

January-February 2006 Newsletter

January started with a bang and when we say bang, we mean it! As the New Year arrived we were amazed again by the sheer volume of fireworks that were being set off all around us. It was like a war zone. Both January and February have passed much like those fireworks. Much anticipated and planned for and then before we knew it, they were gone.

Leyte Ministry:

In early January, I made a quick trip to Leyte to meet with a pastor who was praying about working with our mission in Isabel, Leyte. We shared our hearts for several hours and prayed together for the Lord's direction as we left and headed home. Please join us in seeking the will of God in the future of this mission church and the future relationship with this man of God.

Mindanao Travel:

We had the opportunity to travel back to Mindanao the second week of January in order to visit a couple of missions and attend the anniversary service of one of the established churches in Sulop, Davao del Sur. I always enjoy my time with these fine pastors in that area. They are both an encouragement and a challenge to me by the way that they are consistently serving the Lord. Please pray for the continued growth of the ministries in Mindanao.

Robert's Parents: As many of you are aware, my parents arrived in late January for a 10 day visit. We enjoyed having them here!! They both had the opportunity to see the ministry and the sites of Cebu. Most importantly we all got to catch up on hugs. That is one thing for sure, that Murphy's are huggers. Anyway, we praise the Lord for the chance for them to share in our life here for those precious few days. They have always been an encouragement to us as the Lord has directed us in different areas of ministry. But for them to share in the excitement that we feel in the ministry here and see it first hand was an extra special gift. Thanks Mom and Dad! You are truly a blessing to our lives and our ministry!!



Baptisms: The last Sunday in January, we were blessed to witness a great spiritual milestone in the lives of five new believers. Three of these young Christians were from our Sudtonggan bible study, and two were from our Alegria bible study. Both of these bible studies are ones we



recently started, and these are the first fruits of the hearing of God's Word. Please pray for the continued growth and spiritual development of these new born Christians!!



Basketball Camp/ Mission Conference:

We bid our folks farewell on Sunday and on Tuesday we had another group arrive. Mike and Kurt Goodwin of Evangelistic International Ministries traveled to Cebu and spent 2 days here conducting a basketball camp. We worked with young men from our ministry and from the community where the camp was held. It was a true blessing to see these students receive training in the fundamentals of basketball for several hours on both days. At the end of each day we brought them together to talk about the most essential thing in our lives: our relationship with Christ. Many seeds were planted and these young men are looking forward to the next Hoop Camp. Please join us in prayer for God's provision and His timing for our next basketball outreach.



Mike, Kurt and I traveled on to Negros where we were joined by Bro. Rocky Goodwin, Bro. Larry Markum and Bro. Don Newsom. We shared at the annual mission conference at Open Door Baptist Church and enjoyed the fellowship with the Moore's and Miss Darlene Cary. Thanks guys for your ministry to my family and to our pastors.



New Leadership:

Here in Cebu, ministry has gone on as usual. God has blessed us with a great group of zealous leaders who always take up the slack and do even greater ministry when I am not around. Each Monday night we meet for leadership training and share a meal together. For the last several weeks I sat an extra place setting which largely went unnoticed. In the middle of January we started a section of our training on leaders developing new leaders. It was at this time that I revealed the significance of the extra place setting at the table.

We determined to begin praying for new leaders to emerge and to purposely equip them for great service of our Lord. The next week my parents arrived and we were on a sightseeing outing at a local monument. When we arrived at the monument I noticed a young couple standing near a plaque and it appeared that they were waiting for someone. I assumed that I was not that someone and continued to look around. My dad began to talk to the young man and before long they were talking about our ministry. It was at this point that I came over and introduced myself to Arnold. Arnold is married with children and has been a Christian for several years, but has never found a place that he felt comfortable to serve the Lord. He has a great desire to lead people to Christ, but was struggling for the best way to approach people. He later shared with me that he had been praying for some time to find someone who would be able to train him to be a better soul winner. He also was amazed that he felt led to wait at that monument but he didn't know why. God knew that we would cross paths and that we would both be the answer to each others prayer. That happened on a Monday after lunch and that night at dinner he filled the extra place setting. We all learned something about God's amazing ability to answer our prayers that day. We are now toying with the idea of setting 6-8 extra place settings each Monday night.

New Bible Study:

Arnold and I are spending each Tuesday evening in a crash course of leadership training. Recently I made a new contact at a local bank and they offered to open their home for a new bible study in an area where we had no Simbalay. Gerry was sincere and we set a time and a few weeks later we were able to start our first bible study in Basak, Mandaue. Arnold joined me as we began this new home study. We had a great time in bible study and then had the opportunity to answer a ton of questions. We gave Cebuano New Testaments to

each of the 14 adults that were in attendance. One of the more influential women (in her mid 40's) asked if that bible was for her to keep. We said yes and she, like so many others, said that it was the first bible that she had ever read or owned. They all excitedly invited us back for the next week and we excitedly accepted. Please join us as we pray for this great group of people to find a close personal relationship with Christ through these simple bible sharing experiences.

Landslides in Leyte:

Thanks to all of you who have been praying for us and those affected by the recent landslides in Southern Leyte. We live several hours and two islands away from the affected area so we were not, nor were any of our immediate ministry area, physically harmed by this tragedy. On Feb. 22nd, I traveled to the small town of St. Bernard where the evacuees and survivors are being housed temporarily. In addition to the survivors of the large landslide (less than 500 total) there are nearly 15,000 people affected by the evacuations. Many of these people were subsistence farmers and, due to their relocation, have lost their ability to provide even their most basic of needs. We are targeting areas of greatest need and have met with local officials to assist in this difficult time. We will be providing rice and other essential foods, medicines, clothing and basic housing as needed. The BMAA Missions Department has been very helpful in providing initial emergency assistance. If you would like to join in this effort by making a donation please contact the office in Little Rock, Arkansas through the website www.bmaam.com or by calling 501-455-4977 for more information. Please pray for the hundreds of families affected in this difficult time and for us as we endeavor to help in meeting their needs.

Our family:

Our own personal family is doing very well. Jamin and Jesse thoroughly enjoyed having their grandparents around, especially for Jesse's 7th birthday!! It was sad to see them go! I think they also enjoyed the fact that there was a two week break while Linda and Jesse were here, too!! We are once again involved in baseball here. It's a short 4-5 game season, but it allows us to get together with other missionary friends that we don't normally get to see because we are all so busy. Robert is co-coaching our team (the Astros) along with another fellow Texan!! We get to practice baseball at the military base in Cebu. It's really odd watching soldiers doing practice drills with (hopefully unloaded) guns, while our kids are throwing the ball around. We are so blessed to have children that love God and love to be a part of the ministry that God has called for us to do. They love life, and love living their life here!



As always, we want each of you to know how important you are to us!! We appreciate all the cards, emails, calls, support and most of all the prayers lifted up! May God bless each of you as we serve Him together!

Your Cebuano family,
Robert, Connie, Jamin and Jesse Murphy

