

ARON TOLENTINO

Pastor Mandaluyong, Philippines

Background:

How do you serve in GCI? I serve as pastor of a GCI congregation in the Philippines. I also direct one of our SEP camps here. Youth ministry has a special place in my heart. I enjoy helping young people discover who they are in Christ and grow in their participation in Him. / **How did you connect with GCI?** I was born in WCG/GCI. My family came into the church in 1974, and so this is the only church I came to know and love. / **What are some of your reasons for choosing to participate with GCI in ministry?** I give credit to mentors who invested in me, brought me along, gave me opportunities, and stirred me up to serve in ministry. Shout out to Pastor Rex dela Pena, Pastor Audie Santibanez, and Pastor Eugene Guzon! / **What makes you choose to give your time and energy to this ministry?** I enjoy seeing people discover who they are in Christ and learn to participate in ministry as they find their niche in the Body. / **How has your ministry developed?** I started as a drummer in the music team during the time when the church was transitioning, which includes in the area of music. Worship bands and contemporary music were not the norm, and drums were the least favorite instrument due to their noise. At one point, Pastor Rex was our music team leader and mentor. Soon he also introduced me to youth ministry, summer camps, and later even to the concept of pastoral ministry. Meanwhile, Pastor Audie, who became our local church pastor, thought it would be a good idea to invest in training me and gave me a shot at pastoral ministry. / **What is a must-see attraction where you live?** As they say, Filipinos are very hospitable. This hospitality is one of the most memorable things that a visitor can experience in our country – the warmth, welcome, and generosity. Don't just take my word for it. Come and visit to see it for yourself! / **What makes your region different than other places in the world?** When asked about how far one place within the country is to another, we usually answer not in terms of units of distance but in terms of units of time. One kilometer can easily equate to one hour during rush hours.



Get to Know Aron



1.

For what are you most grateful? Family. I am grateful for my wife (a pastor's kid), who equally loves GCI, and for our daughter, who loves to tag along and be part of what we do, such as conferences, summer camps, and band practices.

2.

What energizes you? Working on projects with a team and being able to challenge everyone to work towards a common goal.

3.

What is one of your greatest accomplishments? Completing my master's degree from seminary with honors. I was pretty laid-back in my high school and college years. The last time I had an academic award was when I was in elementary school.

4.

Everyone who knows you knows you love: Starbucks. It's my default office.

5.

Unique experience: In my early twenties, I was part of an amateur band. We joined a rock and roll competition and made it to the finals. As a result, our song was recorded as part of an album that was released commercially. That album never really took off, but for an amateur musician it was still cool to be able to record professionally. I still listen to the song on my iPod once in a while.



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