



February 2025 Newsletter

COLBY AND SARAH KEEFER
 4695 SYCAMORE DR. YPSILANTI, MI 48197

COLBY—(937) 902-1767
 COLBY.KEEFER@ATHLETESINACTION.ORG

SARAH— (937) 681-6533
 SARAH.KEEFER@ATHLETESINACTION.ORG

GIVE.CRU.ORG/0507765

“And this is the testimony, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:11-13

Winter greetings from Ann Arbor! It may be freezing outside (at least here in the northern U.S.), but hearts definitely have been warm to the things of God here on our campuses! We are excited to write to you this month to tell you about the Lord’s faithfulness in revealing Himself to students and drawing them deeper into relationship with Him! We continue to hear stories from our student leaders of not only growing numbers in their weekly discipleship groups, but also incredible questions that are being asked, as well as lively discussions about the Scriptures. Furthermore, new small groups led by me and Colby have been started up this month at EMU and UM. We call those groups Faith Foundations (learning the basics of the faith), Equipped Disciple (learning how to better minister to others), and Senior Transition groups (using a biblical perspective to prepare graduating seniors for the next phase of life). Personally, I lead four different weekly faith foundation groups at Michigan and I can honestly say they are the best part of my week! In these groups are students ranging from non-believers, to those just grasping the faith, to those who have been brought up in the faith. As we have been discussing topics such as sin, eternal life, salvation by faith, repentance and forgiveness, I feel like I am literally watching God open people’s eyes to truth. On more than one occasion in the past few weeks I have watched very new students to the faith talk themselves through the gospel. For example, when discussing the above verse, Carla, a senior on the rowing team, said, “So from what I am seeing, if you have the Son, you can know that you have eternal life. And if you believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sin, you can have the Son. Is that right?” Amazingly simple yet profound truth being understood by someone with no Christian background! Thank you for making it possible for us to bring the love and truth of Christ to these precious young people like Carla. Lives are being eternally changed here!



We did “speed connecting” with the students at our monthly gatherings in Feb. This generation loves opportunities to connect...you just have to create chances for them to do so :)



Our student leader on the rowing team sent this pic to me. Her text said: *Someone wrote a group on our team’s appreciation board. Anyone in the team lounge can see it, which makes me subtly hope it sparks something in some girls!* (“D group” is the weekly bible study she leads)



Colby spoke this month on Col. 3:12-14 and gave the students a visual of how Paul asks us to “put on” different virtues.

Winter Retreat 2025

Earlier this month we took a group of 7 Michigan women and 6 Eastern Michigan men to Chicago for our annual AIA Winter Retreat. The energy was high that weekend as we joined about 175 other student athletes from around our region for worship, talks, seminars and FUN! We asked the students who came with us to share what they took away from the weekend, and below you can find their testimonies. God was definitely on the move at the retreat and we are encouraged by His faithfulness and the steps our students took toward Him!

“My trip to Chicago was an incredible experience. It opened my eyes to just how many athletes share a deep love for the Lord. It also gave me the space to be vulnerable about my struggles and connect with others who are facing similar challenges. Being there challenged me to choose God’s path over the one that culture normalizes. At first, I was nervous, but by the end, I felt so much joy and found myself praising the Lord in a way I never had before.” ~Campbell, UM soccer

“The winter retreat was a great experience. I met lots of other amazing student athletes who share the same love for Jesus. When you’re around groups as such, you feel the love of Jesus from everyone around you. I learned how important it is to continue to surround yourself with those in Christ, and to remain in the vine of life which is Jesus.” ~Gabe, EMU football



Our entire group that made the trip to the retreat!



“I was not expecting my experience at winter retreat to be so revitalizing for my faith. It was genuinely beautiful to be surrounded by so many young women and men pursuing a closer relationship with the Lord. The verse John 15:9 stood out to me from the weekend. The idea behind this verse was just remaining in the Lord and His love. It finally hit me that He is not asking us in this verse to do anything for Him but instead just to remain in His love.” ~Kelsey, UM field hockey

“The Chicago winter retreat had a long-lasting effect on me and I didn’t think that was possible after three short days. I was able to deeply grow my faith and truly experience the presence of God.” ~Stella, UM soccer

“The retreat brought me pieces of God’s word to implement into my life. Some that resonated with me are the ideas that I don’t need to do anything special, but simply to invite him into my life and he will show me the ways he wants for me. It was incredibly encouraging for me to see hundreds of student athletes facing the same challenges and to want to connect with Jesus.” ~Ella, UM volleyball



“It’s not everyday you get to worship Jesus all weekend with 200 other athletes!” ~Dom, EMU baseball

Please pray...

...for our students who attended the winter retreat. Oftentimes after a spiritually energizing weekend like that, students come under attack from the Enemy. Pray their faith would remain strong and that God would use them to impact others for Christ.

...for the 20+ students going through the faith foundations curriculum. Pray God would use our times together to build a solid foundation for a lifetime of faith.

...for spiritual conversations to arise around our students and for boldness to speak about Jesus.

...for wisdom for our son Jaydon and his college decision.



We celebrated Jaydon’s high school senior night for basketball last week. Love watching that kid play!

Your partnership is making an eternal difference! May God bless you in the giving of your prayers & finances!