

Called to Serve

Interesting Facts:

Wherever you go in Sabah you will spot huge palm oil plantations. Palm oil helps to fuel the economy for local and foreign investors but unfortunately much of some of the worlds most diverse jungle/wildlife is disappearing due to the high demand of palm oil.

Look at my blog online for full stories and photographs!

Semester 1 Exams

May 8-14 were the dates scheduled for first semester exams. Each day students were tested on a different subject. May 14 is when all students took their English exams. Exams are typically 1.5 hours. When students are finished they are free to go home for the day.

The Good Samaritan Home, Keningau, Sabah, Malaysia

Subject Themed Weeks

Bahasa Melayu and English Week

TGSH has a subject themed week for the following subjects: Bahasa Melayu, English, Science and Mathematics.

Activities for the subject typically start on Wednesday and go through Friday.

For Bahasa Melayu Week (March 13-15) students from each grade participated in story telling, reading and putting together sentences.

For English Week (April 10-12) students learned new songs, played Bingo, participated in a Spelling Bee, Acted out action words, quizzed each on animals and their noises and took a quiz to test their English knowledge.



Class Glory (Year 6) waiting for a word to spell for the Spelling Bee

Retreat to Thailand

May 4-8, 2013

The YAGM Malaysia crew headed to Thailand for four days on retreat. We spent time at a retreat center for Christian Missionaries serving in Asia.

The Theme for this retreat was ACTION. We spent one afternoon at the New Life center which helps and supports young ethnic minority women who are at risk for or have been trafficked in Thailand, Burma, China and Laos.

Here I learned that in Thailand even if you are not a citizen, you are still able to attend government schools and universities. My thoughts instantly went to my school in Malaysia which exists because the students there are not citizens and have no where else to go for education.

Mother's Day and Teacher's Day

May 21, 2013- Celebration at TGSH

Students put together dances and songs with actions to celebrate Mother's Day and Teacher's Day. I somehow got to be the MC for the special day and scrambled up until the last minute preparing what to say in Malay. Students gave their mothers flowers and many blessings and thanks for all that they do. It was really a spectacular sight. Family is hands down the most important part of this culture, so there were many grateful children who wanted nothing more to show their love and thanksgiving to their mothers and teachers.

Murut Wedding "Kampung Style"



Picture with the Bride and Groom (top) and cousins in traditional clothes



Murut Wedding- Picture of what would be the equivalent of a reception

I was really excited to go to a wedding in a Kampung about two hours from my house. The week of the wedding we also received a new visitor from Korea whom we quickly invited to join in on the adventure. Nam Dae, my new Korean friend, sat with me at the wedding and we talked about how we didn't really understand what was happening.

For example: We sat near the bride and groom and we noticed that people kept bringing them sugar or packs of cigarettes. I'm still trying to understand the gifts-- so far I can make it out to be that there is some kind of a barter system when someone gets married. The bride's family provides gifts for every member of the groom's family, but in order to take the gifts, you must first give an assortment of items to the bride's family. It's rather complicated.

For the family to take a gift from the bride they must first give a collection of 5 different things.

1. 50-200 Ringgit (Malaysian currency)
2. 10 sarong (traditional clothing with an abundance of uses)
3. 3 tajau (vases)
4. 4 sets of hanging beads (shown in the photo on the top left next to the bride and groom)
5. 1 gift of your choosing

Korean Mission Team Renovations and Paradise Mission

The first week of April brought with it some visitor's from Korea. Nam Dae, who was with us until the 22nd of May, and a pastor from the congregation that sponsors our school. They worked hard for four days putting in tile floors in 4 classrooms, the library, the computer room and two guest rooms. This left the teachers with a week where it was very difficult to teach. As a result we planned a sports day! It was a lot of fun!



Games outside during renovations

dance and see the different ways people use their gifts for God.

On the right there is a picture of the ladies of the Paradise Mission Team who came to our church and school to share their dancing. They also wore some traditional dresses. It was a treat for our students to watch them



Traditional Korean dress and dance



Students carrying food for school down the path



The path after a good rain



Students carrying rice and other food for school down the path

The Path Traveled

If you don't look closely, you won't see the path that leads to the kampung that marks the home of our school. The path actually just continues on from an average bus stop. In the mornings you will find orang kampung (village people) waiting here for mini buses, pick-up trucks or even lorries to climb into by the masses on their way to work.

The path is narrow and on both sides there are looming walls of tall thick grass. When someone walks in the other direction you often find yourself stepping into the grass to let them walk on by. The path is strewn with rocks and boulders of all shaped and sizes, some are jagged and some are smooth and slippery when wet. When it rains the path is difficult to navigate and many children just trudge through the murky water that marks the way. Others try to break the tall grasses and lay them down to protect their shoes or slippers. For those who are barefoot, it's unlikely to phase them. The path leads the way down a slope at first and then eventually to a bridge. The bridge is long and it sways. There are boards that are broken and some that just don't fit. There is water below, some days brown from rain, and some days rather beautiful, once you get past all of the plastic and rubbish floating about. The path finds refuge for many animals, from small kittens I want to take home with me, to smelly dogs and big cows with pointy horns.

The people that walk the path are varied. Small students finding their way to school with their friends, Adults walking to the bus stop to go to work or to the market. Korean Missionaries, teachers, church members and even police officers find their way here at times. If you happen to be around in the morning, chances are you will spot some men carrying massive bags of beras (uncooked rice) or lada (small chilli peppers), students helping to carry the day's food for school, a young man or two carrying a rooster or a chicken (I learned cock fighting is a big thing here). In the afternoon you will likely spot kids hiding along the path or chasing you on the path just to say 'goodbye', 'hello' or 'good morning' (no matter what time of day it is). One man has a bucket tied behind the seat of his bicycle with fresh fish to sell to the people in the kampung and if you happen to be walking the dirt paths at the right time you might run into the man who has fixed a grill to the back of his bicycle and goes around in the late afternoon to sell satay. In the afternoon the path will be less traveled as most people will be inside hiding from the heat of the midday sun. Those who dare go about do so with umbrellas.

I've come to find this path absolutely beautiful in the variety it is graced with. When I walk this path I know it will lead me to a place where I am welcomed and embraced to be with students and teachers whom I love and who love me in return.

I'm on the Web!

ashley-in-malaysia.blogspot.com

As of May 24 TGSB will go on a two week semester break.
Semester II will begin on June 9th.

Prayer Requests

Mr. Nam Dae as he travels back home to Korea.

Students and their families as they are on holiday break.

Teachers for rest and rejuvenation.



Students following me to school on a Saturday morning.