The Bruce Rice Family
IN THE PHILIPPINES

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A brief look back….40 years of experiencing God's faithfulness and enjoying God's grace

Fifteen Years in Cagayan de Oro City. Jeanne and I first arrived in Manila **on January 31, 1986,** amidst tremendous political turmoil in the Philippines. Thirteen days later, **on February 13**, we flew to Cagayan de Oro City on the island of Mindanao. The political instability was still ongoing, but we decided to leave everything in God's hands and go on to the city we had been praying about for almost two years. It was a dark and rainy day when our early afternoon flight landed in Cagayan de Oro City. The old airport was on a mountain plateau overlooking the city of almost 400,000 people. But we did not know even one of them and so no one met us at the airport. The weather was a perfect setting for what we were feeling on that thirty-minute taxi ride going downtown, where we checked into a hotel.

After several long days of surveying the city and searching for a place to live, we located a large house in the area of the city where we wanted to begin. **On Sunday afternoon, March 9**, just three weeks after arriving in CDO, we hosted our first Bible study. It was just Jeanne and me, and the LORD. First, Jeanne taught a group of 70 children from the neighborhood around our house. Afterwards, we had a Bible study for adults and young people with 11 persons attending. By the time we left CDO fifteen years later that small gathering had grown into a church with an attendance of eight-hundred persons each week, with a Bible college of about forty students, an evening Bible institute of thirty students, a kindergarten, and twenty-five full-time ministry workers.

Fourteen Years in Dipolog City. **On August 12, 2001**, we began a new Bible study in Dipolog City, seven hours west of CDO, on the Zamboanga Peninsula. In Dipolog City we established our second church and another Bible college. I stepped down as missionary pastor of that church in **December of 2012**. The average weekly attendance in the church was about 230 people, and the Bible college had 35 students.

Seven Years in Molave. **On January 10, 2015**, the next church was begun in a growing agricultural area called Salug Valley. The town of Molave is the hub of the nine towns in that area. **In June of 2022,** I resigned that church leaving behind a congregation averaging 150 in attendance each week and a Bible institute with 25 students.

Two Years in Dipolog City, again. We returned to Dipolog City **in June of 2022,** where I became pastor once again of the second church we had established. The pastor had recently resigned to go out and start a new church. The church requested me to return and lead the ministry once again. I continued as the pastor until the following June, at which time the Lord provided a new pastor for the church.

The Last Two Years in Cagayan de Oro City, again. We are now back where we started forty years ago. Amazing. But this time we are on the other side of the city from where we established the first church. The population has more than doubled in size and is approaching 900,000 people. On **April 7, 2024**, we had our first service. The name of this new church is West CDO Baptist Church.

On Sunday afternoon, February 15, the members of West CDO Baptist Church had a special service to celebrate our forty years of ministry in the Philippines. That was a memorable day as the program focused on God's faithfulness and God's grace. There were representatives in attendance from the three other churches we had established along with alumni from both Bible colleges and both Bible institutes. Thank you to all those who have been partners with us on this journey. May God bless you.

Bruce, Jeanne, and Emily Rice