

EQUIPPING CONFERENCE FINAL CALL

Keeping close to Jesus equips us to serve him and to serve among international students and scholars whom he deeply loves and desires to



be part of His Kingdom. Keeping close to Jesus will echo through all of the sessions and devotions at the 2023 Equipping conference at Campus

**Ministering
among
Immigrants?**

**You are
welcome too!**

Lutheran church in Columbia, Missouri May 23-25. This is your last call to join us! We will grow in relating well cross-culturally, we will

find creative ways to welcome more volunteers into this joy-filled ministry, we will learn about topics and methods for facilitating English conversation groups. And more, and more! Because

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DOGS BRING COMFORT AFTER CAMPUS SHOOTING

Dan Winter

Executive Director - Friendship House MSU

In the immediate wake of the tragic shooting on our campus here at Michigan State University back in February, I was at a loss as to how to best care for and support our international student community. I knew of at least one of our community members who sheltered in place in the school of music building for at least 5 hours that night, and I heard from one international who simply said, "I want to go home".

We were in uncharted territory here, even with the pandemic so fresh in our collective memories. Our community members went silent. They didn't come to the Friendship House

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Internationals gather around comfort dog following school shooting

SHARING WITH INTERNATIONALS WHERE THEY ARE

Sue Hasselbring

Ministry Catalyst

We praise God for all of the sharing he is doing through each of you! We praise God for the sharing between students that takes place over meals, and for the comfort shared by dogs and their handlers after a shooting. We praise God for the sharing of a testimony by a recently confirmed international student.

Sharing is best when it is two-way.

I am reminded of last summer when I sat cross-legged on the carpet at the LCMS Youth Gathering role-playing as an international student. I'd ask the youth a question about what Christians believe. Some engaged me in dialogue, but others slipped into mini-lectures that would have gone over the head of any international student engaging in a first

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BEING BOLD TO CONNECT WITH THOSE WE MEET

Rachel is a Purdue student who is so active at ULu - University Lutheran Church, that she is a member of the church council. She eagerly participated in the "You Can Be a Friend" Bible study facilitated by Sue Hasselbring, ISM Inc.'s Ministry Catalyst. After Bible study, church, and the church council meeting, she popped into the coffee shop that rents part of the ground floor of ULu and got a coffee. She

noticed one customer seemed to be from another country, so, putting into practice what she had learned at the Bible study, she greeted him. Glass doors separate the church office and entrance from the coffee shop. He gestured toward the door to the office where he had seen many people going in and out.

"What is that place?" he asked her.

She felt a bit nervous, fearing

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CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCES AND EVENTS GRANTS

Is your congregation just getting started in ministering among internationals? Is your well-established site hoping to try something new this fall? Each year ISM Inc. shares up to \$500 with each of 12-15 LCMS congregations or non-profits intentionally ministering among international students and scholars. As you prepare your budget for next year, please consider whether purchasing Bibles in the student's own languages, or purchasing other Christ-centered materials would be a blessing to those you minister among. Grant requests for special Christ-Centered Events will also be considered. Visit isminc.org/resourcesgrant to learn more. Grants requested by early July will be awarded in mid-July. Any remaining available grants will be awarded in September or October. †

SHARING WITH STUDENTS

Augusta Mennel

All Saints Fellowship, Slippery Rock, PA

Our February student meal was filled with opportunities to share God's word through friendship, conversation, and board games. During this event, we fellowshiped and shared encouragement with a Sri Lankan former Slippery Rock University student, three Japanese students, and an American graduate student.

Aru, a Sri Lankan international who graduated five years ago, stunned us by walking in unannounced. When he was a student at SRU, he had attended student meals and other events. During Aru's return visit, he stayed for the whole afternoon to share about life, his job, his wonderful wife Irene from Peru, and his conversion from Buddhism to Christianity. That seems to be why he really came: he wants to learn more about Christianity. He requested a footnoted Bible, and we gladly gave him a CPH NIV Self-Study Bible.

In addition to Aru, three Japanese students came to the meal, and they were a little nervous about trying American foods such as pizza and homemade meatballs. With some encouragement from us, they tried the dishes, and their plates were empty when they left! These students don't know much about God yet, but we hope that, like former Japanese students we have worked among, they will read the Bible one day.



Another result of the meal was the connection with an American graduate student named Jonathan. We first met him when he asked us to attend a Slippery Rock borough meeting to consider the borough's decision to deal with a prominent vacant lot in town. We made it a point to attend the meeting, and Jonathan later attended worship services once or twice.

When Jonathan attended the February student meal he was able to talk with Aru who shared about an SRU professor who helps local businesses improve their community outreach. This is the very help Jonathan needed to provide practical ideas for the borough leaders and local businesses. Jonathan thanked us for the introduction to Aru and said he might return again for worship, which we pray he does. †

("Comfort" continued from p. 1)

for classes and for the most part, didn't attend remotely via Zoom. I reached out to everyone asking if they were OK, asking what did they need, how could we help, and largely, I received very little back in response. I knew this was extremely traumatic for them. So far from home while trying to make sense of such a random, violent act.

Within 24 hours of the shooting, my home church, Martin Luther Chapel, held a prayer vigil. Our lead pastor, Curt Dwyer, was the visible point person during the shooting aftermath. Pastor Dwyer is the president of the Religious Advisors Association and the university recognized

point of contact for people of all faiths. As I drove up to the church, I encountered media cameras and personnel from around the world.

As the countless undergrads made their way around the circus outside and came into the church with tears streaming down their faces for the vigil, they were met by a group from Lutheran



Church Charities (made possible by the coordination from Pastor Trevor Sutton at St. Luke Lutheran Church) with their team of therapy dogs. It was amazing how this team brought so much comfort to so many.

I introduced myself as the director of the Friendship House and was immediately asked if they could come and provide support to our community. Without hesitation I said yes, without knowing if any internationals would come. We let the community know we had the therapy dogs on that Friday around lunch time and from the pictures you can see the response.

This was just the first step in our healing process and wasn't even on my radar as a possibility. Who knew that five of God's creatures could bring so much love and support to so many who needed healing! †

INTRODUCING VICKIE JAMESON - ISM INC. SECRETARY

Vicki Jameson first engaged in International Student Ministry while attending Illinois State University and Wittenberg Lutheran Center in Normal, IL. Then Campus Pastor Bob Lange described ISM and invited interested students to volunteer as Peer Ministers. Vicki signed up and loved it.

She lived in I-House, an international student dormitory, and enjoyed getting to know and care for people from many different countries. Vicki enjoyed serving on staff with ISM-St. Louis from 2007-2014, helping volunteers



share God's mercy and grace with international students attending English conversation groups, Bible discussion groups, free lunches, and special holiday events. Since moving to Anderson, Indiana, Vicki has served as a "Friendship Family" for students at Anderson University and Ball State University. She occasionally serves as an online

English Conversation Partner through the LCMS Office of International Mission. Vicki remains passionate about ISM and is eager to use her gifts on the board.

Vicki lives in Anderson, Indiana with her husband, John. They love traveling to spend time with their four children and six grandchildren. They also enjoy jogging at Mounds State Park. Vicki is an oil painter, working outside and in the studio. †



Enjoying lunch with students in St Louis



Welcoming new students in St Louis

("Bold" continued from p. 1)

she might turn him away if she said the wrong thing. However, taking confidence from what she had learned in the Bible study, she replied, "That's my church."

"What do you do there?"

"We study God's Word and fellowship with each other."

"That sounds nice," he said.

That evening at the weekly "Come Hungry" dinner, Rachel eagerly shared the story of her conversation with Brynne the ULu secretary. Rachel now realizes that sharing her faith and her love for her church can easily be reflected in a simple friendly gesture such as a smile and a simple explanation of what ULu means to her. Brynne, who had also attended the Bible study,

shared an email the next morning "the Bible study... yesterday morning... really got me thinking about how I can personally be more aware of the international students I come into contact with every day."

May our eyes be open to see and our hearts open to connect with those we meet each day. †

("Sharing" continued from p. 1)

conversation. Through facial expressions, I showed confusion and surprise, but some continued to 'share'. They were meeting me where they were, not where I was.

Jesus shares well. He adjusts how he talks about things to fit each context and individual. Of, course, he knows where people are. He knew where Thomas was, and where the Emmaus disciples were. Despite knowing, he also listened! We often need to listen long to have even a hint of where someone is. And

then we need to keep listening because we will continue to learn more of where they are as they respond to what we say or do.

Lord, help us, with each person we encounter to learn from them, to be gentle both as we ask and answer questions. Help us to not be afraid to explore a wide variety of areas: spiritual, personal and cultural. Share your love and truth through us Lord. Amen. †

("Equipping" continued from p. 1)

so many topics related to ministering among international students and scholars are also relevant to those ministering among immigrants, we have broadened our invitation! Tell your friends and contacts involved in immigrant ministry that they are welcome too! Visit isminc.org/ equip to learn more and register! You can also download an Equipping Conference flyer. Registration closes May 15. Contact sue@isminc.org with questions. †

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Yao Jiayu

Wittenberg Chapel, Normal, IL

This is a statement of faith written for the Reformation Day confirmation of a student from China who had been baptized the previous December and received catechesis through the summer and fall.

My Baptism means a lot to me. I used to think that I chose to be baptized and thus chose to be a part of a Christian family, but I now think that God chose me. According to my Bible study for about the past year, baptism or bathing was common in most ancient countries as a preparation for prayer and sacrifice or as an atonement for sin. In warmer countries this connection may be closer than in colder climates, hence the frequency of baptism in religious ceremonies throughout the East. Baptism implies the confession of faith in Christ; the purification or cleansing of the soul from sin; death to sin and new life in righteousness... I believe that the command to baptize and the command to preach the gospel are coextensive. All people are to preach the gospel; we are to be disciplined and accepted as members of the Christian religion through baptism.

Bible study is the privilege of a believer to understand the Word of God by reading, expounding, and applying the Scriptures. Healthy habits of Bible study will also include meditating on the truths of the Scriptures, keeping the commandments of the Scriptures, and explaining the Bible to others. This is accomplished by understanding how to properly interpret the Bible so that man

himself will understand what it says and what it means.

I started to understand from last summer that prayer is important; but what is more important is the quality of piety. Because I think that God is the true selfless one who gives us everything and lets us get it for free, I think that becoming devout means that your whole existence becomes a kind of devotion. It is a process of giving of yourself. Piety... is a quality, a state of being. When we become devotional, it is very beautiful... At that time, the experience is one of complete joy. When we are truly happy, we are completely open and able to receive. Prayer is no longer a one-man show. When I pray is when I am truly in dialogue with God, not only my gratitude to God, but also my reflection on myself. Many times during the dialogue with God I have reflected on my sins and hoped to be forgiven.



Pastor Bill confirms Yao

The Last Supper was a major event that announced a turning point in God's plan for the world. In comparing the crucifixion and the Passover, we can easily see the redemptive nature of

Christ's death. As symbolized by the original Passover sacrifice in the Old Testament, Christ's death purchased the sins of His people; His blood saves us from death and delivers us from slavery.

Today, the Lord's Supper is a time for believers to look back on the perfect sacrifice of Christ and know that by our faith in receiving him.

At the beginning of my Bible study, I didn't like the word "sinner" because it was a bad word. When I was told that we were sinners, I immediately retorted, "No, I'm not! I'm not going around doing evil, and I'm not killing and setting fire to people!" and I wasn't even speeding when I was driving. But the problem then was that I didn't understand what "sin" really meant. I thought sin was a vile act that was so abhorrent to church goers that they wanted to hang the Red Cross around our necks. But after studying the Bible, I know that everyone else is a sinner except Jesus Christ. Because the way to heaven is freely offered to us by God, we need to talk to God through ourselves often and be thankful for what God has done for us. †



Yao proudly displays his medal for winning the darts competition.

IN-DEPTH CONFERENCE UPDATE: STARTS MAY 14

On May 14, international students and scholars will arrive in St. Louis to Know, Grow and Share during the five-day In-Depth Bible Seminar. On the first days they will get to know one another and the Seminar leaders Rev. JJ Voelker, Rev. Bill Jensen and Sue Hasselbring. They will dig into the gospel of John, guided by Pastor JJ, letting

God's Word sink deep into their souls. Early in the seminar, they will also help develop a Bible Timeline that will remain up in the conference room during the whole seminar as a reminder that God's story extends from before creation into all eternity. They will also learn and discuss the various aspects of Christian teaching as found in Luther's

small catechism guided by Pastor Bill. Each participant will be encouraged to prepare and share their journey with Christ in 3 to 5 minutes. And those who are willing may lead one of the morning or evening devotions. As of April 15, 4 participants are registered. We anticipate that this will continue to rise up until just a week before the conference. If you know an international student or scholar who is a new believer or an active seeker, please call Sue immediately (314)745-3253. †

University of Texas - Austin

- For each of the internationals who attended a worship service over Easter or heard the gospel one on one. Especially, P, X, C, A & A (all from east Asia).
- Thank the Lord that A returned to church on Easter, in answer to many prayers!
- For wisdom as we plan end-of-the-year activities for the international students and scholars.

Other campuses

- For God to continue to bring healing to international students at Michigan State University following the shooting there in February.
- Pray for the group of Japanese high school students who will visit the University of Nebraska for one week this summer and that God would open the hearts of those at Holy Cross Kearney to welcome them.
- Pray that children of some of the international families who have participated in the ESL classes at Redeemer Lutheran Church in West Lafayette, IN, would also join in the VBS this June.
- That LCMS students across the US would be bold to connect with international students and scholars whom they meet.

For internationals on university campuses this summer

- That each international student or scholar who remains on a university campus this summer would be blessed by Christians who love them and share God's good gifts with them.
- That congregations and small groups would help international students know about and feel welcome at their summer activities.

- For wisdom for ISM sites in planning appropriate gatherings and events for the summer months so students still feel connected and cared for.

For internationals in transition this summer

- For international students and scholars who are returning to their home countries to have good farewells and good reunions.
- For each student or scholar who is transferring to another university to have good farewells and also a good orientation at their new school. That each will have a place to stay between the two programs.
- For all who are transitioning to be connected to believers near them who will continue to share Christ's love and truth with them.

For summer blessings for site leaders and volunteers

- For ISM site leaders and volunteers to finish the spring semester well, bidding farewell to students who are graduating and understanding which students will remain on campus through the summer.
- For each site leader and volunteer to be blessed with times of refreshment, friendship and rest throughout the summer.
- For wisdom in planning ahead to welcome new students who arrive in May and August.

For In-Depth Bible Training Seminar May 14-20

- Praise God for the 4 who have registered and others who will register for this year's In-Depth.
- May God prepare the heart of each participant, whether a believer or an

active seeker so they are open to learn, grow and share.

- May God grant wisdom and grace to Rev. JJ, Rev. Bill and Sue as they prepare for and lead their sessions and interact with the participants.
- May God cause trust and love to grow between the participants and leaders, creating a beautiful bond that opens doors for communication and spiritual growth.
- May God keep each participant, leader and their families safe and healthy as they travel to and participate in In-Depth.

For the Equipping Conference May 23-25

- Pray that through the Equipping Conference, God will encourage each of the 19 who have registered and better prepare them for service among internationals.
- Thank God for all that Beth Greimann and Pastor Pierce of University Lutheran Church in Columbia, MO are doing as they graciously host the conference.
- Thank God for each one who has volunteered to facilitate one or more of the 3 keynotes, or 16 sessions at the Equipping Conference. Pray for God to guide them and grant wisdom as they prepare.

For other conferences and conventions

- For participants to become more relaxed about the use of multiple languages simultaneously in ministry during Sue Hasselbring's presentation at the Multi-Ethnic Symposium May 2-3.
- For more ministering on campuses to become intentional about friendships with international students and scholars as a result of Sue's presentation at the National Campus Ministry Conference in Minneapolis May 31-June 1.
- For more Lutheran Women in Mission to realize that they can be a blessing to international students through interacting at the ISM booth during the LWML Convention in Milwaukee June 22-25. †

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?



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Doorstep**News**

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OPEN THIS ISSUE TO READ ABOUT...

Sharing with Internationals Where They Are
Comfort Dogs Bringing Comfort after a Campus Shooting
Boldly Connecting with People We Meet
An International's Statement of Faith
And more...

YOUR SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOMED!

Please send your submissions for the July/August 2023 issue by email.

The deadline is May 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