



# THE BLUSTS

EMPIRE BAPTIST TEMPLE • PASTOR ERICH P. McCANDLESS, PHD  
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Dear Pastor and Brethren,

January-February 2023 Prayer, Praise & Progress Report

**“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16).**

**Old Paths Historic Baptist congregation is dedicated to the service of the LORD.** God’s faithfulness and love is overflowing. Members are making their mark on the world, standing with faith and boldness for truth and righteousness in Jesus’ name, going and sharing the Gospel of Christ. Why else are we here? Countless millions waiting for the life-giving message of Christ who we bring. God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9).

**Jovel (28) of the Matigsalug tribe in San Fernando.** He was a drug dealer, and an assassin, and a member of the General Baptist Churches of the Philippines, Inc. He told our congregation that God wants him to be a pastor on Sunday January 8, 2022. Then privately, I told him that he needs God’s salvation first. He told me that he **got saved on Sunday December 25, 2022** when “he surrendered all” (repented and believed the Gospel of Christ and that God wants him to be a preacher and a pastor). He asked when does his training begin? I said it begins today.

**Much appreciation for our tribal members in San Fernando.** They became aware and witnessed over a period that there were two false brethren among them. They questioned these false brethren’s lack of Biblical commitment, their Biblical compromise/disobedience and their pathetic excuses. Praise God that they have the courage to stand for the truth.

**Many of our tribal members** (from four different tribes) **in San Fernando are destitute and illiterate.** They are thankful of our taking time for them, loving them, helping them and teaching them the importance of the Scriptures.

**Church visitors attending our Sunday meetings in Malaybalay.** Rex (54) and Olivia (53) from Malaybalay. He is a government employee. Jacel Rey (35) and wife Aiza (35) from Managok. He is a driver. Arnold (68) and wife Florita (72) and their son Arnold Jr. (36) from Managok. Mary Jean (38) and her cousin April Joy (28) from Managok. She is a Catholic farmer and her cousin is SDA. Elbert (43) and wife Anna (39). He is a seaman. Rizaldo (46) and his wife Josephine (48) from Valencia. He is a farmer. Phoebe (44) from Impasugong. She is a Catholic and former Overseas Foreign Worker (OFW). [She is classmate friends with the mayor of Impasugong. In due time, she will introduce us to the mayor and to conduct Bible studies with her contacts in different barangays in Impasugong]. These families have adult children and teenagers in attendance. Please pray for their salvation.

**A Pentecostal woman (28) who [joined a Baptist group] is now attending our church meetings.** She gave her testimony that “salvation is in the sinner’s prayer formula because this Baptist pastor’s wife said ‘pray it through until you get it.’” She believes recited prayer saved her soul. We told her that this is unbiblical because the Bible teaches repentance and belief in the Gospel of Christ to receive God’s salvation. [“Heaven does NOT rejoice over sinners who recite the sinner’s prayer formula. It reserves its rejoicing for sinners who REPENT!” (Luke 15:10)].

**Two other church visitors** told us that the world’s churches are promoting the “new generation, new technology, new ways and new worship” therefore “why are we old fashioned?” I told them that Old Paths Historic Baptist congregation follows the Scriptures ... “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8).

**The LORD is purging His saints at Old Paths Historic Baptist congregation of worldliness** that they might walk separated godly lives. Those resisting Him, He is purging them “these secular King Saul Christians” ... full of pride, carnality, compromise, materialism out of the membership. The LORD’S sovereign plan is good and we must trust Him and follow Him. Jesus is the omnipotent King of Kings and we praise Him for supplying according to His omniscience and goodness and NOT according to our lusts which would lead us into moral and spiritual ruin.

**We appreciate every blessed brother’s biblical work for God who has the bravery of standing fast forward without fear by the power of God’s Word and obedient love for Christ Jesus.** May God continue to bless each of you brethren, your families and ministries. All Glory to the LORD Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Redeemer and King.

Because Of His Faithfulness And Abundant Mercies ----- Let Us Go Forth And Sow The Seed!

*Jeffrey C. Blust*

## Philippines

“People that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many” (Dan.11:32-33)

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