

Church Triumphant

PO Box 2806, Antioch, CA 94531-2806
PH/FAX (925) 778-7094 (925) 778-7091
<http://www.churchtriumphant.com>

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“LET GOD ARISE, LET HIS ENEMIES BE SCATTERED” Psalm 68:1

God is arising and pouring out His grace and mercy on Mindanao. The powers of darkness are scattering in every direction as village after village renounce their pagan gods to receive Christ as Savior. While we have spent all summer on the road sharing with churches across America what God is doing on Mindanao, our co-workers there have been consolidating the gains from our recent visit.

When we met with more than 300 tribal chieftains from eleven different tribes in May, these leaders entered into covenant to make Jesus Christ Lord over their three to five million people. It was a time of great spiritual victory as the presence of God arose and His grace filled the hearts of these tribal leaders. But the victory cannot end there. That was just the beginning. Now we must train pastors and build churches for all the villages they represent.

God arose and these chieftains threw open the door for the Gospel to come in to areas where it has never been allowed before. But we must still go in and possess the land so His enemies will scatter. In the weeks since the gathering of chieftains at the Peace Convention in Kapalong on May 24, our Filipino director Allan Asang has met several times with these chieftains in smaller gatherings by tribe. He is actively discipling these chieftains and teaching them the basic truths of Christianity so they can teach their people.

A new group of Bible school students began preparing for full time ministry on June 8. In the Philippines, the school year runs from June to March with March, April, and May being their “summer” vacation. A second group of new students began classes on September 1 as we train church planters as quickly as possible. The students spend three weeks in the classroom followed by three weeks in the field ministering under the watchful eye of an experienced pastor. Then it is back to the classroom for another three weeks so there is one group in the classroom while the other group is in the field. That allows us to use our limited dorm capacity to its fullest and train pastors as quickly and effectively as possible. In six months, these students will be ready to graduate and to pastor a church. As they take over for or assist a seasoned pastor, that frees the experienced pastor to start a new pioneering work in an area where there are no churches.

Our goal on Mindanao is to take the Gospel where it has never been before. So most of our churches are in more remote areas, usually where the road ends or where roads have not yet come. Occasionally we will pioneer churches in the cities where there is an unreached tribal population. This was the case in July when our workers were able to establish churches among the tribal people in the city of Panabo near Davao City and in the city of Kapalong at the edge of the mountains. It was in Kapalong that we had the Peace Convention on May 24. Now we have churches in these cities to minister to the tribal people who have come down the mountain looking for work. In cities such as these we are forced to buy land to build churches so it requires a greater investment up front but the potential for outreach and the ability to become self sustaining is also greater.

As a result of the Peace Convention, the three spiritual leaders among the tribal chieftains came to Allan asking for churches to be built in their home villages. These men who led their people in worshipping demons now want to lead their people in worshipping the Creator God and His Son Jesus Christ. Because of your generous gifts to this ministry, we were able to send the needed money the very next day. Three trained pastors were ready and willing to take on the challenge. Those three churches are now being built and the pastors have moved to these remote areas to bring the Gospel to these hungry hearts who have waited a lifetime for someone to tell them how to worship the Creator God. Before, these chieftains would have killed anyone who dared to enter their mountains. Now they are begging for workers to come and bring them the Word of Life.

Inflation has hit the Philippines following their presidential elections in May. It now costs \$250 to build a church in the tribal areas. We cannot stop with just building churches. For \$400 we can build a combination church and school where literacy programs can teach the tribal people how to read and write. We have started on one such church training center but we need two more as soon as possible – one for the Ata tribe and one for the Dibabawon tribe.

Beyond that, our goal is to establish five community centers where we can teach the people how to grow their own food, raise farm animals, and set up fish farms. These centers will also include literacy outreaches to neighboring villages and a residential upper elementary and high school for those who qualify. We want to have a medical clinic at each of the centers to teach basic sanitation, provide emergency care, and host medical missions teams when possible.

We have already been given the land for the first of these community centers, sixty acres in the village of Melale, Laak. This one center can bring hope of a better life to nearly 10,000 families in the surrounding villages. This project is called Living Waters Community Center after the natural springs on the property. It will cost \$50,000 to start and another \$50,000 to fully equip.

We know that God has more than enough resources to make this dream a reality. He is opening up doors for us to meet with some key people who are in a position to help. That is why we have been “on the road” all summer. This is too big for us to do by ourselves but it is well within our reach as God’s people come together in unity to accomplish something for His glory.

God is arising on Mindanao. He is pouring out His Holy Spirit on the tribal people just as He did in the Book of Acts as thousands are coming to Christ in village after village. He is inviting you to become partners with Him in what He is doing. You can partner with Him through your prayers and through your giving. God has more than enough resources and He has invested some of those resources in you. As everyone does what God has called them to do, these five community centers can become a reality and, through them, the tribal people of Mindanao can be reached with the hope that only comes from a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. As the people are redeemed and the land becomes productive once again, transformation will come to Mindanao as God arises and scatters all His enemies.

Please don’t keep this letter to yourself but feel free to share it with others who may be able to help. This is a “kairos” moment for the Philippines. Join us by giving your best gift to partner with God in bringing transformation to the mountain tribal people of Mindanao.