



God's Love – Past Valentine's Day



Late March 2026

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners,



It began on the Day of Hearts – my flight back to the Philippines. What a perfect day to fly, and I couldn't have received a better Valentine's Day gift from the Lord than that. After waiting for eight months with repeated setbacks, I could hardly believe that I was actually heading back to the Philippines! And the travel was great!

In order to break up the trip (my stroke happened after my last very long flight from the Philippines) I decided to stop first in Hawaii, where I spent some time with old friends, Ate Olive Echano and her daughter and son-in-law. After I was rested, the next flight was the eleven-hour trip from Honolulu to Manila, timed just

On the plane from Honolulu to Manila – riding in God's peace and joy.

right so that I didn't have to sleep on the plane. With an aisle seat I was able to follow the doctor's orders and walk every hour to prevent blood-clot formation in my legs. God also gifted me with a vacant seat next to mine, which allowed me to spread my admin works over two tables and use the trip very productively. In the end, I arrived in the Philippines exactly eight months to the day after I left.



Manila Airport Shuttle Service – Pastor Lito and Eazar De Guzman (What a great welcome back!)

In Manila I was immediately flooded with God's Valentine-Month love through the reunion of so many dear friends. Turning over the midweek service at Calvary Manila just to meet me at the airport, Pastor Lito De Guzman with his son Eazar were the first to greet me. After this, I stayed a night at Calvary Manila where I had the chance to meet still other friends as well as board members of Faith in Action. The next day, I flew to Legazpi, where I was greeted at the airport by a lively group from our Legazpi church. They shuttled me to yet another welcome back gathering from the church which was followed by yet a third gathering the next evening



Our ASC student Valentines Fellowship the night I arrived in Legazpi (can you find me?).

with even more from the church. What a month of love this has been!

But it wasn't just welcome-back parties that filled my first days; ministry also started immediately. Just two hours after arriving in Legazpi, I was swept into our Valentine's Day student fellowship, and within the next week, I had the chance to share at the Sunday service, young adults fellowship, student large group fellowship, and prayer meeting. It was so refreshing to finally get back to the hectic flow of ministry that I had so missed these past months!

Besides all of this, God also so blessed me with the chance to witness the fruits of His amazing goodness in the Legazpi church since I left. Sunday attendance increased a lot since last June, with our indoor



Third welcome-back party at our Legazpi church. What a great reunion!

Praise as part of our lives:

In all prayer and requests

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Phil 4:6-7)



Sharing at our Legazpi English Service – joyously face-to-face at last!

begin construction of a ministry center up at our Caramoan outreach. Drawing on workers from both our San Miguel Island churches as well as local Caramoan residents, the center is meant to support the ongoing work there as well as provide a project for the Calvary Chapel Treasure Valley missions team slated to arrive today (March 21) for a two-week mission (this is also the main financier of this project). It's a big group, and between them and our church, over 30 people plan to participate in this outreach. Please pray!

Needless to say, this month has been a huge transition for me – but a loving transition. Thanks for your many prayers – and please don't stop! Your



Back to biking – a little bit. I'm still having to be careful with health issues though.

Trusting in His Unfailing Love,

Dave

David Matthews

sanctuary overflowing nearly every Sunday. The student ministry filled the room as well. In addition, over 60 weekly discipleships and nearly 30 other ministries continued each week. Even the Monday prayer meeting had nearly doubled in size since I left. Dominic Rivera had done a great job teaching the Sunday services while I was gone, and two new Bicol University graduates just joined our ministry staff this month. The ministry certainly did not shrink while I was in the US!

In addition to God's blessing on our local Legazpi ministry, God also opened the chance this month for us to



Mayon Volcano erupting outside my bedroom window (another wonderful welcome-back treat from the Lord!)

prayers were one way God got me through a really uncertain time in the US, but I still depend upon them to get me through this new season as well. After all, I didn't leave the US because my health issues were over, but rather because my insurance ended, and I still had to wait several months for Medicare to start. Several medical issues still remain, two types of surgery are still possible, and I continue to experience a number of uncomfortable health issues. But I continue to trust in God's steadfast love, which He has already shown in so many ways.

God bless you as you too continue to walk under the umbrella of God's love. His compassion is new every morning, whether in the West or in the East, and not just on Valentine's Day –or Valentine's Month–but every day of our lives.

Faith in Action

e-mail: davecmatt@gmail.com

Pressing on in Prayer to the God of Love

- 1. Adjustment back to ministry** – Though I love it all, I still see the effects of the stroke on doing what I did before. Thanks for your prayers as I learn to adjust, and please pray as well for further recovery, should it be God's will.
- 2. Dealing with other health issues** – Though I am OK now in many ways, I continue to experience increasing stiffness in my legs and right arm. Pray that God leads me to the right doctors here as I continue with follow-up tests and appointments. I've already had five appointments and have two more scheduled before the end of March.
- 3. Caramoan Mission** – Please pray for good coordination and fruitfulness for our Caramoan outreach March 26 – April 1. Pray for timely completion of our center there, and also for the Easter activities here in Legazpi Thanks!
- 4. Life decisions** – Please pray as I face some big decisions and directions, both in ministry and in my personal life. May the Lord guide me in every detail and be glorified. Thanks!