

ARISE, THERE'S REASON TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!

Last December 20, 2009, NCF Main, NCF Banaba, Green Valley Baptist Church (GVBC) and Pangarap Village Southern Baptist Church (PVSBC) definitely had the reason to gather together and celebrate God's love! It was a six-hour fellowship filled with praises for God and surprises for everyone. Pastor Albert Salipot presided over the morning part of the celebration. Sis. Dang Baldonado of NCF Main Special Events Ministry gave a teaser of what was



in store for everyone by checking the attendance sheets and giving boxes of delicious cookies to the early birds from each of the churches. The praise and worship team was led by GVBC and NCF Main. The Children's Ministry of NCF Banaba serenaded the congregation with a meaningful song number.

Pastor Mark Dantes of NCF Main, Pastor Andrew Fajardo of GVBC and Pastor Albert Salipot of NCF Banaba took turns in imparting the Word of God. They reiterated not just one but three reasons why we should celebrate Christmas amidst all the crises that struck our nation recently. The birth of Jesus Christ brings peace, joy and hope to all of us.

A special lunch followed at around 12 noon with the youth from the different churches helping out in distributing the food. After which, the congregational singing of Christmas carols ushered in the afternoon excitement. Sis. Gigi Dantes of NCF Main, Sis. Gracce Mones of NCF Banaba and Bro. James Tuazon of GVBC were the hosts. Some members of PVSBC joined in the afternoon program.

Games and raffles raised the energy of everyone. The games covered mostly the diverse age groups of those present. Some kids participated in the game Blow the Cotton Ball off Your Nose. It was an enjoyable sight to see the little ones doing their best in the game! The adults' skill in Paint, a computer application, was challenged. They had to put colors in a nativity image. The youth's teamwork and presence of mind were tested in the game led by Sis. Julie Nueva. NCF Main's Youth Clayhouse also rendered a short drama presentation about the true essence of giving especially at Christmas time.



In between games were the draws of consolation and major prizes. A total of 40 grocery bags were raffled off proportionally to members and attendees from the



different churches. The thrill soared up every time another family member would win a prize with higher value and it had to be discussed among them if they would avail of it or not. The ten-second rule in claiming prizes added much fun as the congregation would start counting down even if the winner was at the sanctuary. The major prizes included 5 prepaid cards with 300-peso cell phone load each, 3 rice cookers , 1 mp3 player, 3 desk fans, 1 two- burner gas stove, 1 cell phone , 1 Orocan plastic cabinet and 1 microwave oven.

As the excitement escalated towards drawing the major winners, kids were asked to queue up as Bro. Oscar Alabado of NCF Main was ready to generously give P50 to each of them. The blessing was shared up to some teens aged 16.

The kindness of Gutierrez couple, Baby and Jun, was extended to some workers especially members of the Pastoral staff. They received love gifts.

Capping the highly fun-filled fellowship was the prayer of unity by NCF Main Pastor, Rev. Mark Dantes. It was a day truly worth remembering. All glory and praises belong to our Lord Jesus Christ.