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Lord, Give Us This Mountain · A church on the mountain

Baguio Baptist Church

Kenneth Ercil Engle, the Boys Brigade and Battalion 9, and a missionary's call to partnership

Baguio City · 1967–1975 · and the Wednesday prayer meeting of November 4, 2026

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A Boys' Club from Chicago

Before Ken Engle ever went to the Philippines, he worked with boys. At Austin Gospel Hall in Chicago, later Woodside Bible Chapel, he helped run a Christian Service Brigade group with Chuck Christensen and Jack Barclay, Jr. Brigade was a program "to win and train boys for Christ." Boys earned ranks and awards by memorizing Scripture, learning skills and passing tests, and every time a boy came to his leader to pass a test, there was a chance to talk with him about the Lord.

Ken reached Manila in March 1951. He was still learning Tagalog when he began thinking about a club for boys. On Sunday, September 30, 1951, he wrote in his diary:

> Talked to Steve about Brigade. Later talked to Noel. I'm very encouraged, step by step as He leads.
>
> Ken, September 30, 1951

Years later he remembered how it began. An older Filipino man, not yet a believer, came to him asking for a club for boys. "Since Brigade was what I had experience with," Ken wrote, "that is what we organized." He and Ken Brooks started it together, and the club held its first meeting at San Juan Elementary School on February 2, 1952.

His prayer letter for April 1952 opens with a roll call: *Maximo Romos, Reynaldo Garantuza, Fred Ison, Alberto Ramos, Rodolfo de los Santos, Benedicto Gatdula.* "These are some of the fellows who have been attending our boys club." There were rough-and-tumble games, calisthenics, a little close-order drill, once a pie-eating contest, "and most important of all... a council ring." The boys memorized verses and read the Gospel of Mark every day. One of them, Rodolfo Ponce de Leon, came to pass a test and said John 1:10–12 perfectly.

That boy was Rudy. He became the first Brigadier in the Philippines to earn the Herald of Christ, Brigade's highest award, and in time he led the whole work across the country.

From One Club to Twenty-Two

The club grew slowly. Some Saturdays in early 1955 only a few boys came. "Brigade with faithful 3: Rudy, Reny & Doming," Ken wrote on January 8. But it kept going. It marked ten years in March 1962. A battalion became official in Binangonan in July 1966. By the mid-

1960s, Ken said, Brigade was "almost wholly in the hands of the nationals," with Rudy directing it nationwide.

Kevin Engle puts it simply: his father brought the Boys Brigade to the Philippines in 1951, and at one point there were twenty-two clubs around the country. Ken's own count agrees. In a 1973 prayer letter from Baguio he wrote that some 126 leaders had taken training, and there were 22 clubs. Battalion 9, in Baguio City, was one of them.

A New Mountain, a Baptist Pulpit

In May 1967 the Engles moved to 55 Malvar Street on Aurora Hill in Baguio City. They went for Mary Lou's health, but Ken saw the Lord "thrusting us forth into new areas."

They had been in Baguio about five months when Typhoon Welming struck on Saturday, November 4, 1967. The wind blew hard from noon on, and Ken and Mary Lou were awake most of the night. The next morning Ken went down the hill to preach:

> Spoke at Baguio Baptist on Jonah 1+2. Much wind damage in the city.
>
> Ken, Sunday, November 5, 1967

It is the earliest mention of Baguio Baptist Church found so far in his diaries: the storm chapters of Jonah 1–2, preached on a morning when the whole city could still hear the wind. (The full story is in Jonah for Sunday.)

"A Battalion May Start Soon"

A week earlier Ken had written to Joe Coughlin at Christian Service Brigade headquarters in Wheaton, Illinois. His letter of October 28, 1967 shows the plan already taking shape. A battalion might start

soon at Baguio Baptist, a church of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE). A seminar had been held with Baptist pastors. With a battalion already in Mindanao, Ken wrote, "we have boys meeting from almost the top to the bottom of the Philippines chain of islands."

All through 1968 he kept at it:

- **March 1968.** Ken told Joe he was encouraging the Baptist church toward a battalion, and that a promising young man just out of the ABWE school was coming to talk. A battalion could not be formed without a local church behind it, and there was no assembly of the Engles' own in Baguio yet, so Ken ran a Saturday club of his own. The boys called themselves the "Boys of Adventure."
- **April 1968.** Ken had lunch with Capt. Mervin Prudencio of a Baptist church, a businessman with a burden for boys.
- **July 1968.** The Brigade seminar drew about 120 people from some 20 churches, "by far the best exposure Brigade has ever had here."
- **September 1968.** Typhoon Nitang struck that week. Ken's diary says: "Called off Brigade leadership — it was really windy & rain." By then, training Brigade leaders was a regular part of his week.

Then, on October 11, 1968, Ken told Joe that he was training leaders at the ABWE Baptist church, and that **Battalion 9 now meets in Baguio, at that Baptist church.** Battalion 10 was getting under way in Pampanga.

Side by Side

The Engles' own work became the assembly that met in their living room at 55 Malvar, and later at Navy Base: today's Christian Brethren Assembly at Navy Base. But all through their Baguio years the two works moved alongside each other:

- In February 1969, ABWE pastors were among the many church leaders at the Bob Harrison rally in the City Auditorium in Burnham Park.
- In June 1969 Ken wrote to Wheaton that **Kevin was in the Baguio Battalion**.
- In August 1969 Ken was teaching Bible classes at Baguio Tech, soon the University of Baguio, with the Emmaus course *What the Bible Teaches* and its charts. "The ABWE Baptists," he noted, used the same materials in their classes there and at City High.
- In May 1974, back in Baguio after furlough in Kansas, Ken and Mary Lou took part in an award night for a Baptist group they had helped in its early days. Their own small Brigade group then had about eight boys.

A Certificate from Battalion 9

In March 1975 Rudy Ponce de Leon and his wife, Uping, came up to Baguio. On Saturday night the Engles' own boys had their award night. Eight received the Observer rank and five the Explorer. Ken's leaders were nearly trained, and the group was about to be recognized as **Battalion 24**. Rudy spoke, and recalled "the day I invited him to Brigade for the first time in 1952."

Then came Sunday. Ken wrote to his parents:

> Then the next day on Sunday he spoke in our Family Bible Hour and in the evening at Baguio Baptist to Battalion 9. Our boys sang, we showed slides and Rudy spoke. Rudy and I received Certificates of Appreciation that night. Mine reads "as an expression of sincere gratitude for spiritual help and encouragement to Bn. 9 Brigade." Signed by the pastor, the Brigade Committee chairman and the Captain.

> Ken to his parents, March 18, 1975

The day before he wrote that letter marked twenty-four years since he had arrived in the Philippines. That evening at Baguio Baptist brought the story full circle: the boy from the first club in 1952, now the national leader, standing beside the missionary who had invited him, in front of a battalion that missionary had helped begin.

The Engles left Baguio in mid-1975. Years later Ken passed on the news that "a man that was in our boys club in Baguio has now gone as a missionary to Kiangan, Ifugao in the mountains to the north of Baguio." And in May 2007, in a letter he and Kevin wrote to the assemblies of Benguet Province, Ken still counted Brigade among the things he was most thankful for: "We were also active with 'Christian Service Brigade' for boys."

Pastor Eleazar Sarmiento

Kevin remembers Pastor Eleazar Sarmiento as the founder of Baguio Baptist Church. He has since gone to be with the Lord. More about him, including his memorial service and photographs, will be added here.

The family's records name him twice. On June 26, 1955, in Manila, Ken wrote in his diary, "E. Sarmiento visited and came to supper." And among Ken's slides of Filipino friends from 1973, during the second Baguio term, is a photograph labeled "Eleazar Sarmiento." Ken's letter about the 1975 certificate says it was "signed by the pastor," but he did not write down the pastor's name.

Back on the Mountain, 2026

On this trip to the Philippines Kevin has visited three churches, each one part of his father's story: Binangonan, where Ken served for years;

the Christian Brethren Assembly at Navy Base in Baguio, where Kevin preached on November 1; and Baguio Baptist Church.

On Wednesday night, November 4, 2026, Kevin went to the prayer meeting at Baguio Baptist, the church where his father had preached on Jonah the morning after Typhoon Welming in 1967. Someone there remembered him. Brother Oscar had been in the Brigade battalion with Kevin when they were boys, Oscar about thirteen and Kevin about fifteen, and he knew Kevin as soon as he arrived.



Wednesday prayer meeting, Baguio Baptist Church, November 4, 2026. Left to right: Missionary Sonny Boy Guerrero, the pastor of Baguio Baptist Church, Kevin Engle and Brother Oscar, who was in the Brigade battalion with Kevin as a boy.

That evening the church's visiting missionary, Sonny Boy C. Guerrero, brought the message. He and his family are preparing to serve the Lord in Southeast Asia. Here is his message.

Together in the Work of God in Mission

Missionary Sonny Boy C. Guerrero · Wednesday prayer meeting, Baguio Baptist Church · November 4, 2026



The Guerrero family's prayer card. Sending church: Gethsemane Baptist Church, Tarlac City (Romans 15:20).

Good evening, brethren, and all of you who love missions.

The Lord has called us to Southeast Asia. Before we went to a foreign field, the Lord called us in 2010 to start a mission work in Batangas, south of Manila. The Lord blessed that work, and I pastored the church there for sixteen years.

Then the Lord called us again to start a mission work, this time in a foreign land. Last year I had the opportunity to visit the field to confirm that calling. This year, in April, the Lord allowed me to go back and follow up with the people we had met. By God's grace, He has given us friends there: families, young people and children.

So that's the update. Please include us in your prayers. We are planning to go back and visit again, and our hope is to move there with our family, to stay and to carry on the work of God. Pray that the

Lord will keep opening doors. Every time we visit churches, they partner with us and help prepare the way for us.

And now to the most important part of our service, the preaching of God's Word.

The text

May I ask everyone to stand, and let us open our Bibles to Philippians chapter one, verses three to five.

> I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.Philippians 1:3–5

Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

Father God in heaven, we come before Your throne of grace. Help us and build us up as we study the Word of God, and give power to Your Word. I pray that it will encourage, edify and strengthen the brothers and sisters in the church of God. I pray that we will humbly take our part in the work of bringing people to the Lord. We give You all the glory, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Please be seated.

Together in the work of God

The message I want to share with you tonight is this: we are together in the work of God in mission.

The mission of the church is not the responsibility of one person. It is not given only to the pastor, the evangelists or the missionaries. It is given to every believer, to everyone who has accepted the Lord as Savior, and especially to every member of a local church. God calls

every believer to take part in His work of reaching the lost, making disciples and advancing His kingdom.

In Matthew 28:18–20, before His ascension, Jesus called His disciples and gave them the Great Commission. Verse 19 says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."

The Apostle Paul saw that the church at Philippi was not just a group of supporters. They were partners in spreading the gospel. Partnership in mission means working together, praying together, giving together and serving together for the glory of God. That is the main purpose. Everything we do in the church, every word, every ministry, every mission, is for God's glory. The mission of God moves forward when His people unite their hearts, their abilities, their resources and their efforts for His purpose.

Why did God save us? Why did God send His Son Jesus Christ to earth to die on the cross? The Bible says in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Aren't you glad that even though we don't deserve it, He gave His Son? Those who receive Him as their Savior, the Bible says, will have everlasting life. Amen.

We can sleep in peace because we have the assurance of a home in heaven. But He didn't save us only for that. He saved us so that our lives can be used for someone who needs the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the main purpose of being saved: so that others may know there is a Savior, Someone who died for them. Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

So let us look at some truths tonight.

1. Partnership in mission begins with a common purpose

Why did God lead me here? Why did God lead us here? What is the main purpose?

Partnership in mission begins with a common purpose. In Matthew 28:19–20 the Great Commission is given to every believer. Mark 16:15 says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

With every believer we meet, and in every opportunity we're given, let us use that opportunity for someone who is lost, so that they may hear the Word of our Lord, and especially the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul says in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation."

Partnership begins when believers share the same purpose: to glorify God and make Christ known to the world. Churches may have different ministries and different methods, but they should share the same mission. We have many different ways of working, but we share one mission, the one we are called to. The Bible says we are called to make disciples, not merely to build church attendance. The gospel must reach people beyond the walls of the church. Every ministry should add to God's mission.

So here is the question for tonight: how can my family, my church or my ministry help more people come to know Jesus Christ? May God give us a wide and growing desire for people to come to know our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Partnership in mission requires unity

Partnership in mission also requires unity. Paul says in Philippians 1:27 that we should "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving

together for the faith of the gospel." Let us be united in one spirit and work hard together for others, so they can become part of the family of Jesus Christ.

Ecclesiastes 4:9 says, "Two are better than one." It is better, far better, when we are united in the purpose of missions, the purpose of saving souls. In Luke 16:23 the Bible tells us there is a hell. There is a real place called hell.

So if we do not share the gospel, if we do not pray, if we do not make ourselves available to the Lord every day, every hour, every minute, people are dying. And if those who are dying don't have Christ, if they never hear the gospel, they will die in their sins and be lost forever.

That is why missions matter. Winning souls matters. Bringing people to Christ matters. That is the heart of God. That is why He sent His Son Jesus Christ. That is the heartbeat of God, and it must be the heartbeat of the church.

Let us stand together. Let us be united in winning souls.

1 Corinthians 12:12 says the church is one body with many members. Some of us are pastors, some are missionaries, some are preachers and evangelists, some are teachers. If we have the desire, and if we use our abilities for God's glory, for His work and for His mission, each one of us helps build up the church of our Lord.

God designed the church as a body in which every member has a part. No one can do the whole mission alone. Unity doesn't mean everyone has the same abilities. It means everyone works together under the leadership of Christ. When we are united in the work, with the Lord leading us, the work can reach far and wide, especially through the churches here in your area.

Unity strengthens the witness of the church. That is where we come to value each other's gifts. Believers give and work together. Each one shares in the work of missions, in the planting and in the harvest, so that something beautiful may be done for God, as each one is faithful in His house.

3. Partnership in mission involves prayer

Third, partnership in mission involves prayer. I believe this is the most important thing a church can do: pray.

Pray for your pastor. Pray for the leaders in the church. Pray for the missionaries, especially those who are on the field now. We don't always know what they are going through out there. There are missionaries who have given their lives to serve in hard places far from home, and still they follow the call of God.

Brothers and sisters, these missionaries obeyed God's call, and it is a big encouragement to them when the church lets them know they are being prayed for. It means so much to us missionaries to know that we are in your prayers.

Notice what Paul says in verse 3: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." And in verse 4: "Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Philippians 1:3–4).

What was Paul doing? He was carrying the believers in his heart. He was praying for them. And that is how he was able to encourage them.

Don't only pray for missionaries, pastors, evangelists and those who go out and preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray also for opportunities to proclaim Christ.

Not everyone is called to go to another country or to serve on the mission field. But everyone can take part. Some go. Some send. Some give. Others pray. And every part helps advance the kingdom of God, especially the preaching of the gospel.

Prayer is important, but missionaries also need financial support. The two go together. That's why the church has a mission program, a faith promise program, for missionaries, for missions and for reaching out to communities.

Philippians chapter four is a good example of giving to missions. In verse 18 Paul says, "But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God" (Philippians 4:18).

The faith promise, giving to missions, is what, according to the Bible? A sweet smell. A sacrifice. Acceptable to God. God sees the sacrifice you make for His work, and He accepts it.

Then in verse 19 comes the promise for those who give faithfully and sacrificially to spread the gospel: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). Amen.

He will supply your needs. It wasn't Paul who made that promise. Notice: it is God. The God Paul served is the same God we serve today. Amen. When Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need," it is the same God who will supply all your needs.

So, brothers and sisters, pray regularly for missionaries, evangelists and pastors. Support missions as you are able. Encourage pastors, church planters and ministry volunteers. And pray for us.

4. Partnership in mission produces eternal fruit

Fourth, partnership in mission produces fruit that lasts forever. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

You know, brothers and sisters, there is joy in serving. God knows what you are doing. He will not forget your work and labor of love. Hebrews 6:10 says, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

These are the verses that encourage us as servants of God to keep going, whatever hardships come in the ministry. The service you give to God's servants, and to your fellow believers, God will not forget. The Bible says it is all written down.

The works of God are great. In John 15:5 Jesus says that the one who abides in Him "bringeth forth much fruit."

We will all give an account to Him. If Christ comes, are we ready to face our Savior? Will we have something to bring before Him? Can we say we have been faithful, that we have done what we should in serving the Lord? If not, the Bible says we still have time. Not much time. We have only a little time left. But it is still enough to bear fruit for the Lord. We don't have many hours left, but in the time we have, let us serve, so that when He comes we will hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

Amen. Let us be faithful, not tomorrow, not next year, but today. Let us give our best. Let us give our lives for the Master's use. Let us abide in Christ and bear much fruit.

1 Corinthians 3:6–9 says one plants, another waters, but God gives the increase. Someone planted, someone watered, but it is God who gives the harvest. In giving and receiving, the fruit is credited to the givers. As Paul wrote to the Philippians, "I desire fruit that may abound to your account" (Philippians 4:17).

So the goal of partnership in mission is not human recognition. It is the advancement of God's kingdom. We may have different responsibilities, but God can use our combined efforts to bring people to Christ. So we encourage you to carry the mission and fulfill the Great Commission: to give glory to God, to please God, and to honor God. That is our encouragement to you as believers.

Missionaries are not a burden. Missionaries are a blessing. They are sent by the Lord, and when they come they share with the church, so the church can take part. The work is very wide.

Acts 1:8 says, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

We cannot all go to the uttermost part of the earth. But think of it: there are families willing to give their lives to go to a foreign land with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot go there, but someone is willing to go. And the church must be willing to partner with these missionaries. Every soul they win, the church that prays for them shares in. As the Bible says, Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

Psalm 126:6 says, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Amen. There it is: the one who goes out weeping will come back rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The Bible says there is great joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:7). It is the same in the church: when someone who has gone astray comes back, the church rejoices. The Lord rejoices, and there is joy in the lives of believers, because Jesus is still in the work of saving souls. The work is not finished yet.

The Bible says, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Matthew 9:37).

Are we willing to partner, and to be used by God, for the great work of His kingdom?

Thank you very much, all of you, for your help, and thank you to our sponsors.

An Old Friend from Battalion 9

Before Kevin left Baguio, he spent a morning with another friend from his Brigade years, Pastor Rafael Buendia.



Kevin Engle (left) and Pastor Rafael Buendia, Baguio City, November 2026. The two were boys together in Battalion 9.

In 1973, when the Engles came back to Baguio from the States, the family lived at 30 C.M. Recto Street, near Navy Base, off Leonard Wood Road. Rafael and Kevin were about the same age, and they were in Battalion 9 together. Rafael was also part of the assembly at Navy Base, today's Christian Brethren Assembly at Navy Base. The Brigade work was tied to both churches: Baguio Baptist and Navy Base.

Rafael came from Itogon, a mountain town just east of Baguio, near the mines. By land area Itogon is the largest town in Benguet, and it has been a gold-mining town for well over a century. The Ibaloy and Kankanaey people mined gold there long before outsiders came, and in 1903 Benguet Consolidated began the first large-scale mining in the Philippines there.

Today Rafael is a pastor, and he manages a Christian organization.

More than fifty years after Battalion 9, the two old friends prayed together and had breakfast together, and Rafael spent the rest of the morning helping Kevin get around town. "It was a refreshing visit after all these years," Kevin says.



Kevin and Rafael on a bright Baguio morning, November 2026.

Kevin gave Rafael one of the Messenger 60 audio Bibles, and Rafael is very interested in using them in his work with young people. It fits the old Brigade days well. Back then, boys earned their ranks by memorizing Scripture. Today, anyone who memorizes the sixty verses of the Messenger 60 program receives one of these solar-powered audio Bibles.

Please pray for Pastor Rafael and the young people he serves.

Please Pray

Please pray for Missionary Sonny Boy Guerrero and his family as they prepare to serve the Lord in Southeast Asia, for the pastor and people of Baguio Baptist Church, and for every boy who ever learned a verse in a Brigade battalion on that mountain. If you would like to pray for the Guerreros or partner with them, their prayer card above gives their sending church and how to reach them.

From Ken Engle's 1951 and 1955 diaries (Doug Engle's typed transcriptions); his letters and prayer letters of 1952–1997, including his March 18, 1975 letter to his parents; his 1984 and 1987 letters to Woodside Bible Chapel; his May 2007 letter to the assemblies of Benguet Province; Gordon Engle's story "Jonah for Sunday"; Kevin's memories (November 2026); and the message given by Missionary Sonny Boy C. Guerrero at Baguio Baptist Church on November 4, 2026, put into English from English and Tagalog, with his public prayer card.

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