



# The Doorstep

SERVING INTERNATIONALS ON CAMPUS

## GOD AT WORK IN THE LIFE OF 'L'

Submitted by Judy Tang, ISM director  
International Friendship Center, Madison, Wis.

Since childhood, I had read and seen God's images and Bible stories through different literature and art. Since my profession is art, these things have always been interesting to me. This was a starting point and foundation in my journey for Jesus. As a teenager I had also met a best friend who also happened to be a Christian.

I have a background in atheism and most people around me are addicted to leadership, heroes, money, power, self, or even the worship and pursuit of "luck." Up until now, I also had not believed in any kind of savior, but only believed in academic knowledge and the pride of self-help. During these years I did not believe in eternal life, but just wanted to work hard on earth to have a colorful life and be a good person, in addition to being recognized professionally in the field of literature and culture.

I knew that my heart has been looking for God even if I didn't realize it at the time. It was a long process, starting with a seed of doubt ... to half assured ... to a firmly established relationship with Jesus.

Today, I deeply experienced the salvation of Christ's death and resurrection and became a child of God through the waters of baptism. I believe that God loves and cares for me and that is a blessing and a gift. I now look at the crossroads in life through the truth found in God's Word and believe that my new life in Christ will be full of faith, love, and hope.



"L" and Suzanne on baptism day.

## Your ISM Board of Directors



Your ISM, Inc. Board of Directors is a working board with shared responsibilities. Serving for 2016-17 are the following dedicated servants: Judy Tang, Madison, WI, President; Rev. Paul Hoemann, College Station, TX, Vice President; Sherrie Smith, Justice, IL, Secretary; Stephanie Johnson, Chandler, AZ, Treasurer; Keith Haney, Popular Grove, IL, Mission Executive & Strategist; Trish Kelm Geske, Topeka, KS, Co-Financial Director; Meredith Wright, Austin, TX, Co-Financial Director; Rich Bearup, East Lansing, MI; and Karol Selle, Rosholt, WI, Public Relations Director.

Serving as non-board members: Bill Benson, Coralville, IA, Thrivent Correspondent; Pat Muehler, Neshkoro, WI, Donation Correspondent; and Mary Weller, Stevens Point, WI, Database Coordinator.

Board members serve for a three-year term and are eligible to serve a second term.

## FLINT INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS BEGINS NEW OUTREACH

by Kate Cole, ISM Coordinator  
Flint, Mich.

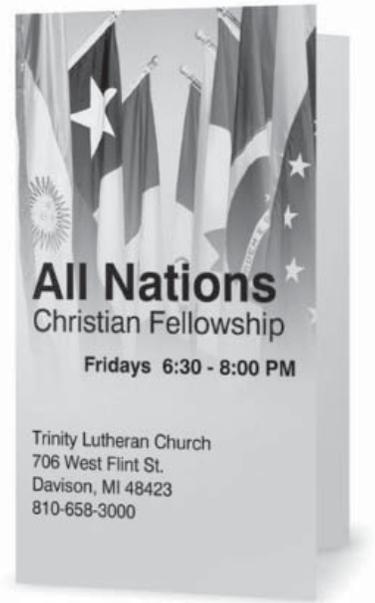
Flint International Friends is excited at the creation of a logo for our organization. The design introduces the All Nations Christian Fellowship that will meet on Friday evenings. By using the flags of other nations, we are hoping that students will feel welcome to come. All Nations Christian Fellowship will begin Sept. 9 with a Bible study on Acts. Our Mission Statement is simple – “I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ” Philemon 1:6.

Have you ever gone to a family reunion and nobody spoke to you? That’s very unlikely, but if you become a Christian in a family that embraces another religion ... then it’s very possible that you will be ignored, shunned or maybe even killed.

Flint International Friends (FIF) has encountered students who expressed their deep concerns for potential loss of family if they embrace Christ. Other internationals who have become Christians expressed their feelings of aloneness. With prayer, and God’s grace and leading, our group is starting two new programs intended to embrace fellow-believers as family and introduce other students to Christian families who will walk with them.

Friendship Families will also begin this fall with our annual welcome at the fall orientation for international students at UM-Flint. We will be recruiting new students into this program and introducing them to Christian families who will develop a friendship and support base. Our leadership team will carefully match students and families who have similar interests and provide students a “home base” for support and encouragement. Families will connect with their student at least twice a month for an outing or event, shopping or just a cup of coffee and a listening ear.

We’re reaching out in new ways with new volunteers to serve our international students with Christ’s love.



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### From Bessie Fick, ISM director Memorial Lutheran Chapel and Student Center, Shorewood, WI

International Student Ministry is a ministry of friendship and hospitality that we might have an opportunity to invite others to hear God’s Word. Chen has started training to be a bilingual volunteer in the ISM office and English conversation classes. Here she shares her story of how the ISM English classes of Luther Memorial have served her and encouraged her to be of service to others:

“My name is Chen. I am an international student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I have been studying adult education for the past four years at UWM. I came to the U.S. in August 2012. That was my first time in an English-speaking country. I was super nervous about living in America. When I first arrived in Milwaukee, it was hard for me to do some basic things, such as registering for my UWM classes. I was also very uncomfortable when I spoke English. At that time, I understood less than half of the conversations. I felt disappointed in myself.

“I knew I had to improve my English before I started my courses at UWM, so I found the English classes at Luther Memorial Chapel. I participated in the basic conversation class for about a month. The class helped me to get used to communicating with English-speaking people because the instructors were native speakers. They were super friendly, that made me feel comfortable when we communicated with each other. Since I moved to another address, I stopped participating in the English conversation classes.

“Since then, I have had heavy schedules every semester, and

every summer I have visited my family in China. This summer, I told my family that I had to stay in Milwaukee because of my summer courses.

At the end of May, I got an e-mail from Bessie that listed the activities in June. It also mentioned that ISM was in need of bilingual volunteer help. I am bilingual in Chinese and English, and also have a linguistic minor. I e-mailed Bessie that I wanted to assist in the program. Bessie replied very quickly and now I am in training to be a bilingual instructor.”

#### Still Friends Today

Submitted by Dick Tatina, volunteer at ISM Chicago

Twelve years ago “Connie,” an exchange teacher from China, visited The Friendship House in Chicago with her “American Dad.” While she was here in 2004, she was baptized at Hope Lutheran Church in Countryside, IL.

Connie returned to the USA in June of this year and last week came to the Friendship House with her “American Dad.” Three of the volunteers who met Connie in 2004 were there to greet her again.

While her stay here is a short twenty days, she managed to see many of the people she met twelve years ago.

# IN-DEPTH BIBLE SEMINAR CHANGES LIVES

Submitted by Sharon Riordan, ISM director, St. Louis, MO and In-Depth Bible Seminar coordinator

The following are two wonderful stories of God at work in the lives of international students who attended the 2016 In-Depth Bible Seminar. Names have been omitted to protect the individual's privacy.

## Faiths Grows

"N," an agricultural doctoral student, rode from Nebraska with Trish, an ISM Board and seminar staff member, to the In-Depth Bible Seminar. On the way to Missouri, it became obvious to Trish that "N" was not a believer. Yet, seeds were sown throughout the long drive.

"N" spent a week at the seminar studying salvation history and Luther's Small Catechism. Trish kept wondering what she was thinking.

"N" rode back to St. Louis with Sharon, the seminar coordinator and St. Louis ISM director, and said that she thought she believed in God but probably not Jesus. That night she went to a Bible study with Sharon at St. Paul Lutheran Church where they studied the parable of the Pearl of Great Price. Afterwards "N" simply said, "I'm the pearl; and Jesus gave up everything for me." "N" spent the next three days with Junnan, from the St. Louis ISM Board, who graciously gave her a place to stay since Trish was attending the ISM Equipping Conference. "N" was so impressed with Junnan's faith and also attended a Bible study with her.

As Trish was driving "N" back to Nebraska she expressed that she was excited to go back to China and tell her parents about Christianity because she wants them to spend eternity in heaven with her!

The Holy Spirit can do quite a bit in ten days!

## "Y" is Welcomed by Boise City Congregation

After leaving the In-Depth Bible Seminar, "Y", who was already a Christian, headed to Boise City, Mich., for a summer internship at a Methodist camp. "Y" wrote to Sharon that she was missing the Christian community from In-Depth and was desperate to find similar teaching and community in Boise City. She honestly was miserable.

"Y" had no car and no way of attending a different worship setting.

Sharon went to the LCMS website and found Christ Lutheran Church in Boise City! Not only that, on the Christ Lutheran Church website, they mentioned that they will give rides to anyone who needs one! The camp is just 13 minutes from the church!

Sharon called the church and found them to be incredibly warm. She briefly told them "Y"'s story and explained the ISM In-Depth Bible Seminar, and what "Y" had studied when she was there. Within minutes, they contacted "Y" and made plans to pick her up on Sunday. Sharon received this text from "Y":

"Hello Sharon, today Christ Lutheran Church called me. I am so happy! I feel that finally I can hope to connect with a Christian community! Thank you so much. Thanks to everyone for their love and kindness. I am so appreciative. I miss you all." Please thank God for this congregation welcoming "Y" into its family! God is good!

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## IMPORTANT WORDS STILL TODAY

In 1982, Glen Zumwalt of InterVarsity wrote these words:

Lord Jesus, you have told us to take your gospel to all people of all lands. But we find this hard! It means leaving our families, friends and culture to tell our message in a foreign land and language to an alien people. Many of them already have a religion which is interwoven into their whole culture and daily lifestyle. Besides, we Americans are not welcome in some parts of the world, and are even forbidden to talk openly about you in certain countries. And the cost! If we really tried to reach the world in this generation, it would bankrupt us all.

*SO WE PROPOSE AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN: you send the people to us. Have them come at their own expense, and learn English before they come. Make them hungry for our friendship and willing to go to church with us. Send the young, teachable ones. Send those who are bright and vigorous, who will someday be leaders in their home countries. Arrange for them to stay for several years so we can win a hearing for the gospel and have time to teach them after they become believers. Send many from places where missionaries are forbidden to go, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and China. How many, Lord? Oh, say 450,000 well distributed around the country so that lots of churches and individual Christians can take part.*

*If you will do this, then we promise to make sharing our lives and our faith with these people a priority. We will get to know them, offer them our friendship and try to learn how to explain your gospel to them clearly.*

*This all sounds like a lot to ask, but you can do it, can't you?*

**"Foreigners living among you will be like your own people. Love them as you love yourself."**

Leviticus 19:34



(Reprinted with permission.)

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# Prayer Requests and Praises

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**Sept. 1-3 2016: ISM Detroit, MI**  
**Bob Dickhudt, director**

PRAISE THE LORD that He continues to lead new scholars to find us ... maybe only for months, but they get to hear about our Jesus!

THANK THE LORD for the ISM/WSU TEAM that filled in so easily as Bob got his broken hip replaced and is again learning to walk!

PLEASE GO WITH DUNCAN, LORD, a special part of our ISM FAMILY for 3 years, "close to Jesus," heading to Virginia Tech for doctoral studies. Help us help him find "family" at VT!

**Sept. 4-10, 2016: ISM Lincoln, NE**  
**Mark Meyer, director**

Praise God that D's mother in China was recently baptized and has started a Bible study in her apartment. Pray for D's father who is not yet a Christian.

That we take great care of the new international students God brings us this semester.

That God would raise up several new conversation partners to meet with international students.

For Ankit, a student from India with whom we have had several deep conversations about Jesus on Facebook.

**ISM Manhattan, KS**  
**Liz Beikmann, director**

Thanksgiving for an amazing reunion in Prague.

Thanksgiving for the families willing to drive to meet incoming flights of international students.

For safe travel for incoming students.

**Sept. 11-17 2016: ISM Flint, MI**  
**Kate Cole, director**

For new students coming in August---that Flint International Friends will connect and serve them as God leads.

For All Nations Christian Fellowship to strengthen believers and prepare them for service.

For friendship family participants, that both families and students will be blessed.

**ISM LaCrosse, WI**  
**John Jaeger, coordinator**

Pray for wisdom and direction of the Planning Committee of the LaCrosse area Lutheran churches as they plan the events for the international students this fall.

Pray for a good response to the "American Fun Nights" and ESL programs that are being planned.

**Sept. 18-24, 2016: ISM Austin, TX**  
**Marcia Mittweide, director**

Thank the Lord for University Lutheran Church's new building. Ask Him to be glorified in all that is said and done in this place.

Thank the Lord for the volunteers who give of their time and energy.

Ask the Lord for wisdom in scheduling activities for the coming semester.

For those who are continuing to study the Bible this semester - to be drawn to Jesus.

**ISM Pittsburgh, PA**  
**Eric Andrae, campus pastor**

Prayers for Anna and Gregory (prospective instructors) as they consider teaching ESL this coming school year.

**ISM Champaign, IL**  
**Rick Milas, pastor**

That new international students would be happy to hear the Gospel and learn more about the faith.

**Sept. 25 - Oct. 1, 2016: Madison, WI**  
**Judy Tang, director**

So grateful to welcome another daughter into the Kingdom of God through baptism! Please pray for N as she begins her new life and is a witness to her family.

Praise God for all the internationals coming to classes! Each English class and Bible study has 15-20 students!

Please pray that the International Friendship Center (IFC) will continue to be a place of experiencing the love of Jesus!

**ISM Tempe, AZ**  
**Greg Fairrow, pastor**

Thanks that International Friendship House (IFH) director Sharon Owens and her two children, Joanna and Peter, safely moved from China to Arizona this summer.

That Allen, who attended the 2016 In-Depth Bible Seminar, will receive saving faith in Jesus Christ.

That many Arizona State University international students and their families will be blessed by the IFH this academic year.

That all area LCMS congregations and many of their members will generously and consistently support Lutheran Ministry at ASU and its IFH with their prayers, service and financial support.

## Supporting ISM, Inc.

When making Thrivent Choice decisions, you must search for INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY, INC. - STEVENS POINT, WI. This will provide choice dollars for ISM, Inc. Our work is the only national Lutheran ministry encouraging outreach among international students.

Your generous gifts fund the publication of *The Doorstep* and our regular conferences. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

## 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.

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# Prayer Requests and Praises

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## **Oct. 2-8 , 2016: ISM Chinese Ministry, St. Louis, MO** **Becky Shaw, director**

Praise for a spiritually uplifting all-church retreat in July.

Praise for new staff (secretary and center director) and pray as they become comfortable with their roles and responsibilities.

For scholars who come to St. Louis for short-term and long-term learning experiences, that they would also hunger to learn about Jesus.

For the Friday evening Bible study, that all ages would learn and grow in their understanding of God's Word and a life of faith. For parents to lead their families at home to read the Bible and pray.

For Laura who is the coordinator for Light of Christ middle school students enrolled in Immanuel's confirmation program to encourage more parent involvement and attention to work that needs to be done.

## **Oct. 9-15, 2016: ISM Shorewood, WI** **Bessie Fick, director**

Pray for all the students returning home that they may find Christian communities that will continue to encourage them in learning more about God's Word. Pray that the Holy Spirit would keep those that have come to faith safe in His care.

That we will be faithful in inviting the new arriving internationals to hear God's Word of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Thank you for Michael who is so diligent in inviting his friends to church and Bible study. Pray that God would provide the necessary grants that he might be able to remain one more year.

That God's people would send their gifts in support of the work among the internationals that God is bringing to our country.

## **Oct. 16-22, 2016: ASU, Tempe, AZ** **Linda Steinbart, volunteer**

Praise God for the donation and free shipping of GOD'S WORD TODAY bibles. I totally appreciate and thank those involved with distributing these Bibles to all the ISM international ministries. I am exceedingly grateful for this gift and excited to share them. This is an answer to prayer.

Lift up in prayer the opportunity to serve our Lord and Savior through outreach to the international students attending Arizona State University. Pray for wisdom to meet the challenges of connecting with new internationals - students, scholars, and spouses.

Pray for more international women to hear about and join the International Women's Book Club.

Praise God for opening the hearts of a small team of dedicated prayer partners to keep the International Women's Book Club wrapped in prayer. Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance in the classroom as we share our family weekly adventures, read from our book, explain the meaning and usage of vocabulary words, and discuss biblical passages that correspond to the weekly readings.

For the leader of the Business English Conversation class to develop an excellent program for internationals to weekly meet, read and discuss business articles. Pray that a classroom will become available on campus for this specialized group.

## **Oct. 23-19, 2016: ISM College Station, TX** **Lydia Schinner and Andrew Cloeter, co-directors**

Pray for Weidong (China) who received Christian baptism on June 12, and then returned for good to his country on July 1. Pray that the Spirit of God will be at work in his life, to help him grow in faith. Pray that he will find a group of believers who can support and encourage him, and a pastor who can instruct him further in the Christian faith and life.

For Bonnie (Taiwan) and Min Gong (China) who both helped extensively in translating things for Weidong as he prepared for baptism and to receive the Lord's Supper for the first time. Neither of these young ladies are Christian, but they certainly have heard the Gospel again and again; and they witnessed Weidong's profession of faith on the day he was baptized. May the Spirit bring a harvest with the seeds planted in them.

Ask God's Spirit to bless the planning of our fall schedule of classes and events, and that the Spirit would bring us many students who are ripe to hear and receive the Gospel message.

## **Oct. 30-31, 2016: ISM Board**

Pray for the direction the board has set for the next year. Help us to stay focused and involved. Being a working board takes time and energy. We are happy to serve!

Pray for Carl and Karol Selle as they continue to walk on the brain cancer journey. May each day find peace and hope in the Lord as changes are happening in their lives.

Pray for an ISM site of your choice and perhaps send a note to the director for encouragement.

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## **NEW DIRECTOR AT IFH IN TEMPE**

Sharon Owens became the director of Lutheran Ministry at Arizona State University's International Friendship House (IFH) on August 1.

Owens, a rostered director of Christian Education for the LCMS, had been an LCMS missionary in Macau, China for 13 years.

She previously started an international student ministry at University Lutheran Chapel, Lincoln, Neb.

She's the mother of two children she adopted while she was in Macau.

"Sharon is a gifted and experienced servant whose love for international students and their families make her exceptionally qualified to serve internationals at ASU," said Rev. Greg Fairrow, Lutheran Ministry at ASU executive director and campus pastor. "From day one, she has been a tremendous blessing."



Joanna, Sharon and Peter

International Student Ministry, Inc.  
- a recognized service organization of the LCMS -  
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## CZECH REUNION - BEAUTIFUL

by Liz Beikmann, ISM director  
Manhattan, KS



Recently, my husband and I were privileged to visit Prague, Czech Republic, where we met with people in charge of the exchange program with K-State at the University of Life Sciences and Czech Technical University. At an evening reunion, we shared a meal with former exchange students going back as far as 1996. Also present were their parents, spouses and children. Stories and experiences were shared.

They were all so grateful for the ministry that they had experienced while an exchange student at K-State. Keeping in touch over these 20 years has been a blessing.

## UPDATES ON PASTOR SELLE

As one of the founders of ISM, Inc., it was thought that those of you who have known him for many years would like updates on his brain cancer condition.

This news is posted on his Facebook page under “Carl Selle.” His family tries to do regular updates. As of the printing of this newsletter the tumor remains stable, but it is wearing on his mind and body. He is mostly confined to a wheelchair and now spends four nights at a home that offers 24/7 care.

Each day he comes closer to making the decision to stop treatment for the tumor. This means he will enter hospice care and prepare for his entrance into glory.

The family appreciates your prayers, emails and cards. It is a journey, but God is in control and we know that it will be a wonderful reunion in heaven someday.



*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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