



Keeping up the Pace



May 2026

Dear Friends and Prayer Partners,

It's always easy to start a race; it's keeping up the pace afterwards that is the challenge.

So it has been with the Philippine ministry here. The Legazpi ministry alone spans many areas, from the two different services each Sunday, to nearly twenty outreach Bible studies and children's ministries, to the plethora of college student ministries, to nearly forty one-on-one discipleships. And the list goes on. Yet God has been so good to help us keep going – and to add more!

I've truly been encouraged this past month by God's grace to begin again discipling and training workers and leaders in the Legazpi church. The Lord opened the doors for me to lead a bi-weekly men's discipleship group as well as mentor two other men. Nearly twenty students and young adults attend the DTS (Discipleship Training School) class I lead and even more attend the young adults' bi-monthly Life Group. I so thank God for the way He continues to fulfill the vision He planted in my heart so many years ago for discipling and training workers for God's kingdom work. May He continue to use these disciples to impact more and more people for His glory!



Families heading home after joint service at our island campsite



Worship during the Cagraray Island Post-Easter Fellowship

Because our Holy Week activities overflowed our time, we were forced to shift the island joint fellowship to a couple of weeks after Easter. As it turned out, it was a good decision for many reasons . . .

First, it worked well for Jonathan, one of our island staff, as well as other brethren, to return from our construction project in Caramoan. The timing also worked for over fifty from our Legazpi church to join – a lot more than may have been possible earlier. Third, it was a wonderful time of rejoicing,

Besides our ongoing ministry, this past month included a number of encouraging special events. One was the joint service at our Cagraray Island campsite at the end of April.

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not just in what Jesus did on the cross, but what He did during the forty days afterwards (appropriate since it was a post-Easter fellowship). And lastly, it was so wonderful to reconnect with the island brethren whom I had not seen since last year. God's family is so wonderful!



Welcome-Back Poster at our Cagraray Island Campsite – it's so good to be loved!



Teaching at the Cagraray Island Post-Easter Fellowship

After the island joint-service, we were greeted in Legazpi with two more trainings: one on special evangelism and one titled "Transformational Development" offered by CPMT (Creative Prime Movers for Transformation). I thank God so much for the opportunities He continues to provide for us to build up effective workers in His Kingdom, even though the schedules keep us running!

Now, with the school year coming quickly to an end, we are not quite ready to rest. At the end of May, we face our yearly college student camp, a number of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, and all this followed by our church anniversary in early June. We also hope to soon begin digging a well for our Estanza lot (Prayer Hill) in Legazpi. This will make the land God provided for us more usable for church activities. Thanks for praying we can hit water!



One of the two trainings held at our church for our workers, a sister church, and Tiwala Kids and Communities



Students still smiling after two-hours of intense DTS study

As is always the case here, ministry continues to keep us running. I so praise God for it all, for there is such joy in serving Jesus! I also thank God for all of you who continue to pray or connect with us in different ways. You are such a blessing! As before, I continue to deal with lingering post-stroke issues as well as on-and-off back problems, although fortunately I haven't suffered anything major. The load of ministry continues to make it difficult to get enough sleep each night (we have ministry activities nearly every evening), but I'm trying with God's help to fix this. Thanks again for your prayers.

Well, I need to get back to the race and keep up the pace, but before I do, I truly want to thank you all for your prayers and encouragement this past month. That is what helps keep us going! May the Lord continue to bless the race He has set for you as well and give you the strength and vision to keep going strong for His glory!

Thanking God for His Grace Each Step of the Way,

Dave

David Matthews

Faith in Action

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Prayers on the Trail

- 1. Filling of God's Spirit and for changed lives as we head into the end-of-semester student activities** – final large group meeting (May 21) and camp (May 27-30).
- 2. Blessing on the upcoming church anniversary (June 7)** – for all to attend whom God desires and for a great blessing on the fellowship.
- 3. Wisdom in ministry and other decisions as we head into the summer months** – For ministry structure and restructuring during the summer, and for plans about dealing with health issues (check-ups and possible return to the US if my Medicare finally gets approved?) Continued recovery from health issues also.
- 4. God's guidance in building projects** – Caramoan ministry center (nearly finished) and Estanza well and other construction (much to do!).
- 5. Joy in the Lord, close walk with Him, and protection in the spiritual battles both internally and externally** – always one of the biggest needs and requests. Thanks!