This past weekend we went to Suomenlina Island again. The fortress on Suomenlina was built by Sweden when it was the dominant, but waning, empire in the Baltic Region (late 1700’s, early 1800’s). It was meant to be a showcase of Swedish might near the eastern border – shared with Russia – of its empire. It turned out, however, that by the time it was built, the fortress as a military tool had become obsolete.

Not long after completion, what is now Finland – Suomenlina Island included – became a part of the Russian empire. Thus the island, which is actually a cluster of several small islands, has both the remnants of the old fortress as well as many buildings with a Russian architectural style. It is a beautiful place, and with a bus pass, the ferry to the island is free. Oh, and it happens to be a World Heritage Sight as well. This week, I’m including some pictures of the island.
Alex also had a soccer game on Sunday, so I’ll include some pictures from that as well. He had a good day; he scored two goals and was team captain for the second game, hence the red armband. His team is a part of a private, parent run organization that owns the land, AstroTurf field, and bubble that you see in the pictures. Thus even through a dark and snowy winter, he’ll be playing soccer twice weekly. It’s quite a difference from what we’re used to in the States.