

LeHIGHlights

News of Reformed University Fellowship at Lehigh University

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We're Overwhelmed!

But it's a good overwhelmed. God has overwhelmed us with gifts, and the RUF ministry at Lehigh is expanding everywhere. This is our sixth year of RUF at Lehigh University. Every year I have reported God's blessing and the advancement of His Kingdom here, but this year has surpassed them all. Praise God for His overwhelming grace!

Mission Mexico

Last March 12 of us spent our whole spring break on a mission trip to Mexico. It was a fantastic experience! We worked at an orphanage in Acapulco. In the mornings we prepared the new boys' bathroom for painting, and we spent the afternoons with the children. Some of the team taught a Bible lesson, some organized crafts, and others played sports. We ate dinner with the children and led the evening devotions before bedtime. They were charm-



Peter with a new friend

ing and very glad to see us. One day we participated in the new ministry to street children – kids who live on the streets, most of whom are addicted to drugs. It was wonderful to be part of a mission which shows the love of Christ by caring for orphans.

Summer RUF

Last year we had our first summer RUF. Attendance varied from 6 to 16. This summer we had over 20 every week! The group was too large for a normal Bible study, so we split up into 3 to 5 smaller groups. I opened with some introductory remarks, then several students led the small groups using questions I had prepared. That got everyone involved and gave others a chance to try leading a group. I sat in and later gave suggestions to the leaders for improving their leadership. At the end we reconvened and I drew conclusions. We spent the summer studying Nehemiah, where we saw God's faithfulness to His people in helping them rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. It also prompted many spin-off discussions!

Explosive Growth

The summer Bible study launched us into a fantastic fall ministry. Several other students joined the Ministry Team in reaching freshmen, and within a few weeks we had 70 new contacts! The students are catching on to energetically pursuing people who express interest in our ministry. Our large group meeting has swelled with many new members and the Bible studies are reaching several dozen more. It's especially exciting that most of these new members are being invited by students. Following are some snapshots of the growth this semester.

Internationals. We have been blessed with 8 Chinese students, most from Hong Kong and south China. Last month three were baptized. They are soaking up the Christian fellowship here, and keep inviting their friends. We also have students from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Viet Nam! The Vietnamese student is an unbeliever who has joined a Bible study and attended the fall conference because he wants to learn about Christianity. A handful of 2nd generation Indians round out the ethnic mix in our group.

Conferences. Conference attendance has been a weak spot in our ministry. This year the Ministry Team decided to return to New England, even though the New England RUF conference moved to New Hampshire. I doubted that we would find many people willing to make

the 11 hour trip, but 20 went! It was a long ride, but everyone enjoyed the weekend. The messages on spiritual transformation were excellent, and the interaction with RUF students from Harvard, Brown, and Yale was good.

The following month we went to Lancaster for a short weekend training conference. The original purpose was to train future Bible study leaders, but we have such committed freshmen, they wanted to come, too. Steven Badorf, the campus minister at Towson University in Maryland, led a track for freshmen and I led the track for Bible study leaders. It was intense, but invigorating. They want to do it again next semester!

Bible Studies

Last year I led all but one of our Bible studies. We were at a place where we needed to reach freshmen in the dorms, but only two students were ready to help. Perhaps the Bible studies are the biggest news this year. Rick Noecker, Seamas Whitesel, and John Bright are leading some of the best Bible studies I've seen. Seamas and John have several assistant leaders who are shouldering a major part of the load. To put things into perspective, each of these Bible studies is reaching as many people as this whole ministry three years ago!

Financial Notice

We are constantly grateful for your prayers and financial support. Thanks for your encouragement and for enabling us to minister here. We're still chugging along financially, but are as dependent as always on December donations. Keep those prayers coming, and please give if you are able.

The Homefront

We're a happy family. The wonderful snowstorm last weekend made us all cheerful! Ruth is presently in Thailand with her brother Peter. He has adopted two Thai children and is going over for a third. Ruth's role is to help care for the children, especially while Peter and Karen work their way through the red tape involved.

So Ruth missed the snow, but we are surviving. I am presently at the December training for campus ministers. A family from church has Benjamin, and Christopher and Stephen are enjoying a week on their own. Benjamin is enjoying 2nd grade, Stephen is keeping up with the 8th grade lessons, and Christopher is very busy with

three advanced placement courses. Peter is in charge of social activities in RUF at Lehigh. It took several months, but Daniel finally got a programming job in Baltimore. Ruth began teaching an advanced placement English literature course on the internet this year. It's a challenge for her, but a pleasant one.

Christmas Reflections

*How bright appears the Morning Star
With mercy beaming from afar;
The host of heaven rejoices;
O righteous Branch, O Jesse's Rod,
Thou Son of man and Son of God,
We too will lift our voices.*

*Rejoice, ye heavens; thou earth reply;
With praise, ye sinners, fill the sky,
For this, His incarnation.
Incarnate God, put forth Thy power;
Ride on, ride on, great Conqueror,
Til all know Thy salvation.
Philipp Nicolai, 1599*

If you saw the recent movie *Gladiator* you got a good picture of the violence and treachery of the ancient world. Jesus burst into this dark culture as a bright star from far out in space. He brought peace to a violent world and salvation to a wicked race. At Christmas we celebrate God's coming to us to save mankind, but especially His coming as a man. The mystery of Christmas is that God in all His majesty and brilliance became an ordinary man. As man, God made it possible for men to leave the darkness and enter His light – even to become lights themselves in this dark world.

But Jesus is more than savior – He is also a warrior. Only as man could He fight and defeat sin in the flesh, and now through us He rides forth throughout all the world conquering sin and establishing His Kingdom everywhere. This Christmastime may you and your family rejoice in Jesus' incarnation and fill the sky with your praise!