

Third Quarter 2007 Update

Dear Church Family,

What an exciting quarter!!! As most of you know, God inspired 12 of us, (now we know, apparently because of the prevailing prayers of a widow in the Philippines) to traverse half the globe to share the gospel with hundreds, actually thousands, of very receptive people. It is like sowing on super fertile soil. In the 3 short weeks God provided 20 baptisms and hundreds of card requests for counseling many of whom are now beginning to attend church through personal invitations, especially text-messaging, by both youth and adults.

For me the mission trip helped me recapture my first love. God cautions us not to lose our passion that first drew us to Him in His message to the churches in Rev. 2:4. God's people in the Philippines don't have all the distractions (that we often call "blessings") that we have in America. They come an hour early to church for an hour of prayer together because they don't have money and have to rely on God to supply their food.

We also sponsored travel and tuition for over 100 poor youth who have never been able to afford to attend SEP camp. It was a thrill to see so much accomplished in just 3 short days! God blessed us with 13 baptisms there at camp with seven others later at the festival gathering.

We also had a five fold increase this year in our youth who attended our SEP camp. This was also an unexpected increase as well as expense since we support half of each camper's tuition and almost all for those who are financially strapped.. Words cannot describe the spiritual benefit this is to your youth. Ask anyone who attended. God is celebrated all week at camp and the unity and bond is electrifying!

Along with this exciting news, I need to inform you of a serious concern for which I request your fervent prayers. We have been averaging about a \$1900. deficit in income every month compared to expenses since the beginning of the year which amounts to \$17,000. in the red so far for the year. That is not unexpected as our largest donations usually come in at the end of the year. This time last year we were \$13,000 in the red, and God came through putting us \$1600. in the black by year's end. This is always a faith tester to continue in faith as the funds are continually depleted throughout the year.

I would like to ask all of us to pray fervently that God will fill every one of us with that first love we see described in Acts 2:42-47. Let's examine everything from our habits to our hearts and surrender them to our Master and Friend, Jesus. He alone can rekindle that *first love*. I earnestly desire it. Let's all ask (pray) for it. Let's all seek it as we would for hidden treasure or a "fabulous deal" or a "steal" as we might say today. Let's all knock on the Door, Himself and ask him to open the doors and windows of heaven so that He gives us the power to shower this first love upon thousands more in the months ahead. Picture how powerfully God could use us with all the blessings He has given us when we, as one, seek that *first love* from God with all of our hearts!!!!!!! Then He will fight our personal battles and even our church financial struggles will become history as He promises in Matthew 6:33.

You are all a treasure to God. Thank you for your faithful prayers and support for the greatest work on earth today – the Work of Jesus Christ working in and through you, His body. You are His beautiful bride and pride and joy!!! God bless every one of you!!!!!!!
Your pastor and friend and servant in Christ, Mel