

C + What?

I sat one day at the InterVarsity information table at DePaul's downtown campus, handing out flyers to interested students, praying for others who walked by, and working on my knitting during spare minutes. Mark, a student leader, was supposed to help me out at the table, but he was already an hour late. I figured he had gotten caught up in conversation with someone. Mark showed up at the table 45 minutes later with his newfound comrade Chris, who is a first-year grad student, new to the city, and seeking Christian fellowship. Mark and he met in the computer lab that afternoon, while they bonded over Java and C++. I'm so thankful for the way God uses our own unique gifts to do his work on campus!



Kirra delivers her dramatic reading of *Caps for Sale*.

Would You Like Them in the Quad?

Students have the darnedest ideas. One of the most creative New Student Outreach ideas was a plan to read Dr. Seuss books out loud in the Quad. Kirra dragged her inflatable purple chair over to our assigned location in the Quad, we spread out

on blankets, ate lollipops, and took turns declaiming classics like *Green Eggs and Ham*. We handed out lollipops (with our meeting info attached) to passers-by.

Was the event successful? Not particularly, in terms of meeting new people. But the students had a blast. I asked them if we should do this again next year, and Kirra said, "I think we should do this every quarter!" I pointed out that it would be a bit more uncomfortable to sit outside with snow on the ground, but she was unruffled.

Shelf Life

Book Notes from Ann

For Christ and the University, by Keith & Gladys Hunt

Although I haven't quite finished it yet, I'm impressed enough with this history of InterVarsity that I can safely give a recommendation. It always seemed to me that the 1940s were the glory days of student ministry — thousands of students becoming Christians and devoting their lives to meaningful service. However, I've discovered that each generation has its own problems.

Although students at that time were not struggling with pluralism, they were trying to figure out how to respond to a new divide that had appeared between science and religion. And most things have stayed the same: some people want to follow God, others don't. I appreciate the way InterVarsity has changed with the times, allowing enough flexibility to address current issues while staying devoted Jesus.

Boyd's Eye View

Life is busy but delightful at the Boyds', as usual. Our latest house project: replacing our lovely but rotting back deck. Jon and our friend Shannon Marion rebuilt it in one weekend! My claim to fame is that I went with Jon to buy lumber. The deck looks great! You can see pictures of it at www.stlou.org.

My big project over the past few months was to organize my recipes. This sounds easier than it actually was. I had collected a few years' worth of recipes from magazines. My strategy was to put the recipes in plastic sleeves, place them in binders, and organize them by category. I've ended up with five binders! It is a bit excessive, I know, but I did have fun doing it. Maybe now that the recipes are organized, I'll actually have time to cook something. :)

Prayer Requests

Please pray:

- for new students — that they would seek to know their Maker.
- for our Fall Retreat Day (Oct 11). We'll be studying the first chapter of John.
- for our student leaders, that they would continue learning to be shepherds.
- for the Theatre School group, *On Book*. (See last month's web extra at annagram.org for more info.)

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Extra! Extra!

A Portrait of a Student as a Young Woman

Most of you probably don't have the chance to spend a lot of time with college students. They are delightful, funny, and sometimes maddening. This month I thought I'd include a little vignette about a wonderful woman in our InterVarsity chapter, one with an amazing story.

Allie grew up without very much religious influence in her life, so she surprised herself last year when she began attending InterVarsity meetings and decided to become a Christian. She was really interested when she heard about InterVarsity's Chicago Urban Program (CUP), a 6-week-long summer internship and training program on the West Side of Chicago. CUP usually requires program participants to have finished their second year of college, but because of Allie's enthusiasm and amazing teachability, they made an exception for her.

The summer was an incredible experience for her. She taught a kindergarten class at a local church's day camp while living in community with seven other students in a less-than-perfect apartment (think "no kitchen sink" and "duct-taped holes in the shower"). She tells stories of going to their apartment in the evening and devouring Bible stories — she had to learn about this stuff before teaching the stories to her five-year-old students! At this incredibly formative time in her spiritual life, Allie was exposed to teaching about God's desire for justice in the world and his love for the poor.

Allie is now a student leader in our InterVarsity chapter. At our New Student Outreach training day, I asked Allie to share with us what she was like one year ago, as a first-year student who wasn't particularly interested in Jesus. Allie described her spiritual disinterest, and also her great desire

for friendship and community. A fellow student in her dorm (who had just become a Christian herself less than a year before) invited her to visit some of the Christian groups at DePaul. As Allie continued attending and developed these friendships, her interest in Christianity and in the person of Jesus was piqued. Before long, she realized that she was dedicated to following Christ, and began to seek ways to deepen her relationship with God. She discovered the joy of having a purpose in life that not only touches the world around us now, but that has eternal significance. She wrote a bit about this:

"Realizing that there is someone out there much bigger than myself, was more than just comforting; it gave me a role model. I soon had direction in my life and came to understand the ways that God was guiding me to minister to the urban youth of Chicago. Since then I have never been happier."

I love Allie's story for the way God sought after this unique individual and changed her life. But I also love Allie's story in the way that it could be the story of many new students on campus this year — arriving at a new university with fears and questions, investigating and embracing Jesus, and discovering real purpose in their lives. May God draw many students into his kingdom this year.

For Christ & the University —

Ann

P.S. As usual, there's more online at www.annagram.org, including an exclusive Web Extra about découpaged candles.

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