



# DAVE & MARGIE STAFFORD

SERVING IN THE PHILIPPINES



NOVEMBER 2020

A big thank you first off for all your prayers and support at this time. My knee surgery went very well and what a blessing to have a strong Christ-Follower as a surgeon. Jesus used Dr. Carter's medical training and skills as a gift to transform my knee. I still have a degree of arthritis in there but hey I'm an old man!

It's been a busy month for me, mainly thanks to you all! I've had lots of interactions with those in the areas I'm working in, in Northern Mindanao. "Distance" learning of some form is the preferred methodology in the whole of the Philippines, by Presidential decree. The latest edict being no face to face schooling until a vaccine is made available! Well, because of this, I'm being asked all the time "Pastor Dave can you help me research this?" "Papa I have no load (data plan) can you help me research this and given me your findings please!" But most of all there's been a growth at the little SDA Church I'm involved with in Kimaya, now formally known as Kimaya Missionary Church. And the leaders are my young spiritual sons and daughters! To have seen these young people, who I first met in 2015 average ages 13-15, now in the 18-22 range become leaders in their own community is just so God! Much kudos goes out to the Arana's who began to evangelize Zone 5 of Kimaya back in 2013. All of this on top of what I'd said in my last newsletter about the crusade and baptisms! They are regularly having 58 attendees including adults, and of course new Christ followers who have just stepped into the Kingdom. Please pray for the tiny corner of the world, they are making a difference.



A number of those young people are leading and serving in very practical ways including giving midweek devotionals and Sabbath School lessons and the main preaching during their Sabbath Service. God is so good! Well, I get asked LOTS of Bible and Bible topic-based questions because they have been handed a subject for them to speak on from the Elders or the Lord has dropped something into their spirits and they just need pastoral guidance to help their thinking process. Can I tell you



how much my spirit rises within me that firstly, they are involved, doing the do, and secondly, how it draws out my own anointing and teaching gift, and that they value me as a spiritual resource, albeit 9,000 miles away! We all want to be significant in advancing the Kingdom of God, no matter what it looks like, We all want to be needed by others, and that these young people continue to see me as a spiritual influence for them continues to astound me!

It goes without saying they all want me back sooner than later and they have all been praying diligently over Ma'am Margie's health situation and their Pastor Dave's knee surgery, as have many of you. **THANK YOU!**

*Again, we can see the concept of the Kingdom of God as a stark difference to what's happening in the earth today! And I'm convinced that focusing on the Kingdom is the only way to outwork our life and calling here on earth. And these youngsters are doing just that!*

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Pastor Richard Labor still has burning in his heart to reach the tribal families. And he's not been inactive, even he was stopped from physically getting to these different groups. He has been training and challenging some of his young people at his church to co-labor with him. He has called them Ambassadors for Christ. They love Jesus and have the energy to go. We try our best to supply Bibles and New Testaments in one of their common Mindanao dialects, Cebuano (also called Visayan or Bisaya) even though they may actually have a heart language that we can't understand or can't get scriptures in. But there are practical issues, like getting up the mountains. I'm not sure I have the physical stamina to go to some of the places that Richard and his team are reaching. I've been to a few but not many. Sometimes it involves strenuous hiking over 2 days because the dirt roads, such as they are impassible, even for motorcycles, the workhorse of the Philippines.

Schools and colleges are partially open and operating on a system of online internet-based assignments and midterm exams, using "Google Meetings" as a virtual classroom. Sounds great but the internet connections are atrocious at best! And the other method is known as modular. This works on the principle of going into school for one day, say Monday. Being given printed material and then going home and doing your assigned work. Returning again on say Thursday, handing in your work and receiving the next set of lessons and assignments, and then going back home to study. I've posted photos of the living conditions for these young people; they are not conducive to studying at all. Plus, truly little teacher interaction except through some virtual classroom scenario, and with little to no signal strength on a smartphone, it's simply appalling. I was approached by two elementary schools, one in Kimaya and the one in Consuelo to assist in the production of the printed materials. They had extremely basic needs, no paper, no ink, and not enough printers. Well, I'm pleased to say that through your funding we were able to buy cases and cases of printer paper for both schools. The teachers and principals were extremely grateful. Let me "thank you" from these dedicated staff for helping them with this basic need. This was on top of paying for a new corrugated tin roof for Kimaya Elementary. We are seen as stakeholders in both these Elementary Schools, opening doors for the preaching of the Gospel to a captive, and willing, audience.

Although I can't usually meet the Philippines needs time frames, I can and do buy supplies when they are greatly reduced in the USA, and then ship them over to the Philippines so that at some point they will have their needs met. We've shipped 7 large and 7 small balikbayan boxes to the Philippines so far this year. They have contained lots of school supplies, clothes, basic hygiene products, soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste etc., shoes, underwear, and for Pastor Richard a very robust and large 65-liter backpack so he can convey items on his back up to the tribal families. With the buying power of Globe, I was able to purchase 4 fully refurbished laptops including fully installed Microsoft office software. One of my students, Jeza, had her original laptop crash and she doesn't know a replacement is on its way! It will be a surprise 20th birthday gift when it does arrive. (shipping from Pensacola to Butuan on Mindanao usually takes around 3 months, but it's the most economical way to get any quantity of goods to them. Large boxes cost \$90 and the small ones \$30, you can do the math on shipping costs this year!)

None of these essentials could happen if it wasn't for you! Thank you! I'm still a long way from being fully funded as a missionary. It's my goal to play a part in advancing God's Kingdom in the Philippines and I couldn't do it without faithful partners like you, both in prayer and in practical needs like finance.

Please consider partnering with us, we need you! Finally, let me give a shout out to my administrative team in our Globe International office. They are magnificent! The fees I pay for their services are worth every penny and more! I thank God for my leadership and oversight team, who support and encourage, guide me and when needed admonish and course-correct me. Thank you, you know who you are!

Thank you for partnering with us in prayer and finances. We couldn't do this without your help.

Remember to Live Loved and #YNWA

- Dave & Margie Stafford



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