



January-April 2025

Dear Praying Friends,

This term back in the Philippines has been full of many new things! While many of these are not what we expected, we are ever grateful that Jehovah-jireh, the LORD Who sees to it, is the One in control of everything. Thank you for praying with us as we have begun this phase of new things in life and ministry.

One “new thing” on this term is that Micah is not with us. We praise God that he is training for his own calling in ministry at Canadian Baptist Bible College in Manitoba. The adjustment back to Canada, specifically in an area with little cultural diversity, has not been easy for him; but he continues to grow and learn in this amazing place. The people of Pembina Valley Baptist Church do a great deal to show love and compassion to the college students. Micah has had the privilege to spread his wings in the “working world” under a few different men from the church there. Our family is grateful for each of these men and their investment in helping Micah to grow. He loves his current job working at a family meat business. With this new job, his migraine headaches and the symptoms of his Tourette Syndrome have reduced noticeably. This has helped Micah in his overall life and ministry. He continues to teach the grade 3 class in Master Clubs, has the privilege of being involved in the music ministry, and helps in various nursing home ministries as well as helping with services at Union Gospel Mission in Winnipeg.

Matthias is looking ahead to a major “new thing,” which is the next step in a vision he has had for years. Since Matthias was a young teenager, he has had a burden for young people with broken lives. He saw all of his friends and peers, almost without exception, go off into the vices of the world. Alcoholism, drugs, smoking, and immorality are considered a normal part of life for young people here in the Philippines. In Sagada, a young person’s first drinking party is on the day of their sixth grade graduation, and alcohol is a major part of the culture. As each of our children have grown up in Sagada, their hearts have ached to see God change the way these people live. God has used this burden to develop a calling in Matthias’ life to start a recovery ministry for the young people of the Philippines. The focus of Matthias’ ministry will be the restoration of broken lives through Christ. Matthias has a vision to offer the truth and healing of Jesus to people by being practically involved in their lives through a local church, student ministries out of a student centre, and men’s and women’s restoration homes. On May 21st, Matthias will move back to Canada to begin training for this calling to recovery ministry. Prince Albert Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Dave Webster, has restoration ministry. By God’s grace, this growing ministry recently acquired a duplex as the beginning of the residential branch of the ministry, a significant step towards deeper daily involvement in the lives of those who need restoration. Matthias will be joining Prince Albert Baptist Church and to learn how to operate such a ministry by working closely alongside Pastor Webster. Matthias will also be involved in another ministry of Prince Albert Baptist Church that is somewhat unique—tent meetings.

As soon as Matthias lands in Prince Albert, he will “hit the ground running” with a tent meeting in Prince Albert assisted by the Wings as Eagles ministry. Many other ministry opportunities will fill his first summer back in Canada. With weekly meetings of the restoration ministry, Faith Bible Institute, Christian Growth Class, as well as evangelistic, music, and care home ministries, Matthias will have no lack of training under Pastor Webster. Each of these areas will help him prepare for when he returns to the Philippines to begin a restoration ministry here. On May 21st he will be flying into Vancouver and staying for only a few days before he flies to Manitoba to see Micah. Upon returning to Vancouver, he will be in our home church for a day and will also be helping one of our supporting churches with their anniversary celebration. On June 21st, he will officially move to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and assume his roles there. Please pray for him as he repatriates and begins the season of life of being “grown up”.

Shirley continues to teach the young ladies’ class in Central Sagada Baptist Church, and she also has a “new thing” she’s working on— writing devotionals for young people ages 10 to 18. Her hope is to write devotionals through the entire Bible, distributed to the youth of Central Sagada Baptist Church every four weeks. As Shirley uses her God-given gift of explaining the truth of the Bible to young people, we have seen young people take significant steps towards knowing and trusting Jesus as He leads them in their everyday lives. Shirley’s three years of being very ill have definitely been used by God to tune her heart to Him. Shirley has also begun to read the Bible in both English and Tagalog each day. She assists Sandra as the two of them co-teach the Bible Club in San Manuel. A brand new opportunity she has is reading the Bible to one of our neighbours in San Manuel. Nineteen-year-old Mikaela has had a hard battle against brain cancer for eight months, and she has lost her ability to walk and read to a certain extent. In the evenings, Mikaela is carried outside and set in a chair next to her house so she can be part of the community. She welcomed the offer for Shirley to read the Bible to her each evening. Shirley is asking

for prayer that she can learn to read Tagalog like a native speaker so it is very clear.

Emmy’s “new thing” this term is being a teenager and not “just a kid” on the mission field. When we first arrived, she felt a little bit lost because her older siblings already had ministry roles in our first term. She is not a child anymore, and was seeking her special place in the ministries here. Anyone who knows Emmy knows she has a gift with children, and God has used this in the ministry in both Sagada and San Manuel to bring many children and young people to Sunday School and Bible Club. She is also developing a burden for the teenage girls around her that are becoming mothers. As she has met young ladies whose lives are forever changed by these types of decisions, she has a deep burden for them to learn about purity and redemption, even if the teaching has come late for some of them. In Sagada, Matthias, Shirley, and Emmy spend a few afternoons a week having lunch with the teenagers that attend our church, trying to encourage them to stand strong even in their wicked and worldly school environments. This ministry will continue even after Matthias leaves, as Shirley and Emmy will continue to have lunch with their friends a couple of days a week.

“New things” have been abundant for Alison. This is her first memory of being immersed in another language, since she was three years old when we left the Philippines for furlough. In Sagada, English is widely spoken and understood, but our ministry in San Manuel has given us all the opportunity to improve our Tagalog. Alison has the least experience with Tagalog, and she often cries wishing her friends would speak English to her. She struggles with the Tagalog Bible studies and songs on Sundays, but little by little she is learning more. In fact, she was speaking Tagalog in her sleep a few nights ago!

Alison’s best friend in Tarlac is Heart. Could you please pray for Heart? She is just six months older than Alison and carries many burdens. Her mother works abroad to send money back to her family, and her father had a stroke. She takes care of him with

the help of an aunt and an older cousin who live nearby. Heart was not at all open when we met her. With a hard face, she would watch Bible Club from outside the gate and leave if we invited her to come in. As our family continued to show love to her, she began to learn she could trust us. One day she came to our house with an ugly wound on her stomach. She had attempted to climb over a tall steel gate and was stabbed by the pointy top of one of the bars. Sandra cleaned the wound as well as she could then she and Matthias went to the pharmacy to buy triple-antibiotic ointment and some bandages. Heart would come back each day to say, "*Masakit pa,*" informing us that it still hurt. Our family would care for the wounds both on her skin and in her heart. Since this time she has become a special person around our house. Nearly every night she eats dinner with us, and she has dubbed Shirley her "*Mama*". Heart and Allie play together each evening until about 9:00 pm, having fun and learning more about each other. Praise God, one of Allie's "*new things*" has been helping Heart feel very loved!

God has also allowed us to see some people become "*new creatures*" in the last few months. While Sandra was still not strong enough to wash our laundry in San Manuel, we took our laundry to a laundromat. Gloria and Maximo, who are in their 80's, sit out in front of their house near the laundromat each day just watching the world go by and greeting neighbors. Sandra would often smile at Gloria as she went back and forth with one of our children to the laundromat.

One day when Sandra was stronger, she was passing out tracts and talking to people about the Lord. Gloria was sitting outside as usual, and this time Sandra stopped to talk to her. When Sandra stops to talk to someone in their language, they are shocked that a white (and presumably rich) person cares enough to learn their language and speak to them. These things touched Gloria as Sandra spoke with her for just a few moments and left her with a tract. This encounter opened the door for Jun to go back and meet Gloria and Maximo. In the Tagalog language, Jun explained salvation to them. While Jun had not told them that he is a pastor,

Gloria said in her language that he must be a pastor because he explained the Bible so well. Having been Catholic for more than 80 years, she was amazed at God's Word and said that salvation made complete sense the way Jun explained it to her. Both Gloria and Maximo accepted Christ that day! Due to their age, they have a hard time getting around, so they have not attended the Sunday Bible studies at our home. However, Jun has begun regular Bible studies with them in their home. Their children live in Vancouver, and Jun's dad who lives there is currently reestablishing relationships from when they were young with the goal to tell them about the Lord.

Alison's language acquisition has given her a new opportunity to pass out tracts. She goes up to a person and says, "*Para sayo!*" This means, "*for you*". People are amazed at her and happily accept the tract. She always makes sure she has a purse with tracts in it when she goes out with Sandra. One day Sandra and Alison walked to the local store. On their way home, they encountered a young man pushing a lady in a wheelchair. As they stopped to chat with them, they learned that the lady, Carmelita, had suffered a stroke five years ago and was now wheelchair bound. As Sandra and Alison continued the walk toward home with Carmelita and her nephew, Mark, they learned where Carmelita lives so Jun could go back later and give her the good news of the gospel. That evening Alison took her daddy to show him where Carmelita lives. Upon meeting Jun, she told him that she just wants to die. She told him that she felt very hopeless because her stroke left her in the state that she cannot walk. All she can do is sit in her wheel chair or lay in her bed all day. Her house is very hot, and she is very lonely. Jun told her that Jesus offers hope. Both Carmelita and Mark accepted Christ that day! Like Gloria and Maximo, because of her age and health condition, Carmelita cannot attend the Sunday Bible studies, so Jun goes to her house to have Bible studies with her and Mark.

The church in Sagada continues to grow, not in numbers, but in strength. Matthias has a heavy burden for our new batch of teens not to be lost to

the world. These young people have been attending Sunday school at our church since they were young. While we were on furlough, the youth ministry basically disappeared, but it has been established once again. Our home in Sagada has become a safe place for these young people—a place to eat, a place to cry, a place to play, a place to laugh. . . a place to be loved. What a privilege it is to still be involved in these young people's lives. Recent youth activities—like a contest to see who could cook the best fried rice—have assured the young people that pastor's house is a safe place to have fun and also come and deal with life issues.

Another "new thing" for us this term is a time of reaping. Sagada has been a very difficult place to minister, but we are seeing some fruit on this second term. One person we have seen some reaping with is Gaygay (pronounced guy-guy). During our first term Micah and Matthias, along with the rest of our family, invested a great deal of time and energy into his life. You may remember this from prayer letters years ago. Gaygay is a significant part of the development of the burden both Micah and Matthias have for broken young people. Gaygay lived with us off and on as Jun worked with the police in an attempt to help Gaygay turn away from his juvenile crimes. During that time Gaygay received the Lord as his Saviour. Sadly, a crime was committed that we could not help with. He was sent to a detention centre several hours away from Sagada, and to be honest we were very discouraged. Because Sagada is a native community, the locals can ban people from living there—even one of their own—if they have enough power. When we left for our furlough we thought we would never see him again. For years we prayed for him. A few months before we returned to the Philippines we received news that the detention centre had helped Gaygay tremendously, and he had been allowed back into Sagada to live again. How we rejoiced! We were not sure how he would be, and to be honest our first few months seeing him were discouraging. Our family continued to pray for him, and God brought about a major change. One time we returned to Sagada from the ministry in Tarlac, and Gaygay had cut off his long hair. He also was no longer

disrespectful when we corrected him. As we spent time with him in the following weeks, a true change of heart could be seen. He loves our family very much and even calls Sandra "Mom". Gaygay is only 18 years old, but is faced with the reality of losing his mother, Jane, at any time. Gaygay was adopted by Jane when he was a brand new baby. He was left on the steps of a police station in Baguio City. Jane is now in her 80's and has severe heart problems. When asked about his mother's health, tears often brim in his eyes. Praise God, his mother accepted Christ shortly before Gaygay did. She has the hope of Heaven, but we can see Gaygay bracing for the time when she will no longer be on earth with him. Our prayer is that our family can continue to help him to be anchored in Christ when those painful times come.

Our family was able to help another family experience "a new thing". This past February James and Myra Suderman with their girls, Kierra and Shana, came to visit us! They were able to meet the folks in San Manuel who are being reached with the gospel. They met many of the children who come each night to play and often eat. In Sagada, the Sudermans helped with a first-time outreach of Central Sagada Baptist Church. The biggest event of the year in Sagada is the Etag Festival. Much about this festival is pagan, but it is also a time when people come from all over to buy and sell merchandise that is not usually readily available in Sagada. God allowed us to secure a stall right in front of the municipal hall in the centre of town. By a miracle of God, our current mayor is actually a Christian! He wanted our stall to be in a prominent place. A couple thousand pieces of Bible literature—including tracts, invitations to church, full-color Bible stories, and colouring pages—were given out along with free popsicles, balloons, stickers and crayons. Several adults were excited to receive a free Bible. A few of these people told us that they had been wanting a Bible, and they could not believe that they could have a Bible for free! We are grateful to a supporting church in Michigan who donated a generous amount of money so we could purchase and ship these Bibles to the Philippines. The Sudermans experienced the mountain-driving of Mountain

Province, the noisy-people environment of San Manuel, the busy city life of Manila, the adventure of eating new foods, and the challenge of trying new things. We were thankful to have them come so that we could share these memories with each other. God certainly blessed us during their time here!

It is currently summer here in the Philippines. Please pray specifically for Matthias as he prepares to leave. The Starex van which we purchased this past October almost immediately needed an engine rebuild. By a miracle, the van got us and the Sudermans along with a heavy load of luggage all around the Philippines, but after they left, we knew we had to dig into what was still wrong with the van. Since we have already experienced multiple times here in the Philippines that mechanics here cannot be trusted, Matthias, with the remote help of a professional diesel mechanic in Winkler, has begun a second engine rebuild. As he opened up more and more things in the engine, the truth was revealed that the previous rebuild was done completely incorrectly and actually destroyed the engine even more. Now, in his last few weeks of being here, he's trying desperately to finish the rebuild while the clock ticks away.

Before Matthias leaves we will hold a VBS in each of our ministry locations as well as a teen retreat in Sagada. Some of the people of Central Sagada Baptist Church will travel to San Manuel to assist in the VBS. We are very excited about this! Brother Godfrey has joined us in San Manuel a few times to assist Matthias as he rebuilds the engine. He is excited to see what God is doing in the San Manuel outreach and has helped many evenings spending time with and feeding the children. A faithful family from CSBC with two teenaged daughters will also be helping in the San Manuel VBS. The wife, Merlie is a grade two teacher. We rejoice that she will be

the one teaching the lessons in this VBS as she is completely fluent in Tagalog. How exciting it is to see the people of CSBC reaching out to other areas of their country to win souls to Christ!

Thank you for patiently reading this long update. With all the changes and interruptions in life, finding time to sit down and write can be difficult. Thank you most of all for faithfully praying for our family. We are keenly aware that without your prayers, we would not be able to serve Jesus here. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We thank God for you!

With grateful hearts,  
Jun and Sandra  
Micah, Matthias, Shirley, Emmy, and Alison Malazo



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