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November 2021 Newsletter

“Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 118:1

Thanksgiving greetings from our home to yours! There is indeed so much to be thankful for...God's provision for our family this year, the blessing of being face-to-face with students again, our health and ability to enjoy being active, treasured friends and family, the freedom, joy, purpose and peace that result from a relationship with Jesus...the list could go on and on. God really is so good and His faithfulness to His people is incredibly undeserved, yet so amazingly abundant. In this month's newsletter, we want to showcase some of the ways He has been faithful to us recently not only in the ministry we have been entrusted with here at the University of Michigan, but as a family, as well. To God be the glory for the things He has done!

Thankful for students who are open and seeking...

“How have you been?”

“I’ve been struggling quite a bit. Honestly at first it was the mental health stuff, then last night I stepped on a piece of glass which made a 5cm long cut on the side of my foot and I ended up getting 12 stitches in my foot. So now I can’t walk or practice for at least 10 days. I was doing very well at practice and now I’m at a loss.”

“Oh no! I am so sorry. That sounds awful! Ugh, it’s like you can’t catch a break. God must be up to something in your life. Let me know if you ever want to chat.”

“I feel like I never have been able to catch a break and I’ve wanted to be more involved with AIA but I’m embarrassed by the very little I know about Christianity and God and everything that goes along with it. I feel I can’t really be involved within a group when I don’t know half of the things they are talking about. That’s what has kept me from being more involved in d-groups. But right now I feel like I need God more than ever.”

“Oh you sweet girl. I can totally relate, as that was me my freshman year. I didn’t know anything and was very, very intimidated. But, everyone starts somewhere! The Bible is full of new people to the faith who learned and grew day by day. God wants nothing more than to teach you about Himself and allow you to experience His deep love for you. Let’s get coffee sometime soon and chat. What do you think?”

“Sounds good to me. As soon as I am able to walk again. Or at least hobble around on my crutches.”

This was a recent text conversation I had with a student I met last year over zoom. She’s had a lot going on in her life and has been thinking about what it might look like to seek God in the midst of it all. Being invited into her life in this way is such a privilege, and we invite you to pray along with us that she encounters our most loving and awesome God.

Thankful for thankful students!

Here’s another text I recently received from Sophie, one of our student leaders:

“Happy Friday! Off to Indiana for scrimmages this weekend and having time on the bus to reflect and feeling immensely grateful that God placed me in a place with such godly counsel. Thank you for being that in my life and for allowing the Lord to use you and your family! You are all life changers and I feel so lucky to call you my mama away from home.”

We minister to some incredible students!



Sophie with Sierra, one of our other student leaders. This picture was taken at our annual Operation Christmas Child wrapping party this month where we were so **thankful** that the students packed 354 shoeboxes full of gifts to send to kids around the world!

Thankful for “it just so happened” moments

A few years back we were studying the book of Ruth with the students on campus. There are so many wonderful truths to pull from that book, but the one that continues to stand out to me is the fact that God is completely sovereign and will accomplish what He wants to accomplish...using any means or circumstance to do so.

There is a scene in chapter two of Ruth's story where she is in need of food and goes out intending to gather grain leftover from reapers harvesting in a field. In doing so, “she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz”, her family's kinsman redeemer. Out of all the fields she could have gone to, she “happened” to come upon the one whose owner had the ability to rescue her from her destitution. As we studied this passage with the students, it was such a joy to recount with them some of the “just so happened” moments in our lives, moment where we knew the hand of God was at work.

Be blessed by the stories of two of our most recent moments like these...

“We Ubered to a cider mill and now there are no Ubers available to pick us up. We are stuck here.” That's what I heard from Laney, a freshman on the rowing team, as we awaited her arrival at an AIA freshman lunch we were hosting at our house. Long story short, we were able to send one of our upperclassmen to get her, but “it just so happened” that she had three other rowing freshmen with her...freshmen who had not been to an AIA event before.

So, Laney and her three unsuspecting teammates came into our home to share a meal and meet other freshmen involved in our ministry. And they all had a great time! Since then one of the new girls has joined a weekly discipleship group and is beginning to learn about God and His Word! Thank you Lord for “unavailable” Ubers and unplanned encounters!!



Here's the group of freshmen we hosted...such sweet people!



Job, one of our faithful leaders (on right)

Please pray...

...for new students who are getting involved in our AIA community. Pray they would experience Christ through His Word and through the Christian students involved.

...for protection and growth for our 16 student leaders. Pray they would be spiritually, emotionally and physically refreshed over the Christmas break.

...for Colby and I to keep Jesus as our first love, and for our kids to continue to draw near to the Lord.

Much gratitude wells up in our hearts when we think of you! May God bless you richly!!

The second “just so happened” story comes from Colby's recent trip to the Toyota dealer to service our car. As he was waiting for the service to be completed, he “happened” to see Sammy sitting there, a former Michigan football player he knew from being around the team.

They got to talking and when Colby asked Sammy about how he had been doing spiritually, Sammy remarked that he wished he would be in a better place with God. As they continued to talk, Colby invited him to be a part of one of our student led discipleship groups as a way to grow in his faith.

Sammy said yes, and ever since he has been faithfully attending Job's group, growing and learning alongside his peers. Thank You Lord for “chance” meetings at car dealerships!



We are **thankful** that our “non-sporty” daughter, Moriah, was given the opportunity to shine on stage in her recent school play.

We are **thankful** that God has provided a scholarship for Mikayla to play VB in college next fall. She signed her letter of intent this month!

