



The Doorstep

SERVING INTERNATIONALS ON CAMPUS

My Life Belongs to the Lord

by Donghao Su, a Chinese graduate student
Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

Before I came to the U.S., I had no belief. I trusted no one, except myself. All I did every day was try my best to chase the things I cared about: money, education and my career. I could not afford to fail, so I pushed myself so hard. That made me become angry, nervous and mean to others. I never felt at peace.

I used to think my education brought me to America, but it turns out my Lord called me here. During my hardest and loneliest time in the US, I met a nice couple who let me know I am not alone and they told me about Jesus. From then, I started learning God's Word, attended weekly Bible studies at the Luther House. Shortly after, I asked Jesus to forgive my sin and asked Him to take control of my life.

The first time my mom told me, "You are different." I realized my Lord is working on me. I am not that angry. I can accept everything that happens to me. I appreciate everything God has given to me. I look back on the past 29 years of my life, I feel the peace I have never had.

Jesus makes my life different, I want to and I will give all myself to Him. Let Him guide me in the future. I want to say it from my heart in my native language: 我主, 我愿把我自己交给您, 我会用我生命的全部去爱您, 遵从您! That means: Dear Lord, I want to give myself to You, I will use the rest of my life to love You, and obey You!



Funding for In-depth Bible Seminar growing

We are one-fourth of the way toward funding our annual In-Depth Bible Seminar for International Students. The total cost for this annual event is about \$15,000, and while this may seem to be expensive, it is an investment in the spiritual lives of our international student friends. As of this printing, 17 international students will be attending the seminar.

Mickey (Ming-Chi Chuang) attended In-Depth in 2010. Today, she serves full-time as a staff member for China Outreach Ministries in Kent, Ohio, and is significantly touching the lives of Chinese students.



Mickey (far right) with friends from the 2010 In-Depth Bible Seminar.

Your gifts will enable this year's students from Nepal, China, South Korea, Egypt, and Sri Lanka to grow in their spiritual formation. *Check the In-Depth Bible Seminar line in the enclosed envelope.*

PLEASE NOTE: Thrivent donation site

When making Thrivent Choice decisions, you must search for INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY, INC. - STEVENS POINT, WI. This will provide choice dollars for ISM, Inc. It is hard to find, but if you put in the above words, it should take you to the correct place.

From Rolla, MO

Nina Haas, ISM director



Friday night suppers and Bible studies with Chinese, East Indian, Sri Lankan and Inner Mongolian students and scholars holding their copies of *Luther's Small Catechism* in Chinese and English courtesy of the Northern Illinois District LWML.

We shall feed the hungry...

by Rich Bearup, ISM director
ISMLA, Lansing, MI

A familiar parable from Jesus teaching at the temple is that of the widow's mite (Mark 12:41-44 and Luke 21: 1-4). We know from this that Jesus explains to his disciples that the small sacrifices of the poor mean more to God than the extravagant, but proportionately lesser, donations of the wealthy.

"Foreigners living among you will be like your own people. Love them as you love yourself."
Leviticus 19:34



We had a comparable experience this week at the Friendship House MSU that shows the power of Jesus' words. About six weeks ago, a young married couple from Iran came to MSU. They are both nuclear physicists. He is here to start a PhD in

this field. They were issued a rare permanent visa into the U.S. They found a place to stay, but have no car, few belongings and, critically, no money. They started attending classes at the Friendship House MSU to improve their English and, more importantly, to ease their homesickness and isolation. They have worked tirelessly to locate employment, even at what we would consider as the most entry-level of positions in retail and food service. They have done countless job interviews in the short time they have been here.

Last week the wife came to Mary Lou, a volunteer, and me asking if there was any possibility of help with food. She said she was ashamed to ask, but didn't know what else to do. Mary Lou immediately got her a box full of foodstuffs. Thanks to a tip from Martin Luther Chapel here in East Lansing, I called Haven House and took them to the food pantry and then home to their apartment with their provisions. These efforts -- greatly appreciated -- mattered for the moment, but they would not be eligible for more food for another four weeks.

Mary Lou and I continued to seek other sources of aid and the response from our churches was deeply gratifying. She and her teaching assistant brought in more food, including fresh fruits and vegetables. Martin Luther Chapel donated a Kroger card. St. Luke Lutheran Church connected us with the Haslett Food Pantry that is at Haslett Community Church. University Lutheran Church donated CATA bus passes to get them through the winter months and lined us up with their monthly food pantry. St. Paul Lutheran Church opened their doors after hours to allow the couple access to their food pantry. Wes Thorp, our resident social media expert, put up a post on our Facebook page about an unidentified couple from the "Middle East" needing food assistance and in the last 24 hours, internationals from many countries have quietly stopped by to donate food. One Middle Eastern man, who has never been to the Friendship House before, came by with 20 pounds of rice and said, with tears in his eyes, "Please get the rice to them as soon as possible. I know what it's like to be hungry and without friends."

The same Facebook message that brought the generous Middle Eastern man to us was also read by someone else: the wife of the young Iranian couple. She came into my office today with four cans of vegetables in a plastic bag. As she handed it to me she said, "This is for the couple I read about on Facebook. I know what it's like to be hungry. It isn't much

but I hope this will help."

As I fought back my own tears in taking her generous donation, she added: "Since coming to the Friendship House I have attended Christian classes. They have really helped me with my problems and made me think about other people." As she turned to leave, she smiled and said, "Please let me know if I can do more."

I thank God for His work within all of us -- the teachers, our church partners and pastors, fellow internationals and even total strangers. But most of all, I thank Him for His work with this young couple -- providing for their earthly needs and illuminating their souls with His saving grace.

Notes from ISM Slippery Rock, PA

Augusta Mennell, campus ministry director

Our campus ministry office is located so that when students open the front door, it is easily seen. Recently the door opened and a student stood there not knowing if she should come in or not. She hesitated until she was assured that she had come to just the right place. She needed to talk. She related that she had lived in many places in the U.S. and even in Cuba. She described her family and that although she had attended different churches, she had not been baptized. She stated that she would like to help others, but believes she must first resolve some of her own mistakes. She emphasized that she yearns to be baptized. This student was carrying quite a load and we were reaching out to her. She will be baptized and we will become her family.

Another student from Eritrea/Switzerland wanted to go with us to shop at an outlet mall. The weather was terrible and while in the parking lot the student dropped his expensive cell phone. It was lost for a month, but when recovered it worked! We called the student and shared the news. We found out that he is a Christian, but had not worshiped in a long time and that he had never been baptized. He has been invited to join us for lunch, Bible studies and to talk about baptism.

Not all outreach to students leads to faith. But, we keep going, offering activities and events that meet the needs of international students and allow us to share the Good News. What a ministry!

Special Prayer Requests

Please pray for the participants at the 2014 In-Depth Bible Seminar for International Students to come with open hearts and minds to absorb all that is taught about our loving God and Lord. The seminar will be held from May 14 - May 21 in Dittmer, Mo.

Also, pray for the ISM Equipping Conference for Workers and Volunteers, May 22 - 24, in Belleville, Ill. Pray for the attendees to leave encouraged and enabled to serve the international students He brings to our doorstep.



ISM Detroit

Bob Dickhudt, director



Four Chinese students from our ISM site joined me as I led chapel at Guardian Lutheran School, Dearborn, on February 19. The theme was, “Do Love,” with many favorite love verses of Scripture shared in English by students and in Chinese by our scholar friends.

Following chapel, the scholars visited a number of classrooms and showed students how to read, write and say some good basic Chinese.

Bonding through a Homestay

by Liz Biekmann, ISM director and ISM Board chairman
Manhattan, KS

The homestay program offers newly arriving international students a three-to-four day stay with a local family. In most cases, this family will then become the student’s American friends for the duration of their stay at Kansas State University

Zuzi and Vrata, a Czech couple wrote, “We were part of an exchange program at Kansas State University. The homestay program was a very nice surprise for us. Having experienced a buddy program in Sweden we were expecting to get a student friend, however it was more than that, it was a family.”

“We were in touch with our homestay family before our arrival as the ISM director connected us with our family. The hospitality and kindness they showed and trust they gave us from the first moment was unforgettable. They were there to help us with anything – school and getting acquainted, searching for housing, purchasing a local cell number, shopping for supplies, and even taking us to Aggieville.”

“We met the other Czech/Slovak students who were part of the homestay program. Each student had his/her own family. It was amazing. Just imagine you arrive at the KC airport in the middle of the U.S., you don’t know anyone but there are people expecting you and taking you into their homes. It was such a feeling of sureness.”

“Throughout the year there were many events such as picnics, lunches, dinners, and celebrations with the families. Since the families are Christians many of these events had a religious context. It was enjoyable for all of us. It gave us a new angle of view especially for those who are not religious at all.”

Vojta said, “Having a homestay/host family is like having parents in a different time zone. College classes would never have shown me how to take care of cattle or taken me to church.”

The homestay program leads to lasting friendships and many opportunities to share the love of Jesus. For more information about the Homestay Program, contact Liz Biekmann at dogwood.angus@gmail.com or 785-539-6843.



Ken Dunker, an ISM volunteer

by Hannah Moore, ISM director
Ames, Iowa

Ken Dunker is one of our newest volunteers teaching English, and we are so grateful to have him! He teaches the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All internationals wanting to become students at Iowa State University must pass the rigorous TOEFL that tests them on reading, writing, listening and speaking in English. Here are some of his thoughts on his experience:

1. Why did you decide to volunteer/get involved?

I fully retired from the Iowa Department of Transportation late in September and was looking for a regular service opportunity at our church. Since high school I have studied German on and off, so I am sensitive to the difficulties of



Ken, is far right in this photo with his class.

learning a second language. Because there isn’t a specific list of things to include in the TOEFL class, I felt that teaching it would have less pressure than I had in teaching ISU engineering courses.

2. What were some of your hesitations?

Generally I don’t talk much, partly because I live alone. I wasn’t sure how much of a liability that would be. Initially I wasn’t sure what the class would include, but the book that has been used in the past and I am using now is very comprehensive and has many options.

3. How has the experience been so far?

After more nervousness than I expected and a somewhat shaky start, the class experience has become smoother. It has been important to be flexible, because a few students come late and sometimes there are several new students. As the class has grown, it may be time for a larger table!

4. What do you enjoy?

The book is very interesting and covers many things that were not included in my high school and university education. The students also are very interesting and have maintained a very pleasant and upbeat atmosphere. Most of the students come from China, Korea and India. It’s going to be difficult to see them leave when their time in Ames comes to an end or they take the TOEFL and move on.

5. What would you say to others who might be considering helping with ISM but are unsure of their gifts/time/expertise, etc?

There always is a bump at the beginning of something new. Sometimes, it’s little; sometimes, it’s bigger. One usually learns something one didn’t expect to learn and one needs to pray through that experience. Hannah has considerable experience with the various opportunities, knows the students, and can help match you with an appropriate activity.

Prayer Requests and Praises

May 1-3, 2014: ISM Madison, WI

Judy Tang, director

Praise that Y was baptized! Please pray for strengthening of his faith and for his wife, J, who is still not sure about Christianity. Thankful they will both be attending the In-Depth Bible Seminar.

For Yi and her husband that their faith may be strengthened and that they find a place to worship and study God's Word.

For the attendees and presenters at the ISM Equipping Conference -- safe travel, lots of learning, sharing, fun, and fellowship!

May 4-10, 2014: ISM Lansing Area, MI

Rich Bearup, director

For three of our board members with health concerns.

For three of our volunteer teachers who are expecting babies.

For our international students who will return to their home.

For other internationals who have recently arrived and are experiencing homesickness and adjustment concerns.

Praise for the four internationals from China, Korea and Nepal we will send to the week-long In-Depth Bible Seminar.

For the more than 500 international students from 32 countries currently enrolled at the Friendship House MSU.

ISM Rolla, MO

Nina Haas, director

Praise and thanks to our Lord for a nice crowd of repeat attendees and newcomers at our Friday evening dinners and Bible studies. The Chinese-English Small Catechisms that came to us through a grant from the Northern Illinois District LWML are being put to good use!

Thankfulness for Anita Schulz who supports ISM with her daily prayers and all of her "Blankie Babies." She recently mailed six "stitched-with-love" receiving blankets to our ministry site.

For the mission grant that will appear on the ballot at the June Missouri District LWML Convention in Kansas City. Funds have been requested for us to be able to send participants to worker conferences, In-Depth Bible Seminars and weekly suppers.

May 11-17, 2014: ISM Milwaukee, WI

Bessie Fick, director

Praise for volunteers who are assisting in the Thursday evening program with the children's ministry and the Bible study.

Praise for the internationals who are letting their friends know about the opportunity for English conversation and friendship at Luther Memorial.

For the students who are returning home that they may find opportunities to continue to grow in the study of God's Word.

For the students that will be attending the In-Depth-Bible Seminar; and give thanks for those who are supporting this outreach.

ISM Chinese Ministry, St. Louis, MO

Becky Shaw, director

The healing of Pastor Shaw's back.

Praise for the seven who were baptized. Pray for their continued growth in faith.

For the ongoing plans and training in leadership and service at Light of Christ.

Praise for the English Bible studies on Sunday and Tuesday mornings. Pray that they bear fruit.

May 18-24, 2014: ISM Honolulu, HI

Janelle Dryden, director

That K would be strong-in-the-Lord, wherever he is.

That J would be available for a meeting and strengthening of his faith.

That R and M would allow Jesus into their hearts.

That O and I would attend worship to be built up in their walk with God and for protection from Satan's schemes to compromise their faiths.

That Lutheran Campus Ministry would be funded and blessed with more connections with students.

ISM Detroit

Bob Dickhudt, director

Luqing "Lucy" and Jiejang "Johnny", WSU visiting scholars, returned to China in March after one year. Both were "touched" by our ISM "family." Pray that the "touching of the Holy Spirit" will continue and that amazing things may happen in their lives.

For the first time in years ISM @ WSU has had some students being sent to the In-Depth Bible Seminar. They are four outstanding scholars who have a very apparent interest in knowing God's Word. Thank the Lord with us for their interest and that their hearts and lives will be eternally impacted.

Thanks, Lord, for the students and scholars with whom we have been blessed. Please "keep them coming" and keep our "family" alive to the wonders of Your love at work in and through us simple people!

May 25-31, 2014: ISM Manhattan, KS

Liz Beikmann, coordinator

Thanksgiving that a legal issue for an international student is being resolved.

For an upcoming summer reunion in Prague with former exchange students.

For encouragement for students as they end their time at KSU and in the U.S. May they have fond memories and we pray that the bond of friendship led them to see Christ.

ISM Conway, AR

Karl Lenser, director

Praise for the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) for their help in making the *Small Catechism* available in Arabic. The catechisms plus other resources we received from the LHF will be additional tools in our ISM Toolbox.

For connections and relationships with the new international students that will arrive in June at the University of Central Arkansas. We ask God to encourage us to love them and be Christ-like in all that we say and do for the students.

For guidance, knowledge and encouragement as we continue to build relationships with Saudi Arabian students. I thank God that I can serve as an adjunct instructor at UCA which allows me to meet many internationals. "To everything, there is a purpose"

ISM Tempe, AZ

Jane Boye, director

Praise and thanksgiving that MJ's chemotherapy worked and his tumor has shrunk. He now is taking radiation.

Praise and thanksgiving that Riyo and Shuwei gave birth to a healthy 8 pound baby boy.

Prayer Requests and Praises

June 1-7, 2014: ISM Austin, TX

Marcia Mittwede, director

Thank the Lord for another good semester of sharing the Gospel with international friends.

For the summer English and Bible classes to be fruitful for the Kingdom.

For new believers, Angela, Changbo, Sophia, Jin, Sean & Ginger to continue growing in faith and to be led to Christian fellowship where they are.

Pray for N whose life has been touched in a dramatic way by Jesus. Ask Him to protect and guide her and her family as they return to their homeland.

We need a new teacher for Mommy & Me. Please ask the Lord to provide the right person for this strategic class for Mommies and their toddlers.

For R, who has expressed an interest in being baptized, to take that step. As he is now back in his homeland, ask the Lord to direct him to other Christ followers.

ISM Slippery Rock, PA

Augusta Mennell, director

Thank God for sending SRU students to All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center for student meals, Bible studies and to worship. They are greatly appreciated among the members.

Pray for Harshani and Seden to open their hearts to the Gospel.

Pray for the baptism of a student from Cuba.

June 8-14, 2014: ISM St. Louis

Vicki Jameson, director

For C who is asking spiritual questions. As she returns home, may the Lord continue to bring Christians into her life who will share God's love with her and point her to Jesus.

Thanks and praise for leading international students and their family members to participate with ISM-St. Louis. Pray for the Lord's guidance as they further their studies and careers. May the Holy Spirit continue to direct them to Jesus.

Thank God for the salvation of J and her family. Pray, too, for the students hosting Bible study and worship in their apartment.

Praise for faithful and loving ISM-St. Louis volunteers and for those who support ministry among international students with their prayers and financial gifts.

At the semester end, schedules change. Ask God for new and different opportunities for ISM-St. Louis volunteers to share His love with international students and scholars.



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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June 15-21, 2014: ISM Pittsburgh

Eric Andrae, pastor

For Miki and Yuan (Japan/China), who attended the Ash Wednesday service that was their first time in Christian worship.

For Junko (Japan) who has been studying the Bible with me for almost 2 years.

For Sawa (Japan), who is leaving Pittsburgh.

For our search for a new ESL teacher for the next school year.

ISM Kalamazoo, MI

Elrene Dirkin, director

Praise and thanks for N. Our paths crossed in a restaurant that led to our friendship and new opportunities for sharing Christ and activities that included meeting her friends.

Praise and thanks for all of the students that God has lead me to meet in Meijer's, a local store that WMU students frequent.

Praise and thanks for the many students who have continued their relationship with our Father upon returning home.

That the Holy Spirit will open the eyes of those who are still seeking and those who have moved our Savior to the back of their lives because of their careers or family.

That volunteers will be moved to become involved with ISM.

For help in finding a place for us to meet on a regular basis.

June 22-28, 2014: ISM Big Rapids, MI

Bethel Larsen, volunteer

That the In-Depth Bible Seminar will have eternal impact on students who attended.

For baby Saud and his family as he continues on oxygen and a feeding tube.

For I and M and their daughter to know Jesus

Praise God for the many opportunities He provides to interact with students and demonstrate His love. Pray for the wisdom of God's Spirit in our conversations.

That Tom (Vietnam) will continue reading the Bible and asking honest questions.

ISM Cincinnati, OH

Jamie Noyd, director

Praise for the healthy baby boy born to a visiting scholar from China and his wife.

Praise for the volunteers who invite students into their lives.

For greater openness to the Gospel for some of our long-time international friends.

For baptisms of international students.

June 29 - July 5, 2014: ISM Ames, IA

Hannah Moore, ISM coordinator

For our two summer peer ministers as they lead children's programs during English.

For the South Sudanese community here in Ames that has restarted their Sunday night prayer service.

For Biao who wishes to be baptized.

For the many new faces in Bible studies and English classes.

For congregations from our district to participate in the "visiting teachers for a day" program this summer.

For international families to attend vacation Bible school.

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Nina Haas, ISM Rolla, Mo., loves serving with her international friends.

Weekend in Watertown!

by Judy Tang, ISM director
Madison, WI

Thirty-eight international students and their families enjoyed meeting and staying with 16 different American host families for the “Weekend in Watertown!” This International Friendship Center activity is definitely a highlight of the year. They enjoyed spending time seeing an American home, attending Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, trying many different soups, listening to the middle school band, roller skating, and a bit of shopping at the outlet mall ... all in two days! But it also created a lifetime memory!



Not even a March snow could dampen the spirits of the Madison group in Watertown!

Here are a few quotes from the internationals:

“I am very appreciated that day we spent together last Saturday and Sunday. You and Steph were very nice and generous. You told me a lot about the history of Watertown and Rock River, and Steph really love this nice, beautiful, peaceful and small town. I had a very special experience to learn more about American people and culture which it’s very meaningful to me. Thank you so so so much!” **Li**



“Thanks for organizing such a great activity to Watertown. We indeed have a very wonderful time that might be the happiest time I have spent here. So I feel so grateful to you! Thank you again!” **Xiaoxia Wu and Tao Peng**

“I thank you so much for the wonderful weekend in Watertown. We enjoyed the time with Lucas Gerlach’s family. There are 3 lovely kids in this kind family, and they had a pleasant time with my son Jayden. We made Jiaozi, had pleasant conversation and went to church. Visiting middle school and tasting soups at the ‘Soup’r Bowl’ were also impressive. I really appreciated you to organize this activity which let us know more about American culture.” **Xi**