

Mission Church Update

By Rev. Nollie Malabuyo • February 17, 2009

Beginnings



On June 21, 2008, as powerful Typhoon Fengshen was approaching Manila from the south, a new Bible study group of six young adults met at our home in Antipolo, Rizal, Philippines. We had an introduction to our Bible study and afterwards, a time of fellowship at the dinner table. Almost two months later, we decided to start meeting on Sunday afternoons for worship on a trial basis. On August 17, we started the Lord's Day

worship services that have continued to this day at the Mars Hill Study Center in Pasig City, Metro Manila.

The six who came were Albert Medina, Russel De Guzman, Maria Theresa "Mimi" Cadaoas, Jill Abarra, Joana Fe Cadaoas and Jeff San Jose (shown L to R in the picture on the left). All but Russel, who has a wife Donna and four little boys, are single. The De Guzmans have faithfully attended the services since the beginning.

Later, Janelita "Gigi" de Guzman (no relation to the first De Guzman family), an acquaintance from a different Bible study group, made it known to me her desire to have her infant daughter, Jessica Danielle, baptized. Gigi and her husband Edwardo "Egay" were catechized (Heidelberg Catechism lessons), and on November 25, Gigi successfully went through her membership examination with Rev. Napoleon Narag and Alfred Santiago, elders of the United Covenant Reformed Church in San Carlos, Pangasinan.



Thus, on Saturday, November 28, 2008, the mission church had a first profession of faith - Gigi de Guzman - followed by a first baptism - baby Danielle de Guzman - at the de Guzmans' house in Cainta, Rizal, in the presence of all the regular attendees of the mission church. What a joyous day to witness a family initiated into the covenant community!

As Christmas was upon us, we had a Christmas fellowship at our house after the worship service on December 21. It was another joyous time of fellowship, games, singing carols, and of course, dinner, to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Continuing the Pilgrimage



Since then, Gigi's husband Edwardo and two of her four daughters, Danielle and Julia, have also been faithfully attending the Sunday worship services.

Our Sunday afternoons consist of a worship service, usually about 75 minutes long, followed by a short time of refreshments, after which we begin a half-hour catechism class. We have finished Lord's Day 25 out of 52 as of February 15, and we expect to finish in another

couple of months. All of those who finish the class will be asked if they desire to make profession of faith, and those who do will also become members of the San Carlos church.

Visit by the RCUS...

Rev. Gil Baloy, pastor of Covenant Reformed Church in San Diego, California, and two other men from the Reformed Church in the U.S., will visit the UCRCP congregations in the Philippines next month. We are thankful that Pastor Gil agreed to lead our worship service and preach on March 15.

We will have an exchange pulpit on March 8, when I preach in San Carlos, and Rev. Edwin Puzon of Las Piñas will preach here in Pasig City.

By God's grace, there will be a Philippine classis soon, with possible churches in San Carlos, Pangasinan; Las Piñas, Metro Manila; Calauan, Laguna; and Davao City. Lord willing, our mission church here in Pasig City will become an organized church in a year or two.

... and Mike Horton!



Two days ago, I received a tentative approval of our invitation to Michael Horton, Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary in California, to hold a Reformed conference in the Philippines. The dates are still being finalized, but will probably be in February, 2010. The conference place will be somewhere in Metro Manila. More details will follow in the next few months.

Summer Plans

We are planning a summer retreat for the group sometime in April or May. Stay tuned for more details.