

Finnish Community's Family Camp

Himos, Finland, 27. July 2014



For the weekend of July 18th to 20th many families and individual brothers and sisters of our Finnish community headed to the Himos holiday village in the beautiful scenery of Lake-Finland to spend time as one unification family. Each family staying in their own cottage of the holiday village gave one the feeling of living in a miniature version of Cheon Il Guk. Brothers and sisters only needed to walk a few steps to visit each other or meet up for leisure activities.

On Friday afternoon most participants jumped onto a charter bus in Helsinki and could already get into holiday spirit by catching up with friends, playing games and sharing food during the three-hour bus ride. During the first evening most families settled in their cottages and tried to memorize which family lived in which of the identical cottages. Those 2nd gen who had spent most of the bus ride asking when we would be arriving, wasted no time and went for their first swim before memorizing their best friend's (and some not even their own) cottage number. Later

in the evening also those who had resisted the temptation to brush off the stiffness of sitting on the bus for three hours by jumping straight in the lake, warmed up the traditional Finnish sauna (each cottage having one built in) and went for a relaxing swim.

Next morning after breakfast in their cottage or in the restaurant everyone could get down to the day's fun activities such as hiking on the surrounding hills as couples or small groups, swimming in the lake right next to the village, taking a ride on a rowing boat or playing football on a small grass field. Since there was only little organized program offered, brothers and sisters could engage in these activities to their hearts' content. Especially the young (and some not so young) 2nd generation really took advantage of the hot weather and went swimming three or four times during the day. In the afternoon a parlour game session for all age groups was organized. We played games such the human knot, up-down-look and questions only. This session was

followed by the traditional Saturday night barbeque that everyone participated in. We had reserved our own fireplace and it felt very similar to Cheongpyeong during the Azalea festival; there was a warm feeling and everyone felt close to you due to both the good atmosphere and to it being very crowded. After brothers and sisters had enjoyed their sausages, corns and crowned the experience with some marshmallows, parents with small children could enjoy an evening walk as their children were watching the movie "Brave".

Since no one was particularly eager to spend their weekend feverishly trying to prepare a speech with deep and inspiring content for the community, we didn't have a traditional sermon on Sunday morning

but instead watched Rev. Young-hwi Kim's address to European members. It was a good source of inspiration for many of us and served as a lullaby for those few who had stayed up too late the previous night. After cleaning our cottages we still had time to swim, play cards and take sun before we got back on the bus. During the journey home the atmosphere in the bus was even livelier than on our way there as brothers and sisters continued playing games and even sang a few songs. When we arrived in Helsinki and had to head in different directions, everyone was feeling very grateful and wishing that the weekend would have lasted longer. Hopefully this experience of a miniature Cheon Il Guk will inspire us to build the real one quickly!

