

DoorstepNews

WHAT IS "ISM"?

Sue Hasselbring, Ministry Catalyst, ISM Inc.

NEAR ONE CAMPUS, one person intentionally engages with international students and scholars weekly at a coffee house for guided discussions. Near another campus, a formal non-profit with three part-time lay staff and 20 volunteers offer Bible studies, ESL classes, and monthly cultural events for international students, scholars and their families. At yet another campus, lunches with Bible study are hosted weekly in the Lutheran room on campus led by a pastor assigned by the district. Each of these is intentional ministry among internationals, each are ISM!

Our vision as ISM Inc. is that international students and scholars have support and community for campus life. That looks different in each place depending on the needs and interests of the international students and scholars,

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GLIMPSES INTO A CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

ADOZEN CAMPUS pastors, along with some district and national leaders and others who support them gathered to learn from each other. I think these tidbits are potentially relevant to us as we intentionally engage with international students and scholars. †

Look for these post-it notes sprinkled throughout this issue of Doorstep News. Which of these might encourage or guide your ministry or prayers?



IN-DEPTH BIBLE SEMINAR 2022

JJ Voelker, Kent State University

OVER THE YEARS, we have been blessed to send quite a few students to the In-Depth Conference. They all have come back saying what a wonderful experience it was for them as they got to learn about Jesus, study the Bible, meet new friends, and see some amazing sights of St. Louis. The students had a great combination of learning and experience. Their experiences and the stories that they told were definitely highlights for them.



One such student was named Arissa. She attended the In-Depth conference the week after her American college graduation. In-Depth was very uplifting and equipping for her. She

hadn't been baptized yet, but In-Depth helped to answer all of her remaining questions. In-Depth strengthened her faith and helped her grow as a disciple of Christ. When she went back to her home country she got baptized, to be a stronger witness to her family. As the next year started, she even started to lead a Bible study for women at her church. †

Please be thinking and praying about who from your ministry should go to

In-Depth. Are they a seeker? Newly baptized? Been a Christian for a long time and need a boost in their faith? Others? Send them May 16-20!

This year, registration will be online. Contact Sue@isminc.org if you need the invitation letter and link. †

ZOOMING CRUCIAL ISM ISSUES

Amy Elwert, Lake Orion, MI

Participatory Meetings Aim to Connect, Examine Relevant Topics, and Encourage Site Leaders and Volunteers

GREETINGS TO ALL Congregations, ISM Site Leaders, Site Volunteers, Supporters, and anyone else interested!

During the past couple months we have been working to build closer connection and collaboration between the eighty-six ISM site leaders, volunteers and staff from across the United States. In late December and early January, representatives and leaders from nine ISM sites met via Zoom. We set up the zoom gatherings in order to fellowship with each other, share about God's work on our campuses, reflect on highlights and challenges at different sites, and brainstorm ideas of topics for future meetings. Our goal is to learn from and encourage each other.

While the discussions flow freely, we try to identify a particular topic or two for each meeting. Some of the topics we have covered or will cover are engaging international students & scholars, congregational involvement, funding, information sharing, training, and sharing success stories.

As part of the process, we try to mutually agree upon a topic that is a priority for the various ministries of those attending the meeting. For the late January meeting, we settled on the topic: "New Avenues for Connecting with International Students and Scholars."

What is a meeting like, you ask? The meetings are filled with the mutual sharing of ideas and encouragement for the benefit of everyone involved. Everyone shared their observations about current "connection" circumstances (such as Zoom being a blessing and a challenge, what has worked, and how international people connect with each other and with Americans). Together, we reflected and analyzed causes of specific situations in our respective ministries. We

thought about the felt needs of international students and scholars. We considered how cultural beliefs can hinder connection. We also brainstormed and evaluated courses of action we might take to improve our connection with international students and scholars. We tried to think together about what would help bring our ideas to reality.

We hope to have calls like this once a month or so. We all have busy schedules and are spread across four time zones (or even six when we include Hawai'i!), so it is challenging to find a time that is

good for everyone. We determined the "best" time for the meeting based on surveying the people who wanted to attend.

The February topic was: "Building Relationships of Trust with International Students and Scholars."

PLAN TO JOIN US IN THE FUTURE.

Here's what the March and April meetings will look like:

Training volunteers to relate well to internationals

- Wed March 23 – 8am Pacific, 9am Mountain, 10am Central, and 11am Eastern
- Mon March 28 – 10am Pacific, 11am Mountain, noon Central, and 1pm Eastern

Connecting with Muslims: ways to engage and ISM testimonies

- Mon April 25 10am Pacific, 11am Mountain, noon Central, and 1pm Eastern
- Wed April 27 8am Pacific, 9am Mountain, 10am Central, and 11am Eastern

If you would like to join the discussion on the next two topics, contact Sue (sue@isminc.org).

What has God given us that we are not yet using (people, time, place, skills, things), but that might be a blessing to others?

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

A ZOOM MEETING PARTICIPANT'S PERSPECTIVE

Dorinda Werner

PARTICIPATING in these zoom calls helps. I don't feel so alone in my ministry anymore because I'm connecting with others in International Student Ministry!

I really encourage you to take advantage of the upcoming zoom calls/discussions. It's worth every minute! Sue plans very productive, efficient, and interactive meetings. Many ideas and experiences are shared. You are sure to get some helpful tips for ministry!

God is at work through all of our ministries. It's great to share what He is doing with one another and to give Him the glory! We certainly experience challenges. Yet, we can be a blessing to each other by praying for each other. ☩

Watch for e-mail notices with topics and Zoom meeting links. Even if you are unable to join, please let us know any other topics of interest to you in your specific location/context. God's blessings on each of our connections and relationships! ☩

Start small and grow from there!

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

UPDATE FROM GRACE MOODY, ISM INTERN

My name is Grace Moody. I'm in the 6th month of a part-time internship program at Grand Valley State University with ISM Inc., and Pastor Marin Cerchez, at St. Johns Lutheran Church, Jenison, MI.

I am very blessed with the opportunity to intern with ISM because it has given me the heart to remain intentional with others and make connections with people from other countries! I have enjoyed pursuing relationships with people I find similarities with, as well as those with whom I have differences.

I have met many international students by attending an international student organization that is registered as a club through my university. I am so thankful to God for leading me to be a part of this organization. The leaders are so caring for others, and it has truly inspired me. Pastor Marin has taught me that we are all (St. John's Church, ISM, and the student organization) working for the same purpose because it is about what God is doing, and we

get to be a part of it. I have kept this in mind since the beginning of the internship.

Some things we have done include celebrating Diwali – an Indian holiday – with students in November. We went



to an Indian restaurant to celebrate, and then went to an American home for Chai tea and Indian desserts and sparklers. I also was able to celebrate Thanksgiving with students. A lot of them were experiencing Thanksgiving for the first time. Whenever I hangout with my international student friends, the evening always ends with dancing! Looking ahead to this month, we are planning a Valentine's Day party!

This semester I have the opportunity to lead a Bible study that is open to non-believer international students. My prayer is that I will be able to share the good news out of the joy given to me through Christ. Finding similarities

beside the differences in beliefs and culture has given me the right posture to share the good news: I am a mere human and need Jesus just as much as anyone.

Showing others you care about them by asking them questions and showing them you want to hear their story is a way I can share the love of Christ with others. I am learning this in many settings. I value one-on-one conversations because I get to hear their story and show them I care. Driving students around to and from the Bible studies and other events is something I have found valuable for making these connections. This lesson has also spread out into other parts of my life. For example, talking with my St. John's host-family while sharing time by cooking with one another has also shown me how much giving others your time can go. I also have recently called my family members more because I know how much it means to me when someone shows me they care by reaching out. Even in my student teaching classroom, I have practiced this as well.

I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this ministry. I really did not know what to expect at the beginning, but I am seeing God's faithfulness through this. I'm looking forward to all that this semester will hold with the Bible studies and developing relationships with others. I recommend this internship to anyone who is looking to meet new people, care for others, and give God control of how he allows the mission work to happen. Thank you so much to ISM for this opportunity. †

Look for ways to meet both felt needs and deeper needs

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

GIFTS IN HONOR/MEMORY OF...

We praise God for current and former ISM workers as well as relatives of yours whom you honor or remember as you give. In the past six months, the following gifts have been received:

In Memory of:

Ted Haske \$25
Jon Schroeder \$25
Rev. Karl Lutze \$180
Carl Selle \$2500 (with Karol)
Mildred Seefeld and Carl Selle \$2500

In Honor of:

Gena (Meyer) Nelson \$200
Sue Hasselbring \$1040
Karol Selle \$2500 (with Carl)

Give others the gift of being with them, listening to their pain and their joys.

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

GOD'S WORD SPREADS THROUGH ISM GRANTS

IN 2021, ISM Inc. DISBURSED *Christ-Centered Resource Grants* totalling \$3,100 to seven ISM sites from Pennsylvania to California. Now those grants are bearing fruit as God's people intentionally engage with international students, scholars and their families. Congregations and ISM sites may apply for a grant at any time using the application on the ISM website or by contacting Sue@isminc.org for more information.

GIFT OF CHINESE BIBLES

Hope Lin (Not her real name. For security and safety, this entry contains no identifying information) arrived with us as an elementary school student from China. She was here with a host family while her Dad was a visiting scholar at an American university. Hope left the area for a few years but recently arrived back with us. She attends a local high school as a sophomore now. She did not have a Chinese/English Bible so we were excited to give her one. Her Chinese host family is not Christian and we were able to give them a Bible, too,

which is an exciting witnessing opportunity. We are excited that this gift can help to further establish our relationship with Hope. Looking forward to getting her connected with our church. As we are not far from Lent we are hoping to connect her with a small group and be able to use the Bible in our local Lutheran congregation.

We are thankful for the ISM grant that helped make this happen.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ATTEND THANKSGIVING FEAST

On Sunday, November 14 - before the students would leave on break - your campus mission in Pittsburgh celebrated its annual Thanksgiving feast, co-sponsored by the Pittsburgh Lutheran Deaf Ministry (PLDM) and aided by a grant from ISM, Inc. We had a wonderful mix of members and guests from the parish, campus ministry, deaf mission, blind ministry, etc: 50 people total. One of our international students from Japan, "Corito," attended

Christian worship for the first time ever and the meal immediately after the service with her family (see attached photos). She wrote to me a couple days later: "Thank you for last Sunday. I'm happy to experience Sunday divine service and traditional Thanksgiving dinner!" Before, she knew nothing about Jesus and had never opened a Bible. She has now been attending Bible study every week with us.

First Trinity, Pittsburgh is thrilled to serve international and US students attending local universities, including University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie-Mellon, and Chatham College. †



JO DUBLIN: AN ANSWER TO PRAYER

August Mennell, Slipper Rock, PA

Seventy students, both US and International, poured into All Saints Lutheran Church, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania in January to experience Christian fellowship and enjoy the homemade meal faithfully prepared by Jo Dublin. Jo is a Korean Christian who passionately includes students in her life for the sake of the Gospel.

Jo was born into a home with few earthly possessions, but rich in Christian love. Because of her mother, she and all her siblings are Christian. When she moved to the US with her Christian husband Mark who was an American soldier, her faith came with her. Jo took a special interest in international students, delighting to share the gospel with them.



Jo Dublin shares leftovers from Korean Student Meal with Jin Lee. Jin Lee helps spread the word to other students at Slippery Rock University about the free meal.

In 2010, Jo invited my husband and me to a games night she hosted which included one of her homemade meals. We had been involved in a movie and pizza night at All Saints for some years, but realized that the students were "pizza-ed out". My husband was praying that God would send us a cook so we could serve homemade meals. Jo was the answer to that prayer!

Jo shows her love for Jesus in her actions and words to students. She often visits a local farm to harvest fresh Asian cabbage and radishes to include in her meals. She sends all the leftovers home with the students to eat in their dorms. She refuses all gifts except one given to her favorite

charity. We give God thanks that Jo is so willing and loving, always sharing God's Word with students. †



Mrs. Augusta Mennell shares a moment with Jo Dublin who cooks the Korean Student Meal for the All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center's Campus Ministry.

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the giftings and availability of God’s people in that place, and the connections to the university.

What about university connections? One student-led ISM (mentored by a Director of Christian Education) is registered with the campus as a student-led group and receives regular funding for their events. Several ISM site leaders serve on the campus committee for religious organizations. Many ISM sites participate in new student orientation and are allowed to post notices about their events. Maintaining such connections takes time and commitment. In other places, where such connections are impossible or difficult, communication is passed student to student, or

events are announced on the church’s outdoor signs.

Some intentional ministry among international students and scholars is closely linked to “LCMS U” campus ministry efforts. Others are completely separate. Some have only volunteers, some only paid staff, others a mixture of the two.

Is one way of being ISM better than another? No. Each offers opportunity and challenges. All require us to depend on God to strengthen, sustain, and guide us. Perhaps, as you have read you realized that you or your congregation are doing ISM or could start

Avoid assuming that others have negative motivations, rather truly care for others and build relationships.

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT

doing it! We would love to list you and your congregation on the ISM list of ministries. We’d love to add you to our ISM leader’s discussion list so you can share your ideas and experiences with others. Contact Sue (sue@isminc.org). †

prayer



In-Depth Bible Seminar

Praise for providing Toddhall Retreat Center as the venue for In-Depth. May God bless the staff who serve there.

For God to guide students and scholars to register for the 2022 In-Depth Seminar.

For God to provide a team to serve, teach, and care for the children who attend.

For guidance for JJ Voelker and Sue as they prepare the In-Depth Seminar sessions.

For additional staff for the In-Depth Seminar.

From Sue Hasselbring Ministry Catalyst

That participants from across the US who attended the Best Practices in Ministry (BPM) Conference in Phoenix would begin intentionally reaching out to international students and scholars, encouraging others to join them.

For wisdom in prioritizing which conferences and conventions to attend.

For appropriate follow-up with various contacts: potential new sites, BPM, those registered for In-Depth, and those who have requested help.

From Bob Dickhudt, Detroit, MI

The ISM site at Wayne State University, Detroit, has been “pandemic-caused inactive,” but HOPE ABOUNDS for potential re-start in the weeks ahead. Pray for us: for wisdom and strength and good ideas and the Lord’s leading.

From Marcia Mittwedel, Austin, Texas

For M, E, J (S. Korea); H (Turkey); N, Y (Japan); G (Hungary); who have all responded to our offer to send them a free Bible (thanks to a Grant from ISM, Inc.). Ask the Lord to continue to draw them and family members to Himself as they read and study these new Bibles.

Please continue to pray for N (Japan) and her kids. (Not Christians yet.) Jesus is at work!! Here’s an excerpt from a recent message: “...my second daughter asked a question about Jesus, so I gave her a children’s Bible. She sat next to me for about an hour and read the Bible.”

More good news! K&T (Belarus) have asked Pr. Richard to baptize their baby girl on Feb. 26. The baptism will be “zoomed” to the family in Belarus so they can also join the event. Thank the Lord and ask that other internationals who attend will also be touched by God’s Spirit.

From Eric Andrae, Pittsburgh, PA

“Corito” and her family came to the divine service this past Sunday; the first time ever they have been to Christian worship. Afterward, they also joined about fifty people from our parish, campus ministry, deaf mission, and blind center at our annual Thanksgiving Dinner (see attached pictures).

Prayer request for Zoë Huelsman, our Deaconess intern who is teaching ESL class, and for me as I continue to teach ESL Bible study. Prayers for one of our new students, “Cortito” from Japan, who has never heard of Jesus or opened a Bible before, as well as for “Jamesi” joins us online from Asia, a Muslim who really desires to learn more about Christianity and to come to the United States. †

It takes multiple persistent friendly contacts over time to really connect. Follow up regularly with volunteers, with students, with student affairs personnel

CAMPUS MINISTRY SUMMIT



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DoorstepNews

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We want to hear from you!



We've been hearing amazing ways that people are connecting international students and scholars with the love of Christ. Please send in your articles, pictures and especially your prayer requests.

Please send your submissions for the May/June issue by email. Deadline is April 1, 2022

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

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