

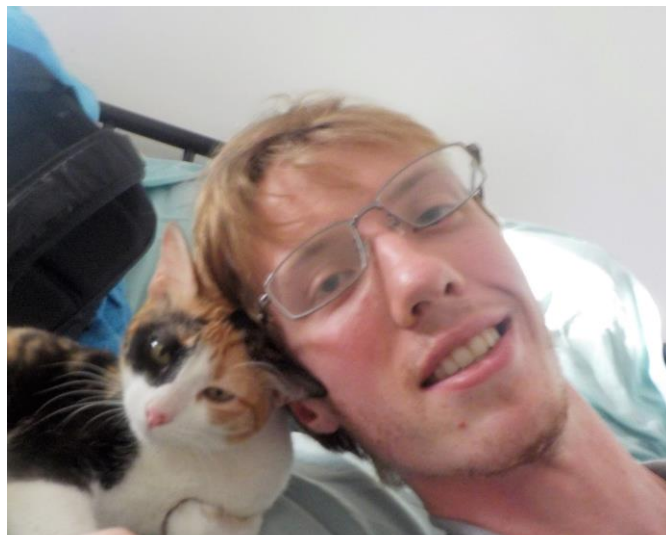
Dear friends,

April 03, 2017

Life in the Philippines continues to be an adventure! After March Break, the fourth quarter of the school year began. This gave me the opportunity to change things up a bit. For one thing, I intend to focus more on projects than tests this semester. Right now my students are working on their final project for the Old Testament unit. I gave them options on what to do for their project: a letter from a bible character, a journal entry, a cartoon, a parable, a devotion, or a movie script. Most of them opted for parable or cartoon. I've really enjoyed seeing their creativity as they apply what they've learned. I've also started beginning each class with a devotional based on Hebrews. My hope is that this will allow us to have more personal conversations about God than merely theoretical ones.

This past month I've been distracted by the struggles of living in a new country. A couple weeks ago we had our March Break (technically its Summer not Spring here so we don't really use the term "Spring Break.") Many of the teachers use this as an opportunity to go on vacation; however, as I've been so busy ever since I arrived, I decided my time would be best spent staying at home.

During spring break I discovered a few problems: 1) I have rats living in my house! At first I could just hear them in my walls but then I started to find evidence that they had been present in my kitchen cupboards. So one night I got up late at night and walked into my kitchen, spotting a massive rat sitting on my counter. I threw a shoe at it, knocking it onto the floor, but it ran away before I could do any more damage; 2) Only a couple days later, I noticed that my bedroom was being frequented by bees. This was less troubling than the rats, but still pretty frustrating; 3) The faucet attached to my washing machine had sprung a leak, causing my water bill to become much more expensive last month!



Me and my new roommate, Mimi

Fortunately, I was able to keep my sanity for God has blessed me with a very friendly and helpful community here at Faith Academy: 1) Someone from Faith came by and fixed my plumbing issues, nailed up the primary rat entrance, and sealed the suspected bee entrance; 2) Some friends of mine are moving back to the states and needed someone to take their cat for a year so she now lives with me as a rat deterrent; 3) Another friend helped me hire a helper to come clean my house each week. Most people here have helpers and isn't seen as extravagant or strange. Regardless, the concept made me uncomfortable so I resisted looking for one for quite some time. However, it helps provide jobs to people who need them and helps me keep hold of my sanity.

This weekend I got to watch the high school production of George Gershwin's "Crazy for You." It was fun to see what a great job the students did, even if I don't teach any of the students involved (but I will next year!) During the intermission I ran into my grade 6 students and they asked me to come sit with them for the rest of the musical. This was as entertaining as expected but also quite flattering that they actually want to spend time with their teacher outside of class.

Answers to prayers:

- This whole quarter I've struggled with engaging one of the boys in my Bible class. He would not pay attention in class, didn't hand in homework, and failed his tests. I talked to his father during parent-teacher conferences and he had no ideas what to do. However, during the first week back I had a breakthrough: We watched a video in class and some of my students asked if they could sit in front on the floor. After the video was over, I let them continue to sit there for the rest of class. This one boy I've been having problems with spent that class engaging with me and asking questions. Following this day, I relocated him to the centre of the front row of desks and he has continued to pay attention and involve himself in discussions.
- After floating between churches for my first couple months here, I've finally settled into one: Union Church of Manila. It's a non-denominational evangelical church that many of the other staff attend here. Recently, I've started attending its 10:30 traditional service. The time is less convenient than the earlier contemporary service but I really enjoy it and am glad to have a service I'm comfortable attending regularly.
- I began driving lessons this weekend! I hope to learn to drive quickly so I can get my licence and a vehicle this summer.
- I have finished up the application process for my 9G Missionary Visa! Now I just have to wait for it to arrive.
- I now know what classes I'm teaching next year: two periods of Grade 6 Bible and three periods of Grade 11 Bible! I'm excited and nervous to start teaching high school next year. Should be pretty different from what I'm used to.

Prayer Requests:

- During Spring Break, I had the opportunity to visit IGSL, a seminary here in Manila where a few of the other TeachBeyond missionaries work. One goal I've had for my time here in the Philippines is to find opportunities to involve myself in post-secondary Christian education. It doesn't look like there are any opportunities at IGSL currently but prayer for God's guidance in this area would be appreciated.
- We are currently wrapping up the Old Testament unit in my Bible class, after which we will move into discussing the inspiration of scripture and then finish up with salvation. Please pray that God speaks through me and helps these children grow in their love for him and his Word.
- I'm rather anxious in looking towards the end of the school year. Summer is still a mysterious entity looming in the distance. I intend to remain in Manila over the summer but I don't know what I'll be doing with my time; especially, as most of the other missionaries either return to the States or go on vacation over summer. Please pray that God shows me what he wishes me to do with this time.
- Faith Academy is still looking for a lot of new staff members for next year. Please pray that God provides the staff we need.

Thanks again for your prayer and support! I'm encouraged knowing you're there praying for me and am always happy to hear from you! Please let me know anyway I can remember you in my prayers.

God's Blessings,

Trevor Loken

My Mailing Address:

Trevor Loken
Faith Academy
MCPO Box 2016
0706 Makati City
Philippines

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TrevorPhilippines/>

Support Website: <https://give.teachbeyond.org/support/trevor-loken>

TeachBeyond Canada
2121 Henderson Hwy.
Winnipeg, MB, R2G 1P8
www.teachbeyond.org

TeachBeyond USA
PO Box 6248
Bloomington, IL 60108-6248