

The S.E.A. Side

Ministry in SouthEast Asia

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Meet the Wood Family

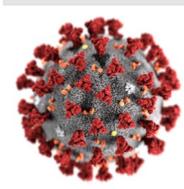
Matthew, Kali, Laurel, Eleanor, and Caroline serve in Medan, Indonesia with LCMS International. Matthew supports *The Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church (GKLI)*, by mentoring pastors, providing continuing education, and overseeing translation projects.



More Updates at theseaside.asia!

Small Catechism Workshop

Read and see more pictures from the Small Catechism Workshop on the Mentawai Islands.



COVID-19 Update

Read a little bit more about the situation here in Medan and our plan now and moving forward.

Last Day of Language Class

Our official classes have come to an end. We still have to schedule a final evaluation. Life is going to be so different!



Mentawai Small Catechism Workshop

From February 25–28 I traveled to the Islands of Mentawai. Specifically I went to Tua Pejat on the Island of Sipora to walk through the Small Catechism with ten pastors and 70 church leaders. We were able to discuss all six chief parts of the Small Catechism. This was a tremendous opportunity to get to know the leadership of these new GKLI congregations on the Mentawai islands. As we worked through the Small Catechism they had fantastic insights and questions, which taught me and the GKLI leadership a little about their context. The most lively discussion centered around prayer. They had very practical concerns with how to model and teach prayer to their people. Another highlight was that I led worship including preaching completely in Indonesian. I still used a translator as we discussed the Small Catechism.



Prayers

COVID-19 Update

According to the Indonesian Government there are 514 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 48 reported deaths in Indonesia as of March 22nd. Up to five of the cases are in the Province of North Sumatra where we live. The reaction here in Medan, the city we call home, is much like the rest of the world. Schools have been closed. The streets are quiet. The people with whom I am in regular contact are concerned, but not panicked. So far there has been no run on toilet paper or any other essentials (except for hand sanitizer but that was always a little bit hard to find here).

We are all currently healthy and staying at home.

We are thankful that our home provides plenty of space and a yard where the girls can play. Fortunately, the work that lies in the immediate future for the ministry here can be accomplished through working at home. I will be spending a lot of time proof reading and formatting the Indonesian Hymnal (BIL). We will have to delay the podcast that was in the works as it requires travel to Jakarta. Thankfully, we did not have any conferences or large group meetings planned. Of course we will not be able to plan any new conferences or workshops until this global pandemic passes.

More at theseaside.asia

Thanksgiving

- Completion of Language Classes
- Continued Health.
- Safe travels through the month of February.

The blessings that allow us to be home and work from home.

Supplication

- Continued language learning.
- Peace and patience amidst the panic of stress and self-isolation.
- To form friendships with Indonesian people.





One of the many different varieties of fresh fruit we are blessed to try here in Indonesia. This is called Salak or snakeskin fruit.



Rains here are frequent, which is o.k. because the girls enjoy their rainy day fun.



KIDS'

CORNER

Laurel, Eleanor, and Caroline are happy to have us at home during the day. Laurel is doing marvelous with her school work. She loves to read and read and read. Eleanor just turned three years old and received a balance bike for her birthday. We are having some challenges with potty training, but now that we have an opportunity to be home all day hopefully that will help. Caroline is starting to sit up on her own, play with toys, and has started to eat solid foods. They're all growing up so fast! Self-isolation has been tough on the girls. They miss seeing their friends at weekly playdates and going to playgroup. Luckily, they still have each other to play with.



Our last day of Bahasa Indonesia class. It took almost 10 months to finish 6 months of lessons, but we had a baby in the middle of that time.



Happy 3rd Birthday to Eleanor! It's hard to see, but the cupcakes are arranged in the shape of the number 3 and decorated with Paw Patrol toys.

A Year in Review

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

We recently celebrated our one year anniversary of leaving the U.S. Over the last year we have learned a few lessons, which I'd like to highlight.

Joy: We have found joy in many of the small things here, such as: finding new Indonesian food we enjoy, hearing our girls speak a few Indonesian words, and making connections between words in the language which helps us to remember them.

We've also had some great big joys this year: the safe and healthy birth of Caroline, Laurel has learned to read, and Matt preached a sermon completely in Bahasa Indonesia.

Peace: We have prayed for and received peace as we moved away from America. While the girls sometimes comment about how they wish they were still there, Matt and I have been given peace about our decision to move to Indonesia.

Trying to juggle teaching Laurel 1st grade, having a baby, keeping an eye on Eleanor and learning a new language, I (Kali) have changed my expectations of what life should look like for us. Homecooked dinners just couldn't happen every

night this year. We ordered pizza or Burger King more than we should have and that's okay. Life is very different this year and we have been given peace about it.

Patience: Patience with language learning because it takes time. Patience with our children who are still adapting to our new life outside of America. Patience with each other as we juggled fulltime language learning and fulltime vocations.

Kindness and Gentleness: We have learned to live in a constant state of forgiveness. Moving abroad has affected our children in many ways as well as ourselves. We have learned to treat each other with gentleness and kindness when we are feeling stressed or frustrated.

The Indonesian people have treated us with kindness and gentleness as well. In learning a new language, immersing ourselves in a new culture we have found that mistakes happen and we learned to accept them humbly and with a bit of laughter. For about 3 months we mispronounced the word "teach," pronouncing it as the word for "chase" and told many people that Matt was going to "chase" pastors instead of "teach" them. Indonesians have been kind and corrected us gently when we make mistakes in the language.

Faithfulness: We have learned not of our faithfulness, but God's faithfulness to us. His promises are no less true here in Indonesia as they were in America. This helps me change my perspective on our day to day life.

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~From Kali