

Jon and Gina Murrell Missionary Report #39 from Cebu City, Philippines - December 2023

Jon Murrell

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Howdy from Cebu City!

We hope this letter finds you well and filled with the joy of the holiday season. As we approach the end of the year, we wanted to share with you some updates on our family and the mission work here in the Philippines.

Our family is doing splendidly. Sean, Jasmin, and Liam have just completed their school term and are thrilled to have two weeks off for the Christmas break. The family is in good health, and if you're connected with us on Facebook, you might have seen some of the delightful moments captured on camera, including videos of Sean playing the piano and glimpses into our family activities via pictures.

Turning our focus to the mission work, things at the Bible Study Center are progressing well. We recently concluded our last week of classes at the office, marking the beginning of a short break. The first week of January will see us resuming operations, but please keep us in your prayers as we wrap up a couple of remaining classes this week.



Sending out flyers for the upcoming seminar

A week and half ago, we had an enriching 3-day seminar at the Bible Study Center. For two hours each night, our guest speaker, Barry Murrell (my dad), delved into various topics, drawing insightful comparisons between human teachings and perspectives compared to God's teachings in the Bible. Subjects such as, "Original Sin," "The Rapture," "Once Saved, Always Saved," and others were explored and made for an insightful lecture. We will upload videos of each session onto our website as soon as possible to make them available for you to watch if you so choose. This seminar was just the beginning of a two-part series that we are excited to continue in the first or second week of the new year.



Shifting our attention to our efforts with the children's class in the mountains, we have been organizing Math, Reading, and Writing sessions every Tuesday and Thursday over the past few months, yielding positive outcomes. The children seem to enjoy these classes and are also showing notable progress, particularly the 6-year-old and below group, who have demonstrated commendable development in writing their names and the basic alphabet. Nevertheless, some kids are encountering challenges in keeping pace with the overall group, primarily among the 5th and 6th-grade students who are presently attending school but face difficulties in reading and basic Math during our sessions. The root cause of their struggle lies in household illiteracy. We have observed that those making swift progress have parents capable of assisting them with reading and writing at home. However, those facing challenges have parents with limited or no ability in these areas. In response, we plan to establish a dedicated class for this specific group of children, distinct from the existing two groups, to provide tailored support and address their unique educational needs.

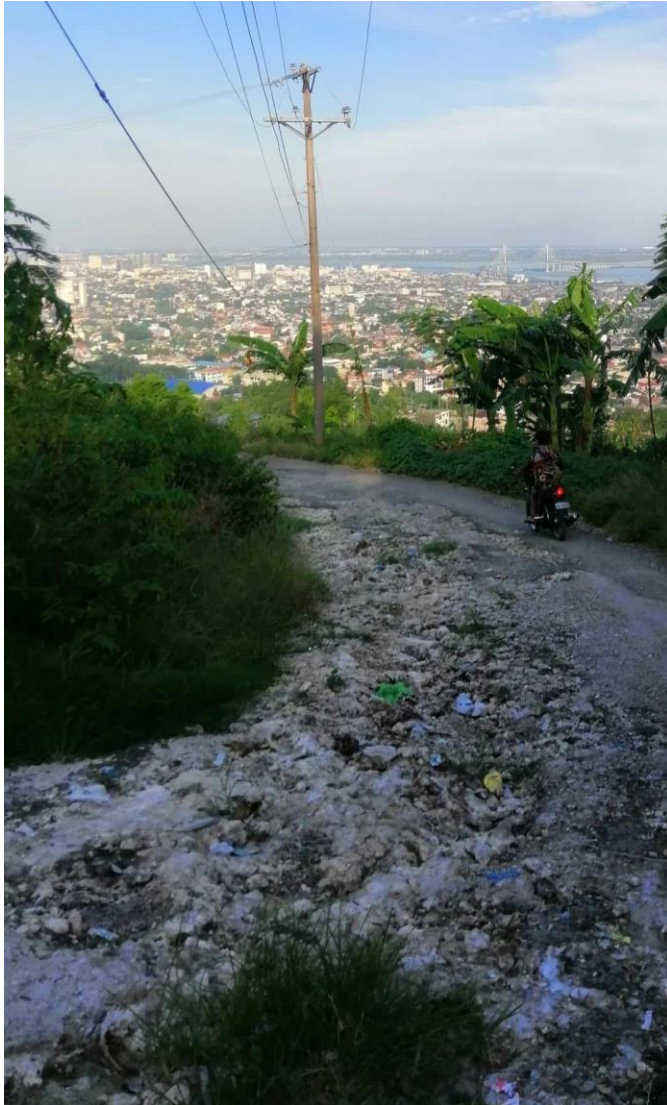


Our Saturday kids' class has gained consistent attendance, and we recently celebrated with a Christmas party last December 16, distributing food and prizes for achievements like perfect attendance and good behavior. The event was a huge success, bringing joy to the children and the parents who were around during the event, providing a heartwarming conclusion to the year. Classes for them will resume on the first Saturday of January.



Scaling the mountain to our destination is no simple task, with the rugged and poorly maintained roads. As it stands, our go-to rides for this tricky terrain are either motorcycles or 4x4 vehicles. The critical issue is the lack of reliable transportation to and from the site. Due to the roads, most cars,

including ours, can't make it to the site. While we can hire motorcycles to get us to the class location, there's a shortage at the site, often leading us to hike down the mountain.



To tackle this transportation hurdle head-on, we hope to raise \$3000.00. The plan is to put these funds toward purchasing a motorcycle, a game-changer that will make the journey to and from the class location smoother. Your support in reaching this goal will not only enhance our mobility but also guarantee the long-term effectiveness and efficiency of our mission efforts in the mountainous areas. If you would like more information on this please feel free to contact us anytime.

As we reflect on the past year, we are grateful for your unwavering support that enables us to make a positive impact in the lives of these children and the community. Thank you for partnering with us in this journey of spreading love, education, and God's teachings to the community around us.

We wish you a blessed holiday season and a joyous New Year!

In Him,

Jon, Gina, Sean, Jasmin and Liam Murrell

"For this is the love for God, that we might keep his commands, and his commands are not difficult." - I John 5:3