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February 2021 Newsletter

“For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” Romans 15:4

Greetings from our home to yours! As the pandemic continues and our family perseveres with online school and ministry as well as staying home the majority of the time, sports seems to be a place where we are finding a tiny sense of normalcy. A number of our kids are participating in either high school or club sports, giving them a ticket out of our house that allows them to have a physical, mental and social recharge. I am so thankful that they are getting that. And I am also thankful that these precious student athletes we work with at Michigan are getting that opportunity, as well. The isolation that these young people are experiencing on campus is really tragic. We talk to freshmen who are now required to live in single dorm rooms, who literally haven't even come across any other students in their dorm for weeks. When I ask them on zoom calls what was something fun they have done in the last week, it takes them a while to come up with something...usually their fun comes from either going to practice or being a part of a zoom call with their family back home. Another student involved in our ministry has been in quarantine in her home country in South America since last March when she was sent back at the beginning of the pandemic. Her journey to get back to Michigan has been a long one, requiring not only a three week quarantine in another country, but then a two week stay in isolation in a Michigan dorm once she returned. Her mental health is not great, and sadly she represents the state of many of the student athletes here. Please pray with us for these young people, that God would be their comfort, hope and perspective during these trying times. We are grateful that with your prayers, together we can provide them a covering of spiritual protection through Christ. Thank you for your partnership in loving and serving these young men and women!

God continues to move!

A few weeks ago Colby and I were having a conversation where he was expressing some discouragement about engaging in virtual ministry day in and day out. Not being able to be around the student athletes and build relationships with them has been wearing on him lately.

One of those opportunities Colby was especially missing was being able to be in the football building and sit with the players as they ate meals. It was a place where he could strike up conversations and get to know the guys, but now with Covid, it felt like all the effort to build relationships was wasted as he hasn't seen many of those guys in almost a year.

While the two of us were having this conversation, Colby's cell phone rang with a number he didn't recognize, so he let it go into his voicemail. Come to find out a few hours later when he checked it, the person calling was *one of those football players* Colby had been reaching out to last year. He called *right in the middle of our conversation* about Colby's discouragement to let him know that he has been thinking a lot about life

lately and wondered how to get involved in AIA! Of course Colby called him right back to hear more, and now this young man is plugged into one of our student-led discipleship groups.

Isn't our God so very sovereign and kind?? To think that He could have had that player call at any time, but chose to orchestrate it in the midst of Colby's discouragement is amazing! To God be all the glory!



Last month one of Colby's core leaders suggested they all compose their own Psalm to the Lord. While you might think that idea would be scoffed at by a group of college guys, they embraced it, and it was an amazing outpouring of heartfelt faith. We wanted to share with you one of those psalms written by Job, a junior on the track and field team. Enjoy...

*From as far as I can remember,
You have called my life.
You have always had your hand on me.
But I have run from you to explore the world.
I have run to try things under the sun
What should I expect drinking from a hollow vessel?
Emptiness.
I battled with who I was because I tried to be something I was not.
A citizen of this world.
You have crafted my heart so I could long for you,
and I smeared it when I longed for what the world had to offer.
Emptiness.
What a concept,
Emptiness is inevitable.
I either find it chasing after air filled pleasures,
or I empty myself like your son Jesus did.
Emptiness.
The difference is, you will fill me up.
You over flow my cup.
A single drop of your love is enough to give me joy everlasting,
So much joy that I cannot contain it.
If your love was water then all the worlds oceans would have nothing to offer*

*Another thing that amazes me,
Every sin, wrongdoing, evil thing that I've ever done, your love over comes!
All the world's sin, all the world's evil, is already paid for.
So who am I to have guilt?
How dare I hold on to what I have done wrong.
What is left to do other than to throw myself at you.
In my ugly, you desire me.
In my shame, you hug me.
I have been broken down by my own actions, and you restore me..*

*Nothing I do will take me away from you
So I embrace you*

*I will focus on you with my mind.
I will focus on you with my body.*

*You bring me hope
You are my strong tower where my enemies cannot reach me.
And I rest in your name, Jesus.*

*You are my encourager, my father, my mentor, my best friend,
my provider, my strength, my Lord, my Lord. I love you
I will worship you forever, Amen.*



Above: Lots of sledding going on here this past month. Left: Mikayla & Jackson are getting so old!

Right: Mia taking a ride on Job's scooter earlier this year. Below: Job doing his thing on the track!



Please pray...

...for the student athletes here, that God would breakthrough their feelings of isolation, loneliness and depression. Pray for God's comfort, peace and perspective.

...for the new football player and women's soccer player who have reached out and found us this past month. Pray they would find Christian community as they join our student-led discipleship groups.

...for our student leaders to be protected and nurtured by the Lord.

...for us as a couple and as parents, that God would give us unity and wisdom.

It is truly a privilege to be able to walk alongside these students and point them to Jesus. Thank you for the crucial role you play in that! God Bless you!