

# INTERCONNECTIONS

MINISTRY UPDATE FROM RENE AND LANI QUIMBO



Our first Sunday worship at the Mampang Ministry Center in December after 8 months of lockdown.

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Presbyterian Mission  
International  
12330 Conway Road  
St. Louis, MO 63141

Dear friends,

We are grateful to God for finally being able to bring Gemma and Jo to Zamboanga City to serve at the **Mampang Ministry Center** last week of November. We found the ministry center which was left

empty since the previous missionaries left five months ago rat-infested leaving big holes on the ceiling, walls, and floors; they nibbled on electric wiring, bed foams, and nesting on bed sheets in cabinets. We spent the first week making the parsonage habitable (covering the holes with plain iron sheets, mowing waist-high weeds in the surroundings, repairing our water tank that was unable to catch rainwater since it tilted due to a post sinking onto the ground, and strengthened our electric posts with cement and steel support).

The first Sunday we were not able to worship together since local protocols only allowed fully vaccinated people 18 years old and above to join assemblies. Thankfully, the following Sunday the protocols on religious gatherings were relaxed to allow everyone to join for as long as wearing of face mask and social distancing were observed. Over 60 members of our congregation were able to come to church. Several stood up to share that despite their unfaithfulness “making” the missionaries leave because they got “bored” with them and gave up on them, *God remained faithful* for once again He sent missionaries to teach them His word and to guide them. **Please pray that the scheduled weekly Bible studies for men, women and children, as well as youth fellowship and prayer meeting will accomplish their intended purposes in their lives.**

## Opol Church

A short seminar on the topic God's children and sin conducted on November 18 in **Opol church** was attended by about 30 church members. It focused on the truth that those who are born of God will not continue to sin. Though they still sin, they are working towards gaining victory over sin. The fact that "God's seed remains in them" is truly transforming because God's new life



which has been born into them will produce Christ-likeness in them. Festivities during our Christmas thanksgiving Sunday included presentations from different groups, games, exchanging gifts, and meal fellowship. The church also distributed goody bags for each family. Also during this time, the congregation gave a surprise gift of appreciation to our son Iking for serving as an associate pastor beginning this year.

## Lacolac Ministry Center

With downgrading of religious gathering protocols in Lacolac, more people joined the prayer walk ministry. What a great opportunity God has opened for us to once again bring His word to homes in the community and to intercede for them in prayer. This year, we treated children who have diligently memorized their Bible verses (up to 22 verses) to a party (not to discriminate the others but to encourage them and their parents and older siblings to teach them). It is working. Now they are more attentive in our Sunday School classes. The Christmas thanksgiving Sunday



Youth playing "Honesty" game

celebration included distribution of goody bags to each family, special presentations and games. One of the games was called "honesty game." Arranged to sit in a circle, each participant must look at one participant in the eye on the count of three. Those who locked eyes were out. They were reminded that if participants are dishonest, no one will win. They were told that this game is a test of their faith. The prize was a 5-gallon plastic container with a dispenser that makes it much easier to get drinking water into a cup at home.



Seminar held in Opol during November on the topic "God's children and sin."

On December 27, we travelled to Tubay, Agusan del Norte, about 6 hours drive from our city, to accompany a missionary co-worker to her hometown for the funeral of her older sister who died from a heart-attack in the aftermath of the strong typhoon Odette (international name: Rai). We had the opportunity to give the gospel message on the last night of the vigil. Her family and neighborhood are mostly non-believers.

## Important Prayer Need

Lastly, this recent event happened during the first week of January 2022. We included this in this newsletter because of its urgent nature. We received information concerning a teenage female worshipper in our Lacolac church who was allegedly repeatedly abused by her relatives (and a neighbor) with whom she lives. The family also comes to church. Upon confirming with two witnesses (both are willing to testify; they are also members of the church), we immediately initiated to process her case with the woman in charge of violence against women and children in our community (she is also a church member). The church has decided to support (financially, and in other ways since there is no budget to assist the complainant) the trips to different pertinent government offices, hospitals, and other related expenses. It is very heavy on our church as the complainant and all the accused (even the neighbor) all come to our church. Already, there are people in the community taking sides, and the witnesses have already received threats. The church leadership has already been criticized by some people in the community. **We ask**

**you to please stand with us in prayer.** We know this is the right thing to do, and we will see this through the end. May justice be served to whom it is due.

This year, our congregations (in Zamboanga City, Opol, and Lacolac churches) had collectively grieved over job losses, deaths of loved ones, and broken relationships. However, we have also shared experiences of God's mercy and grace throughout the year. We had celebrated church membership ceremonies, weddings, graduations, job opportunities, physical healing, spiritual growth, door of faith opened to someone, and of course we also laughed together. What comfort and encouragement as our past assures us of our secure hope in God's everlasting faithfulness.

*Dear friends, with grateful hearts we thank God and you for all the ways you have expressed your love for us and the ministry--- your emails, your prayers, your gifts/ donations, your practical help, your friendship and much more---all these feel like a warm embrace, reminding us that we are all in this journey of faith and service together.*

*We thank you.*

*Rene and Lani*

**Rene and Lani Quimbo**

Email address  
renelaniquimbo@gmail.com

Philippine address  
#37 Faustino Neri St., RER Drive Phase I  
Kauswagan, Cagayan de Oro City 9000  
PHILIPPINES



Marita and Pulmita representing the Bajau group during Christmas festivity in Opol Church



Kids having fun popping each other's balloon during children's Christmas party in Lacolac Church



Christmas thanksgiving Sunday in Lacolac Church