

New Beginnings

May 2020



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Missionaries on the campus of University of Illinois with Illini Life Christian Fellowship

i·life Semester Wrap-up Celebration

Hello! We hope you are doing well and are healthy. So often in these days of social distancing and quarantine we have found ourselves praying for and giving thanks for our health and that of others.

All of us have endured a rapid change to our lives and rhythms as we adjust to the Covid-19 pandemic and response. Illini Life and the University of Illinois are no exception. Like many churches we quickly adapted to streaming our service online, zoom for small group bible studies, and video chat to remain connected while encouraging one another to follow Jesus in these uncertain times.

Traditionally, at the end of the school year we gather our graduating students for a celebratory lunch and some final words of wisdom before they leave campus to embark on the next phase of adulthood. This year we did that from a distance over Zoom. Sending them care packages and restaurant gift cards ahead of time. It was a sweet time to celebrate and remember with our 19 graduates.

For our final service of the year we produced a video reflecting on the work the Lord has done in our lives and in our church this year and took time to celebrate that. You can find it out our Youtube channel: youtube.com/illinilife.

Summer Service The New Norm

As summer classes begin here at the U of I we are also beginning our summer service rhythms. Just as the University is continuing with distance education and all classes are online, so our services will remain online for the time being. It's the new normal for us, though we pray it won't continue that way into the Fall Semester.

As we engaged with our students and staff in this time of isolation and social distance, it was obvious that there is a deeply felt need for community and personal connection in our congregation. Our desire is to continue to gather digitally for service each week, but shift more of our emphasis to group discussion to meet some of that need.

Each week Nick or one of our other teachers will share a short message offering insight and context for a passage of scripture and then we'll break off into smaller video chats to discuss and apply the passage to our lives. We're excited to see how it goes this week.

We hope you'll pray with us that it would be safe for students to return in person to campus in the Fall and we could resume gathering in person as the church.

Prayer Requests

- For Amy, Nick, and Nathan to be encouraged in the Lord and fruitful in ministry.
- For the health and safety of all people amidst this pandemic, including our campus and church community.
- For justice, peace, and health in our world at large.
- For rest and refreshment in the Lord this Summer.

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Where We Live