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## November 2022 Newsletter

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

Happy Thanksgiving! The themes of gratitude and thankfulness have been woven into the past week on campus. Remembering the Bible’s challenge to be thankful in all circumstances, and fighting to muster gratitude when times don’t necessarily feel like gratitude is warranted have been topics of conversation with our staff and students. It really is amazing what can happen in our souls when we heed the Bible’s direction to live lives of gratitude amidst anxiety. Wouldn’t you know?...the peace that surpasses all understanding that is referred to in Philippians really can be experienced :) We practiced these directives with our students this week on campus as we invited them to look at a list of 21 short prayers of thanksgiving for Christian athletes. On it were things like gratitude to God for designing us to play and find enjoyment in competition, for the opportunity to set goals and challenge ourselves to become better, for teammates we have the privilege of training and competing with, for fans who show up to cheer and encourage, and for coaches who help chart a path for a preferred future. I felt myself take a deep breath and settle into some peaceful perspectives as I read the list of 21 prayers. How often do I just plough through life and neglect to take time to remember gratitude? And how often does that cause me to spiral downward as I focus on my circumstances rather than eternity? I must admit, all too often. I pray we would all be men and women whose hearts are drawn toward thankfulness, not just during this Thanksgiving season, but throughout the entire year. And I would be remiss to talk about thankfulness without expressing our sincere gratitude to YOU and how you enable this ministry to continue year after year. Please hear these words below from a few of our student leaders, who also wanted to thank you...

*“Over my three and a half years at U of M so far, I think it is safe to say that nothing has impacted my life and walk with the Lord as much as the campus ministry of Athletes in Action. Guidance in faith is what I needed when I got to college, and the Lord provided. He provided Sarah and Colby, and the community that they foster to be that guidance for me. I will forever be grateful for AIA at Michigan and how God is using it to change lives like He did mine. Thank you so much for your generosity that helps to fuel this ministry, and happy Thanksgiving!” ~ Lauren, Michigan track senior*



Lauren and Sarah



Olu and Greg

*“Supporting the Keefer’s in their mission to help guide students in their faith walk has blessed so many people. Their family encourages me and my peers to continue to grow in our personal faith walk. I am continually thankful that God has put them in my life” ~Greg, Michigan football junior*



## Operation Christmas Child!

This month we were able to once again participate in packing shoeboxes full of gifts for kids around the world as we partnered with Samaritan's Purse.

As you can see from the picture on the right, we had a ton of students join in! The gym was very merry as Christmas music was playing, wrapping paper was flying, and many frosted cookies were being eaten. Praise God that over 360 boxes were filled and wrapped with love by the Michigan student athletes!



One team who was well represented that night were the women gymnasts. Naomi, one of leaders, has been leading her teammate Ashley in discipleship group this semester. Well, Ashley, who is pretty new to faith, invited their other teammate, Paige, to come wrap gifts. And do you know who came to our next AIA meeting for the first time the next week? Paige :) Our vision of disciples making disciples is happening...praise God!



Dylan, who is on the far left in this picture is one of our faithful student leaders. He has been reaching out on his lacrosse team with God's love and was overjoyed that his ENTIRE team came out to pack gifts! Every touch-point we can have with people for the Kingdom is significant!

*Please pray...*

*...for us as we follow up with the new students who attended the Operation Christmas Child wrapping party. Many indicated interest in AIA! Pray we will listen to and love them well and be able to point them to Jesus.*

*...for students as they finish out the semester with many final projects, papers and exams. Pray they would experience the peace of God amidst all of the stress.*

*...for us as we trust God for new financial partners for us and the ministry here at Michigan.*

*...for our family to have hearts that delight in the true meaning of Christmas.*

*In this season of Thanksgiving, we celebrate the faithfulness you show us throughout the year by the giving of your prayers and finances. We are so grateful for you! God bless!*



Our family had an unexpected reunion this past month as we mourned the loss of Colby's amazing grandmother. Beth was just shy of her 93rd birthday when she went home to be with Jesus. She was an incredible woman who loved her family wholeheartedly and served her community in untold ways. Her legacy of love and faith will live on in her 4 children, 12 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren, who were all there to celebrate her life!