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September 2025 Newsletter

“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ...pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.” Col. 4:3-4

Hello again! I am sitting down to write this letter with a full heart. I just returned home from campus after having sat across a table from a new freshman on Michigan’s rowing team. She has been coming to our AIA events over the past few weeks, and wanting to get to know her, I asked if she would like to get coffee together. Today I heard about her journey of faith, which includes the tragic passing of her mother a few years ago to cancer. With tears in her eyes, she told me how the Lord met her in those last days with her mom, and how she gained an eternal perspective with which she now lives her life. She’s excited to plug into AIA, continue to grow in her faith, and also reach out to others with the love of Christ. Before meeting her today, Colby and I sat in our living room across from an EMU football player and his girlfriend. They are considering marriage and desire to have some godly counsel before they take that step. To be able to hear their story and be let into their relationship was a privilege and joy for us. This young couple desires to honor God and seek Him in their relationship, and we were delighted to map out the next few months of premarital counseling with them. These are just two stories of the touchpoints we have been able to have this semester as we reach out to students. I’m not sure how to put it exactly into words, but there seems to be a spiritual hunger and openness in this generation of college students. One that we haven’t seen in a long time. Praise God for how He is drawing people to Himself and giving them the desire to seek Him. Thank you for being a part of that here at UM and EMU. Your partnership is making an eternal impact in the lives of many precious young people!



The pictures to the left are from the kickoff parties we had back-to-back nights at UM and EMU. They were a time to gather AIA students from last year and allow them to invite newcomers for an evening of games and fellowship. Both parties were PACKED with people! We asked students to fill out comment cards to gauge their interest in AIA, and praise God we now have a LOT of interested people to follow up with!

The kickoff parties were followed up the next week by our first large group gatherings. Students kept filing in



through the doors and it was a great time of connection, being in God’s Word and casting vision for the semester. We are grateful to the Lord for this amazing start!



Discipleship Groups

As in year's past, the bread and butter of the ministries on our campuses is the discipleship groups (d groups). These small, mostly team-based groups are led weekly by our student leaders and are a place students can be known, loved and taught the Word of God.

The Lord has raised up 32 student leaders (16 on each campus) to facilitate the d groups! These precious leaders have committed not only to lead their groups, but also to meet weekly with me and Colby for discipleship and training. We call them our core leaders and they are truly a gift to us and their peers whom they lead. As I write this letter, each of the core leaders has met a few times with their d groups and the stories we are hearing are super encouraging. Below the pictures of the core groups are some of the highlights we have been able to hear. Be encouraged by them and know you are playing a crucial part in their development!



All but one of the amazing EMU leaders are pictured above. They meet weekly as a coed group and are so excited to learn and grow!



Here are the Michigan men's core leaders, minus two of them. Next month you can see the Michigan women, as I forgot to snap a picture last time we were together!

- ◆ Both the men's and women's Michigan lacrosse teams have d groups going on them. Both have almost half the team showing up, and both have atheists and Jewish teammates in attendance. After the first d group with the women's team, one of the Jewish women approached the leader and said, "Is it ok if I am a 'faker' in the group because I am not a Christian? I love coming here and being with you all." Of course the answer was yes!
- ◆ "I've been praying for my teammate to come to d group for 3 years, and she actually came this week!" This is what I heard from Sophie, our core leader on the Michigan soccer team. She was SO encouraged by how God answered her prayer! This friend told her that for years it's been as if her heart is locked off to God, but now she would like to explore unlocking it.
- ◆ We have been serving with AIA at Michigan for over 15 years and we have never had a member of the men's swim team come to a d group...until this year when 3 have been coming so far!
- ◆ "Can we maybe do some community service together?" This was a question a d group made up of women's swimmers, gymnasts and softball players asked their student leader. I love how they are coming together and wanting to make a difference!

Please pray...

...for our 32 core leaders. Pray for spiritual protection as they lead their peers. Pray they would be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and that God would use them to impact lives.

...for the freshmen on our campuses. Pray God would lead us to those who are from Christian homes so we can plug them into community. Pray also for God to lead us to those who might be contemplating spiritual things so we can share the gospel with them.

...for our upcoming AIA Crossover event on Oct 5th with other AIA campuses around Michigan. Pray students would be encouraged as they meet peers who are also involved on their campuses.

...for wisdom and discernment to know how best to spend our time with so many ministry opportunities.

...for our kids to know and follow Jesus.



And then there were 3...just Jairus (6th), Mia (8th) and Moriah (11th) home now. Jaydon & Jackson are settling in at their respective colleges. We traveled to see Mikayla's volleyball team play recently. Life is good!

As we begin a new semester, we are mindful it would not be possible without you! Thank you!