a few testimonies from people who have been reached by new churches in the past 2 years.

Below is Bro. Ibrahim who was a **Muslim** and now a follower of Jesus Christ:



"I'm Ibrahim, a Muslim, and I don't know what to believe or who I am. Before I knew Christ, I was still afraid to visit another church because my parents had taught me about Muslim culture. I also have no idea who or what I should worship. My parents were both Muslims. On the first week of July, I discovered a Baptist church with the help of my aunt. She took the opportunity while my parents were away. They left me in her care so we went to church. I had no idea what they were doing in the church because I could tell they were having a good time, so I joined them. At first, I was just on one side watching my cousin play the violin in church and I reasoned that if he was happy, they must be too.

"There I met Pastor Roy Inopia. He had an interesting message that really caught my attention. I feel like it was the answer to my questions. After preaching he introduced me to Christ Jesus and I accepted Him as God and as my personal Saviour. I attend the children's ministry and music ministry. I will use my life for the Lord.

God bless, your brother in Christ, Ibrahim.

Ibrahm's pastor, Roy Inopia, has a ministry reaching police officers. Below he is speaking to a group of officers:



Alvin was also a **Muslim** but accepted Christ as his Savior because his son challenged him to open his mind to the real God.



"My name is Alvin. I got saved through the ministry of Pastor Renato Reyes. My son attended his feeding program and also in gift giving. One time my son got sick and made me a deal with his mother that if he will be ok, we will come to church with him. I am a devoted Muslim with my wife but we wanted to make our son happy and we wanted him to be ok. When he was ok, we came to church as we promised and there, Pastor Renato share about Jesus - who He is and, after knowing the truth about HIM, when Pastor Renato asked who will receive Jesus as their personal Saviour I raised my hand and my wife also. From that time, I have a desire to know more about Jesus and thanks to Pastor Renato, he is always available in teaching me about the Bible. Now we go to church for how many Sundays and no regrets that I felt. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you for saving my whole family."

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Alvin's pastor Renato Reyes below preaching to a group of people in his village.



Regie was an **Aglipayan** who accepted Jesus as his Savior and was able to bring his parents to Jesus.



"My name is Regie. I am 17. I got saved when I was invited to come to a Baptist Church. That was the most important and unforgettable event in my life when I got born again into the family of God. My parents are devoted Aglipay (this is a Philippine independent church that broke away from the Catholic church in 1902. It has similar doctrine - they are named after a former Catholic priest, Gregorio Aglipay.)

"Before I was thinking that always going to church and being good to others are the ways to Heaven. My parents told me to be always good. But when I heard the Bible, although it is good to do good things, but still, it is not the way to Heaven. "After a month of going to the Baptist

Church, my parents noticed that there is something changed in me. When they ask me why I am not coming with them for a month I said, 'Because I am born again.' My parents got angry but I ask God to help me tell them about the truth. One night after dinner, it's

our time for devotion. I asked favor from my mother that I will be the one to lead the devotion and they were very surprised.

"I read John 3:16 and asked the Holy Spirit to help me explain. My parents asked so many questions about doing good things like following the 10 commandments but later after they understand they became silent. When I ask them if they are willing to receive Jesus, they said they have Jesus but the problem is they do not receive Jesus. I was in trouble thinking if they really saved or not. On the following Sunday, I ask them to go to a Baptist Church and they come with me. I was very happy that moment because I know they will be saved, truly saved. The Lord answered my prayer and my parents got saved. Now we are very happy together in ONE church, the Baptist Church."

Regie's pastor, Marlon Osman, pictured right, is giving some food to a poor lady in his barangay:

Florentino Hendrado was a **Roman Catholic...**

My name is Florentino. I am 54 years old. We have 4 children, all girls. I am a farmer. I have 1 hectare of rice land. I would like to share to you my testimony on how I receive the Lord Jesus as my Saviour. My parents are devoted Catholic and because of that, I am also. I remember my parents went to church only in fiesta time because that is our culture. We were just there attending but for me, nothing has changed in my life.

"At a young life, I learned to drink, smoke, and went to nightclubs, fiesta, and party where you can experience a sinful life and always get in trouble. My younger years was miserable. At a young age I got married and have children. One day a pastor named Kirk Regacho came to our village and invited us for Bible study. I said to myself that I won't attend because I am Catholic and I would rather die than change my religion. But my wife and children went with Pastor Regacho in the church and became very faithful.





"Later on I could see changes in their lives. They were always happy and were singing hymns. My wife stopped gossiping and we now seldom quarrel. One day, Pastor Kirk went to our house and invited me to attend church service and without hesitation, I agreed to attend. During the preaching I was convicted by the preaching and during the invitation, Pastor Kirk led me through the simple plan of salvation and I confessed my sin and I accepted the Lord Jesus as my personal Saviour. I went home with my family full of joy and contentment. My wife was praising God when she knew I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour. Now there was a great change in my life. I am faithfully serving the Lord. Praise God!

Pastor Regacho baptizing in a river in the province:



Arlynn Marcellana was a **JEHOVAH WITNESS...**



"Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, thank you for allowing me to share with you my testimony. I am Sister Arlynn, 62 years old. My work is a vendor.

"One day when I was going to the street selling my fish, I met in the waiting area a pastor. He approach me and ask if it is ok for me that he will share to me about the Bible. I told him that I am a member of Jehovah Witness but he insists. Pastor Reynard explain to me the doctrine of salvation and about God. That time our conversation did not continue because I need to go to sell my fish so I leave him.

"I give him my exact address because I am interested with his knowledge about the doctrine of salvation. Thursday morning, Pastor Reynard visit to my house. We spend time discussing the doctrine together with my family. Pastor Reynard is very compassionate with me. He did not force me to believe his belief. Pastor Reynard approach me, if it is ok for me, to invite me to come to his church. Because he is a good man, I accept his invitation.

"In their church while Pastor Reynard is preaching about hell and the only way to escape from it is to have Jesus in our life. God convicted my heart. I accepted Christ Jesus as my Saviour. Now at this time my whole family are baptized and members of the Baptist Church. Thank God for His servants like Pastor Reynard. Sister in Christ-Arlynn

Pastor Reynard Pestin baptizing
in the ocean:



My passion as a missionary is to train men to start churches so that people like these will come to the place where they realize that It is only Jesus that can save them.

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

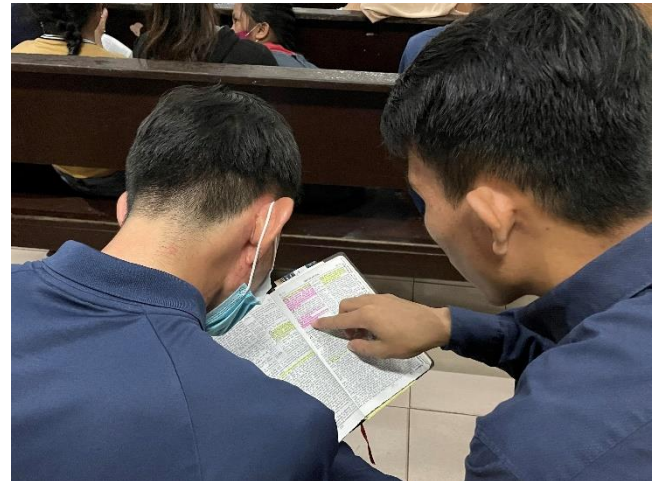
Iloilo Baptist Church recently had their 17th Christmas musical during five nights starting on Dec. 16 and ending Dec. 25. I never take for granted, nor do I get over how receptive people are in our city during this time of the year.



The Filipino people generally open because they Believe the Bible is true.

They just need someone to show them what it says.

Each night many of them made professions of faith.



There were also many who followed the Lord in believers' baptism.



Wise men follow the star

Jesus was born and the shepherds came to worship Him.



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King Herod waits to talk
with the wise men:

The first two nights I was
there and there were over
1300 visitors. I don't have
an exact record of the last
three nights but the reports
I received were similar to
the first two nights.



We are so grateful for those who pray or support the Lord's work here in the Philippines.

God bless,

Rick and Becky Martin

Part 2 will be sent soon.

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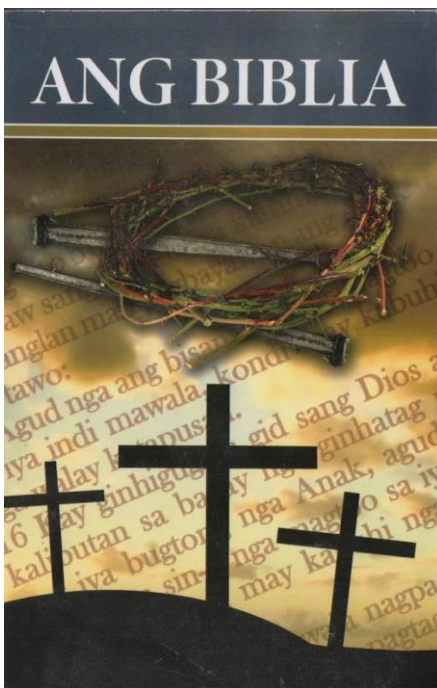
Dear Friends,

This past Oct. 3rd -7th 2022, our church held its 41st annual Pastor and Workers Conference.

One of the most important parts of each conference is the distribution of Bibles. There were about 880 pastors that attended. We gave each pastor 10 Bibles. We also gave 5 Bibles to each Bible College student who came to the conference. There were over 500 students from other Bible Colleges who attended the conference. All total there were over 10,000 Bibles distributed. We are thankful to generous donors and groups who print Bibles like BEAMS BIBLE, BEARING PRECIOUS SEED and MT. PISGAH BAPTIST CHURCH.

A donor is helping us get a very large quantity of Ilonggo Bibles right now through Bearing Precious Seed for this year's conference. The container still has space for more Bibles.

There are almost 7,000,000 people who speak Ilonggo in the Philippines and most of those are in our region. It is the 4th largest language group in the country. There are another 4,000,000 people who understand Ilonggo including over 1,000,000 people on our Island who speak Kinaray-a or Aklano (on our island) but would use Ilonggo when reading the Bible.



A lot of these Bibles were distributed during covid.



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Below are three visitors who requested a Bible. On the left the young man who is becoming a police officer asked for an Ilonggo Bible. Second from the left a lady asked for an English Bible and then a police officer who requested an Ilonggo Bible. We gave this officer a copy of the Ilonggo Bible with the customized cover for law enforcement.



If you are interested in helping the pastors receive Bibles when we have our next Pastors and Workers Conference scheduled for Oct. 2-5, please contact me or Bearing Precious Seed in Milford, Ohio by the end of February.

Below are pastors receiving Bibles at the recent conference.



Feeding a lot of pastors and workers took a dedicated group of workers.

Every year our church provides food for all the delegates including those coming to the workshops from Monday afternoon to Wednesday noon. Providing meals helps these pastors and delegates to be able to afford to come to the conference and workshops.

The workshops included:

- Music Workshop
- Discipleship Workshop
- Radio Workshop
- Church Planting Workshop
- Businessmen's Workshop

There were about 180 attending the Music workshop, 400 at the Discipleship Workshop, 300 at the Church Planting workshop, 45 at the Businessmen's workshop, and 30 at the Radio workshop. This is the first time that almost half the delegates came early for a workshop. The purpose of the workshops is to help delegates be more fruitful in their ministry when they return to their church. Pictured right is one of the sessions for the music workshop.



Session with radio personnel

Another part of the conference was the involvement of the different Bible Colleges. This included about 12 Bible Colleges who brought their choirs. There was a basketball tournament just for the Bible Colleges. One Bible student from each Bible college, who is outstanding in practical ministry, was recognized and given a guitar as guitars are widely used in the ministry here.



Many of the Bible students attended the workshops. They enjoyed having fellowship with students from other Bible Colleges. About 30 Bible Colleges sent students this year. Below is one of the choirs singing.



Pictured right is the Wednesday Night Service, which was the opening service of the conference.

Pastor Jeff Fugate of Clays Mill Baptist Church preached during several services and his messages had a powerful effect on the pastors and workers. One of the messages that was a blessing to me was about how God blesses faith. He told the stories of how Jesus visited two cities and in one city he was able to do mighty works because the people had faith. But in the second city he was not able to perform mighty works because of the unbelief of the people. The application was so clear for the pastors and workers in needing faith to have results that are extraordinary.



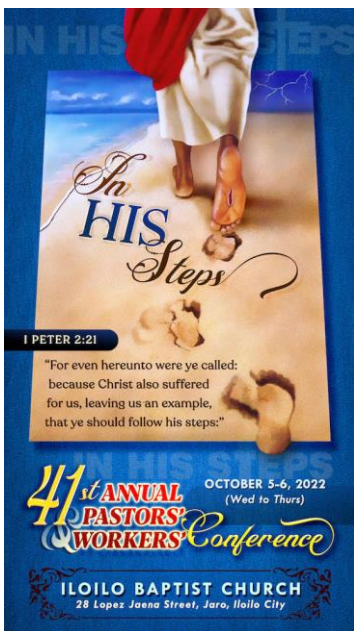
The Lord has greatly blessed Bro. Fugate's church and Bible College, Commonwealth Baptist College. Since he became pastor more than 60 new churches have been started out of his church, with many of them being in the state of Kentucky.





In the Thursday night service, we remembered two pastors who went home to be with the Lord unexpectedly. One was Pastor Gilbert Toquero, a dear friend, who died about a year ago. He pastored Laloma Baptist Church in the Manila area and was greatly used of God, training men to start churches. Laloma also sent out many missionaries to start churches on the mission field. Left is the present pastor of Laloma Baptist, Ramil Lolalia, who is receiving a replica of a memorial our church made for Bro. Toquero at the radio station.

Theme: "In His Steps"



The last night we honored Dr. Russell Anderson with the "In His Steps" award, which was the theme of the conference. Below is Pastor Fugate receiving the award for Brother Anderson who was planning to be here in 2020 but was not able to be here this year. Brother Fugate has been a good friend to Brother Anderson for many years. Both are from Kentucky and both are very interested in seeing more churches started in that state.



The pastors and workers were so sensitive to the Holy Spirit as He spoke to them through the preaching of God's word.



On Friday morning we had a meeting with the Alumni pastors of Iloilo Baptist College. We had the Bible distribution for these pastors during the Alumni meeting to make it easier to distribute the Bibles to the other pastors on Thursday. One of the most important parts of the conference is getting Bibles to the pastors and workers.



Again, thank you for being a part of this ministry through your prayers and giving. We are so blessed to have Christians back in the U.S. who are sacrificing to help the Lord's work here.

Becky is diligent in doing her treatment for her cancer. We are seeing some progress in finding organic food for the fruits and vegetables that she needs in the Philippines. There is a possibility she could go back as early as late June if we can secure enough of the food. If not, she may be able to go back to the Philippines before the end of this year, as early as late October.

God bless,

Rick and Becky Martin

