



Nias Hope Foundation

Mission Trip 2008

15th May - 27th May



Foreword

Rev. Goh Seng Fong initiated this team by gathering William and Lucy (from Moriah B.P Church) and Gilbert, Zhihong, Darren, Jessica, Esther (from Hope Baptist Church) for a mission in Nias. Our preparation started one month prior to departure. Money was a big issue, but God had provided for our needs by pouring in much needed love gifts. Many incidents happened throughout the trip, which made it both eventful and exciting. Many life lessons were learnt and unforgettable memories engraved in our hearts. Overall, we are very thankful for the opportunity to serve God's people and to do God's work. Our Nias team is very grateful to everyone who had helped in some way or another to make this mission trip possible.

Our Team

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Check out our Nias Blog: <http://niasmissions.blogspot.com/>

Schedule

<p>15th , Thursday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departure from Singapore at 0645 (flight: VF581) • Transfer flight from Medan to Nias at 1pm 	<p>16th , Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning packing logistics; write note • After Lunch, Town Shopping 	<p>17th , Saturday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration for camp 4pm • Children's camp Day 1 • Bible Study Fellowship 330 – 6pm 	<p>18th , Sunday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Camp Day 2 • Message, Sunday service, 4pm
<p>19th , Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Camp Day 3 • Mini Finale (invitation to parents) 330pm – 5pm 	<p>20th , Tuesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 – 12pm IKIP College Communications programme • Prayer meeting(led by William) 	<p>21st , Wednesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Programme • 4pm English for Juniors 	<p>22nd , Thursday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Programme • 4pm English for Juniors
<p>23rd , Friday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Programme • Teachers' Training Session • 9 – 12 IKIP College Communications Programme • 4pm English for Juniors • Dinner with Camp volunteers 	<p>24th , Saturday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Programme • 9 – 12pm IKIP College Communications Programme • Bible Study Fellowship 330pm – 6pm 	<p>25th , Sunday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday School 2pm (work with them for Song item) • Evangelistic Finale Night 4pm – 6pm 	<p>26th , Monday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9am flight out of Nias • Afternoon session training for 30 teachers at Haposan's
<p>27th , Tuesday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0745: Flight out of Medan to Singapore (flight: VF582) 			

Nias Mission Trip 2008

Dates: 15th May – 27th May 2008

Purpose: *To be exposed to overseas missions, To experience God's works & To reach out to the children and youths of Nias.*

Members involved (7): Zhihong, Darren, Jessica, Esther, William, Lucy, Gilbert.

Works we did in Nias:

- 1. 3 day 2 night Evangelistic Children's Camp for 8 – 12 year olds (17th – 19th May)**
 - Taught 3 Parables of Jesus through Crafts, Songs and Skits and Activities!
 - Each parable skit presented with a completely new twist.
 - A mini-finale at the end of camp with parents invited to mark this journey with us.
- 2. Kindergarten Programme (21st – 25th May)**
 - Learn English, Mathematics and much more!
 - Lessons conducted daily at our in-house kindergarten at church compound.
 - We provided learning materials for the few lessons, and teachers can continue using the materials brought for future lessons.
- 3. Teacher's training session (23rd May)**
 - Equipped kindergarten teachers with skills and familiarised them with materials which we prepared for them.
- 4. College Course Programme (20th – 24th May)**
 - Taught about 70 students at IKIP College
 - Communication skills and concept are mapped out and explained in detailed through games and lectures.
 - 3 Sessions of 9 hours in total.
- 5. Creative Thinking Session for Teachers (26th May)**
 - Session conducted for teachers in Yayasan Bertania, Medan.
 - 2.5 hours of intense brain twisting and thinking out of the box through activities and lecture.
 - Certificate of Participation given to teachers who have attended the course.

Thursday, May 15, 2008

Day One : Travel Back in Time

Terminal One. ValueAir. Destination: Medan then NIAS. Seven people about to embark on a journey that we would never forget. We arrived at the airport at around 5plus in the morning. A little on the groggy side due to sleep deprivation. Uncle Daniel who had fetched the young adults there was there to see us off, together with Pearlyn, Eileen and Pastor Alvin.



We checked in our luggage which consisted of quite a few boxes of materials and goodies that we had prepared for the kids over there. Darren had been our logistics man and the kids would have a fun pack of stationery in a really nice, sturdy, plastic folder. There were costumes, props, food, 'rewards' and even canned food to supplement the food supply at the house that we were staying in.

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After that we went off for breakfast which consisted of peanut butter toast and half-boiled eggs. My last meal before departure. I wonder what each one of us were thinking. Maybe we weren't really trying to think of what would occur in the next two weeks. We just took things as they came along. Our foresight of what to expect was limited especially since we had never been there before. But I think that there might have been a tinge of apprehension to go to an ulu place where we hear stories of electricity that comes and goes, possibility of earthquakes, 2 toilets for an estimated number of 70kids... and the list goes on. Even though it is not my first time to Nias, the information (more like, the lack of information) that we had gathered from the email correspondence and from hearsay, would stir a certain amount of 'fear-of-the-unexpected'. So a word of prayer after breakfast was appropriate, even though we were kind of running late. After passing through the glass doors and showing our passports, we rushed to the departure hall. Ours (C16) was right at the very end and we practically had to run there. We were the last ones to board the plane...and this was a trend we kept up throughout the entire trip haha.





Our plane took off at 6.45am and when we touched down in Medan, the time that was announced by the flight attendant was 7am. Due to the one hour time difference, we had gone back in time... and as I type this, I think that's how we all felt in Nias. We had gone back in time. Where water doesn't flow from taps but we collect rain water from a spring-well like thing. Where toilets aren't flushable and water replaces toilet paper. Where showers do not exist and we have to scoop out cold water from tubs in order to bathe. Where washing machines are a far off idea and laptops are a luxury. Where keeping your feet clean is impossible and where mosquitos abound.

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In Medan, we hung around for quite a while before Rev. Haposan arrived in his small maroon van. He had had a flat tyre which explained why he was a little late. He seemed to be a friendly and easygoing person, who could really navigate those streets of Medan. William and Lucy volunteered to wait at the airport while Rev. Haposan took us around before the connecting flight, since they had already been here before and gone with him as well. Traffic is wayyyy different in Medan. The cars communicate often, beeping all the time as they swerve in and out among traffic. It's as if the vehicles are alive and have the ability to bump into different lanes. Sometimes I wondered whether they were fighting for the same lane or they were just in a sharing mood coz 3 cars could squeeze into a two lane road. I typed into my phone, "It's like a war zone of hooting cars. Medan. 1pm." I didn't think any Singaporean driver would survive here.





We visited Rev. Haposan’s school called Yayasan Betania. The children were having exams so we just hung around and greeted some of the school staff. Right next to the school was a church still in construction. I think he mentioned that it had taken him 7 years and he was still continuing to build it. It had a stone staircase that led to the sanctuary and right at the front was a hole cut out of the wall in the shape of a cross. So that the light could enter in. At the back was bell tower that we got a chance to ring by pulling the string hard. It would be used to call people to come and worship on Sundays. I wonder how the church bell tradition started out. Well Uncle Gilbert informed us that the proper name of a bell tower was called a ‘BELFRY’. You learn something new everyday.



After a feast of delicious mangoes at Rev. Haposan’s house we went over to an eatery that seemed to have Chinese owners. This trip to Nias enlightened me on the fact that there are quite a number of Chinese people in Medan and even in Nias. While we ate our lunch of fried rice I then remembered how we were stopped at the airport. The security at Medan’s airport found our boxes highly suspicious and demanded that we open them up. Uncle Gilbert tried to explain to them that we were going to my father’s place and these were gifts for children. Well they opened every single box we had, digging through our canned foods, plastic folders, crayons etc. One of the boxes contained ‘The Prodigal Son’ tracts and I almost froze when the security guy took it out and flipped through it. I was thinking “Oh no! This is a muslim country! Oh No! What if we get arrested for trying to convert people”. I started praying silently in my heart. Well the man flipped through it in about 2 seconds and just put it back in. Then he took out the Alphabet book that we

had prepared and suddenly everyone was all interested in this alphabet book. They were reciting aloud, 'A! B!'. We just watched in silence. Anyway it was quite interesting how they spent so much time looking at the alphabet book instead of the tract and I was grateful to God that nothing bad had occurred. You never know...you know. After that episode we concluded that they were just curious to know what was in our luggage. You could see that they were just enjoying themselves looking at what was inside the boxes. Strange but true. Kaypoh. Well I guess I had nothing to worry about coz we found out later on that Medan had quite a high percentage of Christians...so it was ok.



The plane from Medan to Nias was delayed and our group was pretty tired out we fell asleep on the airport chairs. Tough flight regulations resulted in us carrying water bottles that were empty and we were a group of very thirsty people. Good thing Uncle William managed to find and buy some bottles of mineral water (they call it AQUA – name of the brand) to quench our thirst. Our flight was delayed to 1.20 and after sleeping in not-so-comfortable positions in the departure hall,

we were finally able to board the teeny weeny plane – Merpati airlines. You could see the propellers on the wings.



In one hour we reached Gunungsitoli which is like a district in Nias. We were expecting a relative of mine called REFO to pick us up and I had no idea what he looked like. As we walked into the ‘airport’ (it looked more like a long shed) this man showed me a paper that had my name and telephone number, but he wasn’t my relative. He was an employee who was going to drive us back. I hardly knew what to do.. especially due to the fact that I couldn’t converse with him. My knowledge of the Indonesian language was dismal and let’s not even talk about the Nias dialect. As we waited for our luggage to come, we kind of stood in awkward silence and this man (I forgot his name) called Refo on his mobile phone, And then passed the phone to me. It was to confirm that I had found the right person..but I couldn’t even understand what he was saying in Indonesian. Furthermore, I had never even met this person before. A little frustrated I handed over the phone to Uncle Gilbert who knew more Indonesian than I did. I’ve never watched the movie ‘Lost In Translation’, but right at that very moment...i really felt lost. When our luggage came, this man and some other surfer dude (I think his name was Selamat) drove us to Teluk Dalam, where the Yayasan would be. Two vehicles and a 3-4 hour ride there.

Once we stopped for a toilet break at this shophouse kind of place. In the dim kitchen area, a cat was eating left over food off the ground and on the left of the kitchen was a wooden door that wouldn't close shut. Someone had to hold this door to the toilet. When it was my turn to go in, I was a bit confused as to where I was supposed to go. There was no toilet bowl and there was no latrine that you could stand and squat on. Instead there was this little hole in the floor that led to the beach. I carefully searched the whole place for the 'toilet' and concluded that that little hole... that was it. The thought of people swimming in the beach was a little bit hard to swallow. However we were very grateful to these people who hospitably let us use their toilet.



It was late afternoon when we finally reached the Yayasan (Foundation) and I saw my father standing out in the front while my mom was coming out of the house. Once we got out I rushed over to them and gave them each a hug. I was wondering why the hug wasn't really responsive and then I found out the horrid news that my parents had been in a motorcycle accident just about a week ago. My dad must have cringed when I gave him a hug and upon careful observation I saw the red scabs on his hand and the huge swollen bruise on his chin. It was a bittersweet moment.



The evening was spent walking around the place going to different houses and in my case I had to greet relatives. It was a method of publicity because we were clearly a bunch of foreigners and my dad reminded the neighbours to send their children in for registration in on the 17th of May. Sometimes there were piles of rocks along the road clearly meant for construction. Earlier on as we were driving on the way to Yayasan, we saw some ladies banging on the rocks to make them smaller. Rebuilding is a common sight here in Nias, I guess because of the earthquakes from the tsunami. There was a big hill a little further down the road that had clearly been dug out. My father informed me that a person had died in a sort of landslide. They dig out rocks for construction from the hill and this particular guy ended up having the earth above fall on top of him. Our lives are just like vapour which can just be gone in an instant.

Posted by Jessica

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Day 2 – Friday 16th May 2008

Our day started with our routine Morning Devotions, whereby we would rotate to give a short message and thoughts on it. William had the honour to start our first morning devotion of the trip. Breakfast seemed so much like lunch. We had rice and dishes =S WHERE's my bread and Toast, and kaya, and

Culture Check: I'm in Nias, it's their culture to eat rice for breakfast.

Before we dived into preparing for the children's camp, we had to clear our chores which included washing the dishes. It's Jessica and Darren's turn!



They seem to enjoy it. Well, they can have the privilege to do it for the entire trip =)



These are the logistical items we have prepared!!



Darren looks really serious with his work

Don't zh look very old? - Call him Old Man



Gilbert & Esther colouring our camp poster!



Displaying our poster

By lunch, we had arranged most of our logistics and drew two posters to announce the commencement of our children's camp which would start at 4pm the next day.

TOMORROW = CHILDREN'S CAMP..

Oh no..... haha, all of us have high hopes for the camp. After interacting with a few children around the neighbourhood, i greatly anticipate playing games with them, and at the same time teaching them about the joys of being in Christ.

More Photos of Nias



~ Nias Hope Foundation

The lazy afternoon effect kicked in when the sun was beating on the house. The power cut didn't help improve the situation either, because fans are useless without it. Thus most of us took shelter in the concrete first level of the house. Esther practiced her violin, while we took turns to cut out nametags and to play the out-of-tune, impossible-to-tune guitar.



Dinner was served and shortly after it, we had a session of prayer together. We had prayed hard for blessing of safety to be upon all our team members and as well as the camp participants. On top of that, we prayed for God to open hearts of the people of Nias to His words.

Nias has a population size of 500,000, 90% of which are Christians. We were told that most of them were “Cultural Christians”. They believe that they are Christians because their parents were Christians. They did not actively seek after the Lord for salvation, and are passive in their involvement to church.

Having this thought in mind, our purpose shifted more to spreading the Gospel message, telling them that they have to repent and believe in Jesus for them to be saved!

Posted by Zhihong

Friday, May 16, 2008

Day Two : Pensive in Preparation

Devotions were at 7am which Uncle William took, followed by breakfast. Each person was supposed to lead the devotions on each morning and today we focused on the passage in Psalm 127 that said, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain”. It was a timely reminder for all of us before the children’s camp that we had to trust and rely on God to empower us for the activities ahead of us. The day was spent packing the ‘goodie bags’ for the kids, preparing some of the materials for the games and photocopying the material for kindergarten as well as the college program. At around lunch time we walked to a nearby shop that had photocopying services. A house that we had visited the day before and the people were somehow related to me. I came to find out that I had a lot of relations.

When we reached the photocopying shop, we were told that electricity had just been cut off a little while before we arrived. To the people in Nias, this is a normal occurrence. Every single day, without fail, there has to be a certain period of ‘electric-less life’. It’s just a matter of timing – in the day or in the night. When this happens during the day, the fans don’t work, the heat is unbearable, and the people just laze around because they don’t feel like doing anything. Afternoons like these have a sort of sleepy effect on the village as the day seems to drag on. With no computers to use, no tv to watch, no internet to surf, no entertainment whatsoever...moments like these can be used for deep reflection. I used the time to mentally prepare myself as I told myself that even though it won’t be easy, I’ll do my best. I thought of the children’s camp that we had in Singapore when I was a little younger and how it was difficult to endure the late nights and have to control the kids on the following day. Pearlyn was my inspiration. I called her superwoman then, coz she somehow just managed to go on teaching with a smile despite the wearisome situation. Plus after weeks of training and preparing under Pastor Alvin, I really wanted to give it my all such that all the effort put in wouldn’t go to waste. Most of all, I wanted to make God proud.



Uncle Gilbert and Darren had to go to the town with my father to photocopy the materials for us since there seems to be a more constant supply of electricity over there. They came back late because they spent so much time sorting out the kindergarten material that was in one big lump. I needed 20 sets of each, and they spent all their time making sure the stuff was photocopied correctly. Tired out, they came back late while we were just finishing up dinner. We thought that they were eating dinner outside since it was pretty late. But instead they had been painstakingly sorting through hundreds of papers and that was quite touching. Well.. it was mostly my stuff that needed to be organised. I was grateful.

Posted by Jessica

Saturday, May 17, 2008

Day Three - 1st Day of Kids camp : Terrific Turnout

Saturday. The education system in Indonesia is in such a way that school goes on for six days and so Saturday is just another school day. I find this quite sad, but I'm sure they're used to it. Besides, there's nothing much you can do... no shopping, no movies to go to, no game theme parks, arcades...so maybe school is a good way to pass the time. I'm just guessing, don't take my word for it. Anyway this meant that the kids for the kindergarten program arrived for school again and Aunt Lucy volunteered to take them even though she didn't have to. Our kindergarten program started on the next week after the camp, but Aunt Lucy wanted to give my mom a break. I sat in the class most of the time so I could learn and observe the kids behaviour. We went through the alphabets again with Esther and me helping out with the flashcards. They have a really cute alphabet song that a previous team had taught. The kids obviously enjoyed it and it goes like this:

*A-B-C-D-E-F-G
Jesus died for You and me
H-I-J-K-L-M-N
Jesus died for sinful men (AMEN!)
O-P-Q-R-S-T-U
I believe God's word is true
V-W
God has promised you
X-Y-Z
A home eternally!*

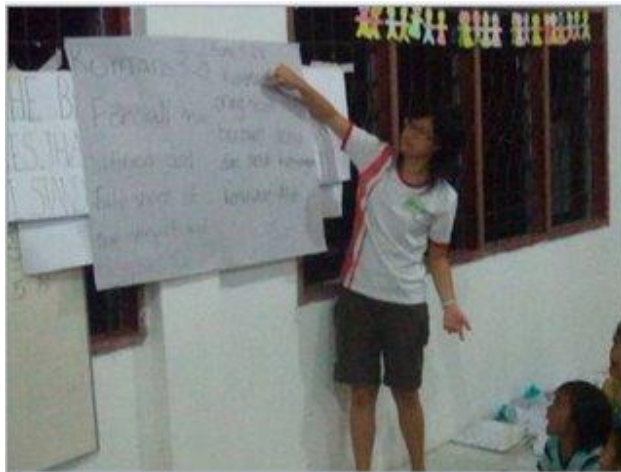
As you can see the gospel is in the song which I think is rather ingenious. Hearing the kids sing it loud and clear (and never ever tire of it) is something I'll never forget. The kids had a break where they would sit in an orderly manner to pray after washing their hands, and have a snack of water and biscuits. After that we had a game of 'London's bridge is falling down' and I witnessed havoc. They obviously didn't really understand what the game was about and we couldn't exactly explain it due to the language problem. In the end the kids were running and shoving and trying not to get

caught. Aunt Lucy had to firmly put a stop to it... **I began to have second thoughts about cute little kids sitting on chairs who listened to every word you say in awe and wonder.**

One particular kid caught my eye coz he was so hyperactive and just kept running and running around. I would get to know his name during the camp and the rest of the kindergarten program.



Uncle Gilbert, Uncle William, Darren and Esther accompanied my dad to a wedding after lunch. Zhi hong, Aunt Lucy and I decided to stay back to prepare the stuff for registration and to make sure some of us were around during registration. I heard that the traditional wedding had some sort of war cry. For this you have to ask those who went. Apparently I don't know much about my roots. Anyway we who remained thought up of last minute things we had to do that we hadn't initially thought of. We wrote up evangelistic memory verses on big sheets of paper and which really came in handy as time fillers. And the kids really put effort in memorising them and learnt a few English words since we presented the verses in English and Indonesian side by side.



The kids came an hour before four. Some had even come before 3 and we saw this propensity to come early during the our stay in Nias. Not only do kids wake up at super early hours of 5.30, they also come an hour early or even more than that when it comes to appointments. We postulated that the reason for this trend was that the kids had nothing to do at home anyway. Anyway I couldn't help but contrast it to Singapore coz registration started at 4 and it was a Saturday. A typical Saturday for me in Singapore would be to have yf at 4pm and have almost everyone come at 4.30pm. Rather interesting how majority of the people here would come half an hour early and people on the red dot would come half an hour late. Contrast the laidback lives of country people with the busy busy busy lives of city people. Affluence and technology put together have an interesting effect.



So there we were, registering the kids above the noise. Most of them were playing in the playground while some crowded around the registration table. Aunt Midar (one of the kindergarten teachers and another relative) was shouting in her loud commanding voice to get the kids registered in the different age groups. I was glad she was there while I wrote their names and ages on the name tags, evenly dividing the kids into different coloured groups. Red, Green, Blue and Yellow (Merah, Hijau, Biru, Kuning). The age group was a bit off, we had kids as young as 5 and people as old as 14. We had prepared 72 name cards...we ran out.



The initial plan was to have the kids come in and register at 4pm and then watch an Indonesian bible cartoon story while waiting for the rest of the kids to register. However due to the fact that **the kids redefined punctuality for us**, registration was done in no time and we were left scratching our heads on what to do with the kids. We gathered them into the room and called them out one by one to give them their name tags. With my mom as the translator, zhi hong asked the kids to come out in front to say their name and age and their hobby. This went well for like...the first 5 people. After that... no one was really listening, the kids were loud, the loud hailer was a bane. Instead of amplifying our voices it just kept on having those frequency problematic sounds which added on to the noise that the 80 kids were making.



Simon Says was a bit too fast for the camera, a blur

Change tactic. Time for ice-breakers. We painstakingly had to explain the game of Simon says like a lot of times before they managed to understand the concept of the game. It didn't help that we were speaking in English. At least by that time, my little bit of Indonesian knowledge was coming back to me and I was attempting to translate to the kids whatever zhi hong was trying to say. There were no translators there yet. Seeing a group of 80 kids playing Simon says can be quite entertaining... for a while. We then moved on to the Jesus jigsaw puzzle. Well there were quite a number of kids in each coloured group and one of the girls in my group wasn't too pleased that she couldn't get to even touch the jigsaw puzzle coz everyone was huddled around it. With a little compromise she managed to contribute in the end. And I must say the green team did a pretty good job!! Biased, I know haha. You can see the eagerness on the kids faces as their attention turns to you in expectancy as you speak.



We had a time of songs. We had a very very very long time of songs. It was the only thing we could do to keep the kids entertained while we waited for the food to come. Dinner was late since it was the first day and we ended up not knowing what to do for one hour. We attempted to watch the Indonesian cartoon but the speakers weren't loud enough. The One Clap-Two Clap activity that Darren introduced was a very good time filler and helped to get the kids attention. We recited the 1st memory verse – Romans 3:23 a number of times. Finally a translator came, Tina, who you could say saved the day. We had to push our whole program forward and we needed her to translate the skits for us. Oh and she led the kids to sing a beautiful Nias song that I didn't know could be split in two groups and be sung in rounds. And when it's sung together you can hear the beautiful harmonies that the kids were making. Lovely. The Indonesian songs that Pastor Alvin taught us came in handy such as 'Betapa baiknya engkau Tuhan'. Uncle Gilbert said it was a nice feeling to come down after their bible study session and hear the kids singing out loud "Hosanna! Hosanna!" so loudly. You could tell that the kids were more comfortable singing songs in their own language. **Overall, they really love to sing.** 'Dalam Yesus' was another popular song that pastor taught us which we heard almost every single day.

The Parable Package was on the prodigal son with a craft of a heart of love that the kids were supposed to give to their parents.



The younger kids were ‘secretly’ ushered out to eat their dinner first before the older ones finally got to eat. The poor souls were hungry and tired and so were we actually... Well we had packet food that created a bit of a mess since it was on the floor. Anyway after dinner we found out that not everyone was staying. In fact less than 20 would be sleeping over because their villages were too far away. The rest either walked home or had someone pick them up.

Anyway during the daily debrief...

- Age was a problem. Comprehension levels for the wide age groups varied and it was difficult to control the younger ones. A camp meant for 8 to 12 year olds became a mix and mash of 5 to 15 and this was extremely difficult to control. Younger ones felt left out, older ones felt bored having to wait. In our discussion, we learnt that we should stick to the age group set out.

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- Translator woes. Before Tina came, we had quite a bit of a problem. Translators are essential for us to communicate with the kids

We went to sleep not knowing quite what to expect the next day.

Posted by Princess had her say

Sunday, May 18, 2008

Day Four - 2nd Day of Kids Camp

Music.

It is early morning. I'm still groggy and have no interest in finding out what time it is. But I am awake and the reason for that is I can hear the activity going on outside. The kids who stayed over are singing, talking, playing. My father wasn't joking when he said they wake up REALLY early. However it was nice to hear music first thing in the morning, sung sweetly by little children to their heavenly Father.

The day before we instructed the kids to come at 9am for two reasons. From the previous day we realised that the program went by really fast and we ended up with nothing for the kids to do. Secondly, we know the kids would definitely come early and so 9am was a safe time to ensure we don't get bombarded so early in the morning. After our usual morning devotions, we had breakfast with the kids who had stayed over. My dad told them they could ask anything they wanted about me, but they were too shy to say anything.

So here we were, day 2 of camp. We could hear the excited chatter of kids as they gathered downstairs or played in the playground. Due to the age group difficulty, we came up with a solution the night before that my father would take the kids aged 6 and below away for a 'secret class' when necessary.



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First up was the morning devotion which Uncle William took. This was an evangelistic camp and this particular devotion was an evangelistic one. Uncle William made use of the memory verses that we had introduced to the kids. Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord

DOSA – sin in Indonesian. The message was clear, that we all had sin and we needed a God to save us.



After devotions, we moved on to the art and craft session which was to form a paper house by colouring the insides of the house. The kids were split into two rooms with each room containing two groups. The kids sat in a circle surrounding me and Darren came in to give the instructions on how to make the house. Aliman was nearby to help me translate when needed, but it was quite a simple activity that didn't need much instructions. However it was interesting to observe how some of the kids didn't want to start colouring immediately because they were afraid of doing something wrong. 7 year old Lince threw herself into action furiously colouring and decorating her house with windows and doors while 12 year old Reminis seemed stuck for a moment as to what she was supposed to do. I was in the center and decided to make my own house as well so it could be a sample for them. This made it easier for some kids who kind of copied what I was doing.

Anyway I know how it feels... to feel afraid to do something wrong. Some of them kept on asking question after question whether they could colour in a certain section and I had to keep on repeating, “enga apa apa” (there’s no problem) in order to reassure them that it was okay to just be creative and design anything and colour anywhere they want.



After colouring the interiors of the house beautifully (I told the kids they were painting their own houses), we glued the walls up and topped it with a roof that was glued on one side. This allowed kids to open one side of the roof in order to peer into their houses and see their lovely interiors with furniture and all. Well this tied in very well with the bible story that we had after that – “The houses on rock and sand”. After the craft was stacked away neatly to the side, we gathered all the kids together again and sang a few songs. We taught them a new song with actions:

The wise man built his house upon the rock x3 And the rain came tumbling down The rain came down and the floods came up x3 And the wise man’s house stood firm The foolish man built his house upon the sand x3 And the rain came tumbling down The rain came down and the floods came up x3 And the foolish man’s house went splat!



That's Tari, she's super duper cute!

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After that, we presented to them our skit about the wise and foolish man which Aunt Lucy introduced. The lovely sound effects that were supposed to go with the skit could not be heard from the laptop even though we connected the speakers to it. For some reason it just wasn't loud enough. But that didn't stop us and the kids from having fun. The kids had a good laugh as we did the celebration jig upon completion of the house. When it was my turn to do the foolish man with the mask, I attempted to speak Indonesian in the halting broken manner and was glad that skits were a lot of visual coz of the language barrier. Tina was great with the translating though and the kids learnt that their foundations were very important.



Lunch was as per normal, but this time in a more orderly manner as we lined the kids up before they collected their food outside to go to the other room. WE realised that throughout the camp, the meals were all very very similar....and there were no complaints. The portions were actually for adults but we realised that the kids, especially the young boys could really eat a lot.

The White Bird

Close your eyes. Imagine you're on the beach. You see the waves, you feel the cooling wind and the sand beneath your feet. You're standing on the beach. And then ... you see a white bird. ... it walks towards you ... Step by step by step... and then it talks to you. And it tells you.... that you are at the beach. ...

Okay a bit of exaggeration on my part, but after lunch, zh did a bit of quiet time with the kids. The kids lay on the cooling tiled floor and were to close their eyes and listen to the 'story' which my dad translated. As you can see from above, this was rather impromptu and I wonder what the kids might have been thinking (I think some just took an opportunity to take a nap). Well the quiet time was rather interesting albeit some giggles from us... It was Darren who saved the day by mouthing from the entrance of the room, "FUBWI! FUBWI!" This was happening while Zhi Hong was busy trying to think up of a story to the kids, so I was the only one standing in front who was trying to comprehend what Darren was saying. In exasperation, he pointed to his foot and realisation dawned upon me. THE FOOTPRINTS STORY! That's what Darren was trying to say, "footprints!". Zhi hong was kind of desperate and was about to tell them to open their eyes and end the 'quiet time'. Then I whispered the amazing revelation I had received from Darren, across the room, in the message of 'fubwi' that we could tell them the footprints story. At that point in time, my dad was translating in Indonesian that the kids could open their eyes.... "oh and guess what kids, you can close your eyes again!". Yeah they had to close their eyes again after the message had finally come across.





Quite a number of kids put up their hands to indicate they wanted to believe in Jesus Christ



Zhi hong was still in white-bird mode, so I had to tell the footprints story on the spot. There's a good thing about having a translator. It gives you that extra time to think to yourself and organise your thoughts. I told the story as best as I could and at the end of it, weaved the gospel message in and asked who would want to receive Christ. That was actually the main aim of 'quiet time'. Quite a number of kids put up their hands. And it was a nice moment of being 'still' during the day where we had a bit of peace instead of endless chatter, talking or shouting.



The Four Teams: Merah, Hijau, Biru, Kuning (Red, Green, Blue, Yellow) - Competition for the group with the best cheer





We spelt out JESUS <3> If you can't really see the words below, it's because SOME persons are blocking.....ahem.



After that was the afternoon fun games that Darren had prepared. Each of the groups had to come up with their own cheer and we marched outside shouting it out aloud in unison. You could see the rivalry between the teams as the competitive spirit in the kids showed forth. This spelt out tremendous fun as we played competitive games of passing down the rubber band(s) using straws. And you'd think that passing a balloon down a line would be easy peasy. Well the kids had to do it back to back and keep turning which was not easy at all. I ended up having to turn each individual kid to stop them from passing the balloon towards the front. Really funny. They were so focused on getting the balloon to the end that they forgot HOW they were supposed to do it. HAHA, but after a few tries, the older ones managed to get the hang of it.



*Scissors Paper Stone - NIAS STYLE - becomes:
THUMB vs LITTLE FINGER vs INDEX FINGER*



I just love the expression on the girl's face in the background. Such excitement and joy!

It was a Sunday, which meant that some of the kids would have to go to church. It seems that the services on Sunday are in the afternoons. Even the one at the yayasan is at 4pm in the afternoon. Which posed a bit of a problem since it interrupted the flow of the camp. The kids were required to remain hush hush while the service was going on upstairs...and you know how difficult this was with a bunch of energetic kids. Well we were hoping that the number of kids would be smaller because some of them were leaving to go to their own churches. Like in my group, one of the boys, Hendra, who used the sign of the cross before praying, said he needed to go to church but would come back, while another girl had a birthday party of some sort to attend. We were hoping for less kids for easier facilitation, but I think the number was still too big.



*We taught the kids the 'AJ clap'.
Of course it's not really called that (i'm the only one of the 4 who isn't from AJC), darren learnt it
in scouts before, long before he entered AJ. So there!*



Aunt Lucy led a the role play which occurred in silent movie fashion due to the ongoing service upstairs. You could see that the kids had really retained a lot more from the skit because they could play it out pretty well. Giggles had to be muffled and it might have been a bit stifling for the kids. We then had a short session of stretch and flex... indoors. No choice. Then when we thought the service was ending, we recited memory verses again. However you could see the kids were pretty restless and they were demanding to bathe. Did I mention that it was also very hot?

Now, under different circumstances, we would have gladly let the children go and bathe and refresh themselves. It had been a long day, fun under the sun and tiring activities. Even keeping mum in a room for more than an hour can be quite tiring. However we only had 2 toilets, and the problem of water supply. A long debate ensued as Zhi Hong attempted to tell the kids the problem with Aliman translating it. My mom came in to try and settle things and this went on for quite a while. You see the problem was we had organised our timetable with the idea that the kids would be staying over and that they would have ample time to wash up before the night session that would contain the parable package. Turns out that most of the kids didn't stay over and so we

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decided to do away with the bathing time since the kids could go home and bathe. We didn't want the kids to miss out the session of learning the bible story. However, a decision had to be made and in the end the kids were left off early after dinner and a short briefing to review what they had learnt. So we skipped out on the story of the 10 bridesmaids and decided to put it on another day.

Debrief:

- We realised that during the quite time, we did not really take into account those kids who had put up their hands. We forgot that the main aim of the camp was to evangelise the gospel and for those who seemed to be willing to accept the gospel, more effort needed to be put in to talk to them personally.
- It was rather inconvenient to have a service that clashed with our camp because we were forced to restrain the kids when we actually had outdoor games for them that were really fun. It kind of put a grumpiness on everyone due to the restlessness and weather conditions.
- Bathing time was essential for the kids. The kids voiced out “mandi ka! Bau!” (bathe big sister, smelly). I think it was the restlessness that made them feel that way, but even during the helpers dinner, Aliman mentioned that we should have some time for the kids to bathe and freshen up. Then again, we learnt that we should just make it a day camp and make it easier for everyone.

Day 2 done. At night we had a little discussion about the mini finale that was going to be held the next day. Parents had been invited and the kids would be presenting what they had learnt.



Posted by Jessica

Monday, May 19, 2008

Day Five - 3rd (last) Day of Kids Camp

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me”

Day 3 of camp and I was woken up again by the singing of hymns. We started off with the parable of the Good Samaritan after the morning devotion led by Uncle Gilbert.

We donned on our costumes which looked like robes used in the olden days. I was called Joo who lived in Jooland who didn't like the other guy called Sam because apparently their kind talked funny and acted funny. But one day as I was travelling on my 'donkey' I got robbed (even had blood on my face – facepaint I think), and the only one who saved me was, not the priest, not the Levite... but my archenemy, Sam. At the end of the play, I told the kids I was all right and recovered, all thanks to Sam...*but still with 'blood' still on my face*. An oversight on my part, but the kids really enjoyed the play. They kept on prodding Sam to help Joo.. even though Joo smelt funny to Sam. As you can see the play is more of an adaptation.



The people from 'Jooland' and from Sam's country do not really get a long with each other



Joo travels on 'his' donkey but gets robbed by the black-jacket-duo

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Darren's supposed to be a priest..but unfortunately he's scared of blood and doesn't help me



Darren is the Levite this time, but can't afford to get his white robes dirty. Only Sam (archenemy) offers to help poor Joo.



We then had a game of PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY!



The horses were actually drawn by Aunt Lucy's son.



Craft time! The kids were really excited about making their own donkey from the cut-outs prepared during one of the youth fellowship sessions. You could see them vying for the attention of each teacher, springing up from their groups to show Zhi hong who was giving instructions, that they had done exactly what they told them to do. Within my group, I would hear endless queries, “kaya gini ibu?” (like this ma’am?), because the kids really want reassurance and approval of their work, at every step of the way.



Well after that was a bit of photo taking and then the preparation for the mini finale. We had to do:

1. A group cheer
2. Recite one memory verse and have one person explain it
3. Sing one song
4. Have 3 testimonies

The competition was intense. Kids don't want to be outdone, and so the 'who-can-sing/recite-the-loudest' competition began. Try speaking in a construction site. That's how the noise level was. Well at least the noise was 'beautiful' since it was filled with song and recitations.

A long awaited break was given as the kids went for lunch, after which each group gathered into their allocated spaces to rehearse their items. I gathered HIJAU (the green team) into the room and made them sit down on the floor to recite the memory verse first. Now there was one particular kid who was actually from the blue group who just would not leave my group, because his older sister was there. Well he was too young anyway so we kinda just let him tag along. But at this point in time, he was getting a bit difficult. After finally getting ALL the kids to sit down, there he was running around in circles around the kids who were seated. He was obviously a MAJOR DISTRACTION. This kid happens to be the very same one from my first day in kindergarten who I noticed had a colossal amount of energy. The famous .jufen. So there he was running around not paying attention to the calls of his sister trying to persuade him to sit. I had no translator, so in my broken Indonesian, I told him to sit down or else he would have to leave the room. I was not sure whether I could be comprehended because he paused, looked at me feeling slightly embarrassed ...

and then continued to run. Good thing I didn't pull my hair out, because he was actually just running around the kids to plop himself right next to his sister, where he stayed put.

The most interesting part during the rehearsals was the testimonies. 3 of the kids, Hendra, Darni and (the last one slips my mind) volunteered to give a testimony about why they came, what they learnt during camp and how they intended to apply what they learnt. Apparently they loved the games of passing down rubber bands with straws and learnt to throw away their trash. I realised that some of the kids thought this was a camp to learn English. I guess because the previous camp probably incorporated some English learning sessions. Well you can tell that learning English is something popular in this part of Nias.



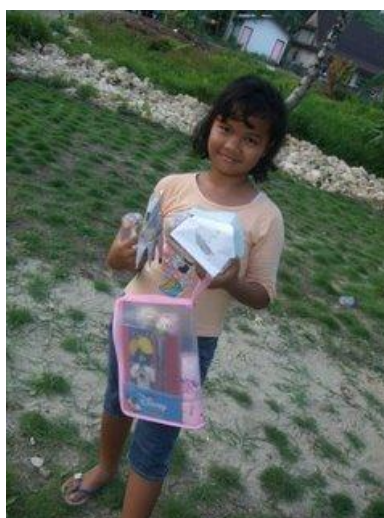
Esther's group did a really nice performance of "I have decided to follow Jesus"



Testimonies and giving out of goodie packs!



Our mini-finale started at four and some of the parents had come to see what their kids had learnt. The mini-finale went rather well, with the presentations and the message by my father afterwards. The kids got a bit restless because they were seated at the back and could not see what was happening. However it was a success and the children were very pleased with the goodie packs they received at the end of it all.



We didn't have enough goodie packs, after all we only had 72 files, so we decided to give those aged 6 and below a different gift. And so jufen (5yrs old) who had somehow joined my group received the smaller gift even though he was reaching for the folder meant for the older kids. Someone spoke to him in Indonesian telling him that his gift was meant for his age, and he nodded his head in acceptance with those wide eyes and that cute face. He didn't throw a tantrum or complain, and I found that really nice. In fact I didn't hear a word of complaint about the classification of gifts. My heart just wanted to give them more.

And so we ended the day tired out, but satisfied and contented with how it had turned out. We had the song 'dalam Yesus' stuck in our heads for a very long time.

Debrief:

- Next time split the kids up into groups
- Dun let the kids sit at the back
- Get microphones and sound system
- 3 Day camp, well done... :D





Public transport to take them to a village hours away

Posted by Jessica

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Day 6: Beach Break

Tuesday. It was a school holiday and there was no kindergarten classes. Sometimes the kids still come even when there is a public holiday. For example, Monday which was Vesak day meant that the kids did not have to come to school, but apparently if you don't tell them explicitly not to come...they'll come anyway. So we made sure we told the kids not to come on Tuesday and so we could all have a break after a successful 3day camp.



Before the beach



What the beach was like

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Artistic pic of Zhihong and the FANTASTIC FOURSOME!



Aunt Lucy and the rocky terrain

In a tropical island, one would have to visit the beach. However Uncle Gilbert and Uncle William were excluded because they were still participating in the university program. So the remaining 5 together with my mom and Carol, headed towards the beach where a surprise would meet our eyes.

You'd expect sand next to the sea, but what we saw was more of rocky terrain with puddles of water here and there. It was actually dead coral reef, the after effects of the tsunami. But we could still appreciate the lovely nature as we found hermit crabs, starfish, sea cucumbers and the biggest fish we ever saw – FRANK. About the size of my hand. It was just nice to feel the cool breeze, watch the crashing waves and unwind from all the packed activities during the 3 day camp.





Darren shows that the waves are no match for him while a multitude of hermit crabs congregate at this particular spot



*This is the famous papaya tree. The inspiration for **THE PAPAYA TREE**, the sequel to 'the lemon tree' song.*

After that we walked to my uncle's house where we got some delicious papayas, before heading down the road in exploration. We came across a house that had an avocado tree in front of it and a man had just climbed it to collect some avocados. Aunt Lucy was interested in getting some and so my mom asked the lady whether they were for sale. We bought about 6 of them, big and heavy and right off the tree. The guy would use this net like thing to grab the avocado and then let it drop to the open palms of the lady standing below. We were afraid it would fall on our heads...or at least I was.



Darren thinks to himself "oh no! oh no! please don't drop on me, please don't.."



Weighing the avocados and goin for a walk



The house on the left was actually built by a Singaporean. Apparently it's like a glasshouse and it's high up a hill.

In the evening we went for their weekly prayer meeting at my cousin's house. We presented the song, "May the Lord find us faithful" and then they in turn sang us a song in Indonesian. Zhihong gave a short testimony and then Uncle William gave the message on the sower and the seeds with my dad as the translator. It was touching to hear some of their prayer requests especially that of my aunt who wanted her family to draw closer to God.



Aliman and Tutti on the right

Aliman and Tutti were touched by the message of the sower and expressed their desires to be like the last seed, to take God's word and apply it in their lives. A day well spent.



Posted by Jessica

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Day 7 – Wednesday 21st May 2008

This is Day 1 of our Kindergarten Programme. Jessica and Auntie Lucy with Darren taught the children. Due to some timing difficulties, college programme was postponed to Friday and Saturday, thus Uncle Gilbert stayed back to help with Logistics and packed up our place.

~Kindergarten~

It was time for the kindergarten program to start proper. We shifted the whole schedule forward to start on the 21st of May, and everything ran like clockwork. Speaking of clocks, we tried to teach the kids how to tell the time in English. The kids got to take home their very own clocks which they had made.

Kindergarten – 5-Day Teaching Programme

Day	8am-8.30am	8.30am-9am	9am-9.30am	9.30am-10am	10-10.30am
	Review	New Material		Review	New Material
English			Mathematics		
Day 1 20 th May	Alphabet A-Z LUCY – phonics Flashcards, alphabet worksheets (join the dots etc)	Simple vocabulary LUCY – using book (e.g. “look at the animal”) EXCIS to be there to help to draw descriptions	break	Numbers 1-20 LUCY – fishing game, cut up and re-arrange numbers, cards, numbered envelopes	Time LUCY – teach using giant clock. Kids make their own clock to tell time.
Day 2 21 st May	Review LUCY A bit of alphabets Review vocab and sentences	Colours LUCY – colour match, wordsearch, coloured card actions. Find charts	break	Review Telling the Time LUCY – “What’s the time Mr. Wolf?”	New numbers UNTIL 100 LUCY – Big floorboard game. Number puzzle – coordinated timing
Day 3 22 nd May	Review LUCY – Colours Vocabulary	Shapes LUCY – find the hidden shapes. Draw animals with shapes. Rhymes	break	Review Numbers and Time LUCY Fill in the missing numbers – spelling?	Addition A: single digits B: double digits LUCY – grains for simple math games
Day 4 23 rd May	Review LUCY – Shapes & Colours Vocabulary	Senses LUCY – hear and identify, blindfold and taste/feel. Optical illusions for sight.	break	Review Numbers and Time LUCY	Subtraction A: single digits B: double digits LUCY – 3-in-a-row, number game
Day 5 24 th May	Overall Review Games involving colours, shapes etc Classification of vocabulary		break	Overall Review Number games How to tell the time games	

* (LUCY) of English section includes various greetings such as: “Good morning” and “How are you?”
 ** Teachers highlighted will do main teaching, but other teachers will be around to help
 *** The review is not strictly half-an-hour. Most probably shorter and can incorporate song.

When teaching the kids ‘numbers’, we realised that the kids knew how to recite one to ten very well. However, if we showed them any number in between, they would have to start counting from one again in order to recall the name of the number in English. So Esther reviewed with them the numbers using flashcards in order for the kids to immediately recognise the numbers and say it in English. There was one really funny moment when Excelsis had to answer a question of some sort that required her to go beyond the number 10 to something like 15. So she started counting from one using her fingers and when she ran out of fingers, she bent over and started counting her toes before finally shouting the answer confidently in English. “15!” It took all my strength to keep from bursting out in laughter. Childlike innocence is beautiful.



~Water Party~



Lazy afternoon syndrome kicked in as we made plans to do house visitations and evangelism. However, we were called on to fetch water from the well across the road as the good weather we had for the past week reduced our water supply drastically. City kids like Darren and I were puzzled about the mechanics of fetching water from the well with a bucket. Without a proper flick motion, the bucket that dropped into the well will just float and this unable to contain any water! After many attempts, we finally got the hang of it. Imagine all the mocking we received from the local children.



We worked together as a team. Sometimes we will go in a pair to fetch 3 buckets at once. Other times, we would go one by one. It's easier to do it in pairs because the load of the bigger pail is shared. All of us worked and worked and worked. Finally after numerous trips, we have filled up the 2 tubs in toilet, 2 full containers and many other smaller ones.

A job well done. Gathered lots of stares and giggles from the villagers in the process.... *Wonder what are they thinking of?*

~English for Juniors~



Due to some miscommunication, about 6 students came over for English for Junior Programme. Not wanting to disappoint them, Jessica came forward to take them through a short session with what we have prepared for the next day.

She taught them basic questions and replies like "MY NAME IS", "I am ___ years old". Then we went on to using a kindergarten book to teach basic sentence structure. We tried to structure our lesson to suit daily conversations, so that they are able to apply and use them often. Lots of interactions and 'question & answer' sessions were included to encourage participation. After the lesson, all of them were eagerly anticipating next day's English for Junior's Programme.

~Dinner~



Dinner was accompanied by our favourite fruit. The king of all fruits - DURIAN. Woe to those *ahem* who doesn't like it. The princess finally plucked up her courage to try her very first piece of the sacred fruit. It was a good try, but didn't like it nonetheless.... maybe another time.



One man's meat is another woman's poison...

In the evening, we had an hour session of songs with a medley of instruments. Jessica was on the out-of-tune guitar, while Esther played the violin and Uncle Famachoi topped everything up with the recorder. We sang and sang till our hearts go wild. But at least we had coconut drinks to soothe our throats. Events like this would always be part of our memories as we recall the good times we had in Nias.

Soon it's time for bed.

Posted by Zhihong

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Thursday, May 22, 2008

Day 8 – Thursday 22nd May 2008



Morning was a rain feast. Finally, the sky was pouring down the much needed water. We took all our buckets and plastic basins out to collect the rain. We now appreciate rain more than we did before we came, but above all, we learn to love our taps.

Devotion point: We should always trust God as our provider.

From big issues to small things like our daily needs, there is nothing too small or too big for God to provide for us, and it is precisely what God wants us to do. Believe that He can and He will provide our needs. And what about quantity some may ask. I believe when He gives, He gives abundantly, so as to let us fully enjoy His goodness but more importantly, so that we can give abundantly as well. For I am born in an affluent country, not so much to enjoy what God has provided for me, but so that I could give to those who have not. And it is my desire to discover the less fortunate so that if God is willing, we can provide for them through Him.



Robin, Famachoi's first son will be arriving in Nias from Singapore around 1. So Gilbert and I, along with Uncle Famachoi and Auntie Damai took a 2 ½ hour journey up to Gunong Sitoli. Auntie Damai had to get her X-ray done that morning in the hospital, thus we left early at 9am. The rest of the team stayed back in the Yayasan to help out with the kindergarten programme.

And as for kindergarten programme - We had prepared coloured flashcards to teach the kids the colours in English. Jessica taught the kids the different colours in English by swiping out the cards from her behind her back suddenly. Darren and Esther did a review of what they kids had learnt the previous day with fun worksheets on telling time and numbers. It was a bit hard to teach the kids bigger numbers. So we just stuck with 1 to 20.



Along the way to the airport, I learnt 2 songs from Damai. The Nias Dialect version of Yesterday, Today, Forever and Haga Gunidaner. Haga Gunidaner is a song which encourages children to be strong as they are useful in the eyes of our Lord. As I'm thinking through this point, I came to a conclusion that God has the ability to use everyone at anytime. Be it adults, pastors, parents, teachers, or even those strangers we have met on the way to some place, He can use them to touch our lives. As my mind ran through all that had happened in the children's camp, it gave me great satisfaction that I was able to share, teach and grow with them in the goodness of our Lord.

We drove past this local market where only durians were traded. So we stopped by and bought some 20+ durians. They were cheap, about 90 cents each. WAY too big and nice for something of that price! And guess how do you carry 40 durians on a stick? See this--->



At the local hospital, we met another pastor of a church in Gunong Sitoli. He was very keen in inviting us over to his congregation to preach a message. We have also discussed much about the situation of Nias. After exchanging contact details, we left for the airport in a hurry because we are late.



Robin waited about one hour, but the wait was nothing compared to the number of years spent away from his family in Singapore. We made our way back to the Yayasan, only stopping over for a short lunch along the way.

English for Juniors - When we are back at the Yayasan, Jessica and Auntie Lucy were midway through the second session of English for Juniors. The attendance was a lot better with about 10 students. Using Charades style, each participant tried to convey a simple message regarding "I put on my ~". So if the item is a pair of watch, the participant is required to act out the motion of attaching the watch to the wrist and looking at the item on the face of the watch. Some like Auntie Lucy were great at acting, while others gave us a really good laugh. Even though the lesson was simple, I believe that as long as they have learnt one thing well for each lesson, after a year of learning, they would definitely have improved tremendously.



I put on my ~

Auntie Damai preparing the durians for a Durian soup dish tonight - specially made by Uncle Gilbert. Looking all the durians we bought... I couldn't help but steal some before it reached the bucket. Jessica took refuge somewhere far away. The aroma of durian just permeates throughout the house. Anticipating a good dinner, we prepared ourselves for a feast.



~DINNER~



Evening's dinner was good. We had nice prawns and fish. The taste of the durian dish was unforgettable, even for the princess. It tasted sweet and aromatic, without the "disgusting" taste of durian. God blessed our team with good food and especially good health as none of us suffered any illness.

Prayed hard in the evening together then retired shortly.

Posted by Zhihong

Friday, May 23, 2008

Day 9 – Friday 23rd May 2008

Again, we had our routine morning devotions followed by breakfast. Today's breakfast was especially good because of the spoils we've got from Gudong Sitoli town the previous day. We had BREAD, Peanut butter, Eggs... O gosh... it had been a long time since I've eaten any of that sort.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMME



Kindergarten programme resumed and Jessica and I stayed back for it. Jessica being a gifted teacher, was very natural and entertaining with the young children. All of them were strangely stuck on to her throughout her lesson. Perhaps it's also due to the strange balls on her hands. She was going through the wordless gloves with them =)

YELLOW, BLACK, RED, WHITE, GREEN

Basic colours bearing much meaning... After which we did the wordless chain for them to hang on their bags. Lots of beads to string, had to help them out with the tying of knots and stuff, even the kindergarten teachers had trouble with it. The product was something which they could display on their school bags.

IKIP COLLEGE PROGRAMME

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Darren, Esther and Robin followed Gilbert over to college for the second session of communications programme. They had an entertaining session, learning the skills and the concept of communications. During their break, they had good conversations with the local students, sharing their faith and interest with each other. Using this opportunity, we extended our invitation for our Saturday Bible Study Fellowship and for our Evangelistic Final Night. Response was great!

English for Junior Session at 3pm was conducted by me. I introduced new sentence structure based on my favourite topic – Food! The different types of Makanan(food) and some questions and answers using those words they had learnt. Jessica's cousin too joined us for the lesson. Through interactive speech and sentence structures, we managed to know each other better. For example, “I like to eat CHICKEN” or “I do not like to eat DURIAN.”

DINNER WITH CAMP VOLUNTEERS

In the evening, we invited all the helpers who helped us in one way or another for dinner at a restaurant. Altogether, there were 17 of us. We had a great time together, talking about the memories of the camp and gave our feedback on how to improve the activities.



During dinner, I was talking with Aliman about the Christian Faith. He commented that before he was involved in this Christian Camp, he always knew Christianity as "My parents are Christians, therefore am I". Faith, Confession of sin, Believing in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour was a totally new thing. I've shared testimonies of my walk with Christ, and i guess it spurred him on to pursue a closer relationship with God. God works in many ways, and while we were so focused on

attending to the needs of the children in camp, God was somewhere else planting seeds of faith in the rest of us.



Posted by Zhihong

Saturday, May 24, 2008

Day 10 – Saturday 24th May 2008

Time flies when we are doing God's work. It's already our second last day in Nias. Morning kindergarten programme continued as Nias is still on a 6 day work week system. Auntie Lucy taught them the uses of our five senses. Interesting activities were used to draw their attention.



Eyes See,
Nose Smell,
Ears Hear,
Mouth Taste
Hands Touch

SMELL~

For sense of smell, blindfolded children were supposed to guess what kind of food were they smelling. It was really challenging since many of the food smells the same!



Guess what's he's smelling? Our favourite, Coffee! haha... i though he too enjoyed smelling it. I would love to drink it though.

HEAR~

For sense of hearing, we had audio clips of sounds made by various objects encountered daily. Well... They could identify most of the sounds like Birds, rooster, bulldozer,... but one particular sound puzzled them. THE VACUUM CLEANER! haha... i wont use a VACUUM CLEANER in a village, so I don't think they would have encountered one before!

After the kindergarten class, we had a small meeting with the kindergarten teachers, to hand down teaching materials for them to use for their lessons in the future. There were many uniquely designed limited edition materials specially made by us. They cant be bought nor found in any shops. It is our desire for them to continue using it. **One very special song which we made for**



the adorable kindergarten kids ->

Preparations for Evangelistic Finale Night started as early as Saturday afternoon. Bought biscuits and cakes for the kids, spent time to pack them in bags for easy distribution tomorrow.

Due to certain arrangements made the day before, Darren, Robin and Esther went down to a local High School for a motivation talk session. Fajar, a student from the college initiated the visit. Due to some unforeseen circumstances, pictures taken disappeared... Robin was unhappy about it, but one has to move on



Afternoon, we had our second session of **Bible Study Fellowship** with College Students. First session was conducted during the first day of Children's camp.

We sang and played games with each other. First game for warm up was a quick introduction of names for everyone present. Then we dived into our first game: **007**. The game goes like: "Zero" "Zero" "Seven" "Bang" "Ah!". Player A will point to B and shout "Zero", B to C "Zero", C to D "Seven", D points and shouts to E "Bang", AND FINALLY E will NOT REACT, but the two players beside E will have to say "AH!". Forfeit were dished out for those who accumulated errors.

Second game we played was "THIS IS A SAD AND SOLEMN DAY, isn't it , ~" I shall not go into specifics, but at least we knew who were the ones who could really NOT LAUGH. Had a great time trying not to laugh.. but i guess some members of our team is just too good.



Uncle William shared with us how we should be using the Word of God through a movie – “The dangerous book”. For many centuries and millenniums, Christians had been prosecuted and killed for reading the bible. It's a miracle for any of us now to read a bible openly without fear.

66 Books of wisdom. Most of us would have read more than 66 books of any sort, be it John Grisham, or Dan Brown, Harry Potters. But have we read all 66 books of the Bible once through? I've not, perhaps many of us are just like me. However, in 1 Peter 2:2,3 , God commands us to be alike newborns, craving for the pure milk of the word that we may know that He is gracious to give us life. We should not live by bread alone, but by every word from His mouth that we may be fed spiritually. How can we know God's will for us if we do not even read or hear what he says through the Bible? Thus I have made it a point for me to complete my reading of the entire Bible.

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More pictures of the members of Bible Study Fellowship



In the evening, Jessica and Robin stayed over at their uncle's place. Dinner was especially good with MORE MORE MORE DURIANS! Luckily Jessica wasn't with us, or else she would have been overwhelmed by it. Later on the rest of us paced up and prepared for the Evangelistic Finale Performance.

Posted by Zhihong

Sunday, May 25, 2008

Day 11 – Sunday 25th May 2008

During the entire duration of our trip, there is always a common complain. “I’ve lost (my shoes, my pen, my scissors”. Then after a while of searching, “I’ve found it!” So is it “lost” or “misplaced”? Sometimes we make certain presumptions when we are unsure about a situation, thus misunderstandings occurs. It is understood that the Devil works very hard to keep us wary and suspicious of each other’s intentions. While we are doing God’s works, he works to stumble us when we work, when we play, when we talk, and also when we talk to God. However, through its only through God’s mercy and guidance can we be victorious over the Devil.

Breakfast as different. We were short of a few members. Jessica and Robin were at their uncle's place to spend a night with them. So the remaining few of us ate our breakfast, at the same time, discussed about the plans for today. Many things would be happening. We've got preparations for Finale, Actual Evangelistic finale evening and light refreshments after. Anyway lots of headache.



After breakfast, we spent time arranging the chairs and all the fans. Learning from past experience, it would be best for children to be seated at the front, on the floor because in that way the children could watch the performance well. And also, fans had to be strategically position all over the hall, else there wont be enough ventilation to keep the guest comfortable. Lastly, we had to cover up the windows and set a white screen for us to project the images onto the wall. And after all that preparations, we still have to prepare our song item for today!

Morning preparations completed. Sound-check done.

Our sound system worked perfectly! We had 4 speakers, but decided to use only two for today because the hall was not large enough to accommodate the loud sound without echo.

At 2pm, children whom came for our camp returned to join us for the Evangelistic Finale Night. It’s also a pleasant surprise that so many of them returned. Even those who reside in villages two hours away were present. In total, we have about 70 children were present. They prepared some song items for the Grand finale. Soon it was time to start the programme.

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Evangelistic Finale Night was organised in a bid to create greater awareness for the cause of Nias Hope Foundation. It was also our way of saying farewell to those whom we have met throughout the trip.

Why

"night"

when it starts and ends before the sunsets?

Another cultural blunder we have made. In Singapore, we have planned for an evening of joy and fun, but little did we realise that the villagers actually return home early, night activities are restricted to mainly watching TV.

~Performance Proper~



First performance was by the Children,



then Singapore Team's Song items



Now the Kindergarten Teachers' song items



IKIP College students' Performance

It was definitely entertaining and at the same time touching to see that we had touched their lives in one way or another. Then came the highlight of the afternoon, the performance by the family of Wa'u.



We also showed a movie clip of our journey in Nias. This clip contained pictures, events, sights and taste of life and the activities we had done so far. The children were especially excited when they saw pictures taken during children's camp.

Shortly after, William gave a message to the congregation while the children had their Sunday School lesson on The Ten Bridesmaid. Due to some miscommunications and other factors, our Ten Bridesmaid Skit was played out by.... Zhihong as the foolish.. But lets not talk further. I had lots of fun doing it =)Unfortunately, not many pictures were taken during this period of time because we were all busy... We ended the session with a sharing of the EvangeCube. Definitely useful to convey the message of the Gospel, though i would like to use a BIGGER CUBE.



Everything ended well. Plenty of extra refreshments to go around. Everyone of us including the helpers worked very hard. We've enjoyed ourselves alot, especially for the children!



Approximately six children stayed back late after the event was completed. Finally some breathing space for us. So since we were all waiting for dinner, we played many games with them => Taught them "I've got peace like the river" and the Birthday Clap! I guess they would be looking forward for us to return to teach the rest.



We had candlelight dinner, to mark the successful completion of our works in Nias for this trip. Although the dinner was simple, we talked and laughed and remembered all the good times we had throughout the trip.

And having to say goodbye the next morning was a pity.

Posted by Zhihong

Monday, May 26, 2008

Day 12 – Monday 26th May 2008

It's time to say goodbye to Nias. The small tropical island west of Java. Goodbye is never easy. Especially when we need to wake up at **5am** to reach Telok Dalam airport to catch our flight at 845am.



Auntie Damai specially prepared some "light" (sumptuous by Singapore's standard) breakfast to fill our stomachs before we embark onto the last leg of our journey. Breakfast is always the time for us to sit together, talk about the day's programme, work out details and jobscope of each member. But today, we did not. There's this aura of unwillingness to leave this place. Uncle Famachoi & Auntie Damai have been excellent hosts, taking care of our basic necessities plus much more! Breakfast took longer than usual. **And we are late!**

So in a hurry, we began loading our barang-barang onto the van. Then as usual, when we're in a hurry, we tend to forget things, haha... Jessica forgot to collect pictures from her dad's camera, i've forgotten to bring certain barang barang. Said our last goodbyes to the house and Auntie Damai. Robin came along with us to the airport. Then with the last goodbyes and kisses, we departed for the airport.

9 adults + barang barang packing into the small van.

Not the most comfortable place to sleep, but i slept anyway. 2.5hrs journey through paved roads littered with potholes. Same road i've travelled three times, this time it felt different.



Finally at the airport, we checked-in and took some pictures together. Then Uncle Famachoi met with his friend. His friend was hurting. He just lost his wife in an accident in which he was involved too. I could only imagine how much hurt he has to bear.. losing his spouse. We could only comfort him, but God heals. So we looked to God in prayer, to ask for his blessings of healing to heal all wounds, both physical and emotional.



Time now: 830am - time to go. Merpati, dual prop



Nonetheless, we had to go. Many of us were homesick and looking forward to the company of our family members back in Singapore. Maybe not so for the princess, but we took comfort in God's shelter, wherever we may go.

We love the plane!



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The journey back took a little more than one hour. Reached Medan Airport early. Waited a little while for Rev. Haposan. And then, he appeared in his small van! And of course, not everyone of us could squeeze into it, so a few of us took a taxi, while the rest took his van. I was in the taxi. And boy was i terrified. Firstly traffic in Medan is chaotic, if orchard road/chinatown/(name the most congested road) was bad, Medan is beyond description. Secondly, when i asked around for who knew the hotel's name, we just stared at each other. Thirdly, we were suppose to follow Haposan's vehicle, but once we exited the airport, we lost them. But everything went well, we managed to find the hotel. Thank God.



Welcome to Hotel Medan, a 5 star luxury hotel with a huge swimming pool plus other facilities. Nahz.. just kidding. We got a even better deal. Gentala Hotel. Rooms with attached showers. Per night about S\$18 per person. Where to get?! After a quick check-in, we took a rest in our rooms until it's time for lunch.

Lunch was at a local street-side stall. Had so many dishes, prawn, meat, everything. We even ordered some kind of mango juice... oh, it was delicious. And after the meal... we were so full and satisfied. Never had that for a long time... To our surprise, for the food and drinks all in.. it's only about S\$50.

Before we left for Nias, we had agreed with Rev. Haposan to give some training to 30 local teachers and at the end of it provide them with a certificate. We only require William and another helper to be present for the workshop. However, we decided to go as a team, to give each other support - Team spirit! William conducted the creative thinking workshop with the rest of us as participants. We learnt many new things and it definitely changed our perspective when we look at things now.

Since we on the topic of creative thinking,

HOW MANY TYPES OF EACH ANIMAL DID MOSES BRING INTO THE ARK?

Answer: 1

Did you get 1? If you did, then you're wrong! It's Noah, not Moses who filled the ark. It shows us that our mind works in many modes, but not all at the same time. Thus if we are tuned to calculative mode, we would overlook the actual point of a question. A quick devotional point : Sometimes in life, we are so fixated on the idea of what God's works are. We have to do house visitation, prayer meeting, do bible studies, street evangelism. However, God told us to do all these and much more! We are to live our lives in His glory, thus everything that is edifying would be God's works.



That aside, in the evening we went for some quick last minute souvenir shopping at the shopping centre with Carrefour. I bought nothing because didn't have any money on me. Uncle Gilbert bought tee-shirts for his children. Darren bought some tees too. Jessica and Esther bought some cookies for us and for those in Singapore. The cookie box was very unique. It's in the shape of a cube, with each face displaying one to six cookies, which makes it a dice!

Dinner was back at where we had lunch. During lunch, i wanted to try their Char Kway Tiao because of strong recommendations by Rev. Haposan. However, i couldn't resist the urge to eat waffles from A&W, so... didn't have much room for it, so i refrained from ordering. Others ordered their share, and we had a nice dinner.

After dinner, we returned to our Hotel to rest for our flight next morning. Uncle Gilbert suggested to see the night scene in Medan, i thought it was a cool idea too. It's our last night anyway.... but we(Uncle Gilbert, Darren and I) were just tired and wanted rest. Before we retired to lala-land, we had a nice chat with each other about the trip =) anyway that concludes our last night in Indonesia.

Posted by Zhihong

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Day 13 – Tuesday 27th May 2008

Our night's stay at the Medan hotel was short. I've slept barely four hours. Stayed up late with Gilbert and Darren, talked about all the stuff there is in the universe. From Relativity, to Genesis, to

Checked out of the hotel early, then proceeded to the Airport to settle our flight arrangements. Rev. Haposan drove a few of us, while the rest who cant squeeze in took a taxi. We reached the airport early, so we'd decided to check in our languages and get our boarding pass.

At the departure hall, we were greeted by these two men who were very well dressed and had good manners. They claimed to be part of the staff from the airport, and decided to be very kind to us by helping us with all the checking-in procedures. Little did we know that they were in fact "helpers" who at the end of it all, require certain form of repayment(tips). Ok, i know.. we had been warned, and vowed not to allow them to help, but we couldn't detect it. Anyway, we were all exhausted from the extended trip, so i guess it's good for someone else to help us settle all these stuff.

As we finished checking in procedures, we thought we had some time, so we exited the departure gates to meet Rev. Haposan for breakfast. But we were called back by the two men who helped us check-in. They informed us that international flights requires passengers to board 30mins before flight! O no... had they not told us that, we would have ate breakfast, and delayed the flight, or worse... missed it! - God works in mysterious ways...



Nias Team photo at Medan Airport



It's time to bid farewell to Indonesia.... The journey has been long, 13days in total. We had our fair share of joy, excitement, times of desperation, disappointment, regret, fulfillment. Such feelings never wears off, and will be sweet memories to stay. We boarded our Budget carrier, and waved off Indonesia.



Yes, we are going back...

Throughout the almost two hour flight, memories of the trip overwhelmed my mind... But something stood out from all. The lack of sleep. If i could, i would have slept throughout the flight!. Anyway... we are all in good spirits.. knowing that we have accomplished our mission.

~some photos taken onboard

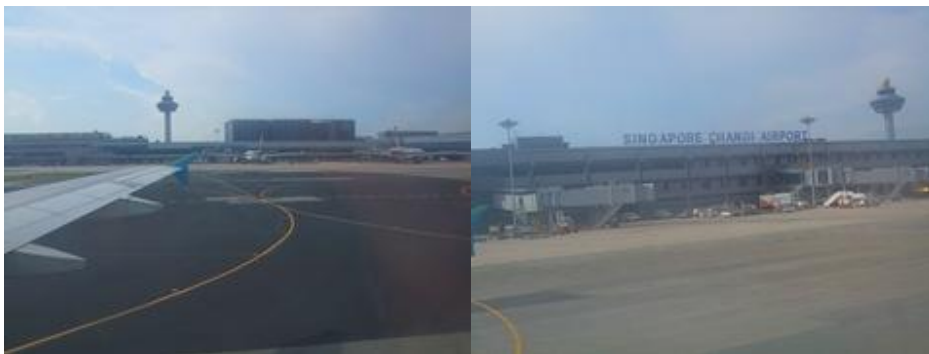


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Touchdown Singapore~



It feels really amazing to be back in Singapore. Although it was only 13 days, i miss Singapore so much. Peering out of the cabin window, the words SINGAPORE CHANGI AIRPORT is a welcoming sign - telling me... welcome home my child.



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~And guess who fetched us at the airport!



Who are those people? They seem so strangely familiar... Pastor Alvin, Jenny, Daniel, Eileen, Pearlyn and Andreas came to receive us. We were all so grateful that they had took time off to receive us at the airport =) There's just too many things which we want to tell them, yet.. at the same time, even if we had the abundance of words, it can never be conveyed fully. It has to be experienced.

Had a light meal at the cafeteria before leaving for our homes. The Nias team concluded our trip with a short debrief and experience sharing, AND of course prayer.

It's both a joy and a privilege to be part of this mission team as we recall the good and bad times we had throughout the trip. Even though conditions in Nias has been tough, we have managed to endure through this journey together with God's Grace.

Our God is Faithful, as seen in Isaiah 41:10 'Fear not, For I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes I will help you, I will uphold you with My Righteous right hand.' Fear not He says because there isn't a mountain too high, or a valley too low for Him to conquer. Fear not because we can find strength in Him. Fear not.'

With this, we've concluded our trip to Nias. May we stay strong and focus throughout our walk with Christ. Not how fast we walk, run or sprint, but how loyal and faithful we are to the cause of Christ, and we will never know where is the finishing line until we meet Christ face to face. Till that day, we shall always be good stewards and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. For where our treasures are, our hearts will be. In Christ alone shall we place our hearts.

*Final Words: Something's growing in me. It must be the seed which Jesus has planted in my heart.
May it flourish to bear His fruits.*

Posted by Zhihong