

# PHILIPPINES

## THE STEDMAN FAMILY

Greetings Pastors, Churches, Friends, and Family

October-December 2022

When I read 2 Thessalonians 1:3, "*We are bound to thank God always for you,*" I think of you all and praise God for how faith has grown exceedingly for me and I hope for you all. I am encouraged by the brethren here, back in the states, and all over the world, who tell me how they are encouraged by my courage to keep pressing forward here in the Philippines while dealing with cancer. "*So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God.*" (2 Thess 1.4) We knew the possibility of having to deal with this cancer, and the Lord just gave us peace about returning to the field and that he would take care of us. Through it all, the Lord confirms we are in the right place through the ministry opportunities in day-to-day living.

The 2002 Isuzu has been a good vehicle. We got a good deal in 2016, but the cost of maintaining was proving the law of diminished returns. With the money the churches provided, we set out to find a car. We planned to find an automatic to help ease the traffic's difficulty so that Anna could drive. I found a car that seemed too good to be true. A 2013 Toyota van with only about 30,000 miles on it: yeah, right; I thought the same thing some of you are thinking. Bill Cannon, a fellow missionary here who is also a very proficient mechanic, came along to check it out and confirmed it was an excellent deal. Jeff, the car salesman, spoke good English and was easy to work with. After the deal was sealed, money paid and counted, and papers signed, the last and best transaction came into play. Br Cannon offered Jeff a gospel tract. Jeff asked, "What is it?" So we proceeded to tell him about the greatest transaction. **2 Corinthians 5:21**, "*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*" Jeff was taken aback by my statement that I became a Christian at age thirty. Having been raised Catholic and associating infant baptism and religion with Christianity, Jeff couldn't understand that I wasn't always a Christian, as I had told him my family



was religious. He heard the gospel and bowed his head, and got saved. Then he looked at his wife and told her she needed to get saved because she was an emotional mess. She didn't, unfortunately. The background to this conversion is interesting. Jeff's Mom married an American, and they live in New York. His brother is a chaplain in the U.S. Navy and had been witnessing to Jeff. We were just able to help with the increase as another had been plowing and watering. I gave Jeff and his wife a Bible, and he agreed to have a Bible study. That has not happened yet; please pray that Jeff will respond.

The Claveria outreach at UTSP has been proceeding along and doing well. We drove the one-hour forty-five-minute trip out to Claveria every other weekend from September to November 19<sup>th</sup>. We conducted Saturday Bible Study and Sunday Worship at the place we were staying at, Ma Mitas. Our last meeting before the Winter break, a Sunday Service, was at the College Dairy in one of their classrooms. We had

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some professions of faith as people stood up to show their desire to be saved. I try to emphasize this only has to be done one time. The gospel is presented plain and simple then Ma'am Imelda, the lead instructor of the Dairy program (taking the selfie), explains the gospel again in their dialect.



As I had mentioned, Anna and I had peace about dealing with the tumor if it became an issue here in the Philippines. Although the tumor was not growing and the cancer was not spreading, I had a severe increase in pain and incontinence. It was severely limiting my ability to minister effectively. I decided to go ahead with the surgery and have the tumor and the scar tissue removed and go with the permanent Colostomy bag. The Lord put things in place, and we met with Dr. Ponce, the Surgeon. He is a saved man and Anna and I both had peace with having him set up the team that would do this surgery on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

The surgery was successful, although instead of 3 to 4 hours, it took 7 hours due to the extent of the scar tissue. I am recovering slowly and have been told it will take 2 to 3 months to recover fully. It will have been one month by January 6<sup>th</sup>. I can walk a mile and feel stronger every day, please pray as we adapt to this new lifestyle here in the Philippines. I am thankful for this colostomy bag for so many reasons. I have no pain from the tumor. Now I don't have to look for a restroom as I was previously constantly.

I am still in touch with what I call "the core Claveria group." I send a devotional twice a week and share prayer requests. They seem as eager as we are to get back to Claveria. We hope to resume our outreach there on the weekend of February 11<sup>th</sup>.

We are so thankful for your prayers and support. We love you and appreciate you all. Happy New Year 2023, Malipayon Bagong Tuig!

- Prayer Requests:**
1. A building to use in Claveria for Sunday Services.
  2. Imelda and Immanuel and their four adult children.
  3. USTP students -Diana, Dina, Cyrel, Peter
  4. Immigration- Missionary Visa

*Sa Dios Ang Himaya* - To God be the Glory,

The Stedmans