

"WE HOPE EVERYDAY IS LIKE TODAY"

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
MARCIA MITTWEDE / ISM DIRECTOR



On March 24, 2018, one of the longest running passion plays in the country put on its 60th live production depicting the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. "The Easter Triumph", as it is called, is a joint effort of the Austin-area LCMS churches and entrance to the play is free-of-charge and open to the Austin community.

All who participate in the acting, costuming, sound, advertising, other production duties are volunteers and work very hard to make this play meaningful to the community. Our ISM here at the University of Texas in Austin has invited international students, their friends and family members to attend the play for several years now, and this year was no exception. The internationals really seemed to appreciate the play and for some, it was the first time they had heard and seen the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. After the play was finished, the students enjoyed having their pictures taken with some of the cast. Then we headed to a local Chinese buffet for a meal together. It was a wonderful time for the students and the American volunteers who attended.

The comments we received give a little glimpse of how the students felt about the event:

"Thanks again for inviting us. This is a great show. We really enjoyed it!" (T, China)

"We had a wonderful time today. Hope every day (is) like today." (A, China)

"The play was moving and it's was very interesting. My daughters really liked it with their eyes wide open. The meal was wonderful, too." (S, S. Korea)

We are thankful to God for the occasion the play brought for us to enjoy time with our international friends and also for the opportunity they had to learn of Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross for all.



HOW SHALL I SPREAD ABROAD

KATE COLE, ISM DIRECTOR

FLINT INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS // FLINT, MI

THY WONDROUS STORY?



After Maundy Thursday worship, I asked my friend from Pakistan if she understood the service—after all her first language is Urdu, her second language is Hindi, and her third language is English. She smiled at me and nodded her head up and down. Have you ever asked the question the hymn writer asks in our beautiful hymn we sang together at Maundy Thursday worship, “O Dearest Jesus, What Law hast Thou Broken? In verse 3 of the that hymn, the writer asks, “How shall I spread abroad thy wondrous story?” How do we tell the whole world that God loves each and every person so much that He sacrificed His own son, Jesus for our sins? We may support overseas missions or include the world’s lost in our daily prayers.

“Even we sing the same hymns as you,” she said.

“Like which ones,” I questioned?

She started humming a familiar tune—the tune of O Dearest Jesus... and then in a beautiful soprano voice she sang this song for me in the Urdu language. What a joy to share with believers from around the world our precious Savior’s love in song. It reminded me of Psalm 86:9, “All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.” That evening this verse came true for me!



IN THE CLASSROOM, ISM DIRECTOR, KATE COLE WITH VINA FROM PAKISTAN AND DAMI FROM NIGERIA.

This was an Easter blessing I didn’t expect but I’m thankful to God to have the opportunity to sing with people from all over the globe. You can too! Find out how you can meet people from different parts of the world at Flint International Friends on Facebook!



71 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TOOK PART IN THE “WHAT IS EASTER?” EVENT HELD AT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CENTER IN MADISON, WI



WHAT IS EASTER?

JUDY TANG/ IFC DIRECTOR

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN / MADISON, WI
INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP CENTER

The International Friendship Center (IFC), along with several international student ministry organizations, hosted a “What is Easter?” event for 71 internationals on April 1st. We began the evening enjoying some delicious soups and sandwiches. Then we showed the movie, *Magdalena: Released from Shame*, in English and in Mandarin, plus had a separate children’s program. After the movie, we had time for dessert and discussion, answering questions and talking about Jesus and the Bible. Many internationals stayed for over an hour talking with various volunteers and eager to learn more about how to put their faith in Jesus.



CONSIDER ASKING AN EXPERT

RICH BEARUP / DIRECTOR

THE FRIENDSHIP HOUSE / MSU / EAST LANSING, MI



AN AFTER-CLASS PICTURE OF STUDENTS WITH TWO “EXPERTS,” ONE OF WHOM SPEAKS WITH A HEAVY SOUTHERN ACCENT AND THE OTHER WITH A HEAVY NEW ENGLAND ACCENT.

I’ve been blessed to be a part of the International Student Ministry – Lansing Area (aka Friendship House MSU) since 2011. My appreciation of, respect for and reliance on volunteers to carry out and further cultivate our ministry continues to grow.

We are privileged to have more than 80 volunteers who have at least weekly contact with our International students. With few exceptions, they are drawn from several Lutheran congregations in the Greater Lansing area.

One of the approaches we use to build a “farm system” of prospective new volunteers is a class we call Ask the Experts. This class, which I moderate, features a new weekly presenter who comes to discuss their profession, occupation, field of study, hobby or avocation.

The effort involved in making this class successful for our students is mostly all up front. I send emails, make calls and do follow up with several people from the congregational communities before the start of a typical 12-14 week semester. Brokering the dates available to many

different people can be a little tricky but, thanks to God, things always seem to fall into place. I get a digital headshot and brief bio from each speaker which, at the appropriate time, I use to market their upcoming presentation via email and social media.

The speaker usually prepares a presentation to give in class (which ranges from elaborate PowerPoints to basic lectures) and at least a half hour is set aside at the end for Q&A and speaker-student interaction.

The students love the different topics they learn about and even more appreciate the chance to listen to, and converse with, an American English speaker. This class is geared towards the International with intermediate or above English fluency.

The speaker inevitably loves to talk about what interests them to an audience of very attentive and intelligent students. It seems as though they almost always thank me more for the opportunity than I thank them for helping us out!

In the nearly 20 semesters we have had this class since I arrived, we’ve featured police officers, funeral directors,

clergymen, MSU faculty, politicians, lobbyists, pollsters, researchers, zoologists, artists and much more.

Over the past six years, many of our “experts” have become conversation partners with students, or substitute teachers, or Board members or liaisons between our ministry and their home congregations.

I highly recommend this type of programming to other International ministries if you haven’t already tried it. Thanks for the opportunity to share about our experience in East Lansing.





FRIENDSHIP AND HOSPITALITY

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE / TRINITY LUTHERAN
BESSIE FICK

"Be rich in good deeds, and to generous and willing to share." 1 Timothy 6:18

International student Ministry (ISM) is a ministry of friendship and hospitality that we might have the opportunity of confessing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those God is sending from other lands.

One of the ways we built bridges of friendship with our international friends is by spending time with them and getting to know who they are. The friendships developed bless us richly and we have opportunities to tell of the greatest treasure we have, God's love for us in Jesus Christ. This past month we had such opportunities with the Just Desserts event scheduled by the International Hospitality Program. There were about 32 international students present. Karen Barringer and I attended the event and had an opportunity to sit with students from Nepal and from Saudi Arabia.



KAREN BARRINGER VISITING WITH NEPALESE STUDENTS AT JUST DESSERTS EVENT AT SIUE

Later in March, I was able to take two students to see Cahokia Mounds. It was an interesting morning climbing the mounds and sharing things in common and things that are different. Steve Twillmann, a student on campus, is visiting with Mike a student from China for conversation. If you would like to help in any of these ways please contact Bessie Fick at Bessie.Fick@yahoo.com.

We continue to thank Trinity members for the gifts of household items. I was able to help Rashmi and her roommates with kitchen items they needed to cook. Some items that are still needed are, small pots and a food processor for grinding seeds.

CELEBRATION IN COLLEGE STATION



LYDIA SCHINNERER AND REV. PAUL HOEMANN, ISM CO-DIRECTORS
UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHAPEL, COLLEGE STATION, TX

On March 20th, Yi (Frank) Zhou, left, and his wife, Shengju (Daisy) Xu, right, were baptized into the Christian faith at University Lutheran Chapel in College Station. Also baptized that evening was their son, John.

Pictured with the couple are Pastor Paul Hoemann and Lydia Schinnerer, who is one of the ISM co-directors at the Chapel. We rejoice in and celebrate the new birth of Word and water that has come in the lives of Frank, Daisy and John! Please pray for them, that they will continue to grow in their faith in Jesus Christ and will share it with others.

REV. PAUL HOEMANN AND ISM CO-DIRECTOR, LYDIA SCHINNERER
WITH YI (FRANK) ZHOU AND SHENGJU (DAISY) XU



STAYING CONNECTED

MAYME KEAGY

ISM, INC. / PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

As we head into spring, and I read through the stories in this issue of the Doorstep, I am inspired and in awe of how many people have dedicated their lives to serving international students and sharing the Gospel.

At ISM, Inc. We are striving to give a sense of community to those that have the same mission, but live far apart from each other. We want to create the most helpful content possible, about the topics you care about. We want you to share your stories that will inspire others, and your prayers requests so we can all lift each other up in prayer.

There are too many stories to share them all here in print, so I encourage you to join us online. Here are 3 ways to keep in touch:

Check out our website, isminc@isminc.org. We have a new look and some new features that we think you'll like.

While there, sign up for our email list. You can have the Doorstep delivered right to your inbox along with information regarding seasonal grants for your ministry, student seminars and leader resources.

Join our Facebook group. Where we share the latest information and your stories.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISMCommunity/>.

We're here to help keep our ISM Community connected. Please email me if there's something you would like to see or share.

God's blessings to you,

Mayme

isminc@isminc.org

