



Tepic, Mexico

Pastor Matt & Anne-Marie Van Dyken

Pastor Matt and Anne-Marie Van Dyken and family are serving as church-planting missionaries in Tepic, Nayarit, in central Mexico. He graduated from Mid-America Reformed Seminary in 2011 and has been serving in Mexico for over ten years.

Greetings from Tepic, Mexico!

Without a doubt, this last year has been difficult for everyone. It has not been easy for us in Tepic either. Recently a member of our church, David, passed away from COVID. After getting sick, he soon passed from home to hospital to ventilator to be with our Lord. It was a shock for us all. We are going through office-bearer nominations now, and he was everyone’s first pick to be an elder. He was a good friend, only 49 years old, leaving behind his wife and 10-year-old son. As well, our only present elder Martin has been bed-ridden



this past year with a serious tumour. We do not always know what the Lord is doing, and some things are hard to understand.

In January, we had a huge wave of COVID. Things were very bad in the city, and many people died.

Thankfully, though at least half of our congregation have had it (ourselves included), the Lord has spared us from further deaths. These times are such a reminder that every day is a gift from the Lord. Life is short, eternity is long, and we have the best message to share with a dying world. May He give us all grace and boldness!

We are thankful to begin new member classes again with four students. One of the students has been attending church for as long as I can remember but has never committed his life to the Lord. (“I know the cost of being a Christian!”) But recently at a relative’s funeral, he spoke in private of knowing that he could not put off the Lord any longer. We are thankful for his keen interest in God’s Word, and for how the Lord is answering his wife’s many earnest prayers for his salvation.

Another answer to prayer, we trust, are the different candidates for elder and deacon in the church. We have been praying for godly leaders for ever so long. May the Lord confirm these men, and may they be a steady encouragement to the church in our walk with the Lord.

Finally, one exciting development in the last year was the invitation of a drug rehabilitation house for us to come and help. They gave us an open door to do whatever we wanted. (“Can’t you come more than one day a week?”) There are usually about 20 young men there—what an opportunity to speak! This is a long and often discouraging road, yet we know that the Lord will bring his own to himself. And that is where we rest.

May God bless and keep you.

In Christ, Pastor Matt and Anne-Marie Van Dyken



Drug Rehab Bible Study



Young People’s Christmas Party



David, Eva and son David

Big Springs, CA

Rev. Nollie & Evelyn Malabuyo

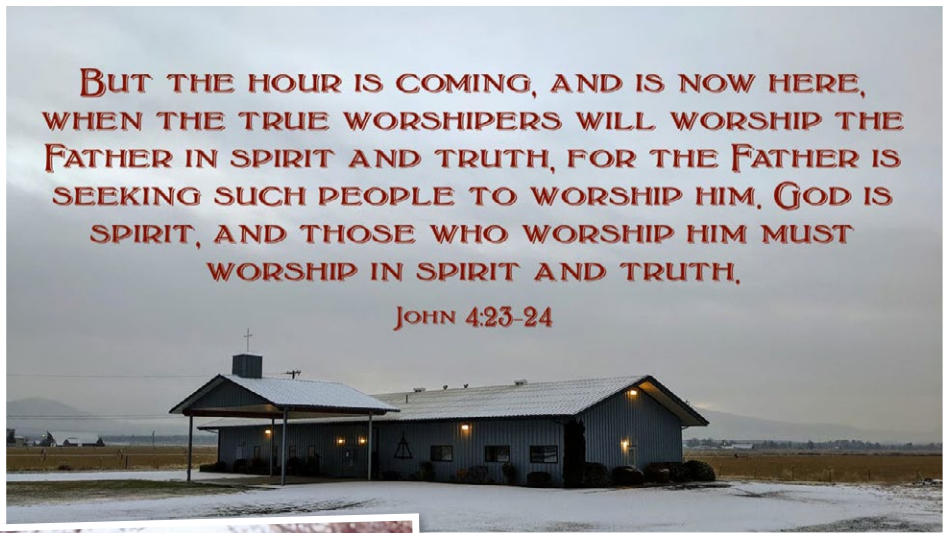
Rev. Nollie and Evelyn also served as URCNA missionaries in the Philippines for several years.

2020 was a difficult year for Big Springs Community Church here in Montague, CA.

Although our county has not been hit hard by COVID-19, the county was locked down from March-May and then again in November-December. Like all other churches under lockdown orders, we had no recourse but to do virtual worship. This was difficult for our congregation, since most of us are in our 70s-80s. Many of them have minimum knowledge how to go about watching the services online. A few don't even know how to read or send text messages.

It was also a big learning curve for me, even though most people consider me "tech savvy." I have a working knowledge of hardware and software, but I haven't done video recording, especially live video. I had to do a lot of research on available and affordable applications and devices. I bought a couple of webcams and a couple of microphones to try them out. I also tried out a few applications. It was a bit scattered at first, but after a few Sundays, it became almost routine. I started with using my laptop with a video and audio cable connected to it. Today, my setup is simple: a new smartphone with an external wireless microphone and without a laptop.

We have been worshiping indoors since our attendance is about 20-25 congregants in a building that has a maximum capacity of 180. Our attendance has decreased from 25-35 to about 20-25. Our offerings also decreased by about 15 percent. So it is sometimes discouraging.



But what is encouraging is the faithfulness of our regular attendees. A few have not attended since the pandemic, but most of them faithfully attend the worship services and Bible studies.

The communion of the saints is alive and well in our little rural church. Thus far, our congregation has had no case of COVID-19, and this is a great blessing since most of them are in their vulnerable elderly years.

So we pray that our online services will reach the lost in our communities. We also pray for a man or two to come and be willing to become an elder(s).

Serving Christ together,

Rev. Nollie Malabuyo
Big Springs, California
Cell: 925-435-8125

New Video Interviews!

Video interviews with **Rev. Van Dyken** and **Rev. Malabuyo** are available at urcnamissions.org and the **URCNA Missions Facebook Page**.

Check them out!