

OCTOBER 2009

"Remember His marvelous works which He has done..." - Psalms 105:5

A YEAR IN REVIEW...

It all started just about a year ago. Jen and I returned from our Honeymoon not even knowing where we were going to live. Within a matter of weeks the Lord had provided us with a house, and with a little loving care, it became our home.

I had been visiting Himamaylan on the weekends before



our wedding teaching a number of Bible studies, but nothing permanent. Within weeks of settling into Himamaylan we were asked to begin a Sunday Bible study in the mountains. The desire from the beginning was to church plant where there were no existing churches (**Roman 15:20-21**) and the mountains (*Bukid*) fit that description perfectly!

Our first Sunday service was November 9th, 2008. Our church building was a bamboo and nipa poultry complete with 100 or so chickens, handmade scrap wood benches, and a



stump for a pulpit. We really had no idea what would happen and who, if anyone, would come. We were amazed when about 40 people showed up that first Sunday. The only thing we needed was a name. In a stroke of creativity the name Simabahan sa Bukid seemed to fit the church best.

Loosly translated into English... Church on the mountain :-)

At first most of the church was made up of kids. It seemed we were as much a children's ministry as we were a church. The Lord blessed us with a couple of amazing volunteers who faithfully began to love and teach the "little ones" who came out every week to hear the Word.



Shortly after that first Sunday the family jeep ended up becoming the church bus. It was not really intentional, we were just driving up to church from our home and happened to pick up anyone along the way who wanted a ride. We would also send the jeep further up the mountain to pick up some relatives who lived in San Antonio. The result was the Simbahan Jeep, with service running from Himamaylan city to San Antonio, started running every Sunday morning.

Over the past year we have had the opportunity to have numerous outreaches. Our first outreach into the community was Christmas caroling after Sunday service. Then in February we had a Valentines dinner for the couples at the church. What seemed an impossible task, turning a poultry into a romantic setting for a couples dinner, by Jesus grace became a fantastic





reality! It presented a blessed opportunity to encourage the couples from the church in a Biblical perspective of a Christ centered marriage. In May we were able to host a 2 day Vacation Bible School in each of the 3

communities that we minister in (*Calasa, Lagtipon, and*

San Antonio). In all we had about 200 kids come out and hear the message of Jesus' love

from **John 3:16**. The Sunday after VBS we had all the

kids come to church for a graduation service. Most

recently we had a church baptism and picnic at the local beach. The scene was one to never forget as 70 people loaded up in the back of a sugar cane truck and bounced their

way down the

mountain. Having

shared the purpose of

baptism from **Romans**

6:4 Jen and I walked out into the water with an open

invitation for anyone to follow. Over 40 people

publically professed their faith in Jesus through baptism

that afternoon!



The church continues to grow and we now teach 10 Bible studies every week. The Lord has opened up doors for us to start a radio station, teach at a local Bible college, teach in the local public high school, teach a Men's and Women's Bible study, start a youth ministry with some of the local teenagers (*a group of about 10 girls attend every Bible study every week*), as well as an every growing children's ministry. "*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.*" - **Ephesians 3:20** The Lord truly done way beyond anything we would ever have imagined! Looking back it's been an amazing year watching the marvelous things that Lord has done.

RADIO MINISTRY UPDATE...

We are getting great feedback from Christian Radio Himamaylan. Apparently a lot of people are now tuning in and listening. The pastor at the local Baptist church asked the congregation if they were listening and he shared most everyone raised their hands. We are still neck deep in the red tape of the NTC (*National Telecommunications Commission*) trying to work out all the licensing issues. As best as we can figure right now we may be wading through the bureaucracy for a least a few more years! The blessing is we do now have a Christian lawyer who is helping us with all the paper work.

ANNIVERSARY...

Jen and I had a great anniversary! We had a candle light dinner at the Planta Hotel where we were married. We were also able to use some frequent flyer miles to spend a few days in Hong Kong with Jen's parents.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For the Bible Studies (*10 of them*) - for the Word to change lives
- For the radio station - favor with the NTC and licensing
- Upcoming outreaches (*VBS, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, Team from US*)
- For our marriage - that we constantly grow closer to Jesus and each other
- Still praying for a full quiver - **Psalms 127:5**
- For flexibility and humility - that we would both be full of Jesus!



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