Claire & Timothy Marker

Director, Bicol Center for Christian Leadership in the Philippines

Claire grew up on Bible stories and enjoyed singing hymns and joining the choir at her parents' church in Legazpi City in the Bicol region of the Philippines. She was a church youth leader as a teenager but never really understood what the Gospel was all about until the manager of a Christian bookstore she frequented explained it to her in 2000. It was like "scales were removed from her eyes" when she heard this, and she surrendered her life to Jesus then and there. She was baptized in 2001.

Timothy came to Christ as a freshman at the University of California at Berkeley. His roommate shared the Gospel with him. Timothy was always amazed by the quality of relationships his roommate had with his Campus Crusade for Christ buddies. Being a soldier's kid, Berkeley was Timothy's thirteenth school due to all the moving on tours his dad's work required, so he never really had lasting friendships, so quality relationships attracted him to God and God's family.

As a young believer, God's heart for the nations always weighed heavy in her heart. She got exposed to missions at a very young age. When she was seven years old, she would see "giant" white people with big backpacks stay at their neighbor's house. It turned out they were missionaries doing some ministry work at an orphanage their neighbor was overseeing. Claire would find herself on the laps of these "giants," and they would ask her to translate simple English words to her Bicolano heart language. When she became a believer, Claire wanted to do something to reach the nations for Christ, but she felt so inadequate. She could not afford to go to the expensive seminaries in Manila, but God knew what she needed. Claire met Mayette, the former director of the BCCL training center, through a coworker whom she shared the Gospel with and was discipling. This coworker was attending the church Mayette had started. One day, Mayette invited Claire to attend the biblical training courses at BCCL. Claire finished the two-year Bible courses in 2006; the previous year she answered God's call to join BCCL as a full-time staff, leaving her job at a government office to go into full-time ministry. Since 2007, she has been teaching Bible and ministry training courses at BCCL. Claire is one of the fruits of the BCCL ministry. She later finished her M.Div. in Christian Leadership at BCCL's partner seminary in Cebu in 2012; she had previously completed a master's degree in Management at Bicol University in 2007.

Meanwhile, Timothy had been actively serving at his church in Silicon Valley, as well as sharing the Gospel with his coworkers. He had worked for IBM as a chemical engineer and at UTC as an environmental manager. These companies paid for his MBA at Golden Gate University, as well as a master's degree in Ministry at Western Seminary. He retired from work in early 2015 and moved back to Lodi, California, to take care of his parents. While doing so, the wife of one of his pastors asked him

if he could travel with her husband and help him teach a Bible training course in Russia. Timothy also went with him to the Philippines a year later to teach at BCCL.

Claire became the assistant director of BCCL in 2012, just after she finished her seminary training. At this point, she was actively exploring God's call for her in the area of missions. She started joining short-term mission trips in East Asia, which confirmed her passion to reach the nations. In 2015, Claire was seriously considering going to serve for more than a year in Vietnam as a missionary. She applied with Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF) for this mission work, but God had other plans. She met Timothy as she and Mayette took him and his pastor to Leyte to teach at one of BCCL's extension ministry training sites. Timothy had been supporting some missionaries in the field back then and was looking to help support Claire as well, should God allow her to be a missionary in Vietnam. Turns out, it would be a lifetime mission support that also includes going with her to the mission field!

After getting married in 2016, Timothy and Claire explored their role in missions by going on a vision trip with OMF to Japan in 2017. During this mission trip, they felt like square pegs in round holes as God revealed that they were not church planters. "What is in your hands?" This question resounded in Timothy and Claire's hearts and minds as they prayed about their role. As OMF guided them through the process, it was confirmed that Timothy and Claire were equippers. (Timothy had become a regular teacher at BCCL by then). They were therefore mobilizers for missions. OMF US invited them to become mission mentors, where they discipled and guided, brought young people to short-term mission trips, and discipled them through the process of learning their role in missions. It all clicked for both of them, as they enjoyed doing this ministry a lot.

In 2020, Mayette passed on to Claire the mantle of leadership for BCCL. Mayette was suffering from cancer and went into glory in October 2020. She had mentored Claire at BCCL for fifteen years. Claire started leading BCCL remotely for more than two years during the pandemic. It wasn't easy, as she stayed on a reverse sleep cycle to be in the Philippines time zone to oversee the ministry from California. But God continued to put his plans into motion.

In January 2023, God moved Timothy and Claire back to the Philippines for his purposes. With the passion to mobilize churches in Bicol to reach the nations, God started a mission training curriculum at BCCL: Graduate Certificate in Intercultural Ministries. The goal is to help each believer know their place or role in mission and do it by establishing sustainable cross-cultural and mission-support ministries, such as regular prayer for the nations and missionaries, mission mobilization, encouraging and helping goers to go into the mission field, and welcoming foreigners in the area with the love of Christ.

During this most recent period of Timothy and Claire serving in the Philippines, God has accomplished numerous amazing things, which made everyone see God wants his church to participate, with urgency, in his Great Commission and desire to reach the 3.4 billion unreached peoples of the world.

Birthdays:

Claire – September 26
Timothy – January 17

Anniversary:

May

For more information, visit our website at nabonmission.org or email us at serve@nabconf.org.