



United News Philippines

INFORM · INSPIRE · UNIFY

News of the United Church of God, an International Association - Philippines

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May 2003

Baptisms Spur Growth in the Visayas, Sabah

The Work of the Church in the Visayas and in Sabah can be categorized as gradual but with continued growth. The year 2003, from January to April, saw more baptisms in Leyte area and in Semporna, Sabah. In Leyte are the following individuals: Xavier Boldios, Alma Batigulao, Ma. Gera Merino and Ma. Nelie Merino. In Semporna, Sabah are Artemio Bernal and Mercy Chiu, daughter of Ruperta Beto, who was baptized during the FOT in Iloilo last year.

The Church in Leyte province started in the middle of April 2001, when Raul Villacote, a former pastor of Jerusalem Church of God, contacted me via long distance call asking if I could visit them in Leyte for a talk regarding the Church.

To date, since that visit, 25 people have been baptized in Leyte and God willing, if He continues to call more people in that part of the Philippines, many more will come to the Body of Jesus Christ.

One of the highlight events of the Visayan Churches was the visit of David Baker, the senior pastor for the Philippines and coordinator of the Philippine Work. He arrived Bacolod in the late afternoon of April 2. The following day, Mr. Baker and I went to Iloilo to see the Feast site in Punta Villa, Arevalo. While in Bacolod, Mr. Baker spent most of his time meeting with Mr. Julag-ay and I, discussing the structural organization of the United Church of God in the Philippines and the important role of the Home Office in Cincinnati.

The Bacolod brethren and the two deacons from Leyte and their wives, were privileged to hear Mr. Baker's message on the Sabbath of April 5. The morning's message covered the subject of Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. The afternoon Bible study was also conducted by Mr. Baker and the message was a continuation of what he covered in the morning. Several questions were asked

after the Bible study, and they were fully answered.

On April 7, Mr. Villacote was sent to Sabah to conduct the first Passover service

for the brethren there. The Passover was observed by four baptized members. On April 12, the Sabbath service in Sabah was attended by 30 people, including the children.

Attendance and Holy Day Offering Figures

Church Area	Passover Attendance	1st DUB Offering	Last DUB Offering
Bacolod City	11	P 4,550.00	P 4,909.00
Leyte	21	P 1,446.00	P 700.00
Sabah	4	*	*

* figure unavailable

Reported by Florante Siopan
Pastor, Visayan Area Churches

Philippine GN List Grows 63.8%

Greetings from the Philippine Mailing Office! This past year has truly been one of challenge, blessings, and growth for the mailing operations in the Philippines.

Here's where we stand as of April this year, compared to the same time last year.

	As of Apr 2002	As of Apr 2003
GN Subscribers (per issue)	3,878	6,352
Bible Study Course (per month)	324	503
Internet Requests (per month)	85	142
Mail Received (per month)	233	423
Mail Sent (per month)	210	579

As you can see, we have surpassed all our figures, and in some cases, *doubled* them in the first quarter of this year alone.

There have been quite a few challenges this past year with our shipments being held at customs in Manila. There were times when we would run out of literature and would have to hold some requests until stocks arrive, sometimes being already more than a month late. And then with growth, storage began to be a problem. This is compounded by an ever-increasing number of mail—and in direct proportion, the time it takes to process them. Of course, a lot of these are

See "Philippine Mail," Page 2

In This Issue...

- Spring Holy Day Reports
- Davao Church Youth Activity
- Comments From GN Readers
- List of Accepted Campers for UYC 2003



Editorial

By David Baker
Philippine Senior Pastor

Greetings brethren!

I am very excited to see the continuation of the United News Philippines. I hope you will find each issue enjoyable, informative and inspiring. I would like to solicit your help in supplying informative and inspirational material for future issues of United News Philippines. If you have any information in relation to the United Church of God that you think would be helpful for other members in the Philippines, please discuss and submit your material to your pastor. We would like the United News Philippines to reflect the work of the United Church of God throughout the country. In order to achieve this goal, we will need regular contributions from all the regions.

I would like to express my appreciation for the dedication and hard work of each of the ministers and members on behalf of the United Church of God. I have been most fortunate to visit the Philippines twice in the past six months and I have been very inspired by each trip. Thank you so much for the wonderful hospitality that you have extended to me. It has been a delightful experience meeting many of you and I hope to meet most of our Filipino brethren by the end of the year. My family is planning to accompany me to the Philippines during the Feast of Tabernacles and they are excited about the possibility of meeting many of you.

I hope you find the reports regarding the Spring Holy Days very inspiring. I have had the opportunity to read some of the reports and I am very thankful for the blessings that God has given us. I would also like to thank you for your continuing support. God can work many miracles through us as we yield ourselves to Him.

This month some of our young people will have an opportunity to participate in our summer camp. I hope the teens that can participate will have a wonderful experience at camp and I really wish I could be there with you. I have visited the facility and I am very thankful that our young people can enjoy such a nice environment for camp. I look forward to reading about your camp experience and viewing some of the camp photos. And finally I would like to express a big "thank you" to all the volunteers who help make summer camp a success each year!

Mindanao Spring Holy Day Report

We had 125 observe the Passover in 14 different locations in Mindanao. During the First Day of Unleavened Bread, we had a combined attendance of 277, while on the Last Day, the attendance dipped slightly to 243.

The Holy Day offering figures were most encouraging. The partial figure for the combined First and Last Day of Unleavened Bread was P42,960, a 5.3 percent increase over last year's figure of P40,796.75. However, the *total* offering (once the offering from the remote areas are processed) is P45,855, a

See "Mindanao Spring," Page 6

"Philippine Mail," continued from Page 1

good problems to have, and with God's help they are easily turned into tremendous blessings.

Below are some of the pilot projects we have been working on. We hope to gain as much knowledge, experience, and information from these projects to hopefully use in a bigger scale one day.

A. Good News and Brochure Display Program

We currently have over a dozen *Good News* magazine and brochure stands spread all over Davao City. Locations include bookstores, malls, restaurants, the post office, libraries, fitness centers, hotel lobbies and front desks, banks, hospitals and clinics, offices, and schools.

Each insert and tear-out card is marked and coded for easy tracking, so we could determine and identify which kinds of places produce the most number of quality responses. The cards are also dated so that we know the time it normally takes for a potential subscriber to respond to our offer.


B. Local Mail Delivery

We are experimenting with personally delivering local Davao City mail by motorcycle. This idea came about with the growing urge and curiosity to get to know the subscribers who keep requesting the same literature over and over again, to just meeting those who live just down the next village.

We have done this experiment for more than a month now and have found it to be helpful in that we have gotten to know and talk with our readers and see where and under what conditions they live.

It does help and make a difference when you have a face and a story to put behind an otherwise unknown name. With this, we are able to better identify those who are potential members of God's Church and work with them. We were

See "Philippine Mail," Page 3



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“Philippine Mail,” *continued from Page 2*

able to answer some questions regarding our origin and shed light on who is behind the publishing of *The Good News* and our other literature. Some even ask where they could go to attend church.

We are also able to identify those who do not care much or at all about God’s work, and are known from the past to keep requesting literature and just toss it once it gets to them.

All the information we are able to gather firsthand from our readers and use for the future is truly valuable—and we have not spent an extra centavo to get that. In fact, we have actually been able to save a lot by delivering mail ourselves. We only spend about one-fifth of what we would otherwise be paying for if we mail through the post office!

The bottom line is, with this we will be able to ensure prompt delivery of our mail, save on mailing cost, and get to know our readers.

The harvest is indeed plentiful and the laborers are few. There is so much to do here at the office. Just encoding and processing mail is a huge job. We already have over 10,000 people who have at one time or another received literature from us. What we are trying to do here is to be good and wise stewards of God’s resources, and do our best to plant good seeds in good soil.

Our mail processing and personal correspondence departments could really use two or three extra workers. There have been some that have come by every now and then to volunteer, (and that has really helped a lot), but I believe that if we are to expect a much larger harvest, we do need to prepare ourselves with much larger baskets.

—Charles Macaraeg



Volunteer staff worker doing data encoding.

Recognition Day!

The Best We Can Give

In the Philippines, one of the most memorable seasons of the year falls around March and April. This is truly a time of joy! This is the time when little children in kindergarten to young men and women in college proudly march up the stage to receive their diplomas, awards, medals, and certificates of recognition. It is a joyous sight to behold, since education is seen by many Filipinos as the torch that leads the way to a better life here on this earth.

See **“Recognition Day,”** Page 5

Spring Holy Day Report From Northern Luzon

Greetings from Dagupan! Below are the attendance and Holy Day figures for the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread last month:

Holy Day	Date	Congregation	Attendance	Offerings
Passover	April 16	Baguio City	5	-
		Dagupan City	15	-
First DUB	April 17	Baguio City	23	P 5,270
		Dagupan City	22	P 1,070
Last DUB	April 23	Baguio City	17	P 4,280
		Dagupan City	20	P 1,450

*Reported by Serizalino Dizon
Pastor, Dagupan & Baguio City Churches*

Davao Radio Program Yields Favorable Responses

In line with fulfilling the commission of God’s Church in the Philippines, an experimental radio program called “The Good News of the World Tomorrow” (GNWT) was recently launched on the FM band in Davao City. Since its first broadcast last March 1, we have been averaging two to three responses per week. Listeners respond by sending their literature requests via text messaging to the number mentioned at the end of the 30-minute program (0918-904-4444).

Text messaging, a very popular means of communication here in the Philippines (as many as 20 million messages are sent in a single day!), has developed a unique language of its own. An example of a message received reads: *“Morning gretnngs i’ve listn 2 ur progrm ds morning on d topic HOLIDAYS OR HOLY DAYS*

dat drew my attntn. Am a blvr constantly readng the bible searchng 4 truth. May reqst for a free copy of d booklet & d 1 year free subscriptn of ur magazine GOOD NEWS ... THANKS & GOD BLESS.”

The GNWT radio program also advertises the *Good News* magazine and other pertinent literature published by the United Church of God. It is aired on DXDJ (“Oldies Radio,” a radio station that caters to the mature and upscale market)—100.3 MHz on the FM dial every Saturday from 9:00 to 9:30 p.m. The broadcast, which is hosted by Edmond Macaraeg, reaches as far north as Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, and as far west as Bukidnon province.

—Richard John Macaraeg

Overnight Campout: Strengthening The Youth's Faith with Fun

Eighteen teens participated in an overnight activity last April 2-3 at the Macaraeg's residence, with a special Bible study conducted by Edmond and Lorna Macaraeg.

This overnight campout was a bonus to the regular youth Bible studies being held every Wednesday night. It was an added treat for the youth who regularly attend for spiritual renewal and biblical reminders on Christian living.

The fun started when the youths arrived in the late afternoon. They barbecued marinated chicken, roasted sweet corn, and made popcorn while enjoying serving and sharing with each other.

Dinner was served at 7 p.m. After that, the Bible study began at around 8 p.m. Mr. & Mrs. Macaraeg shared their life experiences and their walk with God, relating their examples to their questions on love, faith, and peer pressure. Because the youths were so eager for more counsel and advice, the Bible study lasted until 11 p.m.

Of course, the enthusiasm of each one wasn't drained yet and they were still up for more activities like Pictionary and a lot of guessing games. After some games, the boys slept in tents on the rooftop while the girls snuggled in the two rooms available. But the hushed whispers were heard until 4 a.m. After about two hours of sleep, the morning was greeted by tireless youths fixing breakfast with lively chatter about the previous day's events.

The overnight youth activity was a refresher after the busy, hectic, school life and was viewed as a reward for all the students who labored under the demands of school. As one youth put it: "The fun spent with youths of like mind—precious time to be able to talk and share about spiritual matters—was really a refresher after a long time of rubbing shoulders with a dirty, polluted society of youths with questionable morals. This was really a breath of fresh air!"

—Cheryl Lynn Macaraeg



"Hey, let's cook! We're on candid camera! Is it done yet?" 😊
[Meryl, Ann, Shiela, Cheryl, Audrey, Jimmy, and Harold]

Comments From Our Good News Readers



I received your magazine February 22, 2003, Saturday afternoon. Please don't stop. I want to receive it. I am sorry. I know I should have informed you about it months ago. I want you to know that The Good News has helped me a lot in my Christian growth. When I first received it I was already a Christian. But it's only through it that I learned so many things, more than what I learned from our church...

Christmas, New Year, and even Halloween are being celebrated. Before, I was already questioning whether Christmas celebration, decoration, fire works and Halloween were right. I was troubled because some members of our church are practicing them. I thank you so much because now I am enlightened on those issues that these are not biblical, or to put it bluntly—they are satanic in nature.

Lately, I also learned the right food for human consumption. I wondered why? Whenever I eat shellfish and squid I will have an arthritis attack. Thanks to The Good News, now I know. It is because those things (shellfish and squid) are considered unclean.

But you know what? The thing that thrilled me most is your presentation in your previous article that Britain and America are brothers [in] their role in the past, present and future events in the world. I hope you will deal more on this subject in your future issues.

This information is priceless to me. I don't have enough resources to buy books that deal on these subjects, and yet you are giving them for free. Thank you. May the Lord bless you all the more in all areas of life in this ministry.

R.R., Davao City

It is such a wonderful feeling when somebody that you cannot see cares for us all. Just like all of you there with the compassion to obey God's will and to share God's truth with people that do not know, like me.

I started reading your publications last year. It helped me a lot to understand things and know more about God. Would it be possible for you to send me booklets that I know will be useful for me in my everyday life, which I could also share with others? If so, please send them to my address...

J.M., Cavite

I just received the booklets I requested: The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy, Are We Living in the Time of the End? and The Church Jesus Built.

See "Comments," Page 5

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<http://www.ucg.org.ph/unp>



“Recognition Day,” *continued from Page 3*

In our congregation, we are blessed with children who have given their best and have received honors and recognition from their respective schools. As a practice, the church also gives them the recognition due them. This year, the Davao City congregation held a special recognition Sabbath last March 29 to celebrate the accomplishments of several of the children. Their names are as follows:

SHERWIN OBED BALUGO, Senior Kinder Graduate
Honorable Mention

AUBORN ANGCOS, Grade 2
Most Respectful, Behavior Award

BEATRICE GEM NAGTALON, Grade 1
Honorable Mention

CHRISTIAN GEM NAGTALON, Grade 2
Honorable Mention

SARAINÉ GEM NAGTALON, Grade 4
Honorable Mention

AUNELL ROSS ANGCOS, Elementary Graduate
Eighth Honors, Blue Knight Award

ELBI JOSHUA BALLESTEROS, 2nd Year High School
Second Honors, Most Friendly, Department Award

HONELITO REY GILOS, 2nd Year High School
First Honors, Best In English, Best In Computers,
Best In Math, Athlete Of The Year, Dancer Of The Year

MERYL LYNN MACARAEG, High School Graduate
First Honorable Mention, Values Education Award

AUDREY RUTH ANGCOS, 1st Year College
Communication Skills 1 Topnotcher, Best Debater
Champion, Inter-school Debate Competition
Participant, Inter-collegiate Debate Competition, PRISAA
Fourth Place, DCPRISAA Extemporaneous Speaking Competition
Dean's Lister

JHOEFIL ALEGRE, College Graduate
B.S. Statistics

ISIS CABAUG, College Graduate
B.A. Mass Communications, Blue Knight Award

ANN DY LOU CUIZON, College Graduate
B.S. Accountancy, Dean's Lister

CHRISTY DULAY, College Graduate (Octoberian)
B.S. Banking and Finance

—Audrey Ruth Angcos

Two New Baptisms in Davao City

The recent Spring Holy Day season saw the addition of two individuals into the Church of God. We are happy to announce the baptisms of Audrey Ruth Angcos on April 20 and Isis Cabahug on April 22. Audrey is a second-year nursing student at San Pedro College in Davao City, while Isis just graduated this year with a bachelor of arts in mass communication from the Ateneo de Davao University. Both attend the Davao City congregation of the United Church of God.

—Daniel Roy Macaraeg

“Comments,” *continued from Page 4*

I am amazed how God has been faithful to His words and promises especially to Abraham and to His descendants up until our present time. I am even more amazed when the United States of America and Britain are emphasized...

To know and be able to connect the past to the present and the future has always been my heart's desire. Please send me your free literature entitled: You Can Understand Bible Prophecy, The Book of Revelation Unveiled, and The Gospel of the Kingdom...

M.F.A., Isabela

Your publication is really great! I've learned a lot of things and my understanding of the Word of God has widened. I really praise God for your good works, to reach out, encourage and bring people closer to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Keep up the good work. Your labor is not in vain.

A.M., General Santos City

I want to share with you how your magazine inspired me. I am one of your regular subscribers to The Good News. Every time a new issue comes out, I read it from cover to cover. I find the magazine interesting and full of inspirational messages, which I share to all my friends.

The Good News has helped me face the many trials I encounter in my young life. It has even changed my outlook on life itself. I thank God for this magazine because it has allowed me to be truly near to Him. Don't ever let go of your commitment. I will constantly pray for you and your staff. God bless you all!

M.B., Misamis Oriental

Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing to bring light to a much confused world caused by traditional teaching.

Life has been extremely hard for me. All my prayers, and trying to be good and obedient to God and my fellowmen were all in vain! Or so I thought. Failures and misfortunes crossed my path, bringing me to bouts of depression. There was no one to answer my queries as to why this was happening to me. I was at a loss and felt that God has abandoned me. But when I received the Good News magazine (May-June & July-Aug 2002 issues), my empty and lonely life started to be happy and hopeful again.

I pray that all of you who are responsible for spreading the Good News magazine will be made more inspired to work without ceasing. Please be assured of my prayers for your continued success, and may God bless you all for the many good things you do.

A.R., Baguio City

UYC 2003 Camper Acceptance List

We are pleased to announce that the following campers have been accepted to attend the United Youth Camp 2003, to be held May 18-25 at Eden Nature Park in Davao City. We will be having 16 boys and 16 girls this year. There are going to be two dorms of boys and two dorms of girls, with eight campers each. Due to space and other limitations, we are not able to accept everyone who applied this year.

Boy Campers

Family Name	First Name	Age	Church Area
Algabre	Micho	17	CDO
Angcos	Aunell Ross	13	Davao
Ballesteros	Elbi Joshua	14	Davao
Boldios	Sharlo	15	Tacloban
Cabalquinto	Ariel	13	Cebu
Dizon	Ben Eugenio	13	Dagupan
Dulay	Iyarmoon	14	Davao
Gilos	Honelito Rey	15	Davao
Jain	Raymond	13	Bacolod
Julag-ay	Dexter	13	Bacolod
Noriega	David King	16	Tacloban
Remo	David Jonathan	13	Manila
Rico	June Riel	13	Kiara
Tiu	Jeremiah Kenneth	16	Bacolod
Valdez	Rex Hart	13	Kiara
Villacote	Lily James	16	Tacloban

Girl Campers

Family Name	First Name	Age	Church Area
Abrau	Donna Kate	20	Davao
Abrau	Kristine Elaine	17	Davao
Antiojo	Roshirle Ann	15	Davao
Antiojo	Shiela Joy	18	Davao
Balugo	Loureen Princess	14	Davao
Balugo	Shawn Marie	13	Davao
Cambare	Stella Mae	15	CDO
Dizon	Abigail	17	Dagupan
Fernandez	Jennifer	12	CDO
Gervise	Victoria Anne	13	CDO
Julag-ay	Hazel	12	Bacolod
Macaraeg	Meryl Lynn	16	Davao
Noriega	Lorelie	19	Tacloban
Raut	Diana Rose	19	CDO
Remo	Christine Joyce	14	Manila
Revecho	Mareniel	15	Tubod, Leyte

Please look at the checklist for the things to bring. If you are planning to go on the Mount Apo Adventure and Ecological Climb (May 26-30), we require you to accomplish a medical certificate, and bring it with you to camp. As much as possible, please avoid contact with anyone known to be sick of contagious diseases (i.e., measles, chicken pox, flu) within the week prior to departure. If you are so exposed, and especially if you show some symptoms of being sick, please notify us immediately about the cancellation of your participation. We hope and

pray this doesn't happen, but for the sake of others, we have to sadly apply this rule. Please plan to arrive on Sunday, May 18. Please text or call if you have any further questions. We hope to see you all at summer camp!

—Daniel Roy Macaraeg, UYC

UYC 2003 Personal Checklist

- ❖ **Toiletries:**
 - Soaps (bath & laundry)
 - Comb or hair brush
 - Nail cutter
 - Sanitary pads (for women)
 - Insect repellent (optional)
 - Cotton buds (optional)
 - Sun-block lotion (optional)
 - Toothpaste & toothbrush
 - Oil, gel, hair pomade
 - Shaving razor (for men)
 - Face towel (optional)
 - Shampoo (optional)
 - Deodorant (optional)
 - Face Powder (optional)

- ❖ **Clothing:**
 - Set of underwear
 - Towel
 - Socks
 - Pants
 - Sleeping clothes
 - Swim trunks or swimsuit
 - T-shirts
 - Handkerchiefs
 - Shorts
 - Sabbath wear
 - Blanket/Bed Sheet
 - Hat or cap (optional)

- ❖ **Footwear:**
 - Slippers
 - Sabbath shoes
 - Rubber shoes

- ❖ **Others:**
 - Bible
 - Pen or pencil
 - Spare batteries
 - Round-trip travel tickets
 - Payments & pocket money
 - Small sewing kit (op.)
 - Musical instrument (op.)
 - Camera & film (op.)
 - Notebook
 - Flashlight
 - Bag or backpack
 - Personal / School ID
 - Small first-aid kit (op.)
 - Pocket knife (op.)
 - Wristwatch (op.)
 - Cell phone * (op.)

* use will be restricted during camp

- ❖ **Mount Apo Climbers (add):**
 - Sleeping bag
 - Thick sweater or jacket
 - Hood, mittens, thick socks
 - Rubber shoes (good grip soles)
 - Thick blanket
 - Raincoat or equivalent

- ❖ **Things to leave at home:**
 - CD/Cassette players
 - Radios/Walkmans/Discmans
 - All video games
 - Valuables and jewelry

Note: Please mark your clothing and personal belongings so they won't be possibly mixed up with those of others during the camp.

“Mindanao Spring,” continued from Page 2

12.4 percent increase over last year. The figure for the Days of Unleavened Bread last year was a 62.2 percent increase over the 2001 figure of P25,145. God has indeed been blessing us with steady, sometimes even explosive, growth during the past several years. We would like to thank Him for this, as well as every one of you for your faithfulness and your prayerful support.

—Daniel Roy Macaraeg