

THE 3RD CHRONICLES

The Official Publication of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines - Ellinwood Malate Church

October 2016

<http://www.ellinwoodph.com>

Anniversary Issue

SOON TO RISE: ELLINWOOD'S HOME FOR THE CHRISTIAN ARTS

By: Aliza P. Caronongan

Imagine a place where different choirs can freely rehearse at the same time inside soundproofed rooms. Think of a 420-seat theater that can showcase musicals, concerts, plays and other awe-inspiring performances. What a delight it would be to have a place where various individuals can be trained to sing, play a musical instrument or engage in the performing arts. These are but some of the features of a dream that we pray will be a reality soon: the **Ellinwood Music and Arts Center (EMAC)**.

The EMAC, set to rise from the rubble of the former Ellinwood Music Center, is a venue designed to recognize Ellinwood's passion of providing an encouraging atmosphere of nurturing music and the arts for everyone. Apart from being a Christ-inspired, spirit-led initiative to discover, train, and nurture Christian talents in music and arts, the EMAC also seeks to further develop and expand the Youth and Music ministries by equipping them with proper and ample facilities to support their respective programs, projects, skills, and talents. As a result, all groups will be more enabled and empowered to serve as active testimonies of Jesus' life through their passions in music, arts, and service.

The construction of EMAC also hopes to address the growing concern of the lack of formally trained music ministry staffers among most churches. While this talent is replete in Ellinwood Malate Church, a noticeable number of churches no longer have choirs, organists,

piano accompanists, and conductors to lead their worship services and other church occasions. True to its nature of being a venue for church music and learning, EMAC's doors will not only be limited to Ellinwooders, but will also extend to members of other churches, particularly those from the Lowland Cavite-South Manila Conference (LCSMC), doubling as a teaching and learning center to its church workers and members alike through short training courses. ((Once completed, the EMAC will not only house the Youth Ministry Center and the Student Center, but will also feature sound-proofed choir rooms, a

music library, a dance studio, rehearsal studios and facilities for group and individual studies for musical instruments, dance and choral music, as well as a 420-seat performance theater that will

serve as the perfect stage to showcase the God-given talents of the those who walk through its doors and study among its halls.

EMAC's ceremonial groundbreaking is scheduled this October as one of the activities celebrating Ellinwood Malate Church's 109th anniversary, while the Project EMAC fundraising campaign remains in full swing since it was rolled out to the Ellinwood congregation last February 2016. To date, the construction of EMAC has been



EDITOR'S NOTE

WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT

Can you believe it has been FOUR years since we came out with an issue of The 3rd Chronicles? Our last issue was in celebration of the 105th anniversary, with the theme, "Answering God's Call to Confess and to Commit." Most of you may not have remembered that issue, or may have read it and quickly forgotten about it. Some of you may not have even been aware that Ellinwood Malate Church has a newsletter called The 3rd Chronicles.

Well, we do have a newsletter.

And I have tried many times to come up with another issue since October 2012, but life, as always, got in the way. I became busier with my responsibilities at work. Fewer writers were submitting articles. By the time I was able to edit the material given to me, the timing was no longer right, as the news became stale or the appropriate season like Christmas, has already passed.

Being able to come up with another issue of the Chronicles became such a burden to me that I would dream about it every so often. And yet, for four years, no issue was produced. I was getting frustrated and a bit ashamed at my shortcomings.

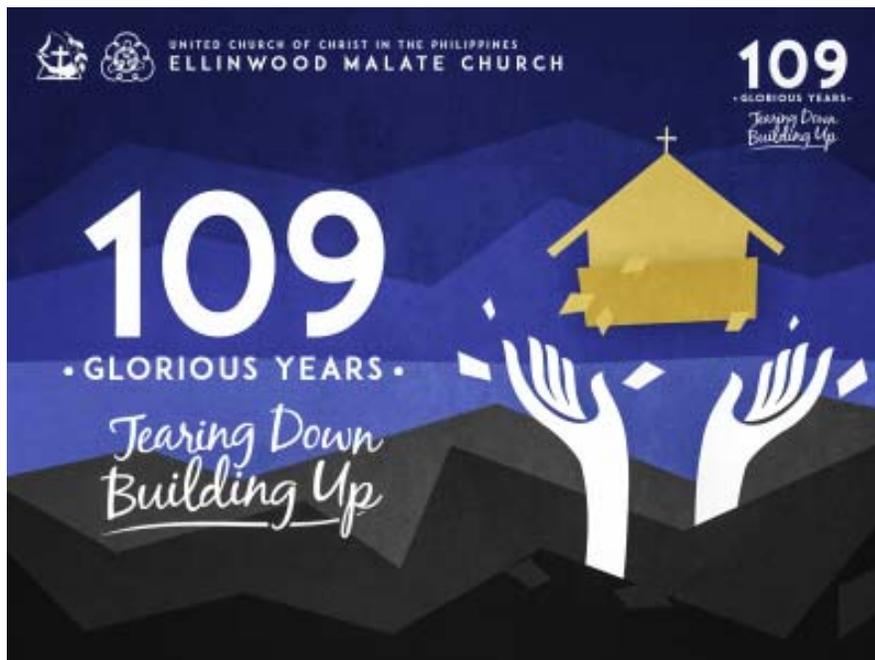
But as always, God has shown again that He is truly in control, even in my weaknesses.

While I was recuperating from a major surgery I had last July, God paved the way for me to start working again on The 3rd Chronicles. His timing is indeed perfect, for this issue is right in time for the celebration of Ellinwood's 109th anniversary. Just when I least expected it, God gave me the time and resources I needed to revive this publication.

In this issue, we have tidbits on the Kids and Youth Camps and sports activities spearheaded by our young people. Pastor Caloy has provided a short reflection on our anniversary theme while our cover story features our Project EMAC. We also have first-time contributors sharing their respective versions of Psalm 23.

We hope that in these stories, we will again marvel at how God works in each of us at just the right time, enabling us to play, to learn, to build, to reflect, to teach. May we never stop trusting His plan and His provision for us. Indeed, "God has made everything beautiful in its time" (*Ecclesiastes 3:11*), including this anniversary issue.

Happy 109th birthday, Ellinwood Malate Church! #



THE 3RD CHRONICLES

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Website: <http://www.ellinwoodph.com>

Printer: **MERRYLAND PUBLISHING**

ANNIVERSARY SPEAKER - LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES

The Dumaguete City Church has played a central part in my whole life for the past seventy-five years.

I spent my childhood years in the loving care of the UCCP Church in Guihulngan (now a city). From Grade V to Grade VI I studied in Hibbard Institute, a church-related school founded by the Malahay family whose children studied in Silliman Institute (now University). I graduated as class salutatorian and proceeded to finish my high school studies, also in Hibbard Institute, where I graduated as class valedictorian.

During my elementary and high school years, the study of the Bible was part of the curriculum. I spent my Sundays studying the Bible during Sunday School, as well as the Daily Vacation Bible School during summer vacations. All these activities were coordinated with the UCCP.

Going to church for worship services, Bible studies and singing in the choir are part of the wonderful childhood memories I treasure as a child of the UCCP. I also attended Revival events in the mountains with a lady church member who would bring food and conduct church services for hill people who could not afford to go down to the lowlands. These experiences taught me that everyone is equal in the sight of God—men, women, rich and poor alike. My playmates were children from poor families. Early in my childhood I learned how to get along with people from different income classes, different practices, and different ways of life.

I then went to Silliman University for my college studies. Once more, I had Bible studies along with subjects in accounting and finance. I had the good fortune to be mentored by great Bible teachers like Dr. Rustico Paralejas who made the Old Testament more exciting and fascinating than the best action films. Mrs. Mack, the wife of Dr. Henry Mack made the Book of Acts a living adventure story of early Christianity.

As a college student, I gravitated towards the Town Church, as the City Church was called then. My life revolved around Sunday School, choir practices, youth activities and conferences in many parts of the province, including Siquijor. We would also spend time on Sunday afternoons visiting the prisoners in the Provincial Jail and the sick patients in the hospital.



By the time I proceeded to the University of the Philippines and eventually studied in England and the United States, my UCCP values were strongly internalized in my daily life. No amount of suffering, crises, and personal difficulties could shake my faith.

Whatever I am now, I owe largely to the teachings of the UCCP in my early childhood, youth, and adulthood. I learned to love the Bible and draw inspiration from its stories, messages and admonitions.

UCCP-Ellinwood Malate Church WORSHIP SCHEDULE

7:00AM English Service
8:30AM Bicol Service (Old Sanctuary)
9:30AM English Service
3:00PM Tagalog Service
3:00PM Visayan Service (Old Sanctuary)
5:00PM English Service

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Rev. Gloria Z. Estrella
Rev. Cyrus N. Olea
Rev. Roberto C. Alguso
Pastor Miriam M. Perocho
Teacher Elena E. Morada

NEWS

CHRIST INSIDE OUT AT THE KIDS CAMP

By: Shairah O. Cometa

This year's Kids Camp happened last April 5 to 8 at the Serenity Christian Camp and Recreation Center at Brgy. Lambac, Pagsanjan, Laguna. With the theme "Christ Inside Out", the children were able to recognize different emotions through personal experiences and discover how Christ dealt with His emotions. For the campers to learn these, they had daily Bible Study and Group Dynamics sessions. They also learned how to express their joy in serving the Lord through alternative forms of worship such as singing, dancing and mime. And of course, they had fun through Bible Quiz, arts and crafts, treasure hunt, campfire and swimming.

Faye Gallego, Patricia Cruz and Pastor Glo Estrella spearheaded this four-day activity. They were supported by 23 counselors and staff who ministered to 48 campers.

It is our prayer that all the participants will continue to practice a Christ-like response in dealing with emotions. To God be the glory! #



YOUTH CAMP: "YOLO" FOR CHRIST

By: Bituin E. Inocencio

#YOLO — You Only Live Once... This is the theme of this year's Youth Camp held at the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIIRR) in Silang Cavite last April 25 to 29, 2016.

79 campers were led by 28 counselors and staff in different activities such as Bible Studies, Group Dynamics, interactive Biblico-Theological Reflections, worship services and fellowships. A Work Camp was also held where the campers and staff helped build a plant nursery, taught dance and acting workshops to technical course students staying in the area, and planted 64 trees.

At the end of the camp, Philip Vizcarra and Ricah Usison and Rica Dicdican were recognized as the Most Promising Campers of the Year, while Charmaine Salcedo and Daniel Degamon, Jr. were recognized as the Campers of the Year.

Through this camp, it is hoped that all participants will be reminded that we only live once, so we should live with Christ, for Christ and with the hope that Christ will come again. #

NEWS**CHAMPIONING SYNERGY AND SERVICE THROUGH SPORTS***By: Aliza P. Caronongan*

The hard courts of Philippine Christian University High School and Patio De Manila bore witness to the talents of Ellinwood Malate Church's budding athletes, as they answered their respective sporty callings to serve the One through EMC's summer Basketball tournament and the ongoing Volleyball League. ((

Our hard court heroes were in full force during the one-day Basketball League held last May 7, 2016 with 40 registered players that were grouped into 8 teams. Emerging as this year's Basketball champions were Team Wawa, composed of Joshua Baldomero, Don Masiado, Toks Dela Cruz, Joshua Dela Cruz, and Elijah Dela Cruz. ((

The ongoing Volleyball League, which kicked off last August 2016, has games at Patio De Manila every Saturdays and Sundays, depending on the availability of the courts. There are currently 60 registered players grouped into 6 teams.

Those interested to stay up to date with EMC's scheduled sports activities can do so through Jeric Baldomero, Youth Coordinating Council (YCC) Public Information Officer, or Quim Ramos, YCC Sports Commissioner. #

**PERSONALIZING THE 23RD PSALM**

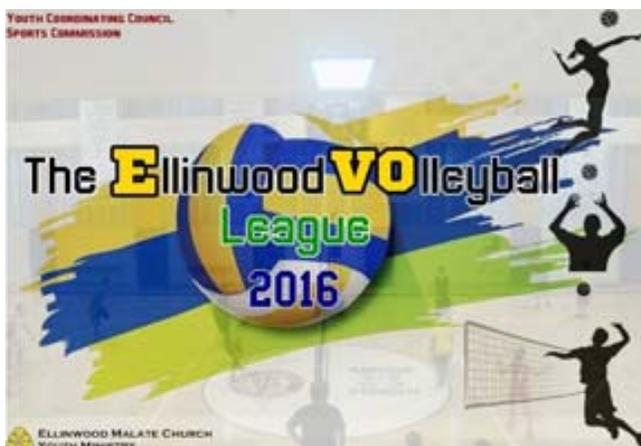
During the Lenten retreat this year, participants were asked to write their version of Psalm 23, as part of an exercise to better understand God's love. This exercise was repeated during one meeting of the Young Professionals Fellowship, and we saw how God works in each of us, how He encounters us in specific and personal ways.

We hope the following samples will encourage you and perhaps inspire you to write your own version of Psalm 23, in praise to our Shepherd who provides, protects and plans the best for us...

*The Lord is my Father,
Always satisfying my wants.
He provides peace and quiet spaces
That restore my soul
He paves my way towards His righteousness,
Even though I walk through
My darkest and lowest points in my life,
Fear is never my stressor since
His presence is heavenly comforting!
His empowerment makes me victorious
In spite of my weakness,
Despite who and what is around me,
His grace is overflowing makes me
Confident that His love and goodness
Will be mine forever
His hand holds my eternity.*
— Pastor Glo Estrella

The Lord is my Provider
I trust that He will supply all our needs
He gives me comfort and a good rest
I lean on Him with faith that
He keeps His promises.
Every morning is a good day
And He strengthens me with His love
Though trials come,
He is there to help me survive
Because He holds me,
I know He will not let me fall
And He will be with me forever.

— Malou Soriano



LITERARY

*The Lord is my Sales Manager
He takes care of my financial needs
He allows me to take a vacation every so often
He encourages me to sell well
He guides and suggests ways to win clients
Even when I feel sad because I lost a sale,
I am not afraid because I know He is there
To help and encourage me in winning a sale.
He encourages me when I deal with difficult
clients*

*He still treats me as a special person and
makes me proud when I sell well.
I know that His goodness and love will be with
me all my life
And everything I learned from Him will guide me
as long as I live.*

— Sylvia Navasero

*The Lord is my Professor
He is all that I need.
He teaches me new things in life,
All that I have to heed.
A student of medicine, of faith, or of this world
He is always there even when I am this old.
He lets me rest for two hours a night
so I could pass the exam
He comforts me even though I want to cry
and as I read this Psalm.
He prepares three meals a day,
sometimes more,
I thank Him for my parents,
I could not ask for more.
When I feel the pressure
when being with friends
He strikes confidence in me till the end.
I apologize when I am against Him
and when I fail to change
It makes me more distant from Him
and I know it's strange
But He is there to teach me
and forgive me anyway.
For that, this life I offer Him,
to sacrifice all till I reach the goal
Because nothing really matters if I
do not offer my heart and my soul.*

— Frank Lee

*The Lord is my Shepherd.
I have everything that i need.
He supplies my lungs with oxygen,
my stomach its food to digest,
my pancreas its insulin to secrete,
my heart its blood to pump,
my muscles its strength,
my brain its neurons,
my ears the perfect music to hear,
my eyes His majestic creation to see.*

*He is the ultimate physician
So that even when my body,
mind and soul deteriorate,
He will restore me.*

*And when even that is no longer
physically possible,
When my body will have to succumb to its
natural process of breakdown,
He will hold my hand and help
bear the pain with me.*

*There will be no fear, no pain that I will not be
able to face with Him.
In His infinite goodness
I will be embraced with love...
Always and forever.*

— Dr. Gail Magtoli

*The Lord is my Best Friend
I could not ask for more
He always encourages me whenever I feel
disappointed with myself
His words give me strength and hope
He accepts me for who and what I am
Even if I have done something to Him
that is not right
He still forgives me
Whenever I make a mistake
or forget my responsibilities
He is always there to remind me
And makes me understand things
I should not do
He tells me that I can always trust Him
And that He will always be there
whenever I need a comforter
I know that no matter what happens
He will always be there for me
And will love me unconditionally*

— Sel Lardizabal



SOON TO RISE (from page 1)

Through EMAC, our dreams of producing a bright and beaming future for God-anchored, Church-rooted music and arts education come to fore and fruition. EMAC will not only be a legacy and source of manifested nurturing and development, but its halls will serve as an enduring home, refuge, and inspiration to those who seek fulfillment and strength through music and arts. Most of all, it will proudly tower and stand as a beacon and bastion of God's enduring promises and blessings to the coming generations of our faith family and community, for now and forever. #



REFLECTION

TEARING DOWN, BUILDING UP

By: Rev. Carlos Dela Cruz

“Tearing Down, Building Up” — this is a very timely theme for Ellinwood Malate Church.

Just recently, the groundbreaking ceremony for the Ellinwood Music and Arts Center (EMAC) was held at the site where the Music Center once stood, in celebration of our church’s 109th anniversary. The old façade of the Music Center may be gone, but who can forget the many memories that took place within its walls? The Music Center was the sanctuary of the music ministry of Ellinwood Malate Church. It has been the home of generations of men and women who arrive Sunday after Sunday, come warm or rainy weather, to rehearse and be ready to bring God’s Word through anthems. It was a place where many stories, notes and meals were shared.

We recall that the Music Center was built through the generosity of one Ellinwooder who provided the seed money, and it took many months to be constructed.

And now, with the changing needs of our congregation and the communities around us, and with the opportunity to further minister to other churches, we have a new project to pursue, the construction of the EMAC.

As is usually the case, before anything new could be built, old structures had to be demolished, torn down and the land cleared. It took just one month to tear down the former Music Center and clear all debris before the first part of construction of the EMAC could be done. What took months to be constructed took only around a month to be demolished.

It truly takes a lot of time and effort to build something great. Isn’t it a bit sad though that all efforts to build something can be torn down so quickly and easily?

Yet, there is another building, one that has been under construction for nearly 2000 years. Work began A.D. 31, and today, in 2016, it is still incomplete. It is a spiritual building with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone, and the apostles and



prophets making up the foundation. That building is the Kingdom of God.

What part do we engage in this spiritual building? Are we like the dozen workers on the job site who previously built the Music Center? Or do we do things that tear down and destroy the spiritual building like the people who did the demolition job? Are we doing all we can to help build God’s Kingdom here on earth? Or are we sometimes, without realizing it, doing things that slowly tear down the church our Lord Jesus Christ built?

“Let all things be done for edification,” declared the Apostle Paul. Everything we do should be to build up the Kingdom of God and not to tear it down in any manner. As further stated in the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP): “*We believe God is at work, to make each person a new being in Christ, and the whole world, God’s kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail. The Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed.*”

Let us do our part then to keep building God’s Kingdom on earth. #