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Faculty Commons is part of the global faculty network of Cru/Campus Crusade for Christ. We are men and women who love the academy, who find the person and works of Jesus of Nazareth to be satisfying and true, and who look to Him as the beautiful hope for the world.



John 10:7-11:

"So Jesus again said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes to steal and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'"

I hope you are all doing well and had a great Holiday season with family and friends and had some time to rest before starting this New Year! I am really excited to start this new year of ministry and am full of hope and expectation for all God is going to do in and through us as we seek to take the hope of Jesus Christ to Penn State and beyond.

Lately, God has been drawing me back to and having me consider what is the "abundant life" He calls us to and that we call others to. As I read and studied John 10:1-11, a few things jumped out at me that I wanted to share with you. Jesus is saying that He is the door in and out of the sheepfold and if you enter by Him you will be saved from the thieves and robbers that come to steal and destroy. The thieves here are anything that promise us false safety and security, but ultimately lead us away from God and to death. But, Jesus doesn't stop there. What do we want beyond safety and protection? We want life. Life. But we want more than mere life. We want abundant life. Overflowing life. Deep life. Weighty life. Joyful life. Jesus goes on to say that if we enter by Him, we will not only be saved, but go in and out and find pasture. This is protection and Plenty. Solid safety and deep soul satisfaction. Abundant life is not about having stuff. It's about having peace. Having Joy. Having God. I am praying that we all experience the safety and security only to be found in Jesus as well as the deep soul satisfying Pastures only He can provide throughout this new year.

Let me start off by updating you on how things ended this past semester. Thank you so much for praying that we would finish the semester well and that students would be engaged until the end. Needless to say your prayers were answered in a big way. Our numbers at our meetings actually grew as the semester drew to a close. It was amazing to see our incredibly busy graduate students increasingly trust the Lord with their time, their work, and their schedules and prioritize Him first in their lives. What an example they are of lives that are surrendered to Jesus. In fact, even after the semester ended many of our students asked us to give them materials to read and Bible studies/devotionals to do over break so they could continue growing in the Lord while away. It is just such a blessing to watch God work and grow our ministry and grow us and the students in our ministry spiritually, as they hunger and thirst for more and more of Jesus through His Word.

At the beginning of the semester, we kicked off four new Bible studies and students are leading two of the Bible studies for the first time ever in our graduate ministry. At our first meeting last week we had about five new faces, which is so exciting

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Prayer Requests

1. Continued investment by our student leaders as they step up and take ownership over various parts of our movement.
2. Wisdom, discernment, and guidance for us staff as we trust the Lord to guide and direct this ministry through us.
3. Wisdom and guidance as we get things kicked off on the faculty side of our ministry this semester.
4. Safety in travel as I have a staff conference in Dallas in a week.
5. Planning and recruiting for a spring break mission trip to the DR, March 6th - 12th.



*Graduate student
breakout session at
Radiate*

to see the continued growth. We **also** now have our first one-on-one discipleship happening between students in our ministry. In addition to this, we have a new student leadership team that has transitioned very well into their roles and are excited to continue to help push this movement forward and bring the Gospel to everyone here at Penn State. Just today, before I wrote this letter to you, I had a graduate student ask me if I would take him to the student union and share the gospel with him. How incredible is that, our students asking staff to share the Gospel! It is very overwhelming to think of all that God has done and is continuing to do here in our graduate student ministry.



Worship at Radiate!

I also want to update you on our winter Conference called "Radiate" That we had in DC between Christmas and New Years. It is really pretty amazing to see about 1,500 college students give up part of their Christmas vacation to come to DC and spend a week worshipping, learning, and sharing the Gospel around DC. This year at the conference we, The Penn State Graduate Ministry Team, lead a breakout session for students who are considering going to graduate school. The topic of our session is how to not just survive, but to thrive Spiritually in graduate school. We want students to see that their time in graduate school is not just a time to put their head down, get through, and worry about Jesus later, rather it actually can be a time that God not only uses to help them connect deeply with Him, but also uses them to help others connect with God. This year we had a great turn out at our seminar and were able to meet many students who not only are considering graduate school, but who also want to know how they can have a kingdom impact while there. Another aim of the seminar is to help equip students to start bible studies and graduate Christian groups on the campuses they will be going to where there are none currently. One of the greatest parts about this year's conference was that we had two graduate students from Penn State travel down to DC to help us with the seminar and also to meet and talk with other students who are considering grad school. It was so awesome to see our students step up, sacrifice their time, and get involved at the conference and be a resource for students. God has truly had his hand on our ministry as we have started this year. We are so excited to see where He will lead us as we continue to trust Him. Thank you so much for partnering with me to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the Faculty and students here at Penn State and beyond. I am truly thankful to God for you and I love being missionaries together with each of you!

Jesus is More!

Josh