



The Doorstep

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SERVING INTERNATIONALS ON CAMPUS

THE AMAZING 'MOMMY BABY PLAYTIME'

by Sarah VandaVeer, St. Louis ISM Communications volunteer

The majority of our lives are spent working for tomorrow. We get up earlier than we want to, we go to work, we come home, we eat, we laugh, we pray, and we go to sleep later than we wish we had. We love this life, but even for the best of us, it can become monotonous.

But there are moments that make you truly come alive. There are times when your purpose for being here on earth comes into crystal-clear focus, and you're filled with joy.



Tonya Peter

For one of our volunteers—this moment of joyous clarity—happened while working with internationals. Tonya Peter is a volunteer for Mommy Baby Playtime, a ministry of ISM that focuses on reaching the wives and children of our international students who may be married.

Each week, up to 12 mothers and their babies, meet our volunteers at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church for a morning filled with crafts, games, songs, and a Bible Story. Each mother receives a children's Bible—even if they only come once.

As the relationships deepen, Tonya gets opportunities to speak the truth of the Gospel. One of these moments came while talking with her friend Kaori, a mother from Japan, with two children. After coming to Mommy Baby Playtime for several months, Kaori told Tonya that she loves coming because she feels so much peace and acceptance. Because of the friendship she and Tonya have built, Kaori felt comfortable sharing that her son is struggling at school because he's being bullied.

Tonya then asked Kaori to read three parables of Jesus—the Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and The Prodigal Son. She explained to Kaori that the reason there is so much love and acceptance at Mommy Baby Playtime, is because Jesus has accepted us. "With God you don't have to earn his love. You don't have to do some-

thing to get it. It's a gift and He loves us all," Tonya explained. She wanted Kaori to know that her son can have that assurance in Christ, too.

It was in this moment, with Kaori before her—brave and vulnerable Kaori who had traveled all this way to the US to start a new life—that Tonya was filled with joy.

"That's the thing about playtime—it's so obvious that this is what God created me for. This is why I am on this planet. That's why I'm here, and it's such a privilege," Tonya exclaimed.

That is how so many of us here at ISM feel. When we get to see how God is intertwining Himself into the lives of these students and their families, we are overwhelmed with the privilege of being on the inside vantage point of His master plan. It's moments like this that restore the joy of our salvation!

Join us in praying for Kaori as she studies the story of the Lost Sheep. May she see the mercy and beauty of God as He goes after even one lost sheep.



IT IS A SMALL WORLD

A letter to Augusta Mennell, ISM Slippery Rock, PA

Dear Mrs. Mennell,

I am writing to share with you a story from the mission field. In December, my family traveled to Nuwara Eliya (five hours from our home in Colombo) to attend the annual Lutheran Christmas program. The area is remote, but while Edward was spending time with his students, my kids and I decided to go for a short walk down a dirt road next to the church.

We saw a young Sri Lankan woman walking alone down the road. We passed and I smiled a hello. After a time, the kids and I headed back. We passed this woman for a second time, and this time she stopped and asked if I knew where All Saints church was. The Lanka Lutheran Center is in the Christian part of town, so I thought that the church might be close too. So I decided to help her look.

We started speaking and I immediately noticed she spoke very good, American-sounding English. She asked where I was from. I said the U.S. She asked where exactly, and I explained that we most recently lived in Pittsburgh. She gasped and said that she went to school at Slippery Rock. It was my turn to gasp and say that we have supporters in Slippery Rock at the Lutheran church there.

She then replied that while she was there, she attended the Lutheran Student Center and knows a woman named Mrs. Mennell! At this point, I had goosebumps. Standing on the dirt road in rural Sri Lanka I met a sister in Christ who knows you! Her name is Chama. She now lives in Colombo, Sri Lanka, teaches technology to middle and high school students, and still attends church regularly. She credits you as being very influential in deepening her faith. We have had her over for tea; and had lunch with her last Sunday!

Your sister in Christ,

Monica Naumann

(Wife of missionary Rev. Edward Naumann in Sri Lanka.)

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.

THE LEAST REACHED

by Kate Cole – Flint International Friends Coordinator

Do you know it is estimated that of the 7.2 billion people alive in the world today and 3 billion of them live in unreached people groups with little or no access to the Gospel? **Recently, that number was reduced by ONE, when an unreached international student heard the Law and Gospel preached at my church.**

An unreached Indian student, from a people group of 45 million, speaking the world's 7th largest language, came to Flint to study. It was a very rocky road, because he found little comradery since he was the only person from this people group and he was of the highest Hindu caste.

He experienced some family loss while studying in the U.S. and had a problem adjusting to what he described as a "quiet atmosphere" that Flint offered. He wasn't used to the streets being quiet after dark!

He saw me frequently in his neighborhood visiting with international students and asked if I could help him find an apartment. We talked a bit and then he asked the question, "Can I go to church with you?"

I was not expecting that question but replied, "Sure," and we arranged to meet. That was his first exposure to a church. He met several of our members and I tried to introduce him to the men who worked in his field of study - engineering. He heard the Law and Gospel that day and we discussed it further on the drive home.

He is a staunch Hindu, but curious about the Jesus, Gandhi referenced in his quote, "I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."

Let's pray the Christians this student meets will be those who mirror Jesus and lead him into Jesus' Kingdom through love. Let's also recognize the great opportunity our Lord is giving us! It was God's perfect plan to bring this student to Flint, to our congregation, so that prayfully, he will return to his 45 million Christ-less people and share the Good News.



Flint International Friends attend the first showing of "Is Genesis History?". A great film for internationals to learn about God's creation!

WEEKEND IN WATERTOWN, WI

by Judy Tang, ISM director
Madison, WI

It's such a blessing to be part of a ministry that is making such a difference in so many lives! I love hearing and sharing stories with my volunteers and with all of you reading and contributing to *The Doorstep*. I thought I would share one of the messages that I received from an international friend so you can hear it "straight from the horse's mouth!" (What fun it is to teach idioms to internationals!)

This is from Yu who returned from the International Friendship Center (IFC) activity, "Weekend in Watertown," where students stayed overnight with an American family, attended Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and experience traditional American life. Yu was in Madison in 2002 and attended Calvary Lutheran Chapel and has returned with her family as a visiting scholar.

"I just came back from the Watertown activity you organized for our Chinese scholars last night. I couldn't wait to write to you about that fantastic experience. It's such a great event I couldn't afford to miss. My 8-year-old daughter and I stayed with Mike and Charlene. They are such wonderful people. We had such a great time at their house. We felt quite at home. We made homemade pizza and chatted till really late that night.

"What a coincidence. Mike is a certified flight instructor and my husband has been dreaming of becoming a pilot all his life. Mike shared with us his airplane models, his airplane pictures, video, and he even offered some pamphlets about how to learn to fly a plane for my husband.

"He also shared with me the essence of Christianity to get me better prepared for the Sunday service. Charlene is such a wonderful hostess that she made a wonderful dinner, soup and even prepared us some gifts. They are wonderful, wonderful people. My daughter speaks very little. However, friendship still gets across between her and Mike's two kids. They were reluctant to depart with one another. They had a great time together.

"For us, we brought them some gifts that may embody Chinese culture and even taught them a bit of Chinese. I invited them to come to Madison and I will cook a typical Chinese dinner for them. We may schedule to make it happen sometime. On Sunday, we attended service. The pastor's words are seeping into our hearts. We were so deeply impressed by the



Watertown Weekend group with Pastor David Groth.

ritual. I really hope I could learn more about Bible and the words from God.

"Anyway, thank you, Judy, for making such a great event and making us such an unforgettable memory. Many thanks for the hosting families, Pastor Groth, Bob, Steve and everybody who made this event happen!"



VISIT IN PITT



Mako and Kuni, with baby Daichi, stopped by the church to say goodbye to Pastor Eric Andrae before moving back to Japan. Kuni was a regular participant in our ESL Bible Study.

Prayer Requests and Praises

May 1-6, 2017: ISM Detroit, MI
Bob Dickhudt, director

Lord, please send replacements for the many former active ISM-ers at Wayne State who have gone back home to China!

Pray that our "ISM family members" who have gone back, will both continue in God's Word as well as share the Good News of Jesus with friends and family.

Give us wisdom as we seek ways and means to more effectively reach out to others on campus.

Help us to continue to "draw folks into our ISM family."

Help us lead them to feel at home though they are 10,000 miles from home!

May 7-13, 2017: ISM Chinese Ministry, St. Louis, MO
Becky Shaw, director

Praise for those who attended the catechism class.

Praise for continued support of family worship.

For speaker, children's and youth program leaders and participants at the summer retreat.

For confirmed youth to continue growing in faith.

For all Bible study leaders and participants to grow in faith.

ISM Champaign, IL
Rick Milas, campus pastor

That our soon to be confirmed international student continue to grow in faith and in the joy of all Christ has taught.

May 14-20, 2017: ISM Manhattan, KS
Liz Beikmann, director

That students might complete the semester successfully and have a positive experience at KSU.

Thanksgiving for the universities in Prague who are willing to have students participate in our ministry.

For the continuing help and participation of the many families who make our ministry possible.

Thanksgiving for such a wonderful group of students at this school who are grateful for our host family ministry.

For the awesome turnout for the spring banquet for internationals and the numerous requests for Bibles.

In-Depth Bible Seminar
May 17-24, 2017

Please pray each day of the In-Depth Bible Seminar for open hearts and minds to the teachings of the participants.

Pray for the leaders: Rev. Paul Hoemann, Rev. Lee Meyer, Sarah VandaVeer, and Sharon Riordan.

Pray for the staff of the Christian retreat center to be powerful witnesses to the people they serve. We are blessed to use this facility once again.

Pray for a community of friends to be built during this 8 day seminar. Pray for the blessings on the sharing of life stories and of faith journeys.

Pray for safe travels and good health during the seminar.

Praise our Lord for this opportunity to share the message of His grace and salvation!

May 21-27, 2017: ISM Shorewood, WI
Bessie Fick, director

Thanks for the baptisms of L and A. We pray that they will find a faithful group of Christians in their home country to continue to grow in faith through the power of the Holy Spirit in God's Word.

Thank you for God's people who are serving in many ways by providing transportation, support, friendship, and invitations to hear God's Word.

Pray that we are faithful in reaching those God is sending to us.

Pray for those who are training at the In-Depth Bible Seminar.

Pray that God's people will continue to bring their gifts for the work among the internationals. Thank you for God's care and provision.

May 28 - June 3, 2017: ISM Lincoln, NE
Mark Meyer, director

Pray for the students regularly hearing the gospel message, especially N, P, S, F, Q, and N. Pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to grow faith in their hearts and lead them to baptism.

Pray for encouragement and perseverance for the English and Bible teachers here. We are very thankful for their service!

Pray that we would be good stewards of the new students we meet. Pray that we may help connect them to individuals or classes where they can hear about Jesus.

ISM Austin, TX
Marcia Mittweide, director

Thank the Lord for His continuing to draw students to attend Bible classes. Especially for A, C, R, T, Z, L, J, and J to desire baptism.

Thank the Lord for the faithful volunteers who have served this semester.

For our summer program to be fruitful for Jesus' Kingdom.

For our Mommy & Baby group as we expand into two sections - one for infants and the other for toddlers. For Ms. Shannon as she heads up this program.

June 4-10, 2017: ISM Honolulu, HI
Janelle Dryden, director

That God would give a job immediately so that she can care for herself and her daughter.

That God would be close to Y, G, D, and R in their lives.

That the Chinese families in our preschool would allow Jesus into their hearts as their children bring home the Good News!

That J would pass all of his tests.

That the Muslims in Hawaii would stop rejecting the Lord as their Savior.

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.

Prayer Requests and Praises

June 11-17, 2017: ISM Flint, MI

Kate Cole, director

For an Indian student from an unreached people group that he would come to know Jesus.

For a volunteer to teach the conversational English class.

For the upcoming baptism of one of our volunteer's students who participated in her 12 week Bible class.

ISM College Station, TX

Lydia Schinner and Andrew Cloeter, co-directors

For Galina's dad's leg.

For Haeja's husband's job search - in the U.S. or Korea.

For Fuping's paper that was submitted to journal.

June 18-24, 2017: ISM Big Rapids, MI

Bethel Larsen, volunteer

Thanks for Yadan's new job near my home!

Thanks for a Saudi event that allowed me to see many students on a day when my time at Ferris was short.

For good fruit from my conversation with I and that he will accept a Bible.

For Mohammed's summer internship, his health and his family; especially that Jesus would be revealed to them.

For Sara, Rawan, Istiqlal, Batool, Mariam, and their families.

That the exchange students will meet Jesus along the way as they travel and then return home.

That I make good use of opportunities in my conversations with the students.

That that we gain many new prayer partners at the national LWML Convention.

June 25-30, 2017: Madison, WI

Judy Tang, director

For L, H and LH from China who are so hungry in studying God's Word ... that they might put their faith in Jesus!

English classes, Bible studies, and cultural events continue at the IFC through the summer months ... praying for ongoing opportunities to connect internationals to life in the U.S. and life in Jesus Christ!

For continued healing for several volunteers.

ISM LaCrosse, WI

John Jaeger, volunteer

That God will bless our remodeling as we add a coffee house onto our Lutheran Student Center.

ISM, Inc.

Board of Directors

Praising God for the 25 years of ministry at the International Friendship House in East Lansing, Mich.. The funds to purchase the ministry center was through the national LWML. What a wonderful blessing in the life of ISM, Inc.



THE YEAR OF 'THE ROOSTER'

by Bob Dickhudt, ISM director

A wonderful handful of Chinese scholars from ISM-WSU, Detroit, made the "Year of the Rooster" come alive for students at Guardian Lutheran School, Dearborn. Not only did they help children learn some good Chinese words like "Hello," "Thank you," "Good bye," they even learned to write a few simple words.

At lunchtime children were joined by older students in trying the art of eating noodles with chopsticks! They loved their morning experience, including using "Grandpa Mr. D." to "properly bow and greet and receive Hung Bao (red packets) with money in them. Great

fun for all, and, somehow, helping children recognize how John 3:16, God's love for ALL the people of the world, fit into our daily lives



and contacts with those different from us!

Back at WSU, the Thursday of Chinese New Year week, the ISM "FAMILY" celebrated the Year of the Rooster with a feast of dishes made by scholars, and even including homemade dumplings!

We entitled our Bible study, "The YEAR OF THE ROOSTER in the BIBLE." Although they could hardly believe the rooster was in the Bible, they attentively read and reacted to the story of Peter and his "cock-sure attitude" that he would never deny the Lord Jesus and his subsequent sadness when the crowing of the rooster reminded him he had denied his Jesus three times.

Other Scripture shared the joy the Lord wants us to have as we celebrate all kinds of things, including the new year as well as the precious gift of our families and even good food! They seemed to recognize that we can include our Savior in all kinds of happenings, including the New Year!

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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ISM IN COLLEGE STATION, TX

Submitted by Paul Hoemann, campus pastor
University Lutheran Chapel, College Station, TX



Lydia Schinnerer, far left, co-director for the ISM at University Lutheran Chapel in College Station, Texas, welcomes five South Korean students to a weekly English conversation/cooking class. This class has been a staple at ULC for a number of years; students are encouraged to share recipes from their home culture.



An officer from the College Station Police Department explains some of the equipment inside his police cruiser during a tour of the College Station police facility in February. Internationals from a number of countries participated, through University Lutheran Chapel's "Ask the Expert" field trip series.



The international student ministry in College Station recently hosted a hayride for internationals and their families in Brazos County.