

Coming up soon...

EQUIPPING CONFERENCE and IN-DEPTH BIBLE SEMINAR

**Registration is now open for
both events!**

What's the difference?

**The Equipping Conference is
for you!** It helps you grow in your
ministry among internationals (or
to take the first steps).

**The In-Depth Bible Seminar
is for international scholars and
students** you know, especially for
new believers and for those who
are not yet believers but are eager
to learn more.



**Look inside for
more information!**

ISM GRANT REPORTS! PRAISE GOD!

We are deeply thankful and very excited every time we hear about the ministry to international students and scholars that has been enabled and enriched through our Christ-Centered Resources and Events Grants program. Keep these ministries in your prayers.

Santa Cruz Chinese Mission Pastor Freeman Li

With deep appreciation for your prayers, care and support this year, we'd like to share some of the blessed events we had here at the Santa Cruz Chinese Mission in 2022. We want to be sure you know that you are a very important part of this ministry, too.

In the fall we had a Mid-Autumn Festival, a beach bonfire, a dumpling party and more. In January we had a Chinese New Year's Eve gathering with over 20 participants. We have more great news to share: Pastor Li and family have received work authorization

(Continued on page 2 — see "Report")



Pastor Li decorating for Chinese New Year

A FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM STORY

Augusta R. Mennell, Campus Ministry Director

All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center, Slippy Rock, PA

Maryam came into our lives at the Slippy Rock annual Village Festival three years ago. We were handing out water and inviting students to a free meal. The meal seemed especially attractive to the college students!

Maryam came to the festival with her infant daughter. She had recently arrived in town with her husband, who had just begun teaching at the university after graduating from a mid-west university. Maryam had left many friends behind there and was eager to make new ones.

One of our volunteers warmly invited her to our church where we

enjoy meeting people from all over the world. She is a practicing Muslim but is open to friendships with people of other faiths. She began visiting our center with her two daughters. She feels that she is a warmly welcomed friend... because she is!

One day while Maryam was visiting, a student stopped in to ask about what Lutherans believe. While Maryam was nearby, I talked through our Lutheran faith with this other student. I know Maryam heard what we discussed.

Will Maryam ever become a Christian? I don't know. But I know she feels loved in Jesus' name. Seeds are being planted. †

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THE IMPACT OF IN-DEPTH ON TULIP!

As the wife of a graduate student in Wisconsin, Tulip wanted to meet friends and improve her English. She attended English Conversation Class and decided to also attend a Bible study to learn more about that “Western” religion she had heard about. Through reading the Bible and discussions with Christian friends, she got to know Jesus. One of the Americans recommended that she attend the In-Depth Bible Seminar that year. She rode from Wisconsin to St. Louis with Pastor Carl Selle and several other internationals.



Tulip and friends at the In-Depth Bible Seminar

During the Seminar, she found answers to many of her questions about Jesus. She was touched by the friendly pastors and the heartwarming stories of how God had helped other internationals

through difficult situations. Her desire to study God’s Word grew.

Although her husband was not a Christian at that time, he sometimes attended Bible study with Tulip. Tulip also shared words of encouragement from the Bible with him. Those words encouraged her as well as him. God had wonderful surprises waiting for them when they moved to California after her husband’s graduation. They are part of a church and her husband has been baptized. The In-Depth Seminar provided a solid foundation for Tulip’s life and faith. †

Encourage international students and scholars you know to register for In-Depth 2023. They can hear Tulip share her testimony at isminc.org/in-depth Registration materials are also available there. Register by March 30, 2023.

(“Report” continued from page 1)

from US Immigration Service. We are looking forward to how God will continue to guide us and bless us for the next chapter in our ministry! Please rejoice with us and stay healthy and blessed!

**ISM at Southern Illinois University,
Edwardsville**
Bessie Fick, ISM Coordinator

We thank the National ISM Board for providing resource grants for special events. The Trinity Lutheran Church, Edwardsville, ISM Committee decided to host a Welcome Back Meal in January for international and American Students so that the group could meet and get acquainted with each other. We also wanted to provide resources for our Christian international students so they could invite their non-Christian friends to study with them. The meal followed the 10:30 am service. It gave us special joy that five of the international attendees also visited the worship service. Our ISM intern, Genevieve Blunier, also prepared a resource pamphlet for the new students, providing them information regarding resources in the community and congregation for student needs.

Thank you to all who made this event possible. †



A rainbow welcomed guests to the Chinese New Year event and provided another connection to God’s promises



American and International Students share a “Welcome Back” meal with volunteers

— MEMO —



ISM inc

INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Date: March 1, 2023

To: Site Leaders, ESL Teachers, Volunteers, Vicars, and anyone and everyone interested in outreach to international students

From: ISM Inc. and the Equipping Conference Committee

Subject: A Not-to-be-missed Opportunity

Purpose: "...to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." Ephesians 4:11-13.

Keep close to Jesus by joining ISM's first Equipping Conference since 2016.

We have four key goals:

- Providing participants with useful ministry tools
- Encouraging and edifying participants
- Thinking outside the box to increase participation of internationals and volunteers.
- Keeping us close to Jesus - because closeness to our Savior makes us want to share that with others

We'll share ideas, adopt new strategies, learn about outreach to various groups, be encouraged in our outreach, worship and pray together, learn from God's word, and more.

Dates: May 23-25, 2023 (from noon to noon)

Location: Campus Lutheran Church in Columbia, Missouri

Fee: \$150 for the conference, plus \$70 per person for two nights of dorm accommodations. Late fee after March 20, 2023.

Recommendation: Sign up to attend now! Go to isminc.org/equip for more information.

In January and February, we have been pleased to welcome three new members onto the ISM Inc. Board: Lydia Schinnerer of Dayton, Ohio, Angela Mueller of Glen Carbon, Illinois, and Vicki Jameson of Anderson, Indiana. Look for articles about them in future issues.

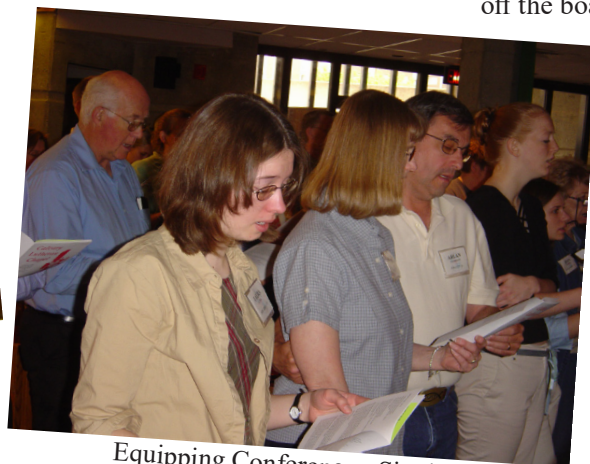
We are so thankful for the combined 15 years of faithful board service given by three members who are transitioning off the Board in the coming months. Wayne Weiss, our Vice President, will have served for 6 years in July and in that role has regularly expressed appreciation to larger donors. Kate Cole, our secretary, who also launched the internship program and other projects, is stepping down early as she moves to a retirement community in New Jersey. Sharon Owens, who was instrumental in the hiring process for our Ministry Catalyst, is also transitioning off the board early due

to heavy responsibilities in ISM work in Tempe, Arizona.

Praise God with us for each of these faithful servants and the blessings they have been and will continue to be to our sites and to international students and scholars. †



Equipping Conference Discussion during break



Equipping Conference - Singing

DIALOGUING ABOUT LENT AND RAMADAN

Compiled by Sue Hasselbring

As we spend time being with our international friends, our ears and hearts are ever open to how we might build bridges and point our friends towards Christ. Lent and Ramadan have both similarities and differences. Muslims are very open to talking about spiritual topics. They are curious about how Christians pray and fast. Our typical answers about the freedom we have often confuse Muslims.

Here are some statements we might make to Muslims that might make them curious and want to know more.

- Lent is a special 40 day season that some Christians observe.
- I feel close to God during Lent.
- We love God's Law and want to understand it.
- I want to understand how to live my life in more enriching ways.

We might ask Muslims some of these questions to learn about Ramadan:

- When is Ramadan?
- What is Ramadan?
- Will you observe it with friends?

- Will you eat special food? What foods?
- How do you break your fast?
- How does your family observe Ramadan back home?
- Do you feel closer to God?

Just as Christians observe Lent in different ways, Muslims from different countries also observe Ramadan differently. Some Muslims would be honored to invite you to join them for the evening meal which is served a little after sunset. Accepting such an invitation allows you to learn from them and may open the door to deeper spiritual conversations.

Here are some pointers when spending time with Muslims: Show love and grace, do not debate. Dress conservatively to honor them - wear long pants and nothing low cut. Do not give or receive things with your left hand. Treat your Bible more respectfully in their presence. Remember that when you are with your Muslim friend, God is with you. †

Ideas in this article are gleaned from the February Equipping call. Pastor Nader Hanna of Salam Ministries and Dr. Patrick Krayer of Dallas International University shared insights. See more notes at <https://tinyurl.com/ismmeetingnotes>.

Contact Sue@isminc.org to participate in future calls.

ISM INC. ANNUAL REPORT 2022

During 2022, ISM Inc. has

- shared presentations or had exhibits at four conferences,
- provided in-person consultation to eight ISM sites,
- hosted 23 zoom seminars on eleven topics,
- distributed \$5,375 in Christ-Centered Resources and Event Grants to twelve sites and
- encouraged, informed and equipped God's people through six issues of the Doorstep and other communications.

We praise God for the 7,103 churches, families and individuals who read the Doorstep News and pray for God's work among international students and scholars. We also praise God that nearly two hundred prayer partners sent one or more gifts to ISM Inc. this year.

	2021	2022	budgeted 2023
Total gifts	\$75,861.10	\$90,317.25	\$123,081.40
Total income	\$83,375.81	\$97,877.40	\$128,381.40
Total expenses	\$63,916.49	\$109,593.03	
Budgeted expenses	\$103,196.00	\$108,327.80	\$128,381.40

Since the ISM Inc. Board took a step of faith in hiring Sue Hasselbring as Ministry Catalyst in the middle of 2021, both income and expenses have been increasing. In 2023 the budget includes funding for the first In-Depth Bible Seminar since 2019 and an Equipping Conference.

By the grace of God, His people are blessed with a bounty that allows all of us to reflect God's generosity. Donations to ISM Inc. whether small or large are greatly appreciated! You may send your gift using the enclosed envelope, or you may give online via Thrivent Charitable or Paypal. Visit isminc.org/give

If your congregation or one of its boards or committees would like to help a good cause, we are happy to share a presentation and answer their questions via a Zoom call or perhaps in person.

Thrivent policy-holders may be able to designate Thrivent Choice Dollars to ISM Inc. Go to www.Thrivent.com to participate.

May God bless each of you as you pass along His love to your neighbors through your time, talents and treasures! †

A guide for Christians to pray for Muslims as they fast during Ramadan is available at



<https://worldprayerguides.org/muslim-prayer-guides/>

thrivent®
Choice Dollars

March 31, 2023 is the deadline to direct your 2022 Choice Dollars

Support ISM with your Thrivent Choice Dollars:

- Online at Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or
- Call **800-847-4836** and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice."

General

- That the Lord would guide Christians to opportunities to invite students to church and Bible studies and to opportunities to speak of our hope in Christ.
- For all international students to have friends to support and encourage them as they move through the middle of the semester.
- For Christians to dialogue with international students about how they are spending their spring break and to offer to spend more time with them if they are available.
- For each international student and scholar to wonder what makes their Christian friends different, to ask them about what they see, and for their Christian friends to point them to Jesus.

During Lent and Holy Week

- For Christians to warmly share about what this season means to them and invite International students and scholars to learn more.
- For many internationals to participate in midweek services and learn of Jesus' love and sacrifice for all people.

During Ramadan Mar22-Apr20

- For Christians to ask appropriate questions of their Muslim friends with a warm caring attitude during Ramadan.
- That Muslims who have dreams about Jesus during Ramadan would ask Christians about what they mean.
- That God would remove from Christians any fear or anger that they have toward Muslims.

- That many Christians would pray for Muslims during Ramadan and beyond.

In-Depth Bible Seminar

- Praise God for Tulip's video testimony about the impact of the In-Depth Bible Seminar on her faith.
- Praise God that two internationals have already registered for In-Depth.
- Pray that God would guide international students, scholars and their families to register for In-Depth.
- Pray for each participant to be growing in their knowledge of God now and when they attend In-Depth.
- Pray for Pastor JJ Voelker, Sue Hasselbring and others as they plan this event: for wisdom, good health and joy.

Equipping Conference

- Praise God for the five members of the planning committee: Beth Greimer, Sue Hasselbring, Vickie Loemker, Judy Newhouse, and Dan Winter and all who will lead sessions.
- Pray that this conference would equip many volunteers and ISM site leaders as well as groups just getting started to grow in skills, be encouraged and bless one another.
- May God guide each person preparing to lead a session.

Best Practices in Ministry February

- Praise God for those who learned about International Student Ministry during the BPM Conference, in Phoenix in

February.

- May God guide these individuals as they begin to intentionally share Christ's love and friendship with international students and scholars.
- May God grant Sue Hasselbring wisdom in following up with contacts and encouraging them.

ISM Inc. Board

- Praise God for the joy and experience that Angela Mueller, Lydia Schinner and Vicki Jameson bring to the ISM Inc. board.
- Praise God for the faithful service of Kate Cole and Sharon Owens on the ISM Board and for God's continued blessings on their ministries.
- Pray for healing for Suzanne Weiss as she undergoes open-heart surgery for blockages. The surgery was delayed due to an infection near a tooth. †

IN HONOR AND IN MEMORY

We praise God for each person you honor or remember as you give. From October 2022 through January 2023, gifts totaling the following amounts have been received.

In Memory of:

- \$120 Rev. Karl Lutze
- \$100 Carl Selle
- \$50 Colin Jones
- \$50 Edward & Alvina Reetz
- \$10 Donald Hoff

In Honor of

- \$2800 Sue Hasselbring
- \$250 In Honor and Memory of Karen Bjornstad and Carl Selle
- \$150 in Honor of Karol Selle and Memory of Carl Selle

SUBMIT YOUR ISM-RELATED PRAYERS

You are always welcome to submit prayers via email to: prayer@isminc.org. However, for an organization as spread out as ISM is, organization can become a challenge. We encourage you to use the Prayer Request Form you can find at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ismincprayer>

Why not bookmark the form and send off a prayer request whenever the Spirit moves you?

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Doorstep***News**

Doorstep News is the official publication of ISM, Inc.
A Recognized Service Organization
of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,
dedicated to ministry among
international students and scholars

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ISM ANNUAL REPORT



SPRING COUPLETS

Before celebrating Chinese New Year, doors are decorated with “Chun Lian” or “Spring Couplets” which wish people luck, prosperity, and health. At Santa Cruz Chinese Mission, the doors were decorated with couplets that say: “Reminisce about the past, the lamps and lights from the land of Goshen reflecting God’s amazing grace” and “Rejoice on this evening, grateful songs and smiles from Santa Cruz Chinese Mission overflowing for the New Spring”. Why mention Goshen? Many Chinese Christians see a parallel between the paschal blood marking the top and sides of the door frame and the red “Chun Lian”. The use of a rainbow (see picture inside) also allowed reference to God saving Noah’s family.

YOUR SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOMED!

Please send your submissions for the May/June 2023 issue by email.

The deadline is March 31, 2023 (but you can send them earlier!). Send your submissions to doorstep@isminc.org.

- See our privacy policy on our website
- Send your submission as a Word (or other text) document and images as separate files.
- Please include your name, your role, and the ministry and/or campus you serve.

E-mail: ISMinc@ISMinc.org

Web site: www.ISMinc.org