

# UNION CHURCH MISSIONS

## Meeting Our Ministry Partners CAMACOP & Shekinah Bible College



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## GRADUATION CELEBRATION AT SHEKINAH BIBLE COLLEGE

BY BRENDA LEE

The 36th Commencement and Commissioning Exercises of Shekinah Bible College on April 22, 2026, began with everyone joining together to sing the hymn "Blessed Assurance." As the sun brought in the heat, tempered by a light breeze sweeping across the stadium, there was an expectant energy in the air. The ceremony was centered on the theme "**Ministry as a Sacred Trust**," echoing the heart of 1 Corinthians 4:1-2: "*This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*" This message resonated throughout the program, from the testimony by one of the graduates to the message shared by **Bishop Joseph Reyes**, the president of CAMACOP.

A significant moment was the commissioning of the 14 interns—fifth-year students embarking on a one-year assignment to serve in various CAMACOP churches across the Philippines. Watching them go up on stage one by one with their families to receive their assignments, which were a surprise until that very moment, reminds us that going into full-time ministry is not a solo journey but a shared mission for the families. Seeing these young workers equipped and ready to be sent into the fields was both touching and motivating. We need to continue to pray fervently for more workers as the crops are ready.

I am especially grateful for the role we get to play in this journey through the Union Church scholarship. Realizing that seven of the thirteen graduates, and seven of the fourteen interns heading out this year, are recipients of our support made the day even more special. It is such a humbling opportunity to be part of this ministry, helping to clear the path for these future pastors and church planters as they begin to carry this sacred trust into the world.

Finally, the graduates presented the hymn, "**Be True**," written by the C&MA founder Albert Simpson. Having come from a C&MA church in Hong Kong, hearing those familiar tune and lyrics was incredibly emotional for me. As they sang to the underclassmen following in their footsteps, and finally to the faculty, it was a sacred passing of the baton and a heartfelt commitment made in front of those who had mentored them over the past five years, signaling that they are finally ready to step out into the mission field.

I am truly honored to have witnessed such a special ceremony and to see these young pastors carry the light of the Gospel into the world.



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## A TIME OF CELEBRATION: VISITING BAWING ALLIANCE CHURCH & CHANGCO ALLIANCE CHURCH

April 19: The journey to General Santos was an emotional homecoming. For **Marga**, a dedicated long-term partner of CAMACOP for over 2 decades, this trip marked her first return to the region in seven years. At the center of this story are two CAMACOP churches: **Bawing Alliance Church** and its daughter congregation, **Changco Alliance Church**. Over the years, Union Church has maintained a deep bond with Bawing, providing consistent support that helped the church flourish and eventually planted Changco. What began as a partnership of resources has also evolved into genuine, lasting friendships.

We had a joint Sunday service, a vibrant multi-generational gathering with worship, dance, personal testimonies, and a powerful sermon. Following the service, over 170 adults and 40 children headed to London Beach for **Family Day**. It was an amazing display of community, with a feast of food prepared by the families. To honor the latest milestone, Marga ordered a huge graduation cake for the high school and college graduates, celebrating their success as they move into the next stage of life.

It was most touching to witness the tangible "fruits" of the Union Church scholarship program. Marga and **Dennis** reconnected with old friends—former scholars who are now thriving in different career paths, as pastor, teacher, IT specialist, bookkeeper, insurance professional, and a baker running her own business! More importantly, these individuals have now built their own families. Witnessing these "living testimonies" was a real blessing, knowing that when we plant the seeds, God will make them grow into a legacy of faith that spans generations.

## SHARING THE JOY OF THE CHILDREN AT PARADISE ALLIANCE CHURCH

April 20: Our visit to **Paradise Alliance Church** coincided with the final day of their Vacation Bible School (VBS), and the atmosphere was **dynamite** with the joy of the children!

The children were super eager to show us what they had learned throughout the week. With great enthusiasm and special choreographed moves, they recited **Acts 1:8**: "*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*" Seeing these young ones own the Word of God in their hearts with such excitement was a moving experience for all of us.

The visit also revealed another wonderful "**fruit**" of our ministry: **Pastor Mary Laurence**, the church planter of Paradise Church, is a former recipient of the **Union Church scholarship** at **Shekinah Bible College**. Seeing her lead with such passion is a powerful testimony to the long-term impact of investing in leaders.

It was truly encouraging to hear the testimonies from Pastor Mary and her husband, Pastor Francis Lacap. Both share a deep heart for children and envision building not only the church but also a preschool to serve this impoverished community. After the program, the celebration continued as the children enjoyed a special lunch and cupcakes. We left feeling inspired by their vision and the vibrant life being poured into the next generation. We look forward to our continued partnership as they carry this mission forward.



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