



The Doorstep

"Meeting the World at our Doorstep"

Reflections from the In-Depth Leadership Training Conference

Amani ya Bwana iwe nanyi

by Benson K. Kalugendo
Lutheran University Center, Wichita, KS

"Amani ya Bwana iwe nanyi" in my language means, "The Lord's peace be with you." At the conclusion of the In-Depth Leadership Training Conference, those were the sending words from me to my newly made friends.

It was a great experience to attend the In-Depth Leadership Conference. This conference helped me grow as a young Christian and nourished my faith. I would like to point out some of the benefits I gained in this conference.

I gained confidence in sharing my faith with my fellow Christians and non-Christians because of training received from Pastor Lee Meyer, Pastor Paul Hoemann, and Keiko Yoshimura. Before this training, I was not feeling confidence to share God's Words with either my fellow Christians or non-Christian friends. However, right now I am feeling more confident after gaining skills and knowledge about how to share God's Words and how to make my personal Bible study increase my Christian faith and knowledge.

For the first time, I was able to pray in English without using my Lutheran Prayer Book. English is my second language and I am not good in speaking it, so I feared to pray in English. Nevertheless, in our small group I found it easier to do anything without fearing and I did it in a great way.

I would like to give thanks to University Lutheran Center at Wichita State University for preparing my trip and making sure I attended the conference, also, to the International Student Ministry, Inc. and LCMS World Mission for sponsoring the conference.

God bless you all and give you strength and willingness to spread God's words. *Amani ya Bwana iwe nanyi - The Lord's peace be with you!*

(Read more about the In-Depth Leadership Training Conference on page 2.)



LCMS President Kieschnick with Benson

Watering a Dead Tree

by Nalynn, ISM - Madison, WI

Back in March 2006, I was so excited — I was going to America! I got a scholarship to come to Madison to do short-term research. It was super exciting because I was also waiting for an answer about my graduate program application. The night before I flew to the U.S., I got a letter from them saying "no." However, after I worked in the department for awhile, the graduate admission's committee reconsidered my application and let me in with one condition — I had to go to English class. When I checked with the university, there were no openings in any English classes at a convenient time.

One afternoon, I was trying to find an apartment and needed to use a phone. I glanced around and saw the sign for the International Friendship Center. Judy, the director, not only let me use the phone, but also invited me to the Bible study that night. Reluctantly, I agreed to come because I needed to practice my English as I had

promised the committee. Since then, I've attended the Wednesday night study almost weekly.

I would say that at first hearing the Word is like watering a dead tree — nothing grew. It took me about one year when all of a sudden I was touched by God's love. It was the night when we were studying about the crucifixion. I wondered how someone loves people in the world so much that He would set Himself to die for us. The picture of how He suffered for us was so clear in my mind — on that day, a tiny green leaf popped up from a dry branch. Wayne, the teacher of the class, offered to spend additional time studying with me. The more I learn about God's Word, the more I am impressed how wonderful, gracious and loving He is. I cannot even find enough adjectives to describe how I feel about Him.

After awhile I started going to a service at

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In-Depth Leadership Training



Participants of the 2009 In-Depth Leadership Training Conference held May 14 - 21 in St. Louis.

God's Blessing – a personal testimony

by Ling Ma

Now I believe the most wonderful blessing in our life on the earth is that God selects us. But before, I always tried to escape from His blessing even when it was pouring down upon me.

When I began to study in Qingdao University in 1997, I got to know an older lady. I called her Grandma and loved her deeply. She set a great model in everything. At that time, although she often told me about Jesus and sent me books about Christians' belief, I was always thinking these had nothing to do with me and I never touched the books.

During the seven years when I stayed in Qingdao, I visited her almost every Sunday, but never on Saturday because there was worship at her home. I tried to keep a distance from anything related to Christians. I was such a person who tried to deviate from God so much. However, God is so merciful that He applied His way beyond my imagination to approach me and love me.

My husband, Yuanchang, and I were classmates at Qingdao. After our graduation in 2001, I found a job in Qingdao while he went to Beijing to pursue his master's degree. We were living in different cities and had different life goals. Although we liked each other, I never expected that we would spend the rest of our life with each other. But it was God's will to bond me and Yuanchang together, and God always make things possible.

One day two text messages between me and Yuanchang kept us so close to each other, then we started to date and visit each other. We felt that we had always loved each other since 1997; but reality separated us. It was God whose power made this come true. Isn't it amazing? Even our classmates cannot believe this.

I invited Yuanchang to visit my Grandma one day and she gave him two books, the *Bible* and *Science and Religions*. At that time, Yuanchang was a strong believer of the theory of evolution on the origin of human beings. So, he opened the second book first.

God's Blessing cont'd.

Once he finished reading the book, he told me he was shocked by the detailed facts and proof in the book. He came to the conclusion that the evolution theory could not be true and there must be a Creator who creates all the living things. He explained everything to me.

Suddenly, I felt my heart was filled with something that later I knew was the Holy Spirit and the door to God was open. Just at that very moment I made the conversion from a non-religion to Christian. I am sure it is the Holy Spirit who worked in me.

God not only does not abandon me for the sake of my deviating from Him but also gave me the greatest blessing through my husband.



Yuanchang and Ling study at In-Depth.

A sincere 'thank you'

by Bernard Kayumba, Peace Lutheran Church, Conway, AR

I am an international student from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and also a young member of the LCMS. It is a great pleasure for me come to the U.S. to pursue my studies, but I am always homesick because I miss my family.

It was a great opportunity for me to be part of the conference and learn more about our Lord. I was so happy to meet lots of internationals in order to discuss the Gospel. Most of us who attended the meeting did not have lots of knowledge about our Savior and the Bible. Fortunately, at the end we were all blessed to know more of God's Word. For that, we are so grateful to the LCMS and ISM, Inc.

We appreciated so much the teaching that we received from our trainers. We were also thankful to the LCMS President who provided an opportunity for the group to meet him personally and ask him questions. We were so surprised how supportive and encouraging the president is toward ISM.

In conclusion, I sincerely thank you so much for helping international students. At the retreat center, we experienced God's power. Some of the group were not Christian, but "serious seekers." By the end of the conference, they wanted to be Christian and plan to be baptized during this month. We hope and trust that the LCMS will always support ISM so that God's Word will not be limited to a few people, but to all the world.



B. Kayumba

Watering a Dead Tree

(Continued from page 1.)

a Lutheran church. I liked sitting in the church, feeling the peace that I never got from anywhere else. About six months after studying with Wayne, I finally told him that I wanted to be Christian. I was baptized by Rev. Mark Schumm at Calvary Lutheran Chapel among the group of people that played an important role in the growth of my Christian faith.

I want to say that I am so lucky. Five years ago if someone told me that I am going to be Christian one day, I would have laughed at the person. Raised by a Buddhist family, I totally believed in atheism. However, now I do believe that God loves me so much that He brought me

here with all the conditions in which He put me. I did not even want to learn about Him at first, but He had a plan to bring me to the Bible study. He put me among the group of people that really helped me grow in faith; it is not only Judy and Wayne, but also everyone in the group that contributed such a warm and wonderful environment.



Nalynn with her International Friendship Center friends.

I do not know how I can thank God and everyone enough for what they have done for me. I know that there is still a long way to go, but I am sure that He will always be with me and walking with me.

Thank you to all who responded to the request for In-Depth Leadership Training Conference scholarships. Your gifts provided over 85% of the funds needed for the 17 international students, and 4 staff members who attended the week-long conference.

We thank God for the outpouring of financial gifts given in April and early May, and for the many prayers of support.

Next year's conference is scheduled for May 13-20 in St. Louis. Begin to pray now for the students who will attend.

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...

Rev. 7:9

Connection with Lutheran Hour Ministries

ISM, Inc. has formed a partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) to more effectively connect international students to local Christians when they return home. The partnership is also in cooperation with Lutheran Campus Mission Association (LCMA).

LHM has agreed to provide the following:

- 1) Share its database of directors where it has a ministry center. This will allow ISM, Inc. and LCMA to communicate with LHM's international directors about students who are returning home.
- 2) Provide materials and Bible Correspondence Courses in various languages to allow the organizations help students study the Christian faith.
- 3) Work to find ways for domestic and international ministries to be involved overseas in bringing the Gospel to local campus ministries dealing with nationals in their own countries.
- 4) Provide ISM and LCMA an opportunity to participate in Global Work & Witness short-term mission trips and the Global Care Packages program.

To find a Lutheran Hour Ministries contact in a particular country, go to www.lhmint.org/contact. Communication can be via email, phone or Skype. The site can assist your international student friend in finding Christian contacts and congregations.

Marcia Mittwede, ISM, Inc. president, commented, "We give thanks to God for this new partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries which we believe will help us assist international students."

Ablaze! in Kansas



Liz Beikmann, Manhattan, KS, reports that students from the Czech continue to come to their "doorstep." Here you see two Kansas State Czech students with their parents.

Ablaze! in Arizona



The International Friendship Center, Tempe, AZ, hosts a baking class. The picture shows the wonderful results of culinary skills and friendship.

Prayer Requests and Praises

July 1-5, 2008: ISM St. Louis

Karen Davis, director

Vicki Jameson and Kim Starr, asst. directors

For the success of the annual ISM dinner and auction.

For Christian international students who will be moving back home or to new places in the U.S.

For ISM-St. Louis directors and board members to have wisdom and clear understanding of God's will as they consider strategic planning and future visioning of ISM St. Louis.

For our loving and faithful ISM-St. Louis volunteers!

For deaconess intern, Kim Starr, assigned to ISM-St. Louis. May she follow the Lord's lead in sharing her gifts.

July 6-12, 2008: ISM Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Bob Dickhudt, director

Thanks for new students coming to the Wednesday class.

For the communication with students from China and Oregon who have moved.

For continuing opportunities and wisdom in using those moments to bring others into a relationship with the Savior.

For continuing enthusiasm, health, and excitement about working/playing with neat people from other cultures!

ISM LaCrosse, WI

John and Karen Jaeger, volunteers

Thanks and praise that XX (China) appears to show a beginning interest in learning what Christianity is all about. Pray that XX will be responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

That we will have a good response to our participation in the New Student Orientation.

Continue to pray for our congregation as we try to find ways to reach out successfully to the many international students in our community.

July 13-19, 2008: Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI

Bethel Larsen and Sandy Hardies, volunteers

For God's presence, healing, and provision for MaTicha and her husband, who is very ill.

That Saz, Sax, and Ash will to be drawn by the Holy Spirit to find Jesus.

For the preparation for the upcoming academic year and the ISM partnership with St. Peter Lutheran Church.

University of Ohio, Kent

JJ Voelker, director

Thanks for Li graduating. May she be a blessing as she continues her faith walk.

For Amiya and Raj as they welcome their first child and become accustomed to parenting.

That Bash and Momita would continue to attend events and even worship.

ISM Pittsburgh

Eric Andrae, campus pastor

For Yevgenja, a Russian/Latvian student at the University of Jelgava, who was my waitress at a pub in Riga, Latvia. We openly discussed the death of her father when she was 11 and how that had lead her to reject God. She said she would email me to continue the conversation.

For the Christian hospitality of Laura, a student at the University of Helsinki who has been our host in the Finnish capital.

July 20-26, 2008: University of Texas, Austin

Keith Loomans and Marcia Mittwede, volunteers

Thank the Lord for the good semester and for the faith He is bringing to D, L and J.

Please pray for our summer Bible study and English conversation groups, that the Lord would draw people to Himself.

Thank the Lord for the strong believers attending the Bible study. Ask Him to give Keith and Marcia wisdom as they lead and answer questions.

Ask the Lord to help M as she struggles to learn English and understand the Bible.

Ask the Lord for His choice as a new campus pastor is called.

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater

Audrey Eggers, director

For all ISM ministries as new and returning students come to our "doorstep." May our Lord lead and guide us in our relationships with them, planting seed and granting harvest.

May God grant guidance and endurance as we make preparations for the fall semester and welcoming events.

July 27-Aug. 2, 2008: University of Iowa, Iowa City

Drew Bayless, director

For Angela Carriker, the new deaconess intern and ISM director, who begins serving August 1.

That the Holy Spirit would continue to plant and grow seeds of faith in the lives of international students who participate in our community.

For students who have been deeply affected by the recent tragedies of the earthquake in China and the cyclone in Burma/Myanmar. Pray for comfort and refuge in the arms of the Almighty for those grieving.

Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA

Augusta Mennell, director

For an international student from Asia who believes that Jesus is God's Son, but is quite afraid to be baptized.

For Prof. Sung Kyun Shin that God would continue to give him great enthusiasm for sharing the Gospel with faculty and with students when he returns to South Korea.

For more and more Christian families to open their hearts and homes to international students.

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

Jim Barton, campus pastor

Thanks be to the Lord that a Korean graduate student was confirmed and an eight-year-old Korean boy was baptized on May 25 at University Lutheran Church. Thirteen other Koreans came to the service as these people affirmed their faith in Christ and received His blessings.

Thank the Lord that Toby Schmidt, Campus Missionary to the Chinese, and his wife, Rachel, were blessed with their third child, a son, Micah Li, on May 16.

Prayer Requests and Praises

Aug. 4-9, 2008: Arizona State University, Tempe **Linda Steinbart, director**

For the new international men's Bible study that Dr. Paul Steinhart's teaching and mentoring will lead the men to faith.

For two South Korean children, who come regularly to the International Friendship House, to know Jesus.

For two friends changing their visa status – one to full-time student and the other to full-time employment.

For the power of the Holy Spirit to touch the spirit of a Chinese man to know Christ as His Savior.

For a student who has returned home with severe back pain, that he will be healed and can return for the fall semester.

For a Japanese family with a six-month-old baby, that God will work in their lives and bring them back to activities at the International Friendship House.

SJ, a new Christian from South Korea, is home for the summer and excited about sharing the Gospel with her family. Their minds are blocked. Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open their minds to hearing the Word and give strength to SJ to be persistent in sharing.

Aug. 10-16, 2008: Texas A&M and Blinn College **College Station** **Paul Hoemann, campus pastor**

Thanks to God for a successful Directors Conference, for all the learning and sharing that happened in the beautiful setting at Heartwood.

For safety as international students travel.

For Anya Knodt and Meredith Wright, ISM co-directors, as they will begin service this fall; may God grant them His Holy Spirit as they provide leadership and work with internationals.

Give thanks to God for two years of outstanding service from Stephen Cordes and Shawn Miller, former co-directors, both of whom have graduated from A&M and are moving on to other phases of life.

For Woody (S. Korea) who will soon be moving back to his homeland with his family. He has heard the Gospel for more than four years at ULC. Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in his heart and lead him to faith. May God put other strong Christians in Woody's path back home!

Aug. 17-23, 2008: Univ. of Wis. - Stevens Point **Carl Selle, campus missionary**

As we meet new international students this week and next, give us the opportunity to be "Jesus with skin on."

Give wisdom and sensitivity to our peer ministers (April, Jeffrey, Lisa, and Matt) as they develop relationships with internationals this semester.

Ask for God's blessing on "Crossing Cultures" (formerly Corn Roast), Sunday, August 24, beginning at 4 p.m. American students and community members will be interacting with many of the new international students over a potluck meal.

Pray that Sangmin and Sujin, now returned to Korea, will find warm and caring Christians to nurture their new faith.

For American students to continue to find a passion to be friends to our international students.

For continued support and encouragement from congregations.

Aug. 24-30, 2008: ISMLA - Lansing, MI **Anna Kortemeyer, director**

For the safe travel and spiritually profitable week of Bible study at the In-Depth Conference. The five students who attended from East Lansing have returned with a desire to share God's love and His Word. Please pray for boldness for each one as they share about their trip with colleagues, professors, neighbors, friends, and family back home in China.

Thanks for the prayers and financial support that helped to make this week possible!

For healing for former volunteer teacher, Elaine, who was recently diagnosed with cancer, and for the husband of Alix, substitute teacher, who recently underwent cancer surgery. May God bring about complete healing.

For each person who attended the spring events. May each one "Ask, Seek and Knock," especially M from Afghanistan, A from France, T, C and CS from China.

For "workers" for the harvest: for prayer warriors, for financial contributors, for teachers and volunteers. Praise for each person who serves Him in this ministry among international students and their families.

Aug. 31, 2008: ISM Board

Thank the Lord for the new partnership with Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM), and ask Him to help us make good connections with LHM personnel in other countries so returning international students may continue to have their faith nurtured after leaving the U.S.

For the continued guidance for the ISM board and its new members Don Christenson, Haslett, MI, and Mary Lou Krause, Lansing, MI, as they work to meet goals and set vision.

Ablaze! in Detroit

Bob Dickhudt, ISM Detroit, writes, "The Easter Bunny joined our traditional Easter party. First time it's by a "Snow Bunny." First time, we had a visiting Confucian scholar with us. Each student found their



numbered egg - empty for the first time. And, that led to reading of the first Easter and the women's surprise - the tomb is empty."

The Doorstep is the official publication of ISM, Inc., a mission society in partnership with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, dedicated to ministry among international students.

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**ISM EQUIPPING CONFERENCE
MAY 28-31, 2009
CONCORDIA SEMINARY, ST. LOUIS**

Directors Conference a Blessing

by Linda Steinbart, ISM director, Arizona State University, Tempe

As the “new” director of International Friendship House (IFH), I wondered if I was experiencing a mid-life crisis – ‘what am I doing in fulltime international ministry?’ My comfort zone has been challenged. How do I meet international students, develop a ministry team, or find volunteers to make soup, to teach English, to be conversation partners, and to support the ministry financially? How do I develop a brochure or find materials to use when students do come?

And the thought of planning a calendar for the school year - oh no, not me, Lord! - please find someone else!

Well, I didn’t want to end up in the belly of a fish like Jonah, so I prayed for guidance. The Lord heard my prayers and encouraged me to enroll in the 2008 ISM Directors Conference at Heartwood Confer-



One last picture before leaving the Directors Conference.

ence and Retreat Center, Trego, WI.

The presence of God was everywhere – I saw Him in each person of every age attending the conference, even in the staff at Heartwood! God spoke to me in the beauty of His creation. He was present in all the sessions. Everyone was eager to share ideas. The friendships made, relationships built, bonding, hugs, tears

of joy, laughter, and times in prayer told me this is definitely where I belong – international ministry.

I thank God for blessing me with many answers to all the questions that have been plaguing me for the past three months. No longer will I question God’s direction or try to hide. He is in control, and I have the power of the Holy Spirit leading the way. Being a missionary among the internationals right here is life with Christ; surrendering my will and serving.

Thank you, ISM, Inc. for this conference where God transformed my life and set me free!

Editor’s note: ISM, Inc. is grateful to Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for the \$6,800 grant to help fund this conference and to our prayer partners for meeting the remainder of the cost.