

crossculture

Asian Intersarsity Christian Fellowship Monthly

September 2008 | Issue 2.1

Where do I belong?

What should my major be?

Why do Christians pray?

What do I put my faith in?

Why read the Bible?

Where do I find a fellowship?

How's my family back home?

When will I graduate?

...How can I help?

STAFF CORNER

by Laura Li, *AIV staff*

I'M SO EXCITED THAT I GET TO write a column this year. There could be many ways to use this little corner of Cross Culture, but I think I just want to talk about Jesus. Yes, it may seem generic, but it's also extremely important! This past summer my journey with Jesus has revolved around the Gospel of Luke. You will notice that Luke will be our companion and teacher this year in AIV. Being someone who likes order and details, I've especially appreciated Luke's account of the life of Jesus. And as I've studied through the 24 chapters, I've actually met Jesus!

But what does it mean to encounter Jesus? Here in the present time, He is not physically on earth as He was two thousand years ago. But as it says in the Gospel of John, Jesus IS the Word of God and when we read and study the Word, it is Jesus himself who we see and get to know. So, come with me on this journey to encounter Jesus, the Savior of the world.

What are you waiting for?

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel... This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed..." (Luke 2:29-32, 34-35)

I'm not sure if I should admit this but I am a diehard Backstreet Boys fan. Yes, I was a teeny bopper back in the late 90s! In 1998 BSB was coming on tour here for the first time in Michigan. My friend had bought the tickets in February or March, and the concert was in July. We waited almost five months for that concert. I even remember we started a countdown at a sleepover, putting up posters on the walls saying "TWO MONTHS UNTIL BSB!" When the day finally

arrived, to say we were excited was a gross understatement. We walked out into the main floor where our seats were, and I was amazed at the arena packed with other screaming fans. Finally, Nick, Brian, Kevin, AJ and Howie popped out of trap doors onto the stage as pyrotechnics went off everywhere. We went crazy, and I screamed until my voice was hoarse. I will never forget that moment. After months of anticipation, the concert had not failed to disappoint. It was one of the most thrilling nights of my teenage years.

Maybe you recall waiting for something or someone. During those moments of waiting, you find yourself imagining what it will be like or how you will feel. And when it comes, you try to soak it all in and savor every moment. Simeon was waiting to see Jesus. Although the whole nation of Israel was waiting for 400 years for their Savior to come, Simeon had been told by God himself that he'd see the Christ in his lifetime. At the moment his eyes fixed upon the child, Simeon broke out into prayer and praise. At last, what he had been waiting for his entire life had come, and now he could die in peace. Simeon's faith enabled him to understand that this little baby meant salvation for all people. He prophesied that this child meant good news for both Gentiles (non-Jews) and Jews, but also controversy for many. Simeon was right: throughout his life Jesus reached out to those considered outcasts, including many Gentiles, and also exposed the hypocrisy of the religious leaders. People either loved him or hated him.

Are you waiting to see Jesus? Let me tell you, there is nothing else worth waiting for, and nothing else that will meet all your expectations. As exciting as it was to go to a Backstreet Boys concert (and it was still exciting the other 6 times... haha), it could never compare to the pure joy and deep satisfaction that Jesus brings to my life. While the concert lasted 2 hours, Jesus has changed my world forever. Whatever it is you are waiting for, Jesus is waiting for you. Come with me to meet your Savior.

AIV SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY FOCUS:

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

(presented by Laura Li)

Date: Early 60s A.D. - just after Paul's imprisonment in Rome and just before Nero's persecution of the church in 64 A.D.

Who was Luke?

Evangelist, physician, Gentile (See Acts, Col. 4:14)

Audience/Readers:

Gentiles. This makes his account very accessible and relevant to modern audiences (us).

Did you know?

Luke is the longest book in the New Testament (1,150 verses!); when combined with Acts, Luke is the biggest contributor to the New Testament (even more than Paul!), writing about 25% of the NT.

Themes: Although there are many themes in Luke, the main point in his gospel is that salvation is for humanity. The world is made up of a diverse people and Luke's story weaves this diversity by showing Jesus interacting with individuals. Jesus came as the Savior of the world.

Front cover by Irene Wu

Interior art by Steven Chen, Joyce Tseng, and Jerry Wang

Back cover by Betsy Lau, Grace Soong, Tiffany Kuo, and Joanna Hui

THE GRIDIRON GOSPEL

by Jerry Wang, graduate student

(select scenes from "Gridiron Gang")

THE BOY WALKED QUIETLY INTO THE gray, dreary room, taking a seat with the others. He had visited this room before, many times. It was a room devoid of detail and life. There was no happiness here. Just rows of beds looking like they had come off an assembly line, conveying none of the comfort and security that beds should. They sat in silence. A tall, imposing man walked in. Sean Porter, juvenile probation officer, now stood in their midst.

Back in high school, we made a mistake and got sent to our rooms, grounded, yelled at, or hit, at worst. When these kids made a mistake, they ended up here, in this room. Months, years. Thieves. Drug dealers. Murderers.

After release, most of them returned to their former ways of gang life, only to die a few years later. Imagine yourself right now. Just entering college, starting grad school, beginning work, traveling, getting married. Now, imagine yourself dead. Gone forever.

That's what happened to kids put in the system. But Sean Porter had a plan to get them out of this cycle that they had put themselves in, using a mandatory football program. Their opponents? Reluctant high schools in the area (would you want to play against criminals?). No one believed his plan would work.

In the room that night, Sean Porter put it all on the table: "The Gridiron is a football field. On the Gridiron, we do it my way, not your way. *Your way got you here.* Whatever gang you claim, whatever hood you're from, this is your hood now."

Their first season was filled with tremendous adversity. The kids struggled to overcome former gang loyalties, racism, doubt and fear, even

deadly violence from former gang rivals during their games. But, in the end, they were changed forever. Some of them went back to school, others found jobs, some even received college football scholarships, and still others reconciled with family and friends. Above all, they were filled with something new, refreshing, and powerful: Hope. Not the kind of idle, wishful thinking we often associate the word with, but a genuine confidence in the brightness of their future.

So, what does this have to do with Christianity? It all starts with recognizing where we really are. We might seem all good on the outside, but deep inside we're all criminals, fallen short of God's standard of perfect innocence, trapped in a cycle of spiritual self-destruction. How-

"Whatever gang you claim, whatever hood you're from, this is your hood now."

ever, like Sean Porter, who forever changed the lives of his kids with a radical new idea, God can forever change your life with the radical reality that is Jesus Christ. He was the only perfectly innocent man who ever lived, born into our world to dwell in our midst. He eventually took the punishment we deserved and died a criminal's death in our place so we wouldn't have to die spiritually. Like the kids who believed in their coach and the transforming power of football, you can experience the transforming, healing power of God's forgiveness by accepting Jesus' act of love for you. Pray, believe, and bring your A-game.

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)

Comments, thoughts or questions? Talk to an AIV member, or check out one of our future Friday evening large groups, same time, same place!

FALL LARGE GROUP SERIES:

WHY DO CHRISTIANS..?

"... Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..."

(1 Peter 3:15)

**Fridays @ 7:00pm
in Forum Hall,
Palmer Commons**

- 9/26 | *... Pray?*
with Pastor Sung Kim
- 10/3 | *... Evangelize?*
with Brad Wathen
- 10/10 | *... Do Missions?*
with Laura Sapp
- 10/17 | Fall Break
AIV LOCK-IN
- 10/24 | *Q&A*
with Pastor Bob
- 10/31 | *Is God Democratic or Republican?*
with Fred Bailey
- 11/7 | *CATALYST*
Joint Chapter Event
- 11/14 | *COMPELLING*
Fall Conference
- 11/21 | *Relational Evangelism*
with Dan Gregorian
- 11/28 | Thanksgiving Recess
- 12/5 | *Super-Duper Outreach Event*

Community, Communion, and Communication

by Donica Liu, *senior*

THE THING I REMEMBER MOST VIVIDLY ABOUT CHAPTER camp this past year was when a woman I barely knew sat down to talk to me for an hour, spontaneously, about an area of my spiritual life that I was struggling with. She described her experiences and how Jesus had guided her and healed her through the tough times. When she was talking, I felt that God was speaking to me directly, and I was reminded of His power and love. I'm naturally a quiet person, so I tend to keep things to myself. I never thought to actively share about how God has been speaking in my personal life until the talk I had with that woman. Now I see that a Bible verse or testimony you share with someone might be exactly what they've been praying to hear from God, even if you might think it's random or obscure. A pastor I know once described God's people as "leaky buckets." After God fills us up, we don't stay full because our hearts are always wandering away from Him. We need as much encouragement as we can get from other believers.

So, did you read a book from the Bible this summer that totally blew your mind? Did you go to a retreat where you felt the presence of God? Did you meet a missionary who took your understanding of the term "missions" to a whole new level? The body of Christ wants to, and needs to, hear about it! There's plenty of ways to share—in a large group setting, at small group, or simply one-on-one with a friend are a few possibilities. In fact, this monthly newsletter, *Cross Culture*, was created so that people within the fellowship would have more opportunities to speak out. The culture of the cross (get the double pun?) is one in which we are able to communicate with each other honestly and with vulnerability, to encourage one another, offer accountability, and celebrate the wonderful things that Jesus is doing in our midst.



Going along with that, I think one of the most powerful ways we can evangelize to others is to simply describe what God has been doing in our lives. Paint a picture of who you were before you knew God, and then share about how you've

"The culture of the cross is one in which we are able to communicate with each other honestly and with vulnerability, to encourage one another, offer accountability, and celebrate the wonderful things that Jesus is doing in our midst."

been changed after knowing Him. I know that for me, the difference between my past self and my new self is absolutely profound—only Jesus' mighty power could have produced that change and healed my soul's diseases. I used to think that evangelism and outreach were difficult, complicated responsibilities, but I've realized that God doesn't ask very much of us at all. He does all the work and performs the miracles; sometimes all we have to do is acknowledge those works in our lives and talk about them with others. 1 John 1:1 says, That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

Brothers and sisters, we live in an age where God no longer speaks to us directly from burning bushes. Nevertheless, God is not silent or ambiguous. He speaks to us through disciplines, people, and circumstances. If we learn something wonderful from an experience that God gives us, but don't share it with others, then that message becomes a light hidden under a bushel: a snuffed flame: a lost and forgotten story.

intervarsity purpose statement

In response to God's love, grace, and truth: The Purpose of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA is to establish and advance at colleges and universities witnessing communities of students and faculty who follow Jesus as Savior and Lord:

Growing in love for God,
God's Word,
God's people of every ethnicity and culture and God's purposes in the world.

MEET OUR LEADERS

Still unfamiliar with AIV's leaders? Don't worry, chances are you're not alone. Sometimes it's taken people a whole year just to figure out who's doing what. By then, it's time to leave for summer and to return next year to a new group of leaders!

So that's what this is for – to get you acquainted with our leaders. (In hopefully less than a year.)

CORE

Core is simply our fellowship's student-led executive team that somehow always gets misunderstood as some cloistered inner circle secretly puppeteering the fellowship's actions through the invisible strings of their political and socio-economic power. (Yes, maybe a bit overdramatic.) In a nutshell, their duty is to supervise the various aspects of our community.

Albert Ma
President
Senior,
Neuroscience



Grace Lee
LG Coord.
Sophomore

Favorite...
Food: Sushi
Verse: Ecclesiastes 7:13

Ken Tang
Outreach Coord.
Junior,
Architecture



Favorite...
Color: Blue
Bible Character: Job



Melissa Pan
SG Coord.
Senior,
Psychology

Favorite...
Restaurant: Asian Legend
Cartoon Character: Winnie the Pooh

Johnny Lin
Admin
Junior,
Poli. Science



Favorite...
Movie: Forrest Gump
Bible Character: David



Caleb Tseng
Prayer Coord.
Sophomore,
Electrical
Engineering

Favorite...
Food: Pizza
Verse:
Romans 8:28

ASIAN INTERVARSITY STAFF

Sara and Laura dedicate themselves to organizational duties that keep our fellowship running, guiding our leaders and shaping the mission and vision of our chapter. They also maintain relations with sister chapters and IV fellowships from other campuses.

Laura Li
Class of '04



Favorite...
Color: Blue
Music Artist: Point of Grace
Bible Character: Joseph

"Unofficial general" of the Michigan school system and AIV's command structure, she quietly but confidently commands fellowship leaders through experience and wisdom."

Sara Wolfgram
Class of '07

Favorite...
Color: Black
Movie: Anne of Avonlea
Music Artist: Sarah Brightman

Part-time babysitter and police-woman for the guys and part-time older sister and mother for the girls, her fave foods include "grapes, Vanilla lattes, Matcha Jamba juice and Pistachio Gelato mixed with chocolate!" She enjoys running with her dog, Josie.

For more on our leaders, check out the Welcome section at:
<http://umivcf.info>

Don't Chug & Don't Sip. Just Drink.

by Eric Chen, *alum*

FOR SOME OF YOU, IT'LL BE AMONG your first appearances at an AIV large group meeting, and I want to extend my welcome to you. For others, it's a return to not just to Ann Arbor and the college setting, but also to the Christian family of brothers and sisters in the fellowship. To you, welcome back!

I remember arriving here four years ago during a muggy August, after my parents had driven the sixteen hours from Connecticut to drop me off on campus. Having attended a small, Christian private school in Taiwan, I was intrigued by what a large, secular university could offer me not only in terms of my academics but also in my social and spiritual development. My Christian schooling restricted my development to just school, as I lived a good distance away from school. It also didn't help that I was extremely introverted and relished avoiding any school function that I could get away with. So in an attempt to be a bit more holistic person, one piece of advice from several of my high school mentors stuck out: "Find a solid group of Christians." It didn't take long for me to find one in the fellowship you know as Asian InterVarsity. But in the four years since then, something else has echoed something else in my head: "Balance."

It's probably reasonable to assume that some of you have your entire educational and vocational paths planned out while others have absolutely nothing in mind. But what about life besides your schooling and your careers? One of the most saddening things I've heard in my four years here (especially when following up during outreaches) is that there's no time for spiritual matters, and that they'd be addressed later. Two issues arise as a result, though. First, especially for Christians, this presents a skewed view of the purpose of humans and the original Adamic relationship with God. Adam and Eve weren't created to name the animals and care for Creation. They

ultimately were on Earth to honor God. Secondly, one may never end up having time later, like in the "real world," depending on scheduling. The argument really isn't all that different from people who think that seeking God on their deathbeds is a reasonable choice – but what if there's a freak accident? There's no unselfish reason to put off seeking Him.

Yes, it's true that Ann Arbor is a college town and a major academic hub. And by God's grace (and some masterful bubble filling), we're here to learn about different aspects of the universe that He's created. But even saying it like that should give perspective to my point. College isn't about you learning to get yourself a good career, a comfortable life, etc. It's completely for God and about God. Granted, it's a perspective in the minority on campus, because the majority of people simply do not trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. So it's all the more a reason for people to be putting God first: We're here only because God put us here to honor Him. Can't we show it by demonstrating what a holistic lifestyle looks like?

Does that mean you have the freedom to ignore your studies? By no means! But it does mean that your focus should not be on what you study, but why and how you study. For some people at some times, it might call for a sacrifice of some studying (There's no Biblical mandate saying you need straight As or even straight Bs, even if you feel the call to a professional school) to help prepare for Coffeehouse. For others, it might mean giving up a party or two because your small group's planning a care package giveaway in preparation for midterms or something. Conversely, take breaks from the fellowship once in a while if you're overexerting yourself. Go enjoy some student organization's annual event to get a break and establish relationships – not because you're on some conversion

project but because you want to love the people you interact with there. The point is this: everything you do (not that I did it perfectly by any means) should point to God but it doesn't need to be a Christian group-sponsored event. You can't be salt and light on the earth if you hide yourself among the fellowship. At the same time, you don't present a full Christian life if you try to lone ranger the Christian life, either.

Four years ago, I made a decision to commit heavily to the fellowship. And after those four years, I've realized that I've had a great experience at the University of Michigan, but one that may have only been a shadow of what my college life could have been had I not locked myself exclusively into this fellowship. I gave up support for my ballroom friends, broom-ball with my hall, and other activities that would have expanded my circles of

"You can't be salt and light if you hide yourself among the fellowship."

friends, where I could have been the city on the hill that God used to draw others to the living water. We were called to be in the world but not of it. I was often not even in the world. Thus, I implore you to consider how much Christ is exemplified in your lifestyles. Are you just sipping at Him when you could have long, cool drinks? Or are you trying to chug gallons at once, choking the rest of life out?

WHAT'S ON
YOUR HEART?

crossculture@umich

FRESHMAN

SOUND-OFF

featuring Dave Chen and Silu Zuo, *freshmen*

Hole in your wallet? Learning how to cook but can't afford fire insurance? Something else? Check out these tips from upperclassmen that you may not learn from Orientation.

Save that Dough (on buying/cooking food, laundry, books/supplies, etc.):

Joyce: For laundry, find a friend who lives in the dorms.

Casey: Borrow books from friends and save money!

Stephanie: Get free blue books from the alumni center.

Ryan: Buy only what you'll eat; freeze the rest. Best prices at Meijer.

Jerry: Get your textbook ISBNs from the store and buy online. It's literally saved me thousands.

Downtown Deals (obscure but awesome restaurants):

Jc: Zingerman's, the stuff on Main St., La Dolce Vita.

C: Sava's Cafe on State St. = best sweet potato fries ever

R: Jerusalem Garden and Rich JC on South U.

How To Not Suck At Your First Time Cooking:

Jc: Don't put the heat on too high. Taste things as you go.

C: Don't forget that there's something in the oven!!!

S: Cook in small quantities if you're still learning how to cook.

How do you de-stress?:

C: Insomnia cookies at 2am + milk = amazing.

S: Play IM sports.

R: "Low Rider" by War is the best pre-exam song ever!

And A Few More:

S: Take the Diag-to-Diag bus if you're running late.

Amanda: Buses: Every 5 mins. between 730am and 5pm - every 15 min. after. Also every 15 min. on weekends.

Dave says:

As an incoming freshman, the thought of going to college is exciting but frightening. Everyone goes on about how great college is, and how different it is from what we've all been accustomed to. Among the variety of differences, one that sticks out is the freedom - freedom from parental control. I grew up in a Christian family that regularly goes to church every week; there's the youth group on Saturdays and sermon on Sundays. No matter what event occurred during those times, church always came first. I'm not saying it was a bad thing, but there have been days when I wished I could've gone out on a Saturday night or slept in on a Sunday morning. Truthfully, I'm glad that my parents always "encouraged" me to attend church, and hopefully this new "college life experience" will not be an obstacle hindering my faith.

Silu says:

The fact that I was actually going to college did not even strike me until August, when I began dorm-shopping and textbook-hunting. I suddenly realized I was about to live in a "home" the size of my room away from my family, while taking courses rumored to be many times harder than their high school counterparts. It is the idea of change that makes me nervous about college - the prospect that my life will never return to the way it is now. Sure, I was prepared for my lifestyle to change, but how would I change personally? My priorities? My goals? My beliefs? One verse I often look to for comfort is Proverbs 3:5-6:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

I know I can trust God to be my guide in this new life and to always be my constant.

UNDERCLASSMEN SURVIVAL 101

with Casey Lwo, Stephanie Chen, Joyce Ker, Ryan Rudy and your Editors Amanda & Jerry



REACHING OUT

by Ryan Rudy, *senior*



LAST YEAR YOU WALKED INTO LARGE Groups on Fridays and chatted with friends, laughed, made jokes, and enjoyed the time set out to spend time with your friends and with God. It makes sense. Why wouldn't you spend all of your precious time with people that you already know you like being around? Why wouldn't you want to do what would bring you momentary joy? Why wouldn't you focus on yourself? I pause now to clarify that I'm not condemning the joy of good companionship. Rather, my goal is to point your attention to that one person off in the corner of the room. Perhaps he is at Large Group for the first time; sitting quietly, awkwardly, not knowing if he is in the right place, and feeling that if he left, nobody would notice. Or maybe one of our sisters has had a really hard week, and she isn't in the mood for frolicking and merrymaking. These people may have concerns that you could help them with. They might just need to feel the love that is overflowing from us because of the grace that is freely given to us. But what if it wasn't like this? What if someone looking for a place to allow his faith to flourish could see first-hand the love that the Lord speaks of in John 13:34-35 (NIV):

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Would it make a difference if we really welcomed new people to Large Groups even after the big push at NSO? Would making an effort beyond an awkward hello convince someone that they just might belong? Quite often, the difficult friendships are the most fruitful; they make us grow, and they force us to occasionally set our own interests aside and care for others. What if we lived out Large Group with as much concern over others' happiness as our own? Paul instructs this in his letter to the gathering of Christians at Philippi,

saying in Philippians 2:3-4 (ESV):

"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

This outpouring of love should not only apply to Large Group and other gatherings of Christians, but should extend out into the broken society we live in as a light in the darkness of the world, preventing the world from decaying into the self-serving, twisted mess it seems to be ever-approaching. Even though "we believe that the only valid purpose for an ethnic-specific group is outreach



and discipleship," I have heard people say that they don't feel comfortable bringing their non-Christian friends to Large Group because of the exclusivity surrounding the culture in our fellowship. I myself have spent an entire semester at Large Group without being invited to a small group, and feeling like I was never welcomed into the fellowship. It's a hard line to follow, but just imagine what a blessing it would be, if someone who has not heard the good news of the Gospel were able to see true and deep Christian love. In the end, our faith should be lived out in everyday life, and in that life we aim to imitate our Lord. I raise this challenge to all our fellowship, and remind you of Christ's words (Matthew 25:34-40, NIV):

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my

Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'"

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

SMALL GROUPS & DAILY PRAYER MEETINGS

Mondays

Couzens/Lloyd (Cory - chincory)
West Quad (Andrew - alobrien)
Bursley Lobby @ 930PM
East Hall (Psych Atrium) @ 730PM

Tuesdays

Bursley (Stephanie - stphchen)
East Quad (Sky - skyy)
Markley (Nathan - niche)
Women's SG (Casey - cslw)
Pierpont Commons (piano) @ 10AM
East Hall (Psych Atrium) @ 730PM

Wednesdays

Baits (Joanna/David - jmhui/david-mai)
MoJo/Oxford (Maggie - wlokh)
South Quad (Dan - dachen)
East Hall (Psych Atrium) @ 730PM

Thursdays

League Underground @ 9AM

Step Up

by Nathan Cheng, *sophomore*

IT DRIVES US, COMPELS US, MOTIVATES US, emboldens us... and I'm not talking about hopes and dreams, I'm talking about one of our deepest fears: Loneliness. I know that the fear of spiders, heights, and speaking in public probably make the list before anyone even begins to bring up loneliness, but that does not detract from how serious the matter is. Loneliness is one of the most devastating human emotions and it happens to everyone.

For me, coming to UMich as a freshman was one of the most exciting, intimidating times of my life. In a place where no one knew anything about me, I had a chance to start over, to become whoever I wanted to be. I had a chance to build up a new persona, to create a new reputation for myself. But on the other hand, no one was here to take care of me. I did not have any high school friends I could hang out with, so I stuck around the friends I made during orientation.

“Show them Jesus through the way we talk, the way we act, the way we live.”

My first week at Michigan was kind of a blur. Basically, we found other freshmen and made our way over to frat parties and through Oak and Walnut where the masses flocked. Coming to Michigan, I had decided that I was not going to drink until I was officially legal, like a good little boy should. It took all of one night for me to break that promise to myself. Throughout that week, we would go through the same routine, go over to the houses we knew were throwing parties and once we got bored we would move on to the next one. This went on for a while until one of my friends used his fake ID to get alcohol and invited us over to his place. Instead of staying the night, I decided to walk back at around five in the morning. Maybe it was the cool of the night (or maybe it was just God kicking me in the butt) but for some reason, on that long walk home, I decided that I wouldn't go back. I decided that I needed to find a different group of friends.

It all started at North Campus BBQ. Oddly enough, I more or less stumbled

upon the event, but I guess it's at times like these, when we have abandoned our hold on our flimsy makeshift security blanket, that we see God at work. I talked to this guy named Albert Yao for something like two hours. We had absolutely nothing in common. We tried talking about our interests like sports, video games, and movies. He liked watching sports while I preferred playing sports. He had honed his skill at Halo while I was the guy who'd either be looking at the sky or at the ground before you killed him. He thought that Die Hard was a classic while I thought that Lord of the Rings was the best thing to ever happen to cinematography since the discovery of Steven Spielberg. We even talked about weather and politics, and even then we still didn't find common ground. Yet it is still one of the best conversations I have ever had in my life. To me, it wasn't so much about what we talked about but that someone was willing to just sit there and talk. I didn't feel like I had to become someone else to fit in. I guess in the end, all I was looking for was a group of people who would accept me for the person I already was, not the person I wanted to become or even the person I was transforming into. When it all comes down to it, I was searching for family, a group of people who, despite knowing your most revolting faults and flaws, still stick around and genuinely care about you. I found that here in AIVCF, people who are real, people who are willing to go to many lengths to see that you're thriving. I am here not because of a chance encounter but because someone decided to reach out, step out of his comfort zone, and act upon an opportunity that God had planned ahead in advance.

With so many freshmen, transfer students, and international students coming into Michigan just as I did about a year ago, I know without a doubt that there are people out there like me. People who are looking for family. Show them that we are the plug for that hole in their life. Show them that amongst the thousands of students coming in and out of here that we are truly invested in their lives and their happiness. Show them Jesus through the way we talk, the way we act, the way we live.

Local Churches

Knox

930am. Rides: Betsy Lau
(248-705-3666)

Harvest

930 & 1130am
Joanna Hui
(jmhui@umich.edu)

New Life

1001am & 1201pm
Johnny Lin
(jtlin@umich.edu)

Ann Arbor CC

9am
Rides: Margaret Yi (908-967-7523)

St. Mary Student Parish

Sat 5pm, Sun 830, 10, 1010am, 12, 2 (Spanish), 5, 7, 9pm
Contact: Andrew O'Brien
(alobrien@umich.edu)

Huron Hills

930am
Contact: Pearl Fung
(cwfung@umich.edu)

Cornerstone

2pm
Contact: Zhongnan Xu
(xuzho@umich.edu)

Vineyard

930am & 11am
Contact: Enid Chan
(enidchan@umich.edu)

Campus Chapel

1145am
Contact: Donica Liu
(jubilee@umich.edu)

