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## April 2021 Newsletter

“And Moses said to the people, ‘Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.’” Exodus 14:13-14

Greetings! I honestly can't believe we are wrapping up not only this winter semester, but also this very unusual and unconventional academic year. Would any of us have ever believed that when we went into our three week lockdown last year to “slow the spread” that we would still be living so strangely over a year later?? Yet even with all the restrictions, lack of in-person interactions, and continual zooming, God's plans cannot ever be thwarted! And His plan was to bring incredible fruit into the lives of students here at Michigan! As I have been reflecting on God's hand in it all, He reminded me of the verses above. They come from the story in Exodus when the people of Israel were fleeing the Egyptians and were backed up against the Red Sea with no apparent way to escape. Moses reminds them that it is God who was going to bring about their deliverance. They didn't need to scramble to figure it all out...God would do the work! Similarly, heading into this year when we didn't know how anything was going to work out, God's incredible grace was already in motion in the hearts and minds of these students, drawing them to Himself and laying a foundation for His work in their lives. We only needed to be silent and watch Him do it. Isn't this a truth that we always need to tuck away in our hearts?? It is ONLY by His grace that any of us is drawn to Him, and my heart's desire is to lean closer into that truth as we continue to minister in the years to come...trusting and depending on God in deeper ways. We are grateful that you are in this with us, going to battle in the heavenlies for these precious students.

## Drawing Hearts

You may remember that last month we shared with you that Lauren, one of our student leaders, had been having some amazing spiritual conversations with her gymnastics teammate, Maddie. A few weeks back I got the chance to have a zoom conversation with Maddie and it was so evident that God had been on the move in her heart.

She shared about not having a spiritual background, but observing Lauren's faith over the past couple years and wondering what it meant to be a Christian. I could relate to so much of what she was saying, as that was my experience in high school, as well.

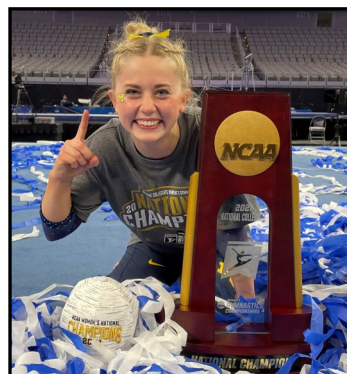
After listening and asking questions about her story, I felt like God was leading me to share the gospel with her...and I did so in a way I never have before! We got out our phones and I had her download GodTools (an app Cru has with various gospel presentations), and right there over zoom, using our phones, we walked through the good news of Christ together.

It was clear that Maddie was understanding these truths for the first time, and by the end she was ready to pray and ask Christ to come into her life...yay! Now, Maddie has joined one of our Faith Foundations groups that meets each week to go

over foundational truths of the faith where she can meet other believers on campus.

And if that wasn't exciting enough, check out this text I received from Maddie a few days ago: *Hi Sarah! My little sister just got home from college and has expressed to me her interest in learning more about God. Is there any way she could join me in our meeting on Tuesday?*

Um, let me think...YES! Please pray along with me for Maddie and her little sister as their hearts are drawn toward our God.



If you follow college gymnastics, you will know that Michigan won the National Championship this month! Here is Lauren holding the coveted trophy. Go Blue!

Oh, how I love this picture! This was taken last week when the core leadership women came over to our house for an outdoor meal together. Our bodies were cold, but our hearts were definitely warm, as it was the FIRST time we had been together in-person since September.

We are so proud of our core men and women for the faithfulness they have shown this year not only in their own pursuit of God, but also in the way they have invested in the lives of those around them.

We asked them all to complete a short evaluation of their year with AIA, and we thought you might be encouraged to hear some of their responses...

*"Having young men to share with and to be poured into by has been SUCH a gift. I've been challenged by each of person in core and the way that they each walk with the Lord."*

*"AIA is special. It is such a joy and an honor to be a part of. There is no greater mission than making disciples. There is no greater satisfaction than being satisfied in Jesus and helping others feel that satisfaction. AIA makes both of those things possible and so for that I just want to say a HUGE thank you. (To whoever reads this but to everyone on staff.) Feeling incredibly grateful to have such an amazing organization and team to be a part of, especially in a COVID year."*

*Please pray...*

*...for Maddie in her new faith and her sister as she explores her faith. Pray they would both be led into truth and that God would reveal Himself to them.*

*...for all of our graduating seniors, especially our core leaders who are leaving ~ Lauren, Lauren, Taylor, Roland, Mitchell, Josh. Pray God would provide Christian community for them in their new season of life, and that they would be lights for Christ wherever they go.*

*...for wisdom as we attempt to make ministry plans for the spring and summer semesters. Pray God would continue to draw students to Himself and allow us to be dependent upon Him.*

*...for Mikayla's continued recovery from her surgery. Pray God would bring both physical and spiritual growth.*

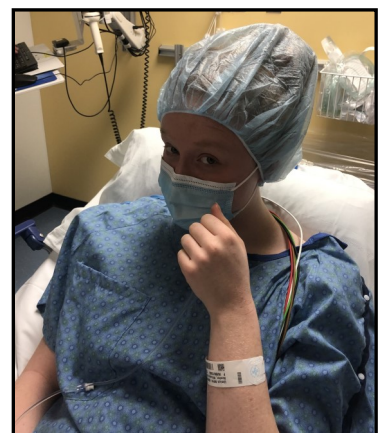
*Thank you for being with us throughout this unusual and exciting year. We are eternally grateful for you!*



*"I have felt so encouraged and blessed to be apart of this group of woman. I have been heard, listened to and felt so known. Following Jesus in college is hard, following Jesus in Ann Arbor is even harder-- seriously. It is so cool to see other female athletes lead other girls on our teams. I have been pushed out of my comfort zone in leading, but felt prepared to do it."*

*"Although it was an extremely isolating year, I was encouraged by the girls in my discipleship group and how they faithfully continued to show up. I am leaving here so thankful for the work the Lord has done and prayerful that He will continue to work after I leave."*

*"God has used core group to give me community, encouragement, and accountability. The Lord calls us to walk in community, and I think ESPECIALLY this year, it was so crucial to have that because many aspects of this year were so, so isolating. I am thankful for the women I got to walk alongside and how we all grew together."*



We are praising God for Mikayla's successful ACL knee surgery this month! Also, hoping we can be done with winter hats at track meets soon!