

May 2020

Dear Praying Friends,

It was exactly one year ago today, May 11, 2019, that we officially set the date for the charter service of Truth Baptist Church of Dapitan. We chose the date, March 15, 2020, and scheduled my home pastor, Bro. Steve Hobbins, to be our special guest speaker. WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT WE WERE GETTING OURSELVES INTO! At that time, who could have predicted a worldwide pandemic? Who could have predicted canceled flights, closed borders, and locked-down cities? We were just excited that Pastor Hobbins could come, and our excitement was only increased when, a couple of months later, my father decided to accompany him.

Fast-forward 10 months to March 2020, and the world was a completely different place. Clouds of uncertainty hung over every area of life. Travel restrictions were being implemented. Entire nations were going into lockdown. Every day brought unprecedented developments. It was in that environment that Pastor Hobbins and my dad got on a flight and headed to the Philippines. At that time, the situation here in the Philippines was still fairly stable. There were a few cases of COVID-19 around the country but no signs of a major outbreak. They arrived in the Philippines late Tuesday night, March 10. I don't have space to share all the details, but shortly after their arrival, things in the Philippines began to heat up. On Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, President Duterte announced the lockdown of Metro Manila. Fortunately, Pastor Hobbins and my dad were scheduled to fly out through Cebu City, not Manila. At that time, Cebu had just a handful of COVID-19 cases, so I felt that a lockdown was unlikely to happen before their Tuesday evening flight. The following day, Cebu announced that it would begin lockdown . . . on Tuesday. With time in short supply, we went to the airport and rescheduled their flight back to Cebu for Sunday afternoon, right after the charter service.

Sunday morning came; and, in spite of all the craziness, God gave us a wonderful charter service. Pastor Hobbins preached a great message, and then **35 people chose to sign the charter sheet as founding members of Truth Baptist Church!** However, our adventures were not over yet. After the service, we took Pastor Hobbins and my dad to the airport. Upon arrival, they were unceremoniously informed that their flight to Cebu *HAD BEEN CANCELED*. I don't know what my dad and Pastor Hobbins were thinking, but I can tell you what I was thinking. "AAAAAAAAAAAAHH!!!!" All of a sudden, we were faced with the very real possibility that they could get stranded here in the Philippines. We walked across the parking lot to the other airline and booked tickets for the following morning—on the *LAST* flight to Cebu. Even as we made the reservations for the flight, there was a gnawing fear that it, too, would be canceled at the last minute. It was an incredibly stressful time for everyone, but it was under those stressful conditions that Pastor Hobbins delivered the best message of his entire visit. Later that evening, he preached for what turned out to be our church's last regular service before the lockdown, and his message was exactly what our people needed to hear! On Monday morning, I took them back to the airport, where they began their successful journey home to America.

The following Wednesday, the mayor of Dapitan declared a complete lockdown. All church services were canceled, and people were ordered to stay home. Our Charter Sunday turned out to be our last regular service before the lockdown. However, God has been very good to us during this time. We have had considerably more freedom than many other areas of the Philippines. I was able to obtain a quarantine pass, giving me permission to do "missionary work." I promise you that I have used that pass to the limit—and probably well beyond. I have faithfully followed the great Bible Proverb, "It's easier to ask forgiveness than permission." ☺ Thank you for your prayers and faithful support during this difficult time. God is faithful, and He will carry us through this trial just like He has in the past.

Yours for souls,

*Mike Morrissey*  
Mike Morrissey



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**Missionaries to the Philippines**

*"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." 1 Corinthians 16:9*