

August 12, 2021

Our Dear Co-Workers in the Gospel,

We send each of you our love and we pray that each of you is keeping safe and encouraged during this pandemic time. There sure have been a LOT of restrictions placed on each of us during the past 1½ years and our lives have changed a lot. The Lord has not changed though – He still loves each of us, has a great plan for each of us and meets all of our needs and He uses us to partner with Him in His plans.

As you know Deb and I returned to Australia in December 2020 for our furlough/home-assignment time, so we have been 'home' now (our Australian home) for going on 8 months.

During this time we have kept pretty busy working online with our different teams in the Philippines. We run 4 different offices these days, so it sure keeps us busy.

One of our desires this year was to see all of our Australian supporters and co-workers. It had been 7 years since our last visit so in June 2021 we headed off on a trip to South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. All of our meetings in South Australia and Victoria went really well and we were delighted to see all of our loved ones who have stood with us in the work for so, so many years and to be able to report about all that we have seen God do in Mindanao.

There were still two families in Victoria and one church (and all the folk at that church) who we were anxious to see but then were prevented from seeing because Victoria was locked down. And the final leg of our trip was going to be NSW, but it also was in lockdown. So we applied for permission to travel through South Australia and enter into Western Australia where we base out of these days. This permission was granted us (many have been declined so we praise God that we were able to travel) so we travelled the 3,500 km home in 3 days and we are now on Day 4 of our 14 day long home quarantine. We cannot leave the house at all apart from to get our Covid test on Day 2 and 12. This morning we bought groceries online and had them delivered which was pretty cool.

So Where To From Here?

We are going to try and report via Zoom to the churches in NSW and QLD who partner with us in the work. This is really different for us and we would far prefer to see everyone face to face and to report in person but it seems like Zoom will work. So please pray with us as we attempt this - especially the first few times. Our first meeting will be on August 22.

We are planning on returning to the Philippines early 2022 – possibly in about March. We really want to get back to all the churches and to see our family in the Lord there. We miss them so, so much and want to love on them and have more ministry into their lives.

How long will we be there for?

We don't know. But the good thing is that God knows and He is over all things! The Philippines has given us permission to return, and we are sure that Australia will allow us to leave here due to us being permanent residents of the Philippines.

The churches in the Philippines number about 60 now and are doing well. A few are struggling but most are really flourishing. The works in each of the 6 regions where we are working are doing great, as are each of our 23 Filipino co-missionaries working in these regions. Covid has been tough for most of the churches, but they have been able to continue to reach people for Christ during the pandemic. Many in the Philippines are turning to the Lord during these uncertain times. God has worked things out for his own glory despite the trials that have flooded the world.

Jubab is doing great. We really praise God for all that is going on in his life. He is doing a science degree at university, plays volleyball and American football, works as a waiter, and is involved in his church here in Perth. He has a girlfriend who we haven't had the joy of meeting yet 😞 -- but after quarantine we will and can't wait. And his heart is being challenged and moved again with a burden for missions. For now, Deb and I have advised him to take one step at a time, to first just complete his degree, to serve in his church and to give lots of time to his relationship with his girlfriend Freya.

Our children and grandchildren in the Philippines are doing great too. Jen and Udi continue to serve the Lord tirelessly and are seeing much fruit. Our oldest granddaughter Char just started her second year of Nursing yesterday, and our oldest grandson Clint turned 16 today. The two littlest are well and growing up too fast.

Between now and when we return to the Philippines, we will continue to treasure our family times here in Perth and to get as much time as we can with them as we miss them so terribly when we are in the Philippines. We'll continue to develop the evangelism series on our website in the four languages we are working in, and we'll be in touch Lord willing via Zoom with dear co-workers we haven't been able to travel to due to the difficulty in travel with the lockdowns.

So, this is just a little update on where we are at so you can pray with us and know our plans.

Lots of Love.....
Paul and Deb

