

House, Manila, April, 2020

Warm greetings from Manila with 36 degrees! This week someone called me and asked where I was. With my travel schedule, that's a question I regularly get. Now that we have not been able to leave our house for over 3 weeks than only at certain times with a card to get groceries, I did not know how to answer :-). "Um, home?"



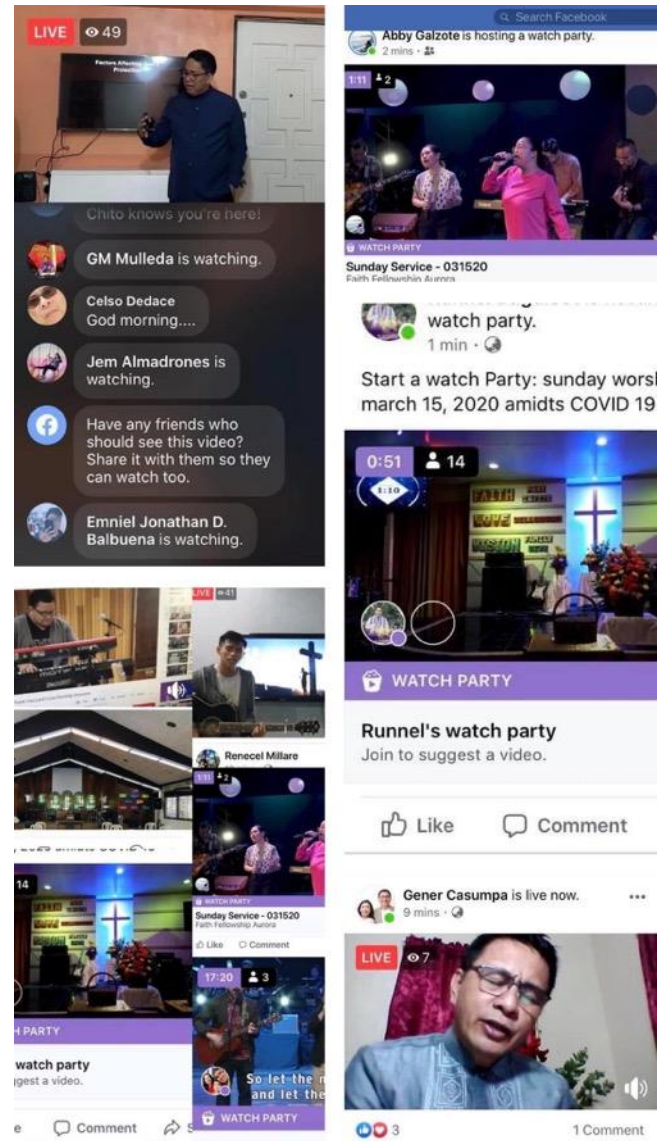
Despite all the "scientific" articles that the coronavirus does not survive 25 degrees, we are still bothered by it here at 36 degrees :-(. Bananas are no longer affordable since there was a message on facebook that they would cure you of the coronavirus.

### Sunday service

Because of the online churches now, I am also part of the WhatsApp group of the Johannes church in Wageningen. Yesterday (Sunday) there was a lot of texting back and forth, whether the organ could already be heard and whether a broadcast was missed, the website or we-transfer worked best ... Even the children's page was passed on via WhatsApp. So special to be there ...

Here most churches broadcast the worship service via facebook live. So special to find facebook full of church services on Sunday morning. People who listen in on the church they grew up in, people who live abroad and who can now listen to

a Philippine sermon, etc. Via the messages under facebook live, everyone can still talk to each other DURING the service: -0 .



Before the service, it was reported that anyone who wanted personal prayer could let it know through messenger and leave their number, then the team of elders would call back for telephone prayer within the day! Amazing, right?

With sermons now being broadcasted online, we thought this was a good time to provide feedback as pastors talk about each other's sermons to grow in this area. So our Langham sermons participants are now trying to listen to each other's sermons and respond if the sermon does justice to what is in the text, is relevant to the listeners and is clearly explained.



### Since the last newsletter ...

In December we had two more hurricanes over us. Many fishermen in Samar lost their boats, houses have to be repaired, and the coconut trees, which had just been bearing fruit since the Haiyan hurricane devastated them, lost their leaves and fruits. We were able to send another crisis team to see what was most needed and to hand out rice. I would have gone with a second team at the end of March for the last details to give boats etc. back to these people so they can make money again. But then we could no longer travel.

In Catarman in Northern Samar, there appeared to be a problem with the registration of the piece of land we would buy, to start with a new work there. We can't go there at the moment to look for a new piece of land. Fortunately, the damage from the storm seemed to be limited.

### Volcano Taal

A volcano with a lake in a volcano with a lake ... A place where I have brought many friends already suddenly exploded. Nearly a million people had to be evacuated. For weeks, churches were used as evacuation centers and kitchens to prepare meals for them. The volcano calmed down, people were slowly allowed to return home. And then came the corona virus ...

In any case, all training until June have been canceled. We were looking forward to a conference with theological distance learning organizers, missionary organizations, and Bible schools to further explore together how we can do and refer things together. Unfortunately, this conference is likely to be postponed for a year.

In the meantime, we have meetings via Skype, Zoom and Messenger. A challenge with our bad internet, but highlights.



### What still continued

Langham sermon training Old Testament, was just in between the volcanic eruption and the Corona virus.

With over 70 pastors and leaders, we spent a week together in the cold north (11 degrees at night). For many participants the first time to feel cold :-).





*Langham National team*

It was clear that as an organization we knew better what to do and the participants had also clearly practiced. It was great for Dwi (Indonesia) and me to organize this together, after we completed our PhD and ThM degrees in Old Testament together. We both thought this was more fun than Hebrew learning.



*Outcomes: confident to preach the OT now, determined to have more applicable illustration etc etc.*

We are currently trying to continue to give information to the participants via a Facebook group, and to criticize each other's sermons here. We are working on a book with examples of Biblical sermons from different genres. We also

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try to indicate the steps in this process. I am also in contact with a publisher if we can translate and publish two good books on sermons in Philippine. So there is still plenty to do!



### **Visit from Maarten, OMF Netherlands**

Maarten was just in time to travel internationally for his visit to us in the Philippines. It was an encouraging time for us Dutch in the Philippines. It was nice to show him some of the work we are allowed to do here. That is very different from what you can communicate via letters. We were allowed to experience a Philippine birthday party and a church anniversary. We also visited a Bible school and ABCCOP.



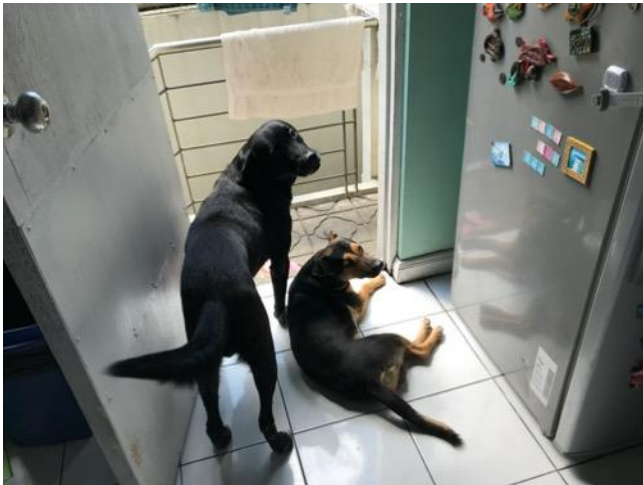
I was even able to introduce Maarten to the leader of the World Evangelical Alliance: Bp. Ef Tendero, a Philippine ABCCOP minister.



**Agenda:**

Langham sermon training in Samar and Leyte on the Old Testament is scheduled for late July. Because someone from Taiwan is coming to help us in teaching, we don't know yet if they can continue.

We also plan Langham Level 1 training in Isabela (North East), Davao (South), Manila (on Saturdays) and in two hill tribes (Ifugao and Mangyan). We can not yet make any statements about when.



*Buzzer and Woody also long the day they will be allowed to go out again....*

Things are going well here. Life is different, but we still have food, space in the house and are healthy. With all the slums here, that's a lot more than most!

Blessing!

Iljo

**COLOPHON**

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