



The Doorstep

SERVING INTERNATIONALS ON CAMPUS

ISM BAPTISMS BRING JOY!

The Testimony of Lili Lai

Three years ago, I worked in China. The work became difficult and stressful, and I was tired and worried. Haitao started to go to church every Sunday and he knew I was looking for peace, so he asked me to go to church with him. When I was sitting in the church, the music, the people, and the preaching gave me peace. I calmed myself down and got back to work with strength and less stress.

I hadn't read the Bible or communicated with the people in the church until I went to Austin last year. I started to go to Austin International Fellowship (AIF) every Friday night and went to University Lutheran Church (ULC) worship every Sunday night. At that time, I didn't quite understand the Bible and the preaching, but I enjoyed spending time with those Christians we met. After a while, I talked to Haitao, "I love the people we met in AIF and ULC because they are nice, friendly, godly and peaceful. When they faced the difficulties in their lives, they have less worry, and more peace. I want to become that kind of people, but I couldn't believe all the words in Bible. I want to, but I just can't. I may not get to that point in my whole life." I felt so sad.

After a couple of months, we studied the story "Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman." My heart was opened when I read the words because it's exactly what I was looking for. After that, I felt joy when I studied the Bible. I think my faith started to grow at this point. I saw a light in front of me to lead me into God's kingdom.

After several weeks, when we were studying the story "Jesus Walks on the Water," I had no doubt that Jesus can walk on the water. I knew my heart was changed again.

Then, Haitao and I attended the In-



Haitao and Lili on their Baptism day,

Depth Bible Seminar in St. Louis in May. We studied the Bible and shared our experiences with other students. Most of us were from China and we were struggling to grow our faith and come to God. Talking to them was very encouraging for me.

When we came back from St. Louis, I found my life was changed. I had more security, less worry and more joy. People helped us to know God because God's kingdom is so beautiful. They want to tell others, and now I also can see part of this picture. At the end of May, I started to think about baptism. I took a walk every morning and I talked to God and prayed when I was walking. My answer was yes and no, back and forth.

One Sunday morning, when we were worshipping, my heart was opened again. I was pretty sure I was ready to be baptized. I want to make a commitment to follow Jesus. Today, I will be a newborn baby in a Christian life.

The Testimony of Haitao He

Last evening we had a Bible study meeting and we learned Matthew chapter 12. Jesus healed a blind and mute man who was possessed by a demon. We also learned that Jesus cast out demons the week before. After the Bible study, I kept thinking what Jesus said about entering the strong man's house in chapter 12:29. The more I think of this, the more excited I become.

About possessed by demon, I had my own experience. There was a period of time, actually more than three years, evening comes, my feeling of regret grows and takes control of me. I fall into my regret and waste my whole night on it. I cannot work. I cannot read. I cannot learn anything, the worst thing is that I cannot do anything to overcome it. The next day I felt guilty all day long but when the evening came, the same thing happens. Yes, a demon is strong and I am afraid of facing that demon again. During the time I tried to get rid of this problem, I went to a church near our apartment every Sunday. I did not talk to anybody in the church, just sit there and enjoyed the music and the peaceful moment. I really think that God gave me strength to cast out the demon.

After I came to America, I felt free to go to church and I started to participate in group studies and discussions. Even though school and life were more difficult than I had expected, I feel joy every Friday night at home after Bible study and I have peace when we go to worship.

Yes, Jesus is strong, he is stronger than the demon. He can tie the strong demon and plunder his house. I want this. I want the strong Jesus living in me and proclaim his reign of this house.

Today I want to be baptized and follow Jesus, and may the Holy Spirit be with me.

MY STORY OF BEGINNING A NEW LIFE

by Yusheng, In-Depth Bible Seminar participant
Madison, WI

My story begins in China in the year 2011 during my senior year in college. My boyfriend dumped me without telling me a reason. I was really depressed because it was my first relationship with a boy. Eating alone, walking alone, studying alone, talking to myself, that's the sort of the way my life was at that time.

One day I was eating alone in a campus restaurant and a lovely girl walked towards me and asked "Can I sit here?" I said "Sure." Then dropped my head again and continued eating.

Maybe my ugly, depressing face attracted her. She noticed I was unhappy. "You look unhappy. What happened?" I looked at her, and felt very safe to tell her my story. Maybe because she is a stranger? My feelings have been buried in my heart for so long time and I really needed someone to talk to. The girl was really a good listener. After hearing my long, long story, she asked me "Do you know what love is?" It was really a hard question for me. After 21 years living I didn't know how to love. Maybe that's why my boyfriend didn't like me anymore, and why I didn't have any intimate friends in college.

Then that lovely girl, together with other girls, started to teach me the Bible, leading me to the answer of "love." I joined their Bible group. Some of them were from other universities, but every morning they would come to my university to accompany me in reading the Bible. We went through the four Gospels. I felt my heart became "softer" than before. But to be honest, I was struggling during the study. On the one hand, they are really nice persons and have very positive life styles. I want to be like them! But on the other hand, I felt reading Bible, becoming a Christian means saying goodbye to my beloved traditional Chinese cultural (which I now know is very stupid). There was also pressure from my family and my university.

After the lesson of Jesus being crucified on the cross and His resurrection, I felt the "deadline" was coming to make a decision of whether to get baptized. No one ever forced me. I knew I wasn't ready but I didn't want to hurt my teachers' feelings. I chose the most inappropriate way: hiding alone. I stopped contacting with my Christian friends. I felt guilty to face them. My Bible was lying on my bookshelf, but I didn't open it again.

Three years passed. I came to the USA as a visiting student at UW-Madison in September 2015. I wanted to improve my English so I searched for free English class in Madison. Then I came to the International Friendship Center (IFC) at Calvary Lutheran Chapel. Free English classes, free food and drink, casual conversation, colorful weekend activities, it was really appealing to me! I noticed there was also Bible study. It reminded me of my Christian friends in Beijing. I then became a regular student at the Bible class, just for re-experiencing the similar feeling of learning the Bible.

Then it came a special afternoon. No one stayed for the Bible class except me. I, being the only student, had a chance to develop a deep conversation with four Christians. I was always a silent student in class, but that afternoon I talked a lot and they knew about my Bible study story. Then, my life opened

a new page. I got a new Bible as a present, and Wayne volunteered to teach me Bible, once a week.

Thanks for the basic Bible knowledge my Chinese Christian friends gave me, and thanks for the English Bible that is much more understandable. I moved on well with the help of my new IFC friends.

Then Judy asked me to participate in the In-Depth Bible Seminar. One week, 7 days with friends who also have interests in Christianity, living together, taking Bible class together, sharing each other's testimonies, it was really a great experience! One morning Lee, one of those great teachers, led us to sing the worship song "Draw Me Closer," my tears kept falling. I felt the lyrics just said my story. I once gave up, but God never gave me up! He keeps sending those lovely people to my life, helping me to learn more about Him, to get closer to Him. That night I sent an e-mail to Wayne at the IFC, telling him I've decided to get baptized. Yes, I know I'm ready this time.

Back at IFC, I was baptized on June 10 right after the Wednesday Bible class. Dan, Judy, Wayne and Suzanne did a lot of work I didn't know to arrange the schedule. I appreciate them so much! And also thanks for Pastor Dan and Pastor Jason who were willing to baptize me. I thought I would be nervous, but actually not at all. With all my teachers and my friends at IFC accompanying me, I felt peace. The Holy Spirit is working! It's a beginning of a beautiful new life!

SUMMER FUN WITH FIFA

Kate Cole, ISM coordinator
Flint, MI

Flint International Friends Association (FIFA) ended their conversational English classes in April, but that didn't stop volunteers from connecting with students in other ways. A free fishing event was held in June at a nearby lake and although no fish were caught students still enjoyed the lake side setting.

Two kayaks were available to explore with and after a short safety lesson the students paddled their way around the lake.

The Fourth of July was another opportunity to share our culture with international students. A volunteer couple invited students to join them for a cookout and then sit back, relax and watch fireworks from their front yard. Squeals of delight were heard as the sky lit up with the fireworks.

Rounding out our summer activities, volunteers joined together for a prayer retreat on August 1 to seek our Father's direction as we add new class offerings, Bible 101: An Overview of the Bible, and a conversational English class World-view Conversations.



CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE!

Art Simmons, ISM director
Columbia, MO

An entire school year spent learning American English--not an easy language to master! Hours spent making new friends from Korea and China, Thailand, Turkey, Afghanistan and America. A whole new world full of interesting people to meet. Many sessions spent talking about and grappling with that mysterious and wonderful faith called Christianity. Ah! Those are indeed reasons to celebrate. And the international student group in Columbia can party with the best of them!

Mike Alexander (English teacher extraordinaire!) and his wife Judy invited the whole bunch over to their house for the festivities and laid out quite a feast. More food arrived as the group gathered. Soon everyone was chatting, snapping pictures with their cell phones and laughing about shared memories of the time spent together. Contact information was shared so that friendships could continue across borders when people returned home. It was a truly memorable way to celebrate a year filled with remarkable accomplishments.

But mostly it was a beautiful way to commemorate what international student ministry is all about, people from all over the world called to-

gether by God's design, touched with God's love through His faithful servants, brought to faith by the work of God's Spirit, sent out to share His Good News with families and friends in all those faraway places.

Yes! It was a fine celebration indeed!



MORE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Liz Beikmann, ISM director
Manhattan, KS

This fall many new students from numerous countries arrived at Kansas State University. St. Luke's Lutheran Church in partnership with Helping International Students (HIS) helped serve dinner during orientation week. At the meal students were provided with an opportunity to sign up for an American friend/host family. St. Luke's has 15 new internationals participating in our American friend program.

Through HIS there was a furniture give-away and a social. Also, HIS sponsors a bike night where bikes are given away and also repaired.

St. Luke's American friend families had a picnic for all of their new internationals. They will be invited to St. Luke's Fall Festival and a Christmas Party. Each family will also have their own events with the students. We are so thankful for the families who participate in this ministry.

A BUSY SUMMER

by Augusta Mennell, Campus Ministry Director
Slippery Rock, PA



This was a wonderful summer at All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center (ASLC) because so many college students came to visit. They made life satisfying. Even during the summer break campus ministry was glad to see them.

"Jerry" from Hong Kong is one of the students who came to the center. He came because a Slippery Rock University professor knew him and knew we could help. Jerry was taking a summer class to improve his language skills. His professor realized that he was lonely, needed a friend and could use help practicing his English. This professor has attended many student meals with us, so he knew us and trusts us so much that he brought Jerry to meet us.

After the introduction, Jerry came every day. He quickly became so comfortable that he talked about real feelings and real questions. Like most students, he has struggles; he is concerned that he does not have a purpose in life; he wants to know how to get over injustices he has gone through. He is familiar with the Christian faith and can even recite John 3:16 from memory in Chinese. He knows about Jesus, but does not believe He is God's son. He questions why God "allowed" sin and why God has "allowed" Jerry to bear the brunt of family discord.

Talking with Jerry about how to make friends, especially with females, was a great talking point. Venting frustration gave us the opportunity to look at answers God gives in His Word. Jerry did not become a believer, but he did volunteer to attend ASLC's worship. He got to experience hearing God's Word and being with loving Christians.

Jerry needed a ride home to New Castle after his SRU classes were finished. We drove him home and met his mother, who was so pleased with our help that she sent us off with mounds of her homemade dumplings. She accepted a bilingual Bible and our offer to help if she and Jerry needed it. We believe a door to faith may have been opened this summer.



2016 ISM Equipping Conference
for Workers and Volunteers
May 26-28, 2016
Our Lady of the Snows
Belleville, IL

Prayer Requests and Praises

Sept. 1-5, 2015: ISM St. Louis
Sharon Riordan, director

That the St. Louis Furniture Give-Away goes well and we meet many new students. (The photo is from a former successful Furniture Give-Away.)

For the health of a number of our board members who are ill or injured.

That the closeness between "Y" and her friendship family continues to grow and that she comes to know Christ.



ISM Pittsburgh, PA
Eric Andrea, campus pastor

Prayers for Moka and Hiri (husband and wife from Japan), who have been attending weekly Bible study and worship for the first time

Sept. 6-12, 2015: ISM East Lansing, MI
Rich Bearup, director

For an Iraqi scholar who has been experiencing severe chronic health problems the past year.

For the many volunteers who shared their summers with our students teaching, tutoring and doing projects.

For a Libyan Muslim visiting scholar who asked to study the Gospel.

For two Turkish visiting scholars who recently requested Turkish/English Bibles and asked to know more.

For an Iranian visiting scholar, who in her exit interview with me, asked for a Persian/English Bible take home.

For the volunteers who entirely repainted and refurbished the House Manager apartment.

For the many teaching volunteers coming forward for our 2015 fall semester classes.

Our often behind-the-scenes Board of Directors for faithful monthly service and leadership.

Sept. 13-19, 2015: ISM Chinese Ministry, St. Louis, MO
Becky Shaw, director

Praise for the visiting scholars who are attending worship and Bible study.

For the visiting scholars to hear the Truth and believe in Jesus.

For the visiting scholars who have gone back to their home countries that the Word of God would dwell in their hearts and they would grow in faith.

Praise for the Light of Christ core team and their insights.

For the Light of Christ core team to hear God's voice as they make goals and determine how to fulfill them.

State College, PA
Bryan Spang, pastor

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church has just welcomed Matthew Doering as our new Director of Christian Ministry. Part of his ministry will be to American and international students at Penn State.

Sept. 20-26, 2015: ISM Milwaukee, WI
Bessie Fick, director

We rejoiced in several baptisms this year and ask for prayers for these new Christians as they continue the study of God's Word.

We thank the many volunteers who assisted us this past year and pray that God would lead others to serve the internationals.

Continue to pray that God would move His people to bring their gifts for the work among the internationals throughout our campuses.

ISM Ames, IA
Hannah Moore, director

For guidance and provision for the Board of Directors and pastors at Memorial who are seeking out a new coordinator to lead the ministry. I am stepping down after leading the ministry the past four years. I will be teaching part-time at a middle school and working towards my teaching English-as-a-Second Language certificate. Pray for all of the students and volunteers in the transition time.

Praise and thanks for a rich summer of English and Bible studies. We had students from India, South Korea, Japan, Brazil, China, Taiwan and Iran join us regularly in Bible study, and gave away our entire supply of Chinese and Farsi Bibles. Pray the seeds planted will continue to grow.

Praise and thanks for all of the wonderful ISM prayer warriors - you! I was blessed to be at the National LWML convention in June and meet many of you. What an amazing gift to know the students, volunteers and directors are being lifted up in prayer by so many from across the nation. There is no greater encouragement for ISM servants.



Sept. 27-Oct. 3, 2015: ISM Lincoln, NE
Mark Meyer, director

For good community to form between the international students and Americans.

That God would create a hunger for the Gospel among the international students here.

For the students regularly hearing the Gospel that there would be a conviction of sin and a realization of their need for a Savior.

ISM Slippery Rock, PA
Augusta Mennell, campus director

That Morgan, our new All Saints fellowship president, will have a great desire to share the Gospel with international and American students.

That many college students will come to worship and Bible study to grow stronger in faith and knowledge of God's Word.

For Jo who cooks the student meals. She is a blessing!

Prayer Requests and Praises

Oct. 4-10, 2015: ISM Manhattan, KS

Liz Beikmann, director

Thanksgiving for new host families from St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

Thanks for the wonderful cooperation of our university and the one in Prague for getting in touch with in-coming new internationals and sharing the information about our ministry.

Thanks for KSU cooperating with Helping International Student Organization (HIS) to be friends with internationals.

ISM Big Rapids, MI

Bethel Larsen, director

Thanks for Xiaohua's internship at a highly regarded area hospital.

For Vivien to find the right internship placement and continue growing in her faith.

That Jesus will shine through to new and returning students as the semester begins.

Oct. 11-17, 2015: ISM Austin, TX

Marcia Mittweide, director

Praises to the Lord for drawing Haitao and Lili to believe in Him and be baptized. For the Lord's guidance to a new church as they move to a new city for further schooling.

For the Holy Spirit to continue to draw students to Jesus - especially J, H, Y, B, B, S, and M as they read and study the Bible.

For the Lord's wisdom as we plan and carry out fall classes and activities.

For the Lord's continual provision for our precious volunteers - good health, encouragement and sensitivity to the Lord's work.

ISM Conway, AR

Karl Lenser, director

For Peace Lutheran Church's International Student Ministry. May it continue to grow and make connections with international students.

For all of the volunteers throughout all of the ISM sites around the country. May God continue to bless them for all of the work that they do within this ministry.

For the ISM Board of Directors for strength, knowledge, wisdom and energy to help other individuals and ISM sites with their ministries.

Prayers for support and recognition for ISM within and throughout the LCMS.

Prayers for healing for Carl and Karol Selle. Pastor Carl is in treatment for brain cancer. Each day can be a challenge, but he is out and about working in the yard and serving where he can. Karol reports that her ankle is almost as good as new. They thank God for each day of life and ministry.

ISM, Inc. on Facebook ~ Join Us!



This group is for anyone who wants international students to know the love and the hope that is found in Jesus. ISM, Inc. wants to encourage, pray for and celebrate the work God is doing among international students.

Oct. 18-24, 2015: ISM Rolla, MO

Nina Haas, director

Praise and thanks for the time spent with Rev. Keith Haney, Rev. Kevin Wilson and Judy Tang via virtual media. This new coaching team initiated by ISM, Inc. gave encouragement and greater clarity about our site's mission and ministry to internationals.

For new people on our team: retired missionary to Botswana, The Rev. Richard Cook and his wife, Renee. The Lord bless their partnership with us.

For the blessings of a new school year serving the Lord through this mission outreach and safe travels for incoming students, scholars and their families.

That the Lord would preserve His Word in the hearts of those who have gone on to their countries and other destinations and who have been touched by His goodness.

ISM Board of Directors

As the Board continues to work to serve ISM sites and to promote the importance of international student ministry, may God grant us wisdom and insights as decisions are made.

Bless the effort of this working Board to share the story of ISM and to encourage others to join in this effort.

Oct. 25-31, 2015: ISM Madison, WI

Judy Tang, director

The IFC had 15 classes during the summer, with 15-25 people in attendance at many of the classes. Praise God for all the internationals attending English classes and Bible studies this summer!

That God would provide more volunteers, both American undergraduate students and others this fall, to help *connect internationals to life in the U.S. and life in Jesus Christ!* (IFC's mission statement)

For several Muslim friends attending our Bible studies... that their hearts might be softened to the Gospel and see the truth in God's Word.

For me, (Judy Tang, Director) and volunteers that we might continue to find creative ways to teach English and share God's Word.



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

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DAYS OF SUMMER FUN IN MADISON

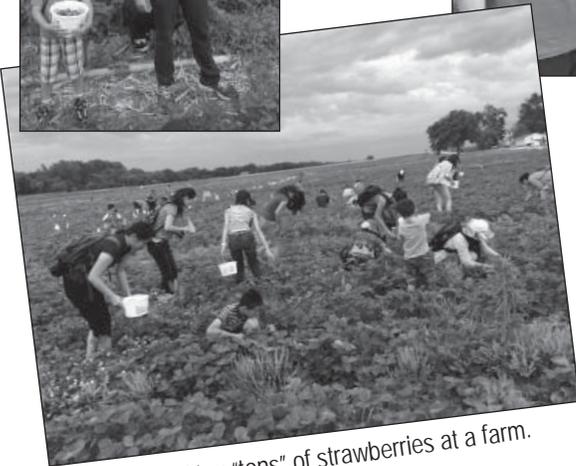
ISM Director Judy Tang, Madison, WI, shared these wonderful photos from summer activities sponsored by the International Friendship Center.



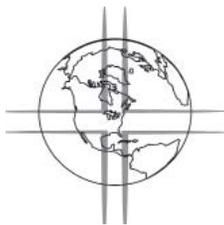
Victor and friend enjoying the day.



Judy and friends at "Concert on the Square" (...event at the Capitol with a free performance by the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra... time to sit on blankets, eat, talk, and enjoy the music together).



Picking "tons" of strawberries at a farm.



July 4th BBQ at an American home.