

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOUNT ZION FILIPINO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

BEACON LIGHT

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Volume 23, Issue 2



COME AS YOU ARE, NO JACKET REQUIRED

Nica Esguerra on Adventurer Sabbath **PG. 4**

PHOTO - NEMUEL MAGSIPOC

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Article by Pastor Ly **PG. 3**

FROM STRANGER TO FAMILY

Testimony by Shazam Baksh **PG. 6**

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:14,16 ESV

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SEND ME | EDITORIAL

By Marian Mendoza

The past few months have been filled with exciting events and achievements in our church community. We share the experiences of some individuals who stepped out of their comfort zones and let the Lord lead.

Moments of courage, like starting a fellowship group on a university campus, preaching for the first time as a child, or taking on a leadership responsibility, show us that God has drawn us to do His will. Bro. Shazam's testimony reminded me that God's grace is for everyone, regardless of whatever stage we are in life. God's work has no requirements on age or experience, nor does it have an expiration date. All it requires is faith and love.

Every June 12th, Filipinos around the world celebrate Independence Day, commemorating the courage of the Filipino people who declared their sovereignty in 1898. This year also recognizes 500 years since Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses as a moment of defiance against unbiblical practices in the church, sparking the Reformation.

In this issue, we're invited to come as we are and to have the courage to accept the mission that God has set out for us.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8 NIV

LOOKING AHEAD

- July 15 Pathfinder Emphasis Sabbath
- July 21-25 Pathfinder Camporee
- July 26-30 Adventurer Camporee
- Aug. 4-6 Filipino Camp Meeting
- Aug. 6-12 Youth Bash Week
- Aug. 12-13 Adventurer Indoor Camping
- Aug. 18-20 Ontario Constituency Meeting
- Aug. 20-26 Children's Week of Prayer
- Sept. 3, 17, 24 JAZ Festival
- Sept. 10 Health and Culture Expo
- Sept. 16 Pathfinder Day (worldwide)
- Sept. 23 Christian Education Sabbath

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| Fall Issue | Wednesday, August 16 |
| Winter Issue | Wednesday, November 15 |

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

HEALTHY DISCIPLES, HEALTHY CHURCH

By Pastor Sereivudh Ly

Many churches are motivated by traditions. Some churches will be driven by personalities and politics. Still, other churches are driven by debt, by the size of their buildings, or by a ministry structure so large and so inflexible that fresh growth is difficult.



Healthy Church

According to scriptural concept, the church is like a living organism, not just an organization. A growing organism focuses on its health, its capacity to reproduce, and how its individual body parts interact. Organisms are nurtured, not assembled. In the same way, the church requires an intentional long-term commitment, consistently dealing with the most important issues at each stage of growth.

The Mount Zion Filipino Seventh-day Adventist Church is on the journey to becoming a healthy church that assists those who search for God and helps every church member become mature disciples who grow in the love of God and people (Ex. 20:3-17). The church currently cultivates opportunities for people to love God and people (Matt. 22:36-40).

In the past four years, Mount Zion has arranged its structure for each church member to become a mature disciple. The current church structure follows Jesus' ministry model. It creates the environment for discipleship. There are five biblical necessary focuses of a healthy discipling environment. These are: worship (Faith), evangelism (Frontier), discipleship (Fortifier), fellowship, and ministry (Friendship).

Jesus' ministry modeled these five values in John 17:1-26 NIV.

1. "I have brought you glory on earth" (WORSHIP) (4).
2. "I revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world" (EVANGELISM) (6).

3. "I gave them the words you gave me" (DISCIPLESHIP) (8).
4. "While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe" (FELLOWSHIP) (12).
5. "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (MINISTRY) (18).

These five focuses of the church are also commanded by Jesus in the Great Commandment and Great Commission, described in the passage above (John 17:1-26), explained by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-16, and modeled by the first church in Jerusalem (Act 2:41-47).

Healthy Disciples

Loving God and loving people are the keys to becoming healthy disciples so that we, at Mount Zion

Filipino SDA Church, are driven by God's will. We continue to focus on the Great Commandment (Matt. 22: 36-40), the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), with our great commitment, for these five reasons:

1. We exist to magnify the name of Christ in all we do in the church (Faith) (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
2. We exist to focus on the mission of introducing unbelievers to Jesus (Frontier) (Acts 1:4-5, 8).
3. We exist to bring people into membership in God's family (Fellowship)(1John 1:6-7).
4. We exist to help people become more like Christ (Fortifier)(Phil. 3:7-11; Col. 1:9-11).
5. We exist to help people discover their spiritual gifts for serving others (Friendship) (Matt. 20:20-28).

In addition, Mrs. Ellen G. White also wrote, "The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and loveable Christian" (MH 470.1)

As one of your pastors, I would like to invite you to join me in growing to become a healthy church, by becoming healthy disciples.



COME AS YOU ARE, NO JACKET REQUIRED | ADVENTURER SABBATH

By Nica Esguerra

Sabbath, May 6th, 2017 was a memorable Adventurer's day. All of the adventurers and their parents participated and had a special task. Some led out in praise time, prayer, message in song and as little deacons. The Helping Hand class (Kierra Alba, Nica Esguerra, JR Brillantes, Kenneth Servito, Paul Villanueva, Jared Tulod, and Nico Ranin) delivered the message. We were dressed up as chefs and used "elements of cooking" to relate the message of "Completing God's family" -- Each of us are different, but if we accept to be part of God's family, we can



PHOTOS - NEMUEL MAGSIPOC

use the special gifts that God gave us to help in the ministry.

Our area coordinator, Norene Dyer, gave us words of encouragement.

The "Family tribute" was both emotional and happy. It's nice to see parents express their love and support to their children who will be joining Pathfinders next year.

After a delicious fellowship meal, we enjoyed the afternoon skit. One lesson I got from it is that "God is our friend and He accepts us the way we are." All the adventurers had fun, and it's rewarding to see it all come together nicely. Special thanks to Auntie Dahl for being patient with us, and to the church family for supporting us. We ask for your continued patience and prayers as we learn everyday.

EVANGELISM IS A LIFESTYLE | FRONTIER

By Andrew Skytte | Adapted from *Adventist News*, "World Church: Evangelism Must be 'Way of Life, not Event'" by Elizabeth Lechleitner | April 2007

If our concept of evangelism involves riches, a star speaker, and a critical attitude toward new believers, we need to change our outlook. According to Pastor Mark Finley, evangelism is an ongoing process, not a special occasion. Nurturing a community is our end goal and telling friends about Him is the first step. If we believe in the Bible, it is our duty to preach the gospel to all the world, in whatever means possible. This can even be a short prayer that goes a long way.

Trending presently are small group ministries, the Internet, and other progressive modes of outreach, often thought to better resonate with a largely secular and skeptical society. The topics must be doctrinal and "must be presented in the context of their relevance to modern thinking and modern values." The Adventist belief in the Seventh-day

Sabbath is an example. It's not simply a "proof," the Sabbath is also our identity in the modern world.

The traditional form of public evangelism is still popular in places like India and South America. In fact, 93% of SDAs are located outside of North America. In the Western world, people may have great jobs and cars and it may take a life crisis before an individual opens up to faith. In these cases, one-on-one relationships as a form of evangelism may be more effective than a large public event.

Flexibility is the key to reaching people for Christ, alongside an active, supportive network of Adventists in the community. This "contagious energy" is the sense of fellowship that will nurture a new Christian's faith. Mark Finley says, "The church is the body of lovingly ministering and sharing God's love to the community." Thus, evangelism occurs every day, because "true evangelism is a way of life, not an event."



THE INSTITUTE OF APPLIED FAITH | CAMPUS MINISTRIES

By AB Aguinaldo

I went to Arizona State University, in Tempe, Arizona on May 21-27 to attend the ACF Institute. This year's theme was Never Alone. Adventist Christian Fellowship, is the Campus Ministries movement of the North American Division. Leaders of the different ACF chapters in public universities and colleges across North America came together to be trained on practical application of their faith on their campuses.

We had workshops on how to start and lead vibrant campus ministry groups, effective ways to do outreach, how to give Bible studies, the art of conversation and sharing our faith to our peers, the importance of health and many more. What impressed me was the emphasis on the holistic approach in student ministry. The balance of academia, ministry, and self-care was

comprehensively explored from a biblical perspective, which helped us understand our calling as students.

The most memorable moment for me was outreach. I joined a group that went around the campus and the city hosting free intelligent conversations. I learned that:

1. Arizonans love Canadians.
2. People are yearning to be heard and to have intelligent conversations.
3. Free IC is an effective way to speak intelligently about spiritual matters.

I treasure the lessons I learned and the life-long relationships I've made. However, the most precious thing I gained was the knowledge that there are others just like me who have the confidence that God always has my back, and that I am never alone.



PHOTOS - AB AGUINALDO



TESTIMONY

FROM STRANGER TO FAMILY

By Shazam Baksh

I would like to thank and praise God for all His blessings and guidance bestowed upon me and my family. I'm thankful for His unconditional love, despite being hard-hearted in my early years of life. My life changed when I met a friend who never got tired of sharing the word of God with me. One day I decided to test her; I will try to be rude when she shares her God. If she stays calm, then this woman, her God and the church must really be true. This friend of mine won the challenge without a doubt. Everything was genuine about the God she kept preaching to people.

The following Sabbath, I promised her, "Okay I will come to your church." In spite of the promise I made to her, I was hesitant to go. When I entered the church, a man greeted me by the door with a sweet smile and ushered me inside to find a seat. In my heart, I said, "This guy is so amazing! He not only gave me a very welcoming smile, he helped me find a seat as well." Soon after the service, I met more and more people. With their kind hearts, they made me feel very comfortable, loved and accepted. From that moment on, I kept looking forward to Sabbath after Sabbath. I felt so thirsty to hear the Word of God. At the same time, I loved the warm friendship from my church friends. I kept wondering how they could be so loving; they made a stranger feel like their own family. Because of their love and hospitality, each time that I left church, my heart was full of a gladness that I had never experienced before.

I couldn't understand the changes that I was feeling in my life. Sometimes, my friends would ask me why I couldn't join them in activities I used to do for fun. Soon afterwards, I prayed and decided to give up my work on Saturdays. I knew I would be questioned by everyone I knew, but truly, God is faithful to all His promises. Even though I received unpleasant comments from my supervisor, I no longer worked on the Sabbath.

Despite all the changes in my life--being renewed, feeling blessed and content--I never considered being baptized. One day, after several Bible studies, two pastors approached me appealing for baptism. After more than 3 years of attending Mount Zion, I decided to be baptized on October 8, 2017. I will never forget the moment that I stepped inside the baptismal pool with the pastor holding my hand. I could no longer fight the tears of joy that I had been holding back. I reminisced the long years that I wasted when I hurt not only my parents' hearts, but also my Saviour's. After meeting the Lord, I got complete peace of mind. I can sleep peacefully at night, unlike before when I would feel like a barbecue on a grill that kept tossing and turning in bed because of all the unpleasantries in my heart.

'AFTER MEETING THE LORD, I GOT COMPLETE PEACE OF MIND.'

I thank God for sending me a friend to bring me out from the darkness, and all the brethren, especially at Mount Zion, who have loved me untiringly. Their friendship inspired me to look forward to each Sabbath. I learned to be thankful and trust in Him even in the midst of various trials.

The only regret I feel is that I wish I could have given Him my life long ago. My prayer now is that He may continually bless and guide me, that no matter what the future holds, this world will not overcome me. I pray that I will walk with him till He comes and live together with Him and my whole family in His heavenly mansion. Amen.



PHOTO - IMELDA CARIAZO

WHAT IS THE FELLOWSHIP TEAM?

We got to catch up with Evangeline Lagazo to tell us about the Fellowship Team and their ministry in our church.

OB Rey: Tell us about yourself!

Evangeline Lagazo: I am the current leader of the Fellowship Team. This team covers many ministries, including the singles, seniors, the socials, family life and hospitality teams. It's my first major office in the church, with most of my prior experience being the Pathfinder Ministry Director.

O: How would you describe your experience so far?

E: It's very challenging. There are monthly meetings, a lot of work behind the scenes, and it's difficult to juggle between responsibilities. But it's been a great experience to really trust in the Holy Spirit and let Him lead. It can get overwhelming at times, but the team effort expended is worth it when relationships are developed and strengthened. I'm definitely still learning as a leader.



PHOTOS - BERNIE LAGAZO

O: Any big event? What's the department doing?

E: Filipino Day was the big one! We had different geographical groups with their own booths, performances, and specialty food! Prizes as well. Many people were dressed up in their traditional garb. It was a cultural diversity celebration that always draws support and attendance. Aside from that, we're inviting a speaker for Family Life, and maybe host mental health lectures on a quarterly basis. We're looking into launching services for our seniors, building on the sports that the men have now, and perhaps have men's and women's fitness programs. The next big event will be a summer picnic, possibly in Earl Bales Park.

O: What are the dreams for the department or for each of the ministries?



E: Maintain the active singles ministry! There's a lot of potential in this group; I'd like to see them on fire for the Lord and have a willingness to invite friends. We encourage them to continue to share and expand both within and outside of the church. For the seniors, we'd like to take care of them more. I'm sure they would like to spend more time together, not just with their families, but also with friends in their age group. Imagine if we had volunteers who could drive them to events and visit their friends. For men and women, we want them to better understand their roles in their families; husbands and wives submitting to and loving one another. We want our church families to be fruitful families. We're well known for our hospitality, but we can do more than physically feed – we want to spiritually feed people as well.

I think the fellowship team starts with the individuals: "How can I be a good steward," or "How can I be a better son/daughter of God." The more we focus on how we can grow with God, the more we can invite people from outside and grow as a church.

O: Any closing thoughts?

E: If you have any suggestions, I welcome it. It's important to also provide what you think is a solution to your concern. We can only be successful at glorifying God if all teams work together and every person finds a way to contribute. When there's a problem, the Spirit will show a solution. We've just got to be willing to go where it takes us.



PATHFINDER BIBLE EXPERIENCE | TESTIMONIES

Congratulations to the Maharlika Team for placing 2nd at the PBE Division Finals in Chicago, Illinois!

Since joining PBE, I read the Bible daily, learned so many new things and grew a relationship with God. I thank God for leading everyone in PBE through this experience.

- Megan Villanueva, 13

I would like to thank God for our very supportive pastors, elders, and church family. I would also like to thank the parents, coaches, drivers, pathfinders, the conference, and those who supports this ministry and make PBE happen.

- John Dubria, 17



PHOTO - GLADELYN HONGO

What I learned in PBE will be retained for a lifetime.

- Aedrich Tubongbanua, 12

PBE taught me not only about Paul and his letters, but also how to collaborate with my fellow teammates. PBE has helped me become more interested in God's Word and I can't wait to continue studying for the years to come.

- Erica Bynoe, 14

PBE teaches me to be strong in the Lord, to find answers in life, what happened from the past in relation to the present time and the future. In my heart and mind the Bible is a special gift for me to read so I can feel His presence, hear His Voice, know His will and plan for my life.

- Iris Repizo, 11

I was spiritually enriched through study of the Pauline letters. I am thankful for everyone who in one way or another has supported this ministry. Let's continue to pray and to be there for our children.

- Darlene Rey, Coach

COMPASSION HEALTH 2017

AUGUST 6&7 (SUN-MON) 11AM-7PM

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