

Clemente Newsletter

April 2019

David's Discussions

I remember the beach. I remember the sunrise. There was a lot of good food and sweet fellowship among the many church members in attendance. Grilled fish, steamed shrimps, kinilaw, steaming hot sweet potatoes and sab-a were ready for the picking. But we all waited for the culmination of our Easter Sunday Service. This was our tradition to hold our Sunday morning worship service at the Masaobeach here in Butuan City, Philippines. The whole church, well, almost all of the members came to gather and witness the rising of the sun and greet this new day, with our favorite Easter hymns, such as "Christ Arose" ('Up From The Grave'), and "Because He Lives." I was nine years old back then, but the memories linger like it was just yesterday.

I remember the wet grass beside the lake. I remember the small crowd of twenty or more church members who came. We all brought our lawn chairs, hot coffee, a few breakfast rolls, and our hymn books. We greeted each other with the words: "He is risen!" We greeted the sun rising for this new Easter Sunday here in Lexington, Kentucky, USA. I brought my guitar and we all sang the songs "He Lives," and "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today." This was the 1990s and I was a student doing graduate work at a nearby seminary. It was 25 years ago but it feels like it just happened a week ago.

Easter is a time for new things. It brings the promise of renewal, the joy of the resurrection experience, and the hope of moving forward with our living Lord. Easter is also a time of remembering the past. With all our pain, the sorrow, and hardships, we bring them all to our Resurrected Jesus, and he transforms them, renews them, and recreates all of them so that we are able to live with them with God's hope and in his resurrection power. "He is risen indeed!"

Jacob's Journey

This past weekend, my class went on an 8th grade graduation retreat. We went to a resort in Kenting that many of us had been to before. It was pretty cool. There was a pool, an arcade, and even two restaurants. The resort didn't have **rooms**, but they had **cabins** which were very cool. Except my cabin people didn't go to sleep until 2 AM, even though I wanted to sleep. No hard feelings or whatever.

One activity we did after supper was good idea/bad idea. We were divided into groups, and the teachers gave each group a scenario that some high schoolers thought would help new Freshmen. My group's scenario was talking to a teacher about retakes. We had to make up a skit showing a bad way to do that and then a good way to do that. Then we all got together and shared our skits with the other groups. It was fun!

We were only at the resort for one night, though, but it was still awesome. The next day, we went to the beach after checkout and I got buried in sand. It felt... weird. But nonetheless, the retreat was a pretty cool event.

Carmen's Corner

These past few weeks have been AMAZING! There have just been so many highlights and moments where I felt so blessed by God.

First, I went with a group of people in my school to Hong Kong to attend this spiritual retreat, Vida Nueva. I already went last year, so I went as a worker this time, shadowing the two student leaders. It was a very meaningful experience and I was further encouraged by God to share my faith with others and be a light to the world. The reason Morrison people went to Hong Kong was because we are planning to have our very own Vida Nueva retreat in Taiwan, so we wanted to experience and learn how to run our own Vida Nueva. As I am writing this, tomorrow (Wednesday) I will wake up early in the morning to go up to Taichung to the Morrison campus where the retreat will be held. A lot of my friends are working with me or are going to go through the retreat, which is really exciting. I am a bit nervous and stressed, but I am encouraged by God and excited to see what He has in store for me and all of us.

Second, my school's prom was about a week after the Vida Nueva at Hong Kong. It was really fun and I'm really thankful to have gotten to spend time with the seniors who are leaving. I wish it could've gone longer, but there were a lot of people who were already exhausted at the end, which I understand. I cannot imagine being a senior next year. I am a little anxious and nervous, but I know I don't have to worry about the future. Instead, I can trust in God and know that He has a plan for me.

Last, but not least, my school attended the ACSC soccer tournament for the first time, which was pretty exciting. ACSC stands for Asian Christian Schools Conference, where international Christian schools from around Asia gather together to compete in sports tournaments. This spring, we were able to go up to the Morrison Taichung campus and compete in Varsity Women's Soccer. We played against really good competition and fought hard, ending up in sixth place out of the eight teams, which is a pretty good achievement, given the lack of experience we had before that tournament. In addition, I am very thankful that I won the "Golden Glove" award, which was given to the goalkeeper who the coaches felt like excelled the most throughout the tournament. There were so many people who encouraged me and complimented my goalkeeping, even people I never met before, which was a very humbling experience. I am thankful that God gave my team and I this opportunity, and I am excited for what He has in store for us as our season comes to a close very soon.

Thank you for reading!

Carmen

Faithful Finances

"Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God." -- Philippians 1:3 (NLT)

We are very thankful for all of your prayers and support as we continue to serve the Lord here in Taiwan and Asia.

So far this year, we have commitments and one-time gifts to cover about 70% of our projected budget. This is up from 38% back in February. Praise God!

If you would like to make a financial commitment for 2019, you may call the FMWM ministry center at 1-800-342-5531.

If you would like to make a contribution by check, please make it payable to "Free Methodist Church - USA" with "Clemente MSA" in the memo line and send it to the following address:

Free Methodist Church - USA
770 N High School Rd
Indianapolis IN 46214

Prayer Requests

Pray for the members and leaders of the Higher Ground Church. Pray for the work of discipleship and the process of mentoring.

Pray for the final draft of the translated FMC Book of Discipline, both in Nepali and Bahasa Indonesia. David is helping our national leaders in the process of writing.

Pray for the China Free Methodist Church (Taiwan) and its coming Annual Conference sessions this last week of April 2019. Pray for the many decisions to be made.

Pray for Sarah, Carmen, and Jacob that they will have a strong finish to this school year at Morrison Academy Kaohsiung (MAK).

Pray for our family as we prepare to return to the U.S. for a brief time of Partnership Building this summer. We will visit Sarah's family and supporters in the Macomb, IL area. We will also attend the North Michigan Conference Family Camp in Manton, MI, as well as the Free Methodist General Conference in Orlando, FL. We look forward to seeing many of you!

Pray for Sarah's father as he continues to live with cancer. We are looking forward to spending time together again this summer.

Thank you and God Bless You!!

Love in Christ,
David, Sarah, Carmen, and Jacob Clemente

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