

**Filipino Church Celebrates 16 Years of Ministry**

A vibrant church community has been ministering to Filipino-Americans living in the Midlands since 2007. On Sunday, August 20, the Filipino-American Friendship Ministry of Christ Church in Columbia celebrated its anniversary with a service led by special guest speaker Dr. Rick Christman, interim president at Columbia International University in Columbia, and a time of fellowship with church members, pastors, missionaries, and friends from the Filipino community.

Pastor Jake Bolotano said celebrating this anniversary with his congregation is “a great privilege that God has given me. I am a living witness of God’s faithfulness to our church and to the community. For the last 16 years, I have seen God’s powerful hands moving, touching, healing, and transforming lives.”

According to Bolotano, the church began as a small group meeting for Bible study in a Northeast Columbia apartment complex. In the following months, the group grew in size and a number of Filipino families accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The next year, the core group officially founded the Filipino-American Friendship Ministry of Christ and then incorporated as a church and held its first worship service on February 17, 2013, at 1812 Washington Street in Columbia.

“I believe that it is the Lord who draws people to Him, as the Scripture says. Today, the Lord keeps adding people to the church and we are noticing a significant increase in our weekly attendance,” Bolotano reports.

A Filipino teacher recently visited the church and told Bolotano that she enjoyed the warm welcome she received. She shared that her children love the church’s children’s ministry, and have started to build relationships with other children from the church. Although the teacher comes from a Catholic background, she wants to be a part of the church and said she’d like to know more about Jesus.

The culture of the Filipino-American community was also celebrated on the church’s anniversary Sunday during a special lunch held after worship. Members fellowshipped over dishes including lumpia, pansit, and adobo, “the best Filipino recipe,” Bolotano says.

For more online information about the Filipino-American Friendship Ministry of Christ Church, visit [www.fafmc.net](http://www.fafmc.net).