

Clemente Newsletter

December 2011

David's Discussions

Out in the park. Dancing to live music. Singing praises to God in a language most listeners do not understand. This is a group of Filipinos gathering to sing Christian worship songs in a Kaohsiung city park. Their smiles show off their joy. The way they talk to each other reveal God's love in profound ways. God is with them. The "Bringer of Peace on Earth" is with this group of dancers and singers.

Watching the dancers move to the music. Enjoying the outdoor fun. Waiting for a chance to talk to one of the Filipino visitors. This is a group of Chinese seminary students coming to meet Filipino factory workers. They are here to learn from this experience. They are full of wonder listening to the stories they hear from these few Asian laborers working here in Kaohsiung. They hug. They pray. They smile together and celebrate the one Christian faith. God is with them. The One who said, "I will give you rest," is here, among the people of God from many different cultures and traditions.

I am here with my camera. I record what God is doing in our midst. This is one of those times when Taiwanese Christians, represented by my students at Holy Light Theological Seminary, and Filipino Christians, represented by the brethren from Higher Ground Church, come together to celebrate God's goodness. A few Chinese friends from a nearby church, New Song Church, has also come to help in promoting this public event to the people in the neighborhood. God is here. God is with us.

I am here at San Min Park. I know this park. There a lot of Indonesian house helpers and caregivers hanging out in this park. I also have seen a few Filipino and Vietnamese caregivers. Who knows how many more Asian migrant workers are in the area. I am sure, together with the local Taiwanese population, the need to share God's love is ever great. God is here. He is preparing the way. The Mighty King, who is the Lord of the Harvest, is already here. I just have to come again and see where he is working and who is ready to receive the gift of salvation. Immanuel, God is with us. He is here. ** **

Carmen's Corner

Dear Family and Friends,

Remember this year's Christmas Project planting trees in Madagascar? Our goal was 300,000 NT dollars -- that was \$10,000 US dollars. Well, we made our goal!! We raised more than 300,000 NT!! Thanks to those who donated money and prayed for this project. We really appreciated the help. At the Coffee House fundraiser, I couldn't go there because I was sick. But, my 4th grade class did have our own fundraiser with the Christmas Project. We sold snow cones! It was really busy because we sold about 60 snow cones -- that made about 1,000 NT and planted 400 trees! Anyway, we really did meet our goal and planted over 100,000 trees! So thanks for the help!

December 15 was the Christmas Concert. My class sang "December Nights, December Lights" and "Joy to the World". Then 4th and 5th grade sang "Feliz Navidad". I really had fun and really liked the other Christmas songs music.

Feliz Navidad and have a Happy New Year!

Carmen Clemente

Question of the day: I'm going to the Philippines for Christmas. Where are you going for Christmas?

WORD SEARCH

M F Y F K G B I H W	
U D A D I V A N B F	
S I C B F W O N S X	CHRISTMAS
I C H R I S T M A S	CONCERT
C O N C E R T I M O	SNOW
Z K N K J P C P H P	CONES
P L X N E A O N N J	NAVIDAD
D I F W B G N N G E	DECEMBER
D E C E M B E R C Q	MUSIC
K J M V B S S N H L	

Sarah's Sentiments

November is the beginning of a two-month holiday season for us -- Carmen's birthday, Thanksgiving, David and my wedding anniversary, Christmas, New Year's, Jacob's birthday, and Chinese New Year. It's a fun time with lots of fellowship and celebration, but it can also feel like one great big long checklist. After getting about half-way through the season, I'm ready for it to be over. And we're not even to Christmas yet. I don't feel especially negative about it all. I just feel...tired. What is wrong with me?

I think I understand part of what is going on. We gather with different communities during this time -- FMWM missionaries, Morrison Academy families and teachers, Holy Light Theological Seminary students, Ladies' Bible Study members, Feng Shan Church and Nantze Higher Ground Church. We also reminisce with family and friends in the United States via Facebook and email, and this year we will actually visit David's family in the Philippines for the first time in four years. It feels like some sort of emotional overload. We are blessed beyond measure to have so many wonderful people in our lives, but it can seem overwhelming when they converge on each other all at the same time, or in this case the same season.

So what can I do about this? Just keep pushing my way through my checklist, shake off the emotions, and exhale when I'm on the other side of January? Of course I don't want to do that. I want to go into this last week of Advent with a clear focus on Jesus. Emmanuel. God with us. I want to be fully present with family in the Philippines, which is why I plan to "unplug" as much as possible during our two week stay (December 20 - January 3). I want to take time to journal a prayer of thanksgiving as I reflect on each person and each blessing that God brings to my mind. And I want to approach this New Year with joyful anticipation of "God with us" as our family continues to walk with and serve Him each day.

Wishing you a time of focus, presence, thanksgiving, and anticipation as you celebrate the birth of Jesus this Christmas and prepare to follow Him into the New Year.

Jacob's Journey

Dear Friends,

I like to play with you. You're my best friends forever. I like to draw stories. I really like you all and I just want to stay with you in two minutes.

Your friend,
Jacob

Prayer Petitions

** Praise God for the wonderful music concert put on by the HLTS Student Mission Fellowship! Not only was it a great time of fellowship and prayer, but it also helped Cambodia Mission Team 2012 reach their fundraising goal!

** Pray for the Cambodia Mission Trip this January 13-20. The seminary students will visit the House of Love, a Free Methodist children's center in Cambodia. Pray for safe travel, good health, and the Lord's leading.

** Pray for David as he teaches three new courses Spring semester 2012. Pray for God's inspiration as he continues to prepare for these classes.

** Our family will return to the United States during July-November 2012 for a scheduled time of Partnership Building. Pray for Sarah as she communicates and plans with churches regarding our speaking schedule, housing arrangements, and transportation needs.

** Praise God for the faithful giving of churches and individuals which has allowed us to serve in Taiwan for six years already! As the end of the year approaches, pray that God would continue to provide for this ministry and for the needs of our supporters.

2012 Financial Commitments

Free Methodist World Missions is in the process of gathering financial commitments for 2012.

If you would like to make a commitment to support our ministry, please contact Pam Sheads either by phone (1-800-342-5531, ext. 236) or by email (pam.sheads@fmcusa.org).

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