

The United Church Letter

A publication of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines

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FEATURED STORIES:

- "A Church Worker's Pension is Real": Pastor Pering
- Grab and You Will Have It: A Global Partners' Experience

Along with these was the sharing of best practices on salary standardization through the Conference Ministers namely; Rev. Jesse Pagalan, Conference Minister of Agusan District Conference, Rev. Roceni Bakian, Conference Minister of North Highland Associate Conference, and Rev. Joel Bayot, Conference Minister of Batangas Associate Conference.

On a highlight, Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza, General Secretary, updated the State of UCCP on the achievements and developments of the E.Y. 2016-2017 as undertaken by the National Secretariat using the Church-Wide Objectives as the framework of the report; consistent release of the theme-based Sunday School curriculum and other Special Celebration Liturgical Guides and Weekly Liturgical Guides online; the Church Membership Course, active collaboration of UCCP and UEM; the advocacy on capability building and other direct services; Community Ministries Program; Disaster Response Program; Human Resource Development, providing timely care to needy Church Workers; Data banking of Church Workers; Clergy Resource Development; Canonical Review; Property Development; Financial Updates and other related information that every UCCP should be informed about. Marigza challenged the Church leadership in saying that, "in gratitude to God's wonderful grace, **(continue to page 6)**

11th General Assembly & 70th Anniversary Update

The 11th General Assembly of the UCCP is going to be a festive occasion for the church as we shall also be celebrating the 70th Anniversary of UCCP.

We are asking every local church, organization and institution to be part of this occasion by continuously praying and by posting a tarpaulin of this momentous event. Copy of the tarpaulin lay out with daily schedule of the 11th GA may be downloaded from the website www.uccpchurch.com and was also sent to the Conference Ministers for distribution.

The Anniversary Service will happen on May 23, 2018 at the Pelaez Sports Complex, Cagayan de Oro City. We pray and hope to gather 10,000 members that day – and we hope you are one of them!

The GA delegates, guests and observers may now register online thru: <https://tinyurl.com/uccp-onlinereg> – please register on or before February 28, 2018 for the facilitation of accommodation and other reservations. We shall also be using the online registered delegates as basis in sending out the UCCP GA Delegates Handbook.

Other events to watch out for are the Grand Reunion of the Church Recognized Organizations (CROs), Interest Group Forum/Workshops (covering various current issues and social concerns), Awards for UCCP Unsung Heroes, Festival of Faith – featuring our choirs from Mindanao and the winners of the UCCP Theme Song Writing Contest, and many more!

National Leadership Initiates All Leaders Meeting and Training 2017

The theme "Growing our Capability, Growing our Ministry" had guided the All Leaders Meeting and Training conducted by the National Secretariat on October 9-12, 2017 at Subic International Hotel, Rizal cor. Sta. Rita Road, Subi Bay Free Port Zone, Olongapo, Zambales. The Jurisdictional Area bishops, Conference Ministers and Jurisdictional Area Program Coordinators included in the participants who were filled with the inputs of Ms. Abbey Goyena, as the main facilitator, Rev. Elaine Grace Salen, Mr. Larry Milan, Ms. Rachel Gail Cadiogan and Rev. Alejandro Lazaro for Developing Yourself and Others, Development Needs Analysis; Competencies, Roles and Responsibilities of Conference Ministers and Church Workers, Human Resource Development Plan, Orientation and Leveling-Off and Pre-announcement about the General Assembly 2018 and for the closing worship respectively.



National Training on Disaster Risk Reduction Management and Climate Change Adaptation



The National Training on Basic Life Saving Techniques and First Aid, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Climate Change Adaptation was held at the United Shalom Medical Center, Tacloban City last November 13-17, 2017, and was attended by a total of 21 participants, including representatives from the Jurisdictions guests and national staff. This is in partnership of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) and the United Church of Canada (UCC) TASK FORCE HAIYAN. The activity aimed to Conduct Training on Basic Life Saving Techniques and First Aid, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Climate Change Adaptation and to equip the participants on the knowledge of existing Humanitarian Principles that is widely used by humanitarian workers. Lectures, workshops and skills demonstrations were done by each participant. They were also able to experience doing Hazard Mapping and Identification of some communities' vulnerability, exposure and capacity. Each Jurisdiction was able to learn the principles of

humanitarian aid, the importance of preparedness and mitigation of hazard risks, how to respond before during or after a natural or human-made disaster. Planning on DRRM was also done.

The UCCP, as a member of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), sent a participant to the historical "UNITED IN SERVICE" Philippine Faith Based-Organizations on Humanitarian Work and Sustainable Development

This historical event was done last November 28-29, 2017 at the CBCP-NASSA/ BEC Development Center, Maglabete Drive, Brgy. Asisan, Tagaytay City, wherein the three major Christian Councils in the Philippines CBCP- National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA)/Caritas Philippines, National Council of Churches in the Philippines-ACT Alliance, and the PCEC (Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches)- Philippine Relief and Development Agencies convened for the Faith-Based Organization Summit on Humanitarian Work and Sustainable Development. The primary objective of the Summit was to institutionalize coordination efforts in Humanitarian and DRR work among FBOs through the launching of the Philippine FBO Forum (PFF). The three major Christian Councils were represented from every part of the Philippines. A solidarity statement was also released as a result of the activity.



Migrant Ministry Updates

by: Rev. Cathy Chang, Mission Co-Worker, PC-USA

Welcome to first-time readers and welcome back to those familiar with the UCCP Migrant Ministry, through this newsletter column. At your service in knowing you and your families, and in solidarity with OFWs around the world, this migrant ministry takes on new dimensions in this new year. To refresh your memory, I am a Presbyterian Church (USA) mission co-worker, serving in partnership with UCCP and working in the national office. This March marks our family's second anniversary of living in the Philippines. Here are some brief updates about our partnership in mission:



Whatever happened to Mary Jane Veloso? Mary Jane Veloso is still imprisoned in Indonesia and potentially unable to provide her testimony for the trial against her traffickers in the Philippines. On January 10, there was a birthday gathering and media forum to launch the campaign to let Mary Jane speak. Please add your prayers and alert our authorities that her testimony must be included in her trial. Please read and share the pastoral statement from the Council of Bishops. Please sign and share widely this electronic

signature campaign at: <https://www.change.org/p/to-pres-rodrigo-duterte-and-the-philippine-court-of-appeals-let-mary-jane-speak-the-truth-allow-her-to-testify-against-her-traffickers>

In mid-February, **General Secretary Bishop Marigza and I will be traveling to the United Arab Emirates.**

There in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and other places, there is a growing UCCP fellowship called "Panambahan Sa Disyerto" with Rev. Teresita Oton serving as resident pastor. This fellowship celebrates their second founding anniversary. We are eager to learn and to support one another in mutual ministry. Stay tuned for more stories and photos!

During many visits to local churches and conferences throughout this past year, I have appreciated these invitations. There we have met and talked, and I have heard your desire for more effective ministry. One model of **community-based ministry** that is already in effect, most recently with UCCP-Faith Bible Church in Quezon City with Rev. Irma Balaba: churches are desiring to create a migrant desk in their local churches or conference offices, with training provided by Migrante International staff members.



On the occasion of Mary Jane Veloso's 33rd birthday (January 10, 2018)

by Rev. Catherine Chang

Lord God, Gracious God and Merciful Father, in whom all life originates, to whom we bow down and praise, from who comes all good things, we give you thanks for all of life. All of us are made in Your image. Today we gather to celebrate the 33rd birthday of Mary Jane Veloso. Yet this celebration is still tinged with sorrow because of her prolonged imprisonment and delayed trial against her traffickers, not to mention her ongoing separation of family members.

In the Holy Scriptures, the Lord hears the cries of the poor and oppressed. The Lord alone will judge the lives of those who oppress, and those who are oppressed. The highest ideals of any society's justice system should reflect these values. People sang through their persistent prayers for justice, and people lived and ruled according to these highest ideals. When these ideals were not fully realized, the Lord sent prophets and judges to bring the people back. The Lord also held accountable, those same prophets and judges when they fell short.

If Mary Jane cannot speak her truth, what are we saying? What are we allowing the justice system to say to Mary Jane, to her family, her sisters, her parents, and her sons? As a country, what are we saying to the other OFWs and their family members? How can it be that the voice of the primary victim is not included in her trial? The voices of her family members, her traffickers, and a long list of other witnesses have been or will soon be heard, but what about her voice?

On this day, we are not silenced, instead we are emboldened to find ways for Mary Jane to speak her truth. Inspire and unite us in our efforts. Until the day when Mary Jane is free. . . until the day when she is reunited with her family for more than a few hours at a time. . . until the day when her family no longer face the lights of rolling cameras. . . until the day when people like her don't have to go abroad to find the means to live or to survive, until that day, we will speak and act on her behalf.

We pray in the name of Jesus, who is the Word of God, and who gives us the words to speak, to speak up, to speak out, and to speak truth to power, Amen.



UCCP Participation in the 2017 International Peacemakers Program of the PC-USA



The United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) is one among the fifteen (15) mission partners of the Presbyterian Church, United States of America (PC-USA) in 15 different countries that sent participants to the 2017 International Peacemakers Program of the PC-USA.

The Office of the General Secretary (OGS) of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), in response to the invitation by the PC-USA Peacemaking Mission Agency, designated the Rev. Jerome C. Baris, National Coordinator for the Justice, Peace and Human Rights (JPHR) Program and Administrative Pastor of the UCCP Tondo Evangelical Church, to attend the month-long program that started on September 19 through October 19, 2017 (inclusive travel).

After the program orientation phase at the PC-USA Center in Louisville, Kentucky on September 20-21, Rev. Baris has been assigned to visit four presbyteries: 1) Presbytery of the Pacific in California (September 22-29); 2) Eastern Virginia Presbytery, Virginia (September 29-October 4); 3) Cemarron Presbytery in Oklahoma (October 4-12), and, 4) Cincinnati Presbytery in Ohio (October 12-16), then returned to Louisville for debriefing processes on October 16-17.

His engagement includes the main presentation entitled: **“UCCP Peacemaking Ministry: A Prophetic Spirituality for the Mission of Transformation”** before Presbyteries in Session, local churches, church’s organizations (men, women and youth), ecumenical partners, campus ministry centers, college student and professors in three universities and some Non-Government Organization (NGO) Centers on Faith and Justice, on Human Rights and Conflict Resolutions, delivered sermon on Sundays in some local churches and during regular meetings of some Presbytery, integration with several families of Pastors and church members and tour visit to famous places and/or museum with historical significance about the USA.

“It has been a wonderful journey, indeed, to experience and learn a lot of things on life in all aspects in such foreign place well-known and considered by many as a first-world or developed country. I was humbled not only by the hospitality and generosity of churches, families, organizations and even ecumenical partners, but with their openness to listen and understand as well the prevailing reality of social injustice in the Philippines and appreciated how the UCCP, in alliance with local and international ecumenical and multi-sectoral mission partners, has been responding faithfully through her prophetic witness and hope for social justice, peace and integrity of creation. Their expression to support the continues partnership on Peacemaking Ministry between the UCCP and the PC-USA has been overwhelming!” Rev. Baris narrated. *“But surprisingly, our mission partner-churches in the US are also facing the challenges of prevailing issues on migration and refugees, increasing homeless citizens, racial discrimination, growing percentage of hunger among poor and low-income families and the seemingly unpredictable natural disasters, among others,”* added Rev. Baris.

“Since 1984 the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has invited international guests from our partner churches around the world to visit with and speak to congrega-



tions and mid-councils throughout the United States. This has become a widely-popular and extremely helpful annual effort to inform Presbyterians of peacemaking efforts abroad and to increase and strengthen our partnerships for peace



throughout Christ’s church. Over the years we have hosted over 250 International Peacemakers from 60 countries and the impact on Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the peacemakers has been profound,” said Rev. Carl G. Horton, Coordinator for the Peacemaking Mission Program of the PC-USA.

Coordinator for the Peacemaking Mission Program of the PC-USA.

National Representatives Met to Act on an Indispensable Move



NC Action 2017-12-03 states that the said National Council accepts the proposal of Vista Residences for the UCCP to enter into a joint venture

agreement to develop the property into a high-rise mixed-use condominium project under the following terms and conditions: (a.) That the share of the UCCP shall not be less than 1.1 Billion Pesos; (b) That the share of the UCCP on the commercial part of the project shall not be sold.

This was acted upon during the Special National Council Meeting on December 4-5, 2017 at UCCP Shalom, Malate, Manila. Among the 110 attendees, 11 were NEC members, 6 Bishop Emeriti, 9 conference representatives from North Luzon Jurisdictional Area (NLJ), 9 conference representatives from South Luzon Jurisdictional Area (SLJ), 6 conference representatives from Middle Luzon Jurisdictional Area (MLJ), 6 representatives from West Visayas Jurisdictional Area (WVJ), 5 representatives from East Visayas Jurisdictional Area (EVJ), 7 representatives from North West Mindanao Jurisdictional Area (NWMJ) and 6 representatives from South East Mindanao Jurisdictional Area (SEMJA), 3 representatives from the Church Institutions, 5 representatives from the Church Recognized Organizations, 3 representatives from the commissions, 12 from the National Secretariat and 22 observers and guests.

Dr. Pio Baconga, presided over the meeting and General Secretary, Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza discussed the history of the stewardship aspect of the Church and how it faced the acid test as the tenets of the so-called “Three Self Movement,” that it was able to live up with being self-governing and self-propagating but failed in the third test, which is the self-reliant. Marigza enumerated the present and even the long-time problem of the church workers having no standard salary, received less than the minimum wage in their respective regions, no SSS benefit, and no financial assistance for the retired or retiring church workers and ministerial students. Also, the Church barely have a health or hospitalization benefit, not a realistic Mortuary of Death Benefit Plan.

The Church’s Financial Affairs was presented by the National Treasurer, Mr. Larry Millan. He emphasized the gap in providing church workers benefits through saying that their pension, the church should be giving them P850.00 per month but it only provided one quarter or P2,500.00 per year including hospitalization of P10,000.00 per annum and Mortuary assistance of P7,500.00. Milan also highlighted the positive result of the past 2 quadrennia that included the great contribution of the local churches and conferences of Wider Mission Support (WMS); the implementation of one ecclesial plan which allows the whole Church to move in one direction using OGSM as framework, as this is a first time in the UCCP history; the Church has become less dependent on its foreign

partners; and became more efficient with the Church program operations thus have freed up more funds to be used for the needs of the Church, especially those that are unfunded; the financial resources were used to provide financial assistance to its institutions instead of letting it sleep in the bank. Milan explained to the body saying that “these are just some of the many accomplishments with just a period of almost 2 quadrennia which show the sincerity and prudence of the leadership of the Church and they are fruits of learning and painstaking labor.” In the entire duration of the said meeting, everyone was called to believe that the Church may have a long way to go and dreams to fulfill its vision that is to have an abundant and meaningful life for all.

The deliberations were heard that this period when its people are facing and going to enter right now may lead to that dream and it is a great challenge to every member of the Church not only on where to stand to but being one with the truth and listening to one another . “It is not whether we invest to support and sustain the church. The Legal Counsel Atty. Olalia has spoken, we have fulfilled the legal processes. We now need to move the UCCP to a day when we are united not only in name but in benefits and pensions. Let us be a united church where all have pensions and benefits, so we can truly be united,” said Prof. Carlton “Cobbie” Palm, a representative of the Presbyterian Church, USA.

Thus, along with the presentation of Vista Land by CSRD member, Mr. Norma Ramiro, the body also voted an action as NC 2017-12-03, “To confirm the joint decision of the CSRD and the NEC that 500 M pesos from the proceeds sale of UCCP from the joint venture with Vistaland be allocate as endowment fund for the benefit and welfare of the church workers.”

The said actions were understood to be brought to the forthcoming General Assembly with the idea of Legal Counsel, Atty. Edre Olalia, “Let us be reminded t, that the technicality must work for something that is good and not something to obstruct or to complicate or defeat a purpose that everybody has agreed upon. This Church is called United Church of Christ in the Philippines, it is not a disunited Church of Christ in the Philippines. It is a united and uniting church – and it’s all up to the decision we are going to make today!”





UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINES

celebrates its

70th Year Anniversary and 11th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SCHEDULES

MAY 23-27, 2018

- Arrival & Registration
- CRO's Grand Reunion
- Opening Session of the 11th GA
Simultaneous with: CARAVAN/MOTORCADE/PARADE
- ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

23
DAY 1

- FORA/INTEREST GROUPS
- GA Business Session
- Gala Dinner and Awards Night

24
DAY 2

- GA Business Session
- Festival of Faith

25
DAY 3

- GA Business Session
- Closing Worship
- Fiesta sa UCCP

26
DAY 4

- Church Visits (Worship with local churches around Cagayan de Oro)
- Round Table Meeting with Partners
o Simultaneous with organized tours
- Homeward Bound

27
DAY 5



CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY



let us continue to commit ourselves – and may it become our spirituality – to carry out God’s mission amid these critical times towards the realization of our shared vision wherein ‘abundant and meaningful life’ shall be enjoyed by all.”

The training was realized in pursuit of Objective Number 3 in the Church’s unified OGSM which states: *To formulate and operationalize a comprehensive stewardship plan to support the ministries of the Church* – but this time, it’s more of human resource. Utilizing and maximizing our leaders through this kind of training.

Moreover, the participants were reminded to echo the same to their respective conferences to train more leaders as well on their return home.



UPCOMING EVENTS



MAY 19-22, 2018

CYF NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY @ INITAO, MISAMIS ORIENTAL



MAY 19-22, 2018

NCYAF 4TH QUAD-RENNIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY @ UCCP -AURORA, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR



MAY 19-22,

NUCWO 3RD QUADRENNIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY @ UCCP- GINGOOG CITY, MISAMIS ORIENTAL



MAY 18-21, 2018
10TH JOINT NUCM & NCWA QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION @ PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT CENTER, DAO, PAGADIAN CITY



National United Church Workers Join the Con-Con



The 144 registered delegates from conferences of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao adopted the UCCP quadrennial theme, "Spirituality for Mission," from October 24-26, 2017. The said delegates had expounded the theme based on Luke 4:18-19 which manifested the UCWO as an organization that is in line with the program thrust of the Church, particularly in: "*Unity in the understanding of and commitment to the beliefs, values and principles of the Church, manifested in a profound sense of identity as UCCP.*"

According to Rev. Reinhard Licayan-Nuena, current NWMJ UCWO-JACOB convener and DCNM representative, "The National UCWO Constitutional Convention at UCCP- Bradford, Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City was a very historical event because it deepened and strengthened the organization (UCWO) more at the national level down to conference levels."

Guided by the following objectives: 1. To deepen the Church Workers understanding on the relevance of spirituality in relation to the life and mission of the UCWO; 2. To review, refine and approve the proposed amendments to the existing UCWO Constitution and By-Laws; and 3. To celebrate the gift of fellowship and unity -- The whole activity was said to be "a concrete expression that faith is a dynamic and ever-changing process that results in a transformed life," as the Rev. Fernando C. Saria, UCWO National President, defined it.

Among the highlights included the resolution on the current comprehensive property development issues of the UCCP, that in a unanimous decision. It stated as follows:

Whereas, The Holy Scripture clearly states that unity in Christ is the defining mask of the church. The church cannot stand if it is divided against itself.

The Church is called upon to the faithful stewards of God's creation. Our task is to enhance everything that has been entrusted to us so as to achieve a meaningful life for all.

Therefore, We stand by the General Secretary and National Council actions to uphold the stewardship component of our faith through concrete property development plan in sup-

port particularly of the life and ministry of our church workers.

We discourage the use of social media as venue for discussing issues of the church as there are proper ecclesial bodies with whom we can address our concerns.

We enjoin all UCCP constituents especially the church workers to be prayerful, sober and prudent in dealing with concerns confronting the faith and integrity of the church

All duly-elected signatories of the National Executive Committee of UCWO were reflected in the said document carrying the knowledge and reminder that all the church workers of UCCP are to live in God's mission as their mission as well, that is, to proclaim the unperishable message of eternal salvation, take care of the poor, and challenge the powerful and wealthy.

As an organizational claim, Rev. Saria concluded in saying that, - "We are better together!"



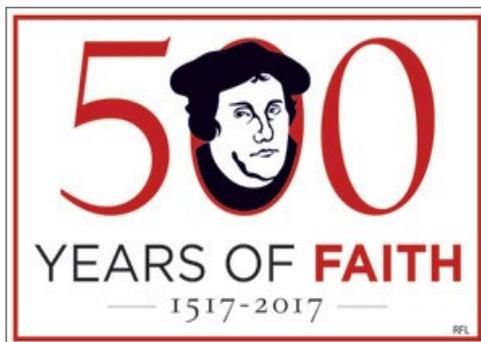
Protestant Reformation Celebrated its 500 Years last October 2017

Five hundred years since Martin Luther published his 95 theses and launched the Protestant Reformation. This historical and important event leads in the development of religious and political freedom in Europe and around the world. And it has been celebrated by Protestant denominations all over the world.

The Ecumenical Partnership of United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), Iglesia Unida Ekyumenikal (IUE) and the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) celebrated their 18th Anniversary and held an activity in commemoration of the 500th Year of Reformation with the theme *“Reformation and Partnership: A Continuing Journey of Redemption.”* . This historical ecumenical activity was held last October 28, 2017 at the UCCP- Cosmopolitan Church along Taft Avenue, Manila. Speakers include Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza, UCCP General Secretary; Rev. Leonardo R. Moranda, IUE General Secretary; and The Most Reverend Rhee Millena Timbang, IFI Obispo Maximo. This was attended by members of the ecumenical partners; this activity is done to strengthen the united work for the reformation of the church and society. An ecumenical walk was also done, where UCCP members from UCCP Ellinwood walks where IFI brothers and Sisters were waiting at the IFI- Holy Child Cathedral going to UCCP- Cosmopolitan where our brothers and sisters from IUE welcomes the delegations.

In line with the celebration of Reformation’s 500 years, CBCP- Episcopal Commission on Interreligious Dialogue, Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), National Council of Churches in the Philippines, Institute of Spirituality in Asia, Religions for Peace Philippines in cooperation with the University of Sto. Thomas held an event with the theme *“Looking back at the 500 years of Reformation: Challenges for Harmony and Unity”* last November 7, 2017 at the Grand Ballroom, 2nd floor Paredes Building of the University of Sto. Thomas. Keynote address was delivered by Archbishop Antonio J. Ladesma, S.J. on his *“The Road Towards Christian Unity”*. Sharing on the Christian appreciations, limitations, and looking forward part was done by Rev. Ferdinand Anno, PH.D, Fr. Richard M. Babao, Bishop Rodrigo D. Tano, Ph.D. Discussion on baptism, eucharist, ministry, and Mixed marriage. While in the Afternoon session, there had been a sharing of the Ecumenical Experiences from Rev. Fr. Carlos Reyes and Success Stories of ecumenical celebrations was discuss by Prof. Rommel F. Linatoc. Peace issue is also tackled in the event, testimony from a lumad was heard and discussion from Dr. Aldrin Penamora, this was followed by Workshop on Harmony and Unity facilitated by Rev. Dionito Cabillas.

Celebrations of the reformation’s 500th year was also celebrated on each churches, appreciating the impact of the 95 theses of Martin Luther on the life of the church and its continuing journey towards the wholistic spirituality,



Credits from Pastor Jhomel Ricafort, CM Junwel Bueno

Updates on UCCP Campus Ministry

At the start of Protestantism in the Philippines, missionaries brought with them the pillars of Ministry; teaching, healing and preaching. The manifestations of the ministries are Schools, Churches and hospitals that were established. As time went by, the development and experiences of the church and society became more of a foundation that led to what is recognizable in the ministry work. The objective three of the UCCP Plan states *“To strengthen and nurture the understanding of our Spirit-filled constituency to carry out the basic ministries (preaching, teaching and healing) of the church as a manifestation of our common identity and ownership.”* Doing ministry is our identity as a church. And in doing this Ministry, it is also addressing our UCCP Quadrennial Thrust 1, that states *“Unity in the understanding of and commitment to the beliefs, values and principles of the Church, manifested in a profound sense of identity as UCCP.”*

Campus Ministry initiatives were already present on the Jurisdictions not only in the church owned school but also in schools, colleges, and universities where the UCCP members were located. Consolidating these initiatives will be beneficial on sharing the best practices and to come up to how campus ministry can contribute to the fulfillment of our vision and mission that will manifest our common identity and ownership. In the attempt to consolidate re-launch /or even start our Campus ministry given with input of the initiatives, the jurisdictions where campus ministry is existing unertook consultations and meetings. Last October 20-21, 2017 in Pilgrims Christian College, Cagayan De Oro for the consultation with Rev. Bernadette Curan from Pilgrim Christian College, our church institution under this jurisdiction has a strong chaplaincy and campus ministry program, Bishop Melzar Labuntog as assigned to the NWMJ focuses on Quadrennial Thrust 1 with Rev. Rey, NWMJ Program coordinator, Mr. Joengie Enricoso as NCYF-CWS desk, , The meeting’s objective is to come up with an action plan starting with the participation of the CYF Leadership, in implementing the Campus Ministry. Sharing on the best practices, possible improvements on the current campus ministry initiatives were also done.

South Luzon Jurisdiction also initiates consultations on Youth Leaders from each conferences and Church owned school within the Jurisdiction. Last December 1-2, 2017, youth from juris attended the consultation and workshop. They define Campus Ministry on their context as *“Our church’s extended mission in the campus which is a student led movement that minister to the wholistic needs of the students.”* The consultation also identified who are the key persons in implementing the program, they also states the objectives, its Biblico Theological Themes, Goals and even the components. There were also sharing about the *“Oikos”* as initiated by the University of Mindanao as guiding documents on initiating campus Ministry.

Continuing consultations were also done with the Jurisdictions, consolidation and workshop will also be done in the NWMJ this coming January 24-28, 2018.

“A Church Worker’s Pension is Real”: Pastor Pering

How great it is to know that in the retirement of service as church workers, pastors enjoy their pension.” This is how a certain Pastor Ceferino “Pering” Aguillon Dumanig expresses his happiness upon receiving his pension in December 2017.

Pastor Dumanig of the Agusan

District Conference will turn 98 years old come August 26. From Brgy. Bad-as, Placer, Surigao del Norte he had transferred to Esperanza, Agusan del Sur on 1959 as he acquired a small farm lot in the said municipality. Working as a farmer, Dumanig became active in the Church and a significant pioneer in building the UCCP Esperanza local church.

Among the highlights of his church involvement included his sermon during ADC UCM-CWA 1987 Annual Assembly; study on Homiletics and Preaching under a training program of Lay Formation with Rev. Lydia Niguidula with plaque of appreciation and first church assignment in UCCP Mt. Olive, where he was also first installed as a Pastor and served there for two years; Dumanig’s pastoral ministry became deeper in all his roles and responsibilities as he was approved as a conference lay and elevated as conference licentiate. Despite his age from 1983 to 1987, he served at UCCP Mt. Olive, UCCP San Juan, UCCP Calaitan and UCCP Villa Undayan. From 1987 onwards he was assigned in UCCP Sta. Irene, UCCP Bahbah, UCCP Trento, UCCP Laminga and UCCP San Luis and after his retirement in 1997, he was recalled to serve UCCP Bucac and UCCP Noli, accepting them with no hesitations in the name of serving God through His people.

Two of his children are also pastors, namely: the late Rev. Palpito and Rev. Leonida Dumanig-Bajao, who were alumni of Silliman University.

Now, it is time to give back our gratitude to our Church Workers like Pastor Dumanig whose contributions to church works can be gratefully appreciated through pension from our WMS.

These are 510 Retired Church Workers who are regularly receiving pension every December. Through the WMS of the local churches. These said pensions have given happiness and fulfillment to the Church Workers such that of Pastor Pering Dumanig in saying, “Praise be to God!”



Grab and You Will Have It: A Global Partners’ Experience

By: Ms. Laarni Joy Robles



Have you ever been given an opportunity to travel to other country by yourself? For the first time, a great opportunity was offered to me. I had visited Canada, not as a tourist but as an official delegate from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, being one of the global partners of United Church of Canada sent invitation to participate in the leadership team of the GO Project. It was a youth mission program as I also attended at Rendez-Vous, a national church gathering of youth, young adults and leaders during the summer of 2017 dated last June 28 to August 23, 2017.

It was with mixed emotions when the plane landed in Pearson International Airport, Ontario, Canada. Adjustments in billet, time, food, language, people and goals were present on that day forward. The GO Project has widened my perspective and understanding on discerning through mission as one of the staff of Children’s and Youth Programs. It was part of its mission that transformed my faith into action, it strengthened my principle in life to be one of the witnesses of God. It had helped me more to revitalized and become more empowered as I continue to be more inclusive and to appreciate individual diversities by providing safe spaces of our brothers and sisters in Christ and to go beyond the four corners of the church building through reaching out, helping and sympathizing with the people who struggled to fight for their rights, where justice is served, for love to be felt and have a lasting peace and to achieve that abundant and meaningful life for all.

As Rev. Jordan Cantwell, moderator of UCC, once said, “We do not have to do everything, but everyone needs to do something.” I am thankful for this kind of fruitful and life-changing experienced that the UCCP and UCC has given me.





The UCCP mourns over the death of **Rev. Lowell Tac-an** who serves as the Executive Secretary in the UCCP National Secretariat on EY 2012-2014. And the former Conference Minister of Western Mindanao Conference (EY 2010-2016); **Rev. Diosdado Marquez**. The two church worker has gone before our creator last January 29, 2018. We pray for their eternal repose.



Your stories are welcome here for our news bits. This may include your local church, district, committee or conference, institution's information, updates and even testimonies.

Kindly send them to communications_officer@uccpchurch.com

We're waiting! Thank you.

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