



DAVE & MARGIE STAFFORD

SERVING IN THE PHILIPPINES



FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

This is a big THANK YOU newsletter. Firstly, we got the necessary \$2,500 plus funds to send the anticipated 5 boxes off to the Philippines. Thank you to everybody who made that possible.

Secondly and surprisingly, the Philippine Government announced a reduction of the Covid19 travel restrictions which meant the borders reopened again on February 10th. We thank the Lord God for a return to a sensible approach to allowing foreign nationals back into the Philippines. It'll be 2 years this March that I was locked out of the Philippines and locked in New Zealand for 7 weeks all thanks to the SARS2 Coronavirus.

Therefore because of the lessening of restrictions, Margie thought it was a good time for a return to Mindanao, with me going and her staying at home. This was another surprise that I was not expecting. But very pleased nonetheless! That being so, we contacted Gary Arnold, both Globe's and our travel agent, (I recommend Gary to you for all your travel needs) to engage in the onerous task of tracking down a ticket. It was no mean feat in the crazy covid world of travel. Eventually, he was able to secure good connections at a competitive rate. The major downside was the travel dates. He began researching fares from the end of March and it wasn't until the 14th of April before anything worth buying opened up. This means I'll leave on Thursday the 14th early in the morning and arrive in Kimaya at the earliest lunchtime or more likely supper time Saturday the 16th. Three days of travel, with the likelihood of speaking at an Easter outreach the next day, seems just a little daunting!! For those interested the plan is to leave Pensacola at 7.30 am fly via Dallas, Tokyo, overnight in Manila airport then out on Saturday to Butuan airport in Northern Mindanao. My base is around an hour and a half drive south from Butuan.

I'm hoping that the restrictions are reviewed downwards before the actual date of travel. The current requirements are to be vaccinated with proof. Testing negative with a pre-departure RT-PCR test within 48 hours of travel, mandatory travel insurance to include Covid-19. You also have to enroll in the Philippines One Health pass no earlier than 3 days prior to travel to include accommodation address and local telephone number plus uploads of all proofs and evidence.

Currently, I'm working on a budget that around \$5,000 USD should cover the costs of the trip. Half of that amount is up-front costs including airfares, mandatory Covid19 insurance, PCR testing, and an overnight stay on my return through Manila. The rest should cover the in-territory expenses for the 26-day trip. These will include accommodations, transport, outreaches including food, hospitality, and some gifts. The reality is if ten of my partners could donate \$500 each then the trip would be fully covered.



January Shipment



Cebu Pacific Flight



Civoleg



Arriving in Butuan Northern Mindanao



Please pray about this opportunity to send me back and continue this much-needed ministry. If you are willing to assist me, then please send all donations to Globe and I can reassure you that everything given will be used to extend God's love to these dear people.

Additionally, I'll be contacting close friends who will support Margie during my absence. Margie doesn't want anything formally put in place and so I've been holding lots of dialogue behind the scenes to ensure she will be taken care of. All of those people know who you are, THANK YOU!!

Changing gears, I wanted to bring a major prayer item to your attention. On the day of my leaving the Philippines, May 9th, the Philippines General Election is being held. This is a very important time and now is the time to pray, ahead of what may happen. Current President Rodrigo Duterte is stepping down after his six-year term in office. When he entered office in 2016, he launched a "war on drugs" which has seen thousands of drug dealers and drug users killed. The drug war's biggest critic, Senator Leila De Lima, was arrested, thrown in jail, and subjected to a spurious trial which is still going on after four years.

May's presidential election will take place alongside elections for Congress and regional governments. The key election issues are how to revive the Philippines economy from a sharp recession brought about by the Covid pandemic, and how to stamp out corruption in public office. Also, a big issue of concern is China's increasing military presence in the seas between it and the Philippines, where it has been building strategic bases and using vessels to threaten Philippine shipping.

The current frontrunner for president is Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., son of the former president, Ferdinand Marcos. Many of you may recall the Marcos' regime, they were resettled into Hawaii by then US President Reagan. President Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and took control of the country's courts, businesses, and media. The army and police arrested and tortured thousands of dissidents. He, his wife Imelda Marcos, and his cronies plundered an estimated \$10bn from public funds. Former president Ferdinand Marcos was forced from office in the "People Power" revolution of 1986.

Bongbong Marcos was convicted in 1995 for tax evasion while serving as a public official, and his political opponents say that should disqualify him as a presidential candidate. Critics also say he has used his wealth to whitewash the history of his father's dictatorship on social media platforms. Sara Duterte is the daughter of the current president, Rodrigo Duterte.

She is running for vice-president alongside Bongbong Marcos. They brand themselves the "Uni-Team" and have vowed to make the Philippines "rise again". (President Duterte is close to the Marcos family.)

There are other candidates like Senator Manny Pacquiao, the world-famous boxing champion, who has great appeal to the Filipino poor, and Leni Robredo. Robredo is the current vice-president, former lawyer, and leading human rights advocate.

We are receiving lots of requests asking for prayer, especially that God would speak to my friends as to who they should vote for. We are in critical times, depending on the Lord is even more up-front and center for certain.

Thank you for being you and partnering with us in these God-given mandates and Kingdom pursuits.

Live Loved and remember, that with Jesus You'll Never Walk Alone!

#YNWA

- Dave & Margie Stafford



National Highway Gingoog City



SCAN THIS CODE TO
GO DIRECTLY TO OUR
GIVING PAGE ONLINE!