

THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK IN JAPAN

**AUGUSTA R. MENNELL, CAMPUS MINISTRY DIRECTOR
SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY
ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH AND STUDENT CENTER**

Campus ministry is able to provide such wonderful opportunities. Even though we often doubt that God can open doors of faith in the hearts of others, the story of Steve (not his real name) and Kenzaburo from Japan shows what God the Holy Spirit is doing.

Kenzaburo from Japan came to All Saints, where he became a baptized Christian. After All Saints and SRU, he attended graduate school in Pittsburgh and continued studying the Bible at First Trinity with Reverend Eric Andraé. Because he loved being in America so much, he was reluctant to leave, but he did. He stayed in contact with us for years. He always wrote saying how he continued to read the Bible. His parents later told us that he read Luke aloud to them every night.

Only a few years later sad news came to us from Japan. Kenzaburo had died of a heart attack. Since he had not had a Christian memorial service, All Saints and First Trinity Pittsburgh had one for him. Ken's sister, her son and her mother (pictured right) came from Japan to attend. The service was a great comfort and we got to know his sister, Michiko, her son Shun, and his mother Reiko.

Steve is an outgoing, friendly student from Pakistan, a Muslim who attended SRU about three years ago. While here, he made time to attend worship once or twice at All Saints. He had wanted to come more often, but his schedule was too full. He loved the worship service and the hymns. After he left SRU, we continue to correspond. When he wrote saying he is studying for a masters degree in Osaka Japan, I immediately wrote back telling him how to connect with Ken's sister Michiko, who lives in Osaka and with his parents, who live in nearby Kyoto. Steve said he had become fluent in Japanese so we knew he would be at ease speaking with Ken's family. Because he is interested, Michiko told him about Christian



STEVE (NOT PICTURED) MET SHUN, MICHIKO, AND REIKO (ABOVE) THROUGH AUGUSTA MENNELL

churches in Osaka. They preach in Japanese and English and are welcoming. He plans to attend.

After a glowing call from Steve, I asked if he would write a few sentences describing what he'd experienced while a student here. I had hoped for a few words, but he wrote an essay called "Friendship Knows No Boundaries." I am delighted to share his letter because it is so encouraging. It shows that God the Holy Spirit uses campus ministry to be an instrument for sharing the Gospel. Truthfully, we in campus ministry need this encouragement because we often talk about the growing number of international and American students who do not seem to want to even hear about Jesus' love. This is a stunning example of just the opposite: God is still at work among college students.

Friendship Knows No Boundaries

by Steve

Friendship is such a beautiful thing, and it is amazing how we find friends in the most unexpected of places. I came to Slippery Rock around four years ago in 2014 and it was my first time outside of my home country of Pakistan. I had come on a cultural exchange program for about five months and it was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I made so many wonderful friends, one of whom was Mrs. Augusta Mennell. I had never been to a church before, and since faith is an important part of life for many people in America, I wanted to experience church worship and learn about the Christian faith. Mr. and Mrs. Mennell were so kind to invite me to the All Saints Lutheran Church to experience Sunday prayer there.

Next Sunday, I went to the church and was welcomed wholeheartedly by the community that gathered there to worship our Creator. It was my first time experiencing church prayer and what a wonderful and beautiful experience it was. I still remember the magnificent feeling I had there, and the beautiful songs the faithful were singing there, praising God. I can still recall some of the lines from the songs and hymns that were sung there, even though it has been almost 4 years. One of those songs that has stuck in my heart and memory is "How Great Thou Art." Sometimes I find myself singing the lyrics to that song without even noticing. It could be at night or morning or even when I am taking a walk somewhere; I would start humming this song

that is still close to me. It is such a beautiful and grasping song that I absolutely love. I am so grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Mennell for sharing with me this experience and giving me everlasting memories full of love and joy.

Even after coming back to Pakistan and my home University in Lahore I kept in touch through letters and postcards. All Saints genuinely cares about people and loves them, no matter where they are from I always feel rejoiced whenever I receive their letters. They make me really happy and peaceful.

This year I came to Japan in the city of Osaka to pursue my graduate studies, and the new chapter of my life began. Sometime later, Mrs. Mennell told me that she has friends in Japan. Somehow I got connected with her and found out she lives in the very next city to where I live in Osaka. So, a few days ago I met her, and we took a trip to Kyoto together to meet her parents. They were all such lovely, heartwarming and welcoming people. I really felt happy and elated after meeting them and hope to meet again. At their home, I saw pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Mennell and the logo of Slippery Rock University, and it made me think how closely connected the world is.

Think about it. I, as a Pakistani student, came to the United States and met Mrs. Mennell; and then years later I came to Japan and, through Mrs. Mennell, met and befriended such wonderful and loving people here. God really is great, and the world surely is more beautiful when we think about how interconnected our lives are, and how love and friendship and human connections know no boundaries. I know that these experiences will remain part of my life forever, and I hope that I remain in touch and in love and friendship with all the wonderful and loving people that I've met during my life. Stay blessed!

Steve later sent me a handwritten note dated September 23, 2018:

Another interesting thing. The other day I was coming back from the supermarket and I saw Michiko on the way. It was incredible. She told me that she works there close to where I live. Hopefully, I'll meet her again and her lovely parents.

It is wonderful how God plants seeds of faith. All Saints is thrilled with what God arranges. Steve is not yet a Christian. Please pray that he will be led by the Holy Spirit to faith in Jesus Christ. This is All Saints' prayer, too.



THANKFUL GATHERING

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

Students from Ukraine, South Korea, Russia, Serbia, Bangladesh, Turkey, China and Iran gathered for a Thanksgiving potluck meal at University Lutheran Chapel in College Station on November 16. The international student ministry there provided smoked turkey and dressing, and asked students to bring a dish from their home country to supplement the meal. A wonderful feast was enjoyed by all, including some of the American students from the Chapel. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve such wonderful people from around the world, not only with good food, but with food for the soul, the Good News of Jesus Christ!

ASK THE EXPERT

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



In September, international students from University Lutheran Chapel went to David Gardner Jewelers in College Station, Texas, to “Ask the Expert.” Our expert was Jerry Zerbe, dressed in all black, who is the certified Rolex technician at the store. Jerry is also a member at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in College Station. The students learned how jewelry is made, what goes into servicing a Rolex watch, and how Jerry’s Christian faith impacts his daily work at the store.

TURNING THE TABLES

FLINT INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS ASSOCIATION, FLINT, MI
KATE COLE / ISM DIRECTOR

Did you know that 75% of international students will never enter an American home while in the United States? And, 80% of international students will never enter an American church! Flint International Friends is working on reducing those numbers by introducing our Christian friends to international students during the holidays. We place students in homes of church members who express a desire to meet an international student. We pray that each student will experience a huge helping of God’s love in the hospitality served during the holidays and that friendships will be formed in order to share not only food, but the Bread of Life, Jesus!

Our students were very grateful for this Thanksgiving opportunity—so much so that they decided to turn-the-tables on us and host their own “International Thanksgiving” celebration—inviting our volunteers to taste food from around the world. We tasted Nepali momos which are a delicious combination of vegetables and chicken steamed in a dumpling wrapper. We also enjoyed Indian butter chicken, and stir-fry cooked to perfection.

Besides the wonderful food, we had the pleasure of learning more about the cultures of Nepal, Nigeria, India, Pakistan and Turkey, which helps our volunteers better understand our students’ worldview.

Scripture tells us to, “... always be ready to give a logical defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope that is in you, but do it courteously and respectfully.” (1 PETER 3:15) If we are going to effectively share our faith with our international friends we need to have an understanding of their worldview. Sharing meals and friendships is a great way to begin to develop this understanding and be ready... when anyone asks us... to share our faith in Christ.



LEARN WHAT YOU TEACH

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY / DETROIT, MI

BOB DICKHUOT

This past Halloween I was invited to lead the children's chapel service at Guardian Lutheran in Dearborn, MI. I brought along with me Chinese scholars who wanted to see an American elementary school.

The scholars helped me teach the students by reading a part of the story of Peter, scared out of his wits, calling out to Jesus for help as he began sinking in the water. They also shared a verse from Isaiah in Chinese, "for the Lord tells people of all lands, 'Fear not, I am with you...'"

Most memorable for the scholars, and for Guardian's students was the classroom visits after chapel. Our Chinese friends loved the friendly "laid back" American classroom atmosphere. The children were overjoyed to learn to read, write, and say a few good Chinese words.

The rest of the "Dearborn experience" for the scholars included visiting the famous Henry Ford Museum and eating in an authentic Middle Eastern restaurant. As they wrote in their personal "news reports", it was a most memorable day!



November 7, 2018

To: International Student Ministry, Inc
3177 State HWY 66
Rosholt WI 54473

From: Ruth Ann Rebber
Zion ESL
Zion Lutheran Church
1501 Gaiser Drive
Seymour IN 47274

To Whom It May Concern:

I want to thank you so much for the \$500 gift to our ESL program at Zion Lutheran Church, Seymour IN. Your gift was a blessing as we have begun a Bible Study group with some of our students and were finding it difficult to purchase materials.

Our contact with Marcia Mittwede was an unexpected blessing that only God could have orchestrated. Her help and support have been such a wonderful gift. She has shared Bible study lessons with us and apparently shared our story with your organization.

Please accept our sincere thanks. We have purchased Japanese/English New Testaments as well as God's Word Bible.

May God bless your ministry.

Sincerely,

Ruth Ann Rebber

Darlene Cooley

Maggie Schneider

1501 Gaiser Drive Seymour, Indiana 47274 (812) 522-1089

LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD
Servants of Jesus Building Relationships for Eternity

We received a lovely note from Zion Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN. letting us know how they used their funds from the ISM, Inc. Christ-Centered Resource Grant. God bless you and the ESL students at Zion!

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Please accept our sincere thanks. We have purchased Japanese/English New Testaments as well as God's Word Bible.

May God bless your ministry.

Sincerely,

Ruth Ann Rebber, Darlene Cooley and Maggie Schneider

PRAYER AND PRAISE

JANUARY 1-5, 2019

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY/ MANHATTAN, KS
ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
LIZ BEIKMANN, ISM FACILITATOR

- Prayers for safe travels for internationals as they travel over the holiday and for those returning to their native countries.
- Prayer of thanks for the host families that stepped forward for the semester to be friends with the students coming to KSU on exchange from the Czech Republic.

JANUARY 6-12, 2019

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

- Pray for Manel, a lady from Sri Lanka, who recently returned to her home country. We had only a few months with her, but she was able to hear the Gospel often in Bible study at the Chapel, and we developed a nice friendship with her. Pray that the Holy Spirit will do his mighty work in Manel.
- Pray for Sina and Fatemeh, a couple from Iran; Nittaya and her family from Thailand; Burcu and her husband from Turkey; Nabila from Bangladesh; Amerika and her boyfriend from Brazil; and Yong Chen from China. All of these are new students this semester with whom we've developed significant relationships. Pray that the Spirit of God would draw these unbelievers to himself.
- We continue to pray for a new co-director to work with Lydia. Ask the Lord of the harvest to raise up a new worker for our ministry.
- Please ask the Holy Spirit to bless our classes and activities for the 2019 winter/spring semester.
- Pray that the Lord will continue to provide faithful financial partners so that our ministry of friendship and hospitality to internationals at Texas A&M University will continue. We praise him for providing all that we needed in 2018!

JANUARY 13-19, 2019

UNIV OF PITTSBURGH, CARNEGIE-MELLON, CHATHAM COLLEGE
FIRST TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
PASTOR ERIC ANDRAE

- (Not real names) For ESL students Karam & Yuzeli (Turkmenistan), Yukha (Japan), Suzuki (Japan), and Zhinzhing (China) - none of whom are Christian and all of whom have been connected with Friendship Families or Conversation Partners from our First Trinity parish or our Lutheran Student Fellowship.

JANUARY 20-26, 2019

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS & AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AUSTIN, TEXAS
MARCIA MITTWEDE, ISM DIRECTOR

- Thanksgiving for a faithful cadre of volunteers who pray for, support financially and give of their precious time to all our ISM ministries!
- Thanksgiving for opportunities which the Lord gave over the holidays to proclaim the Gospel.
- We would be sensitive to the Lord's leading in what topics to cover in the second semester of the Marriage & Relationships class.
- The Lord to give several who already believe the desire to join His family by baptism.
- The Lord's guidance in who we have attend the In-Depth Bible Seminar this next year.

JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2, 2019

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY IN BIG RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
BETHEL LARSEN

- As I have been requested to find a different place to meet students, please pray that I find a location that works.
- Thanks that a Saudi couple and their daughter found me the last time I visited campus. I had known both for some time, but did not know they were related! Please pray for further opportunities to share with them.
- Please pray that I am able to reconnect with women I have not seen in some time.

FEBRUARY 3-9, 2019

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
PASTOR RICK MILAS

Please pray for a new student from China in our confirmation instruction. We'd like the Holy Spirit to give him enlightenment and peace in the Gospel, and joy in the gifts Christ gives by His Word and Sacraments.

FEBRUARY 10-16, 2019

FLINT INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS/ TRINITY
FLINT, MICHIGAN
KATE COLE, DIRECTOR

- Our upcoming showing of the Jesus Film that hearts may be opened to hear and receive the Gospel.
- Volunteers are needed --especially young people who can share Jesus with our students.
- Wisdom and guidance from the Holy Spirit in planning for a new year of activities.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

FEBRUARY 17-23, 2019

**INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP HOUSE / ASU
TEMPE, AZ**

SHARON OWENS, DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS MINISTRY

- Thank God for the 27 new students who attend our outreach events and were able to hear the Gospel
- Thank God for a wonderful semester of learning and growing together and the strong friendships that were made during this time
- Thank God that the 20th annual Thanksgiving dinner for international students was a great success. We played out door games prior to dinner and then engaged in various activities after dinner including a Thanksgiving devotion and Thanksgiving Bingo.
- Please pray for the start of the new semester, that we will have the chance to connect with many international students especially the ones at new student orientation
- Pray for that a stronger connection between the domestic and international students will continue to grow
- Pray for God's word to work in the hearts of the students and that they will see that God is good and follow His ways.

FEBRUARY 24-28, 2019

**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE, ILLINOIS
BESSIE FICK, ISM COORDINATOR**

- Thank you for the committee volunteers who have begun to befriend students on campus, pray for opportunities to invite the students to hear God's Word.
- Pray for opportunities to invite students to activities and to Bible study.
- Thank you for the donations of household goods that have helped us connect with students.

**WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY / DETROIT, MI
BOB DICKHUDT**

- Please help "M" to recognize and accept Jesus as the Son of God, his Savior.
- Please continue to send us new folks to work with, young and old, Chinese or "other"
- Please help us to choose wisely the Scriptures to be shared each week, relevant to the lives of the scholars and showing Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Please help R with the migraine headaches that turn up too often.
- Finally, help us to wisely discern which Bible parts to share, and adopt methods that maintain the interest of our intelligent attendees.

*Doorstep***News**

**YOU'VE GOT STORIES AND WE WANT TO SHARE THEM!
SEND US YOUR ARTICLES, PICTURES AND PRAYERS.**

Please share with us, and our subscribers, what's happening at your ministry site with the internationals you serve. We are honored to pray with and for you and encourage you to send your prayer requests!!

Best practices for sending in articles and prayers:

- Send via email to: isminc@isminc.org
- Please include your full name, your role and the ministry or campus you serve.
- Send your submission as an attached Word document
- Send your pictures as separate images (not embedded in your article) high resolution jpeg.
- Be sure to have permission to share personal information or images and any written work is your own.

Articles and letters may appear in our print edition of the DoorstepNews, our website, or Facebook page. Submission does not guarantee publication.

Join our International Student Community on facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISMCommunity>

