

July-August 2025 (part 2)

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MISSIONARIES TO ILOILO, PHILIPPINES SINCE 1977

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Dear Friends,

This prayer letter is about youth camps this summer.

Camp is a time when young people can get away from their family and friends and routine and get closer to the Lord. The result is often making lifelong decisions that bring honor and glory to our great Savior. Sometimes the decision is to go to Bible College and spend their lives in full time Christian service.

Many of the graduates of IBC who have their own Bible College will have their own camps and youth conferences.

Most of the graduates do not have Bible Colleges, so those pastors in an area will usually get together and plan their camp. This summer our staff and students participated in 27 of these camps. A smaller camp like below will meet in one of the churches.



Young people lining up for a meal.



Pastors and other workers prepare the meals.



Mud fights and activities.



Most camps have morning line ups where the campers do exercises before breakfast. The young people above are part of one of the largest camps with over 500 campers.



One of the activities of this camp is mud volleyball. I guess I am too old to understand why young people get excited about playing in the mud.

But as you see in this picture the "joy" on their faces. These activities bring the campers together although I can't explain why.

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At the same camp the organizers went to the local fire station and asked if they could come to the camp and spray all the campers. It was a good idea for the firefighters as they gave a message on fire safety before opening their fire hoses on the crowd of several hundred campers. The church who organized this camp has a basketball league for the firefighters, Police officers and other groups as it has an outdoor basketball court. Quite a few of the Police Officers and Firefighters have come to know the Lord as Savior from this ministry.



Some of the pastors' wives judge the competition in Bible Storytelling and Bible quizzes.



In this camp, a lot of the delegates brought their own tents. Others sleep in the gym if that is the facility they are using. Schools are also used for housing.



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Classes

Classes where either pastors or older Bible College students are teaching are very effective in challenging the young people.



Class for boys under a hot tin roof.

Services

Students getting ready for a service held in a gym.



One of the two largest camps was held in Negros Island. The Lord used this camp to send a lot of students to our Bible College in Iloilo City.

This service was held at one of the churches.



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Special music is a blessing during the services and prepares the heart of the campers for the preaching of God's word.



Pastors recognized for their service during the service.



Pastor Nic Luceno (above) was one of the preachers at this camp. Young people love to hear him preach and for over 30 years he has been preaching at camps. He was a real character when he was in Bible College. I remember one time he preached at the camp for Pastors Kids and more than 50 of them decided to go to Bible College. Once he and his best friend when he was in college, Hermando Alibitado, spoke together at the camp in the mountains.

The mountain area is a perfect place for youth camps as there are numerous waterfalls and places for hiking. It is cooler up there and a refreshing place to visit during the hot, humid summer. One night after the service some of the pastors went to the river to catch some freshwater crabs. Brother Nic, the practical joker, later that night went to the place where Brother



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Hernando was sleeping. He took a couple of crabs and threw them on him and shined a light at him. Hermando woke up and started chasing Nic with one of those crabs around the camp yelling at him waking up the whole camp, including me.

I told the leader of the camp to find the two campers who did that and send them back home in the morning. The next morning the leader asked me if I was sure if it was a good idea to send them home and I said yes. He said it might be a problem since the ones involved were the two speakers! I couldn't help but laugh. The campers loved it so much that it ended up being one of the best camps.

Pastor Gilbert Porras (pictured right) is the radio station manager of the station here in Iloilo City. He is a wonderful preacher and loves to challenge young people to serve their Savior.



Pastor Johnny Lee Narvaez who has an underground church in a restricted access nation, preached at this camp. He is a very effective preacher and also spoke at the youth conference at IBC this April.

Camp in
Mindanao



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Invitation



On the last night at this camp there was a bonfire. The campers gave testimonies of the decisions they had made and what they were going to do when they got back to their church.

Below is a picture of the student body of Iloilo Baptist College this year. Many of these young people came to IBC because of the decision they made at one of the camps.



God bless,

Rick and Becky Martin