



### **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (Day 1)**

Today is only day 1 of the mission trip and looking back, there is already so much to thank God for.

**Thank God for Kenneth Leow and his family**, who had graciously opened their house to allow the whole team to stay over the night before our departure for Wangsa Maju. It was a good opportunity for the whole team to come together to brush up on our mission trip preparations, check in with one another and to set our hearts and minds right just before we embarked on this journey.

**Thank God for the youths from the Tuao mission team** who came over to lend their support and offer words of encouragement. We were reminded to trust in the power of prayer and rely not ourselves, but on God for guidance as we continued on our mission trip. But to do that we first had to set our hearts and minds right with God as it says in James 5 :16 "... the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

**Thank God for bringing all of us safely to Wangsa Maju** and for blessing us with a smooth journey. With all the stories about bus drivers falling asleep at the wheel and car hijacking by road 'pirates' it was truly a relief for us ( and our parents ) to know that we have made it to our destination safely.

**Thank God for the yummy Ampang Yong Tau Foo** lunch that we enjoyed en route to the church.

**Thank God for the team who have spontaneously stepped up, out of their comfort zone.** We arrived at the church around late afternoon and were warmly received by the Wangsa Maju brothers and sisters. We started off with ice breaker games to get to know the youths over there and pretty soon it was time for the cell group night at Wangsa Maju. Cell group night is where youths from Wangsa Maju as well as student visitors come together every Wednesday night for group discussions and a short lecture from brother Dino. It was encouraging to see the whole team actively take the initiative to mingle around with the other youths and to get to know the other visitors.

**Thank God for His guidance** as the team led group discussions during the cell group night at the Wangsa Maju Church of Christ. Leading in group discussions was a first for some of us and it was heartening to see the team step up to the task without complaining or pushing away their responsibilities. Thank God for guiding the discussion leaders and for the heartfelt sharing from the Wangsa Maju youths and the visitors.

**Thank God for the kind hospitality of the Wangsa Maju brethren** who have warmly received us into the church and for opening up the church for all of us to stay in.

All in all its been a blessed day for all of us and I pray that God will continue to look over us and guide us as we continue on this mission trip. Thank you Lord! ☺

Prepared by Bernice Loh

### **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (Day 2)**

\_Joel woke up reinvigorated after a peaceful night of rest but freezing. The accommodations far exceeded his and the Wangsa team's expectations and they were well pleased as there was air con.

That morning, Joel and the Wangsa team were daunted by the prospect of evangelising to the university students of TAR. Some team members including Joel were plagued with fear of rejection by the university students. The hearty breakfast of nasi lemak certainly didn't help the Wangsa Team, especially Joel, as it left him feeling bloated, his breath unmistakably stinky. However, the team was showered in encouragement from brother Winston, Dino, brother Tom and brother Gan. Their greatest Encourager however was from God through his teachings and words of comfort ever-present in the Bible.

Joel and the wangsa team left for the university campus inspired. Although apprehensive at first, Joel and the wangsa team were emboldened by the courage they saw in each other in spreading God's word. Slowly but surely Joel and the team let go of their inhibitions, realising that what was at stake was more than being

embarrassed but the potential salvation of lost souls. Joel's and the team's effort was blessed by God and he allowed 264 people to respond to their invitation to join an activity organised by the wangsa church of Christ.

Joel and the wangsa team were feeling tired but strangely pleased from the outcome of the day's exertions by mid afternoon. Whatever feelings of tiredness experienced by Joel and the wangsa team quickly evaporated later in the day when they joined their brothers from Puchong church of Christ in fellowship. Joel and the wangsa team were overcome by the hospitality of their hosts and revelled in the joy of being able to share their songs and skits with their Puchong brethren.

Sadly, the fellowship with their Puchong brethren had to come to an end late in the night. Joel and the wangsa team wearily made it back to their residence at wangsa church of Christ filled with thanksgiving to God in their hearts for keeping each and every one of them safe during the day's activities and allowing for so many to respond to their invitations.

Joel and the wangsa team snuggled comfortably in their makeshift beds to rest and prepare for what surely would be an eventful day. All was well.

Prepared by Joel Loh

### **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (Day 3)**

I remember that when I was a small boy, and perhaps now as well, I always had problems with self confidence. Growing up in the family as an only child, the only people I had for company on a consistent basis would be my mum and dad. So I more or less grew up as a lonely child, interested in books, wild dreams, flights of fancy, but never in people. I always recall having had problems in opening up to other people – like after I told them my name the conversation would suddenly die off because I had major problems in thinking of what to ask them about next.

There was a storytelling competition in church that everyone in church was signing up for, so I somehow got to take part in it. On the day itself I was due to tell the story of the good Samaritan. The mike was taller than me. Everyone's eyes were on me – which was immensely problematic for someone who always kept to himself. There was distinct tingling sensation on my cheeks. Helplessness. Stuttering. Not knowing how to begin although the many hours of practice I pumped into story suddenly vanished into nothingness. I practically saw the anticipation on people's evaporate as I launched into a chorus of once upon a time, followed by an almost incessant string of 'and then' and 'uh...ah'.

I remember also that somewhere in the middle of the story I felt that I ought to do a better job, even though I was embarrassed, way out of my zone, and stuttering like crazy, because I was telling my audience a message that came from God. The solution was surprisingly simple – to imagine the events of the story like a video and then describe what I 'saw' in my mind. That got me through the story.

In so many ways coming for the mission trip was an exercise similar to telling a story in front of the audience that intimidated me many years back. The memories evoked of my past somehow strike a chord with the many ways in which I had been stretched today, physically and spiritually.

This morning we were given the opportunity to bless the community by helping to clean up the area surrounding the church. One of the highlights of the day was when we stumbled upon this noxious heap of leaf litter, plastic bags, funny smelling brown matter and cigarettes – a rarity in pristine Singapore – that we proceeded to clear with the surgical gloves and garbage trash bags. I felt that what we did was really effective, not so much in clearing the rubbish lining the streets (which I have a feeling increases in the presence of a bunch of enthusiastic cleaners) but in the impression that we made on the community.

We were all stretched physically by exertion, but what challenged us more was the fact that people in the community were paying attention to us as we cleaned the streets. It was the kind of actions carried out by this team that drew interested stares from nondescript pakciks sipping the tarik and discussing soccer at the coffeeshops. Some approached us to ask about why we would be so civic-minded as to step forth to help this community, some had the impression that we were doing research for a school project. I guess it led to some awkward moments in which we were unable to fully make use of the situation – for me being inept in handling these kinds of situations was an experience that made me feel ill at ease, wanting to share so much more of God's word through this small opportunity but lacking the courage to do so. But God provided me with the courage and endurance to continue doing what I set out to do.

Later on in the afternoon we were all tired and headed back up to the church building to rest for awhile. After a fulfilling lunch, we were left to our own devices so I went to help pack clothing for the Burmese children who would be coming for the VBS that day. Yet another instance in which I was led right out of my comfort zone transpired. I needed to choose clothes for Lu Lu Aung, a 12 year old girl if I remember correctly, and her family, as well as for Caleb, a 13 year old guy and his family. Me being terrible with estimation and consistently unable to differentiate between girl's clothes and unisex wear, I struggled through heaps of clothes and couldn't find something suitable for the families.

God provided me with friends and loads of helpful advice – it soon evolved into an enjoyable experience with everyone helping to pack for their own families, simultaneously throwing clothes suitable for the families of others across the room, akin to a flea market. I felt that I had help when I really needed it – in the form of Ryan as a makeshift model for clothes that had interesting proportions, Derek and Louis meticulously sifting through clothes and organizing them into neat stacks, Jocelyn and Bernice telling us about who we were packing for, Chen Yi the expert on the clothes he contributed, Auntie Nancy for her superb estimation skills based on her 2 kids sizes, Gabriel Gillian Joel Kenneth for making all the terribly funny comments that made the work a lot easier.

Night came, Uncle Winston gave us a truly enriching lesson on how we could make wise choices about our career in future, choosing to invest instead of speculate in things that truly possess value and not just being very sensitive to changes in terms of price. The genuine opportunity for sharing came after the talk when we could talk to the KTAR people who had come for the talk to find out more about their career options, and convince them about coming to church.

I talked to Chong Yi, a guy who is 19 this year, attends KTAR, studies sports science and has been to WMCOOC numerous times but has yet to accept the Christ as his Saviour and Lord. Personally, I noticed that he was not really talking to anyone at that point in time and decided to sit beside him during the talk so that I would get a chance to know more about him, and perhaps try to invite him to the Singspiration and service that were taking place over the weekend.

At the end of the talk, I distinctly recall not being sure of how to start the conversation with him. But as God would have it, he asked me about what I was studying currently, and what plans I had when I came into the working world. So we began with the secular, then it happened so naturally that I myself was surprised in the way in which the conversation progressed, because I am not one who can get others to open up easily in one to one settings. Eventually it was time for him to go home, and I was glad that I managed to tell him about my faith, why I worshipped in PPCOC, what made me choose Christ, and squeeze in a timely reminder for him to come for the Singspiration the next day.

I never expected being able to come so far in knowing more about this guy – and also sharing this message of my faith, and why I chose this path, with someone I had gotten to know barely one day before. I thank God for giving me the courage to step forth into areas that I had never done so before in – it is these chances when bestowed upon us that yield unexpected, bountiful returns if we should choose to embrace them wholeheartedly.

The day's events have truly been about me stepping out of my comfort zone.

It is an exercise in faith when we step out of our comfort zones. I learnt today that we have nothing to fear whatsoever, just that this desire to step forth will present us with enhanced abilities to serve God and to glorify His name. I felt God working through me as I learnt to open up, which is totally unlike my character, to this stranger I had barely known, and at the end of it all I felt deeply encouraged by his response, and the presence of the Lord in making of all this possible. Perhaps it can be best encapsulated in God's promise to us, marking the end of Matthew – He is with us, always, to the end of the age.

Prepared by Samuel Lim

## **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 (Day 4)**

Today was a totally enjoyable day. I must say that I had a lot of fun. In the morning everyone did their usual routine of brushing teeth and queuing for the toilet and a breakfast of egg and tuna sandwiches. Then there was the morning devotion and singing.

After that uncle Yong Wee showed us a video of a brief summary of the Myanmar refugees' life. I was really touched by their faith, because even though the circumstances they were in were not very good, they still trusted in God and held their Sunday services without fail.

A rough idea of what their living conditions are like is that they used the same water to drink and to bathe; they have to live in forests to hide from the Malaysian army and await death to come. They live in tattered old huts that they probably built themselves.

The Myanmar kids came not long after we had finished watching the video. Everyone in the team made an effort to mingle with the kids and I think everyone had a lot of fun. I think the kids really enjoyed the whole VBS program.

I learnt quite a lot from the kids, and one example is that we should always be happy with whatever we have. They were happy with very simple gifts like yoyos, kites and key chains.

Then lunchtime came and the kids had their full. There wasn't enough food for both the kids and the team, so we had doughnuts and chicken rice later in the day. There were 3 extra boxes of food, and I have to commend all the guys for their selflessness; all of them were willing to let the girls eat first even though they were hungry as well, and I think that they really displayed God's love through this simple and kind action.

After the kids happily left with the clothes packed for them, everyone took a break. Some of us went over to the heart center to put up decorations for tomorrow's visit, and singspiration started at 7.30.

After that everyone went their separate ways to the home stay.

I think that today was a really tiring yet enjoyable experience. All of us had also learnt something from all the Myanmar kids, and thanks be to god that everything went smoothly!

Prepared by Gillian Chong

## **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 21st, 2008, Day 5**

Today is the Lord's Day! Everyone met at church for Sunday service and bible class after having breakfast with their home stay host. My home stay was with the Shee family. They brought us to an Indian food stall near their house for breakfast, and then drove off to church.

The church was filled with chatter, and lots of excitement, especially among PP youth's as we were conducting the Sunday service ourselves. They had bible class before their service, and had only 1 service. Uncle Tom conducted the bible class. Everyone attended the same bible class conducted by Uncle Tom, as the congregation was small. Sunday service was after bible class, and thanks to God, all the youths who were serving were able to conduct the service smoothly, although it was all their first time.

Everyone ate catered lunch at church, and visited IJN after that. All of us followed our respective home stay hosts to IJN. The Wangsa Maju blue dolphins sang 2 songs and performed 1 skit of the popular "3 Billy goats gruff". Their performance was very interesting and entertaining, and I'm sure the kids and parents who were watching enjoyed it as much as I did. Our PP mission team performed 2 songs, "My Life Is in You", and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing". We also performed a modified version of the "disease" skit. We did the skit slower and softer than we usually do, as it was a hospital and we were afraid that the children may not understand it. Had light refreshments after that, together with some patients and their parents. We talked to them, and offered colouring materials for the children.

We walked around the hospital, and visited many patients. We talked to them, and prayed for them. We even sung songs for them, as an encouragement, and to show that God loves them. It was a very touching and fulfilling experience for me, and it was my first time going to IJN for evangelism. The biggest obstacle all of us encountered was the difference in language. Few of the patients could speak English, as most of them spoke either Chinese or Malay. I encountered difficulties when trying to talk to them, as we had problem understanding each other. Still, all of us tried our best, and I'm thankful to God for opening their hearts, for allowing us to speak to them and not rejecting us straight away, even to some of the Muslims. I'm sure that our visit to IJN has touched many people's lives.

All of us followed our respective home stay hosts back home. The Shee family brought me to a Chinese restaurant for dinner. Dinner was great, and I'm thankful for the hospitality of our home stay host. They had been really nice to us, always giving us as much as they could. Uncle Steven shared his devotion with us. 2 visitors joined us for the home stay, as both of them will be going to Fraser's hill for the Wangsa Maju church camp the next day.

I'm thankful for God's guidance in our mission trip, and for God to use us, and work in our lives. Praise the Lord!

Prepared by Gabriel Siew

## **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 22, 2008 (Day 6)**

Today was feeling pretty excited because this is the day that we will be leaving for Frasers Hill and the start of a 2.5 days camp with the Wangsa Maju church.

As usual, woke up quite early blurry eyed and stoned face as 5 people were going to fight for the toilet. Had my good refreshing morning bath and was out packing my bags as we were leaving the Chongs at 7am to the Indian roti coffee shop opposite the Wangsa Maju church for breakfast. Before we left, we were figuring how we could squeeze 9 people and a whole lot of bags into a 7-seater car but thank God we managed to squeeze everyone and everything into the car and we were all literally squashed sardines.

We boarded the bus near the church at 9am and had ample time to rest on the bus. We reached the gap at around 12pm, since the gap was a 1-way direction and an even hour, it was a down-ward traffic and so we had to wait until 1pm to drive up. During the waiting time, we got out of the bus to enjoy the cool air, sang a few hymns and had a devotion by Chen Yi about focusing more on things that are eternal and not temporary. We reached the Methodist House at around 1.45pm, checked-in into our respective rooms and proceeded to the dining room for lunch.

After lunch, we had ice-breaker games organised by the Wangsa Maju COC youth. We introduced ourselves and had a couple of games and it was of great fun. We then had a briefing about the rules and regulations by brother Dino, after which we were split into groups for the camp. We then started to plan and practice skits or songs for tomorrow's group presentation and had a group sharing on "Growing To Be Like Jesus".

We were all called to the dining room for dinner and had another sumptuous meal. After dinner, we sang a few hymns and played chariot organised by the PP youth. After which we had a short devotion by uncle Winston on "A Mind Like Jesus" and then a lesson by Tom Goracke on "Bonding in Heart".

It was a really eventful and fun day. Thank God for the safe journey that we arrived at Frasers Hill safely. I would like to thank the Chong family for their warmth and hospitality and for opening their house for Chen Yi, Louis, Gillian, Rachel and I and claiming us to be their temporary "adoptive children" and also giving us an unforgettable experience. I'm grateful to the Frasers Hill camp organising committee too for the hard work and making this a really fun and beneficial trip for the PP mission team.

Prepared by Jocelyn Yee

### **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 23rd, 2008, (Day 7)**

As usual, we woke up around 6.30 a.m., had our personal quiet time and went for breakfast at 7.30 a.m. Following that, we went for a nature walk. The theme of the nature walk was "Finding God Thru' Nature" so our task was to collect things that we could find during the nature walk into plastic bottles and relate what we had found to God. The nature walk led us to a waterfall where we had lots of fun pushing each other into the cold water and "surviving the waterfall". Then, Uncle Tom gave his second lesson on Bonding in Heart at a nearby shed, letting us know how awesome God's creations were. After that, we went back to the campsite to have our lunch followed by a devotion shared by Chen Yi called A Heart like Jesus and another lesson by Uncle Tom called Knowing Jesus intimately.

At night, we were all doing last minutes preparation for our skits and presentations and at 8 p.m., the presentation began. From the presentation, we could see many different types of creatures created by the hands of God and how God has equipped each creature with a few unique abilities. Next were the skits. All the groups presented interesting and hilarious skits. However, we were marked base on originality, impact and appeal of the skits. Philippines emerged as the winning team. After the presentation, Uncle Yong Wee ended the day with a closing prayer. However, the day was not over for the youths. After debrief, all the youths gathered for a session of affirmation before going to bed.

I feel that this mission trip has brought me closer to God and has taught me a lot of valuable lessons that I can apply to my life.

Prepared by Clarence Lim

### **Wangsa Maju Mission: December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008, (Day 8)**

I'm thankful to God for giving me this opportunity to come on my very first mission trip. At first I was a little scared as I did not expect what to come. During this mission trip, I have observed all the members of our team as well as those other members of the Wangsa and Puchong church and tried to learn and follow their example in doing the various activities.

Like the Campus Visit to KTHA where we were suppose to recruit students to come for English classes organized by the wangsa church and uncle Winston's Career talk on Friday night, I was hesitating at the moment on how to start and which students to start with. But when I saw how some of the youths went all out to talk to the students with enthusiasm, I was encouraged and motivated to do the same as well. God used them as an example to give me confidence to talk to those students. And after several attempts it came naturally and same goes to all the other activities such as the Myanmar VBS and the visit to heart patients center. So I think God has made each one of us as encouragement for the others in different areas according to our different abilities, through our actions and words.

The youths were really making an effort to cheerfully participate in the activities whether is it the skits, songs and talking to new people. Thank God for the confidence and the courage that God has given all of us to be able to share the God's word to them to the young kids and to the teenagers and adults. Before the mission trip, uncle yong wee has asked us on a rating of 1-10 with 10 as the most bonded, how bonded we are, many of us felt we were not bonded enough. But through this mission trip, after working together, praying together, talking together openly, I guess all the members have been closer and more bonded when sharing the same spirit to do God's work.

Given the fact that the wangsa maju is a small congregation, their commitment to God outnumbers the membership of the church. During our stay at their church, they welcomed us with much warmth and hospitality. They reach out to people from their surroundings like the KTHA students, discovering their needs and trying to fit in something about God in it. In this case was to organize an English class and using scriptures of the Bible as the English learning source. I guess starting a mission could just be starting with our surroundings. Like when you're in the bus, on the train, wherever you go, seeing someone and sharing with them something about God is considered a mission accomplished.

The daily and nightly devotions by the youth guys were really helpful during the trip as each of them constantly reminded us of our purpose of this mission trip and God seems to be speaking to us and giving us encouragement from time to time. Uncle Yong wee, Winston, Tom and the other uncles from the wangsa church's lessons helped us to know the importance for us to have a closer relationship with God. I guess the youths, and myself have learnt about contentment and the joy in serving from the mission trip on the whole. I'm glad that I have experienced much from this mission trip and I thank God for that.

Prepared by Rachel Teow

