



Claire & Tim Marker

MISSIONARIES – SERVING IN THE PHILIPPINES



FEBRUARY 2025

FROM DOWNS TO UPS

Praises

- For God blessing our mission students' hard work at fundraising for their mission trip near Thailand on the 16th.
- For more new pastors and church leaders attending our ministry equipping courses.
- For the missional prayer ministries that continue and are starting up.

Prayer

- For protection, good health, and impact as Claire leads the students on their mission trip February 16–26.
- That our students would learn much from the biblical training we provide and unlearn incorrect perspectives.
- For the “good problem” of a shrinking campus as BCCL’s ministries have expanded and more space is needed.

[W]eeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

PSALM 30:5B (NIV)

I've always found, during decades of ministry and of being a believer, that after much sadness or trials, God always brings joy and encouragement. After all the deaths, disasters, and difficult times we experienced last year, God brought forth a series of encouraging developments.

“Holy Book”

“This story comes from the Bible,” one of our mission students declared as she starts sharing a parable to our young Indian friends. “Do you know what the Bible is?” she continued.

The small group immediately replied, “It is a holy book, *a-tel!* (older sister, in Filipino).”



We are so blessed to see how attentive our young Indian friends have been listening to the Bible stories our mission students have been relating to them. This is

the second month, during our monthly *Sangati* (gathering, in Hindi) that our mission students have been

practicing their orality Bible storytelling skills. January 24, they shared about the parable of the weeds. We were so pleased to see that within five minutes of listening to the story repeated twice, our young Hindu friends were able to retell the story to friends who have just arrived. The discussions about what stood out to them in the story, etc., were also quite interesting.

It is wonderful to see how excited our Hindu friends are each time they come to our monthly *Sangatis*. It's exciting that we are now able to intentionally plant God's Word in their hearts. We started off in May 2023 with our mission students sharing their “life stories,” or testimonies. Now, almost two years later, as we have developed deeper friendships with them, we are able to have these conversations about the “Holy Book.” Praise be to God!

Blessing and Being Blessed

We were amazed by our mission students' determination and commitment to raise funds for their mission exposure trip near Thailand (coming up this February). Last December, they decided to visit Christian friends' homes as well as offices to cheer them up with Christmas carols as their way to solicit funds as well.



Caroling is a Christmas Filipino tradition where groups, especially kids, go around the neighborhood with makeshift instruments, like an empty tin can or a string of flattened bottle caps, and sing a few Christmas carols, expecting the families to give them “*pamasko*” or Christmas money.



Our mission students got creative, rehearsed a medley of Christmas carols, and then, armed with a guitar and a tambourine, they put on shimmering cultural

costumes and went around communities and government offices to spread the cheer and share about God’s love for two weeks last December. Rain or shine, morning and evening, they went to different communities in the area. They set aside timidity and sang with all their hearts. Wherever they went, they took the opportunity to encourage and pray for the people and the local government offices.

As a result of all their hard work, they were able to raise some funds to buy round trip tickets to Thailand! They also pooled together used clothing and items and did an online auction for a cause. Through this experience, they get a deeper appreciation of how difficult it is for missionaries to raise funds to go to the field. This way, they can tell their churches to pray more specifically for the needs of missionaries and help hold the rope for them.

The Power of Art

Mid-December last year, a participant of the short-term mission team that we hosted earlier in August, in partnership with Overseas Missionary Fellowship, came back to Legazpi to do an arts outreach ministry called Art Walk.

We invited local artists and art enthusiasts to come and do art together at a scenic location in the city. Sharla, the Christian professional artist who led this activity, has been doing this kind of outreach in her hometown in the city of Baguio. This event allowed us to connect with art societies for possible future outreach to them. This is our

Claire & Tim Marker

J. ESTEVEZ STREET GUEVARA SUBDIVISION, LEGAZPI CITY 4500, PHILIPPINES
BCCL.MINISTRY@GMAIL.COM | MARKER@SERVI-DEI.COM
NABONMISSION.ORG/MISSIONARIES/CLAIRE-MARKER

way to engage churches to more creative local outreach ministries and at the same time allowing cross-cultural exposure and a platform for believers from other places to reach people in Bicol for Christ.

The highlight, though, was after the event when I took Sharla to the Mayon skyline, since she wanted to paint the volcano. When we arrived at the place, it was so foggy we couldn’t see the volcano at all. Oh well, she just taught me some basics in watercolor painting. I paint as well, but with acrylics, so it was also a rare time for me to unwind with a fellow artist.

As we were enjoying our little art session, a few kids started to peek behind us and were interested in what we were doing. Then some of them wanted to try it out. Before we knew it, around fifteen kids were gathered around us! That’s the power of art as a tool for outreach.



We thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the kids, and Sharla is coming back in March to do more art-related ministries, including an art outreach to kids.

Equipping More Church Leaders

We’re experiencing a surging interest in equipping, as more churches are sending their leaders to get biblical ministry training at BCCL. Around twenty students attended the Systematic Theology class in January, and now thirty students are currently attending the Spiritual Warfare class that started this week.



We continue our commitment to provide affordable, relevant, immersive, and effective biblical ministry training to pastors and church leaders in Bicol and beyond.

