



International Student Ministry, Inc. (ISM, Inc.)
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CREATING AWARENESS

To: Church secretaries and newsletter editors
From: Missionary Carl Selle, ISM, Inc. director

Re: Monthly ready-to-use bulletin and newsletter “blurbs” about international student ministry. Thank you for helping ISM, Inc. tell this important story of mission ministry.

JANUARY

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

With the advent of a new year, it’s time to look again to see how we are reaching the international students in our communities. Pray that we in the Lutheran Church would be sensitive and hospitable to those who come to live among us for a time.

If you have not yet chosen to receive the prayer newsletter, *The Doorstep*, it may be a good time to sit down and request a free subscription. Each issue will offer prayer requests and will share exciting stories of how international students are being touched with Jesus’ love through some of our fellow Lutheran congregations around America. For *The Doorstep*, contact Karol Selle, PO Box 22, Stevens Point, WI, 54481 or by e-mail at isminc@isminc.org.

FEBRUARY

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Classes for international students, spouses, and children being offered around the LCMS include: News in Easy English, Moms and Tots, Basic Bible Studies for Seekers, Understanding the American Culture; Instruction class in preparation for Baptism; Conversation; Idioms and Slang; and more. How could you serve the students in your community?

While some classes are taught by ISM directors and area pastors, other classes are taught by congregational volunteers. Hold up all of these special teachers in your prayers that they might know wisdom and boldness in interacting with the international student community. If you would like more information on how to reach out at your college or university, contact Karol Selle at 715.677.4877 or isminc@isminc.org.

MARCH

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Would you like to be more involved with international students and their families? Since 1996, ISM, Inc., an LCMS mission society, has encouraged prayer for intentional international student ministries and the students they serve. *The Doorstep*, a prayer newsletter, is published bi-monthly to share stories and an invitation for you to pray. You can sign up to be a prayer partner by sending a card with your name and address, and a note requesting *The Doorstep*, to ISM, Inc., PO Box 22, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or e-mail the request to isminc@isminc.org. You’ll discover what a joy it is to serve those whom God is bringing to our country!

APRIL

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

The 10/40 Window (the area from 10 degrees to 40 degrees north of the equator, stretching from West Africa to Japan) is a primary focus for mission work today. The very cradle of civilization is the contemporary Church’s evangelistic frontier. The Window’s nearly 4 billion residents include 97 percent of the inhabitants of the world’s least-evangelized people, including 84 percent of those with the lowest quality of life. The 10/40 Window contains most of the world’s 1.1 billion Muslims, 800 million Hindus, and 300 million Buddhists.

(April continued.)

The 62 countries within the Window include those most closed to Christian missionary activity. Presently, only 27 percent of all missionaries work within the 10/40 Window. It is in this area that LCMS World Mission is most anxiously looking for opportunity to find and reach God's lost children. **Almost two-thirds of the international students studying in the U.S. come from this 10/40 Window!** Such a marvelous opportunity for hospitality and witness.

MAY

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

This month, many international students and scholars who have spent between six months and six years at our educational institutions will finally return home. They will have received bachelor's, master's, or Ph.D. degrees. They may have done post-doctoral research. They may have taught our own American students. These gifted individuals will return to their home countries to lead their own people with positions in education, business, or government. They will have been influenced negatively or positively about our country and the American people. Significant for God's people is the question, "Will they have heard a clear presentation of the Good News of the Christ?"

Study your community to discover those whom God is bringing to you from other countries of the world: tourists, international students, short-term business people, or immigrants. How will you impact these visitors with the love of Jesus?

JUNE

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Since 1992, Missionary Carl Selle has served the LCMS through World Mission as an encourager and resource person for international student ministry. Selle reports, "We are currently targeting congregations in Ohio and on the East coast to encourage them to be sensitive to the international student community. New ministries recently have begun at New York University and Kent State University. Many more schools within reach of LCMS congregations wait to be served.

Pray that God would continue to give vision to Missionary Selle as he trains and equips both ISM directors and laity to serve the international student community around the States. Pray also that God would already be preparing the hearts of students, spouses, and children for the witness of the Gospel they will clearly hear.

JULY

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Work among the 720,000 international students and the 1,000,000 spouses and children associated with international students began intentionally in the LCMS in 1992. Some facts about the international student community worth taking note of: 90% do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior; 80% will return to their home countries after completing their education here; 70% will never have the opportunity to have a meal in an American home; 80% will never have a Christian as a friend; 66% of the students are from Asian countries; and 60% come from a country where it is almost impossible to hear a presentation of the Good News of Jesus. Pray that eyes and hearts will be opened within your community to such an opportunity is right at our doorstep.

AUGUST

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

This month, new international students will come to colleges and universities all around our country. Pray that campus ministries and congregations serving colleges and universities will be able to match students and volunteers for opportunities in conversation groups, Bible studies, friendship families, and culture classes. God is giving us the opportunity to show hospitality, serve, and offer a witness to members of the world community.

Pray specifically for Pastor Tim Drawbaugh (NYU), Pastor Kent Pierce (Kent State U), and Messiah Lutheran Church, Setauket, N.Y., as they reach out among the thousands of international students. Ask God to move the hearts of area volunteers to offer assistance in reaching our international friends through hospitality, service, and witness.



SEPTEMBER

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Ask God to open the hearts of Lutheran Christians to volunteer among the international students who are new to our universities. Make pastors and lay workers alike bold to love strongly in word and deed. Pray for internationals you meet on the street to come to know Jesus. Particular concerns as new international students settle in are cultural adjustments, homesickness, difficulty understanding spoken English, and the great need of developing friendships.

Take time to be up on world news so that when you ask God to lead you to an international student, you may also have some world information to talk about. Some of the internationals who come to the States are already sisters and brothers in Jesus. Perhaps God is tugging at your heart string to be the one who can serve as a spiritual mentor for a student from Liberia, Taiwan, Costa Rica, South Korea, or China.

OCTOBER

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

“For a while, Janet came to church with me almost every Sunday. Then she announced that she would walk to church for exercise. I knew what that meant, and my heart sank. Even though she stopped coming, I continued to see her now and then and invited her to different activities and meals and prayed for her. I didn’t pressure her, and we always had a good time. Others tried to keep in touch with her. Honestly, though, I had given up on her. She would come now and then, attend the Mandarin Bible study and church, but I could see no spark in her. A month and a half ago, after church, she confessed to a friend that she had a block and couldn’t believe in Jesus. Some of us quickly gathered and prayed for her. Then she stopped coming again.

All of a sudden, she came back and was invited to a Chinese cell group and there shared her Christian faith. That was just a few weeks ago, and I am still totally amazed and rejoicing for her salvation! Since then, I have spent many hours with her and am convinced her conversion is real. Every day now she’s reading the Bible I gave her a year ago and asking good questions.

Her mom is coming in November and I can’t wait to see how God will save her, too. I’ll be praying for that, and I hope you will too!” (submitted by an ISM director)

NOVEMBER

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

Most international student ministries operate on a “faith support” basis; meaning that they often operate on the fringe. Many are not fully financially supported by district or congregation, but by the gifts of individuals and small groups. Now may be the time when you would like to consider a gift to assist in the work of reaching out to those that God has brought to our doorstep. You can make a difference. (Gifts can be designated “International Student Ministry” and sent to ISM, Inc., PO Box 22, Stevens Point, WI 54481) For additional information or for specific ministry projects, call Rev. Carl Selle at 715.345.6510.

DECEMBER

The World at Our Doorstep: International Students

During this month when we celebrate Christmas, remember the many international students who don’t understand this festival. Thirty percent of LCMS campus ministries (69) now have intentional outreach among internationals on campus. Among the 620,000 international students in our country, LCMS international student ministries are making a significant impact by serving at: the University of Wisconsin, Madison; the University of Texas, Austin; Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.; St. Louis University, Saint Louis, Mo.; Iowa State University, Ames; SUNY at Stony Brook, N.Y.; Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh, Penn.; Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Ill.; UWSP, Stevens Point, Wis.; Flint area colleges, Flint, Mich.; Arizona State University, Tempe; University of Hawaii, Honolulu; and many others.

Ask God to uphold those serving in these ministries. May He grant wisdom, vision, and patience in serving those who are on our doorstep. You might just investigate to see where your District is reaching out among international students.