

# Church Triumphant

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## “REJOICE ALWAYS”

### *I Thes. 5:16*

As the Christian world gathers to celebrate the turning point of history – the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord – we have so many reasons to rejoice in every circumstance we face. Death has been swallowed up in victory. Our debt of sin has been paid in full. We have been set free to worship and to serve the King of kings and Lord of lords.

On Mindanao, there are so many special reasons to rejoice. We have just returned from our visit there and our hearts are filled with rejoicing at the goodness of God. We are so thankful for your prayers for the situation there during this time of crisis.

The rainy season has finally come to an end. In the Philippines, they only have two seasons – the “rainy season” when it rains non-stop day and night and the “dry season” when it only rains two or three times a week. Normally the rainy season on Mindanao lasts for two months – January and February. This year the non-stop rains began in November and continued on into March. The rains finally stopped right after we sent out our trumpet call, requesting intercessory prayer for the situation. Your prayers joined with the prayers of the rest of God’s people before the throne changed everything. Your faithful giving made it possible for us to effectively minister to the needs.

All of our church buildings were spared in the landslides and the homes that were destroyed have been rebuilt. We have churches in six mountain villages where the crops were totally destroyed by the flooding and the people were left with nothing to eat. Through your generosity, we were able to provide all six villages with enough rice to eat until their fields can be replanted and become productive once again. We were even able to provide them with quick growing vegetable seeds for replanting.

With the weather clearing, work can begin again on church building. We were able to be there for the ground breaking for the church in Kapitalong. The church there lost its rented facilities and was forced to meet in homes. A tribal chieftain gave them land and some dear Brothers and Sisters in the Bakersfield, California area provided the funds for building materials. The church building should be finished by the time you read this.

New churches are also ready to be built in the villages of Andap, Calabcab, and the city of Lake Cebu. A house is being remodelled and expanded for a church in Panabo. We are also needing to expand the church in Uraya to four times its current size because so many are coming to Christ there is barely room to stand. All of this has been made possible by your generous donations for church buildings and by your prayers for breakthrough.



*Our workers buy sacks of rice to take to the mountain tribal villages for distribution to those who have nothing to eat.*



*Howard officially breaks ground for the new church building in Kapalong while a volunteer carries lumber from the mountains to begin the construction as soon as the site is cleared.*

We have experienced a real breakthrough both in the natural and in the spiritual. We held two pastors' conferences while we were there, one in Tagum City and one in Manila for pastors, workers, and young leaders. God moved in an awesome way as we taught and encouraged people from the Word of God. People who had been in bondage for years were set free by the power of God's eternal Word. The last service in Manila was awesome as God gave us a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the young people. The reality of God's presence was overwhelming.



*When finished, the new church in Uraya will fill this clearing.*

We have even had a breakthrough on the rented building in Tagum City that has been home to our Bible school and headquarters for the last five years. Two years ago the bank threatened to sell it out from underneath us unless we bought it right away for a price of \$25,000. We tried to negotiate terms but the home branch in Manila never got back to us. We just received word that they sold it to another bank in Manila that is anxious to get rid of the property. They have cut the price and have agreed to sell it to us for only \$16,000 with 25% down and low monthly payments. The loan is interest free if we pay it off within three years.

Truly there is reason to rejoice as we celebrate the glorious resurrection of our Lord. By His mighty power, He is able to turn every crisis into a joyous breakthrough if we will just stay faithful to Him and trust in His unfailing Word.