

# Athletes in Action

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“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”  
Ephesians 2:10

Happy New Year! Gosh, it feels weird to type the number 2020 in that box up above. Where did the rest of the 2000's go? Wasn't it just 1998 last year?? When I sit back and think about it, the 2000's have been an absolute blur to me, as it was those years I gave birth to six babies, lost a lot of sleep, and spent much of my time juggling ministry and managing little people's needs and behaviors. During those crazy years with little kiddos, in some ways I longed for the year 2020 to come — all the kids would be in school, I would have *so* much more time, and life would begin to feel “normal” again. Boy, was I wrong! If anything, this season we are in with older kids is much more hectic and demanding than those years with little ones. At least in those early years, everybody was in one place when they came home from school and for the most part they were in bed by 8pm. Now it feels like a treat when we are all home for an evening, free from running all over the place to different activities...and those ideas of getting them all into bed by 8pm are now a total pipe dream! Where am I going with all of this? I think it is just to say that God has been doing a new work in my heart, ripping away ideas I had of what I *thought* life would look like in 2020, and slowly showing me the *reality* of His good purposes for me in this season. My joy can so easily be stolen from me when I try to measure up to the false expectations that I put on myself — I *should* be doing this, or *should* be doing that...life *should* look like this, or it *should* look like that. Rather, God is teaching me (again!) that He is my true Audience, and I don't need to perform for Him. And that is a huge comfort in this season where I feel like my emotional and physical capacity is diminished, and when I feel like I should be doing so much more. I'm learning that God has good works for me to do each day, and as I surrender to Him and rely upon His Spirit, I can trust that I will walk in them. Those good works may come about on campus encouraging a student in their faith, at home talking through a discipline issue with a kid, or even at the grocery store as I ask the cashier about her day. Whatever it may be, I can trust that God desires to use me (however much capacity I feel I have to give!) to bless others and show them His love. I am thankful that God is kicking off my 2020 with those precious whispers in my ear. May you also be blessed this year as you hear God's voice calling you to walk in freedom with Him.

## Praise!

You may recall us mentioning that two of our former Michigan student athletes felt called by God to go to East Asia this past August on a one year mission trip with AIA. We are SO proud of Brennen and Nicky as they took that step of faith to follow Jesus there.

They are in a country where it is very rare to see someone place their faith in Christ, so we were so excited to read their latest newsletter explaining how one precious student recently decided to become a Christian...praise God! Please pray for this new sister in Christ, as well as for Brennen and Nicky as they trust God for more gospel conversations with students there.



We were so blessed to share in Brennen and Nicky's wedding day with them two summers ago!

## Running toward Jesus

We are trusting God to be a ministry that makes disciples who make disciples. To that end, our main emphasis is on our weekly discipleship groups that are led by our faithful student leaders. Each week students are taken into God's word, observing and applying it to their lives...and it is SO encouraging to watch how God is using these groups!

To the right are some of the members of Jessica's group, a group of mostly track runners. At our last large group monthly gathering, a few of these women stood up to share about how being in a discipleship group has impacted their lives. Praise God for His Word going forth here at Michigan!



Lauren, Olivia, Colleen, Amber, Jessica, Kayla and Ericka



Back row: Job, Vale, Jessica, Sean, Lauren  
Front row: Roland & Blake

While Jessica is doing an incredible job leading the women on the track team this year, Blake and Roland have been running with leading the men on the team for the past three years. The energy and impact they bring to their group is having an eternal impact.

Job is one of those people who have benefited from Blake and Roland's faithfulness. Job came to college with a church background, but not sure how to grow in his faith. After having been involved his freshman and now sophomore years, he is really turning into a leader for Christ in AIA here. He serves as our Emcee at our monthly gathering, and I love to see his heart for people and God come through in that role.



We have a new driver in our house! Mikayla is so excited to be on the road!

Please pray...

...for the new believer in East Asia. For boldness as she approaches her family and community with her new faith. Pray she would grow into a disciple who makes other disciples in her country.

...for wisdom for our student leaders as they start their discipleship groups back up this semester. Pray God would give them favor as they reach out to new students.

...for our annual regional AIA Winter Retreat in Indianapolis Jan 31-Feb2. Pray for God to move mightily in the lives of the students in attendance.

...for our walks with the Lord to be intimate and strong.

*Our gratitude for you and your support of our ministry overflows our hearts! Thank you!*



Moriah turned 11 on New Year's Eve. Where did those years go??