

The Sillysheep Pen

finding the lost, binding the brokenhearted



Interfaith

December 2010

"If we're not having interfaith dialog in here, then how can we promote it on campus?", asked Matt, one of our Epic Small group leaders. Matt Han is a senior psychology major and one of the students who came with us this summer to Wildwood, New Jersey on a summer project. At the beginning of the semester, he got a job with the newly minted Religious Affairs department here at UMass. The stated goal of this department was to increase spiritual awareness and to help interfaith dialog on campus.



As Matt looked around the room at the other students who represented their different faiths (Buddhist, Islam, Wicca, Catholicism, etc), a question was raised, almost out of frustration, "Well, how can we do that?" It was something the group had struggled with for months, trying to find a purpose. For many of them, even understanding what their own faith means, and where they are spiritually has been challenging.


"If I were to use one word to sum up their responses, it would be hunger."

Then an idea dawned on Matt, "Well, I happen to have this set of picture cards, designed to engage students in spiritual discussion here in my backpack!", he blurted out. Reaching into his bag, Matt pulled out a copy of the Soularium, a tooled designed by Campus Crusade for Christ, to

engage postmodern society in discussions on spiritual matters. (www.soularium.com)

Drawing on his experience using the tool over the summer (at the Wildwood summer project), Matt lead the team through a series of five questions, over the course of the next two hours, where each person, including the director, answered with one (or more) of the fifty photos in the deck. Each question led them to share about their spiritual experiences, backgrounds, and hopes. Through each question Matt was able to share about his personal experience in coming to faith, and the deep joy and satisfaction of walking with Jesus and living in authentic Christian Community.



I asked Matt about some of the answers that the other students had, "If I were to use one word to sum up their responses, it would be hunger. They were just incredibly spiritually hungry." Thank you for prayers and your generous partnership which allows us to equip and send students to places where God has called them, places that only they can go to reach the spiritually hungry for Jesus. Please also continue to pray for Matt and the unique opportunity that God has afforded him to share the gospel, especially because the ones he is reaching are in a position of influence within their faith communities. Please pray for God to open even more unexpected doors for the good news of Jesus Christ. 

Prayer & New Year

1. Joe's aunt (Eleana) passed away 12/11/2010. She love the Lord very much and had spent the last few years going on short term missions eventhough she was battling cancer. It was very encouraging to be reminded that Eleana had spent her life serving the Lord, including being involved with the Billy Graham association, Jewish outreach and teaching at Alliance Theological Seminary in Hong Kong. Please pray for us as we will miss her very much.
2. God has presented us with an incredible opportunity. ECAASU (East Coast Asian American Student Union) will be holding their annual conference at UMass this year. Over 1200 Asian American Student leaders will be coming to UMass from Feb 16-18, 2011 from all over the east coast. We are planning outreaches to engage these student leaders with the gospel. Please pray for our planning as well as a readiness on the part of the conference attendees, to hear the gospel. Also please pray for divine appointments.
3. We are in the process of helping our campus to raise support for Big Break. With (prayerfully) up to 70 or more students who may come with us this year, we will need a bus, and that will require much more finances than previous years. We trust God will provide and we are looking forward to what this will mean for our campuses, as potentially 70+ students experience the joy, freedom and excitement of sharing their faith, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
4. We will be visiting family, friends, churches and supporters in the Los Angeles area from January 5-14th. Please pray for safe travel, that the trip will be refreshing and fruitful.
5. The regional Boston Winter Conference will begin next week (Dec 31-Jan 5). Please pray for all the staff that are running the conference. Pray for Joe as he takes on the leadership role of assistant Program Director. Pray especially that the presence of the Holy Spirit would profoundly impact both staff and students.
6. Dr. Greg Ganssle will be speaking on Science & Faith at UMass on Feb 1st, 2011. Pray that this even will be well attended and would lead to many spiritual conversations and decisions for Christ.
7. Our plan is to focus on outreach in the Spring semester. Please pray for us as we lead and equip our students in the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ.

