



NORTHEAST REPORT

NEWS OF REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP IN THE NORTHEAST

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Now What?

How do you have a campus ministry with students when the students are not on the campus? That was the question that loomed over RUF Campus Ministers as universities sent their students home for the remainder of the spring semester. Many of you were wondering the same thing! Were Campus Ministers sitting idle at home? Far from it! This pandemic has unleashed a tidal wave of creativity among ministers, staff, interns, and students. Following are a sample of ways RUF is continuing to reach and equip students in the gospel.

Creativity Unleashed!

Howard University

This semester along with taking courses I have sought to engage student life. This past semester I joined the Muslim Student Association's Qur'an Class. A professor from Howard Divinity school would come to host a lesson on different aspects of the Qur'an and devotion to Allah. I wanted to join because I want to befriend all kinds of students at Howard, including Muslim students. Also, I have always wanted to learn more about Islam. I believe that one cannot understand the world until one understands Islam, and one cannot understand Islam until one understands the Qur'an.

I attended one class in person before all the students were sent home and attended two others virtually. They were all very kind and welcoming, and although I mostly listened and learned, my participation was also welcomed as well. Once the semester ended the Qur'an Class ended, but Ramadan was just about to begin. During Ramadan I committed to read the Qur'an with my Muslim friends to better understand them and their faith. In a Groupme I shared summaries of what I read and asked questions. They were very welcoming and answered most if not all of my questions. Although I joined the Groupme to learn about Islam, there were moments where the students were curious about Christianity's differing views on certain topics. It was a joy to be able to share the gospel and to have mutually respectful dialogue.

I finished the whole Qur'an during the 30 day month of Ramadan. I have learned so much about my Muslim neighbors, about Islam, and the beauty of the good news of Jesus. *Cyril Chavis, Campus Minister at Howard University*

Lehigh University

The end of the school year is supposed to be punctuated with joy. Celebration, a collective sigh of relief, and one last "hurrah!" typically fill the air. And all of this normally happens at summer camp. But that was not the case this year for anyone, on any campus. So you can imagine my shock when one student approached me with an alternative: a virtual retreat.

I wasn't sure what to think. I was one part skeptical (who would want to sit on a Zoom call for days?), one part confused (would it be fun?), and two parts elated (on his own initiative, one of our student leaders, Sam, had put together a schedule, arranged for virtual games, and comprised a list of suggested topics for our speaker to talk about). Sam surveyed the group to gauge interest, and to my surprise, there was a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for a virtual retreat! With the newly adopted retreat just around the corner I jumped into action. I re-booked our original camp speaker, drafted multiple Bible studies, finalized the schedule, coordinated with the music team, wrote a sermon of my own, and pulled together Bible readings and prayers for our morning worship. Whew!

And how was it? It was great! The students loved it. They soaked in the preaching from Acts, engaged with our speaker's follow-up questions, and played trivia games until all hours of the morning. We even had more students attend our virtual retreat this year than came to last year's summer camp! Praise God the retreat was a hit. Praise God for Sam's initiative. Pray that the LORD continues to use Sam's gifts as a student leader. Pray also that the LORD's work would continue in our students lives even beyond the retreat. *Michael Goodlin, Campus Minister at Lehigh University*

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

During this pandemic we continued, as usually as we could, to reach and equip students online for the rest of the semester. Many of us struggled with some Zoom fatigue as the semester wrapped up in May. However, our spirits had a reboot when another RUF campus minister at WVU reached out to me and a few other campus ministers to suggest partnering together for an online summer event we've called Theology Thursdays. We've taken seminars that are normally done at RUF summer conference, which was unfortunately canceled due to COVID-19, and set them up online. Students from IUP, WVU, Rowan, and even Bogota National University in Columbia have joined us each Thursday to learn together! In a time where people have been weary of video calls and social distancing, it

was particularly refreshing to have some fellowship in Christ even with students in a different hemisphere!

For the past three weeks, we've had two four week long seminars running, one on Biblical worldview and another on the authority of Scripture. After that we will begin a two week series and I will be teaching one on anxiety and depression. We have been encouraged by the seminars so far and especially by all the great questions students have been asking. *Oliver Pierce, Campus Minister at Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

University of Connecticut

With so much sadness in the news and in our world, it was wonderful to begin Northeast Summer RUF last night via Zoom. For the next couple of months we will meet with the other Northeast RUF ministries each Wednesday night. Last night was a wonderful kick-off. We played some fun ice-breaker games, took time to pray for racial reconciliation and justice within our country, and I got to preach on the parable of the great banquet to students from several different campuses. Each campus got to have their own breakout discussion group, and then some students stuck around for online Pictionary. It was a great evening together! *Lucas Dourado, Campus Minister at University of Connecticut*



First Summer Northeast RUF. Campuses represented: Columbia, Brown/RISD, Vermont, UConn, Boston U, NY City Campus.

University of Maryland

During the COVID-19 crisis I think it's important especially to share good news! University of Maryland RUF alumnus Joey Barnet, along with his wife Ruth and their daughter Grace, will be moving to Newark, Delaware to become the Campus Minister Associate at the University of Delaware. This is exciting news, as Joey is the first RUF Maryland student to become a Campus Minister. Again all of this came about through your prayers and support. Rejoice with me!

I came to know Joey through one of our Fall costume party outreach events at my house about six years ago. Joey came to the event through another fringe student and I can remember speaking with him in my dining room

around a table of snacks and goodies. Through early interactions I immediately knew he had a real spiritual interest. One evening he had a very significant conversation with my intern Billy Jacobsen who asked him one question: "Do you think people are basically good or basically evil?" This question rocked his world and began him on his journey to truly understand the Bible and the Christian message. Through his conversion he became involved in all aspects of our ministry, helping with music team and later as a leader on our ministry team. He attended RUF conferences and trainings, helped lead Bible studies and disciple students, and joined Mosaic Community Church PCA in Silver Spring, MD. About a year or so later he met his wife Ruth through the ministry. I had the privilege to officiate their marriage.

After Joey graduated from UMD he sensed that the LORD was pointing him towards clinical Psychology and the academy. At the time before he accepted the Ph.D. I said, "Joey, you have real gifts for ministry...I think you are going to end up in the ministry at some point. Why don't you seek the RUF internship instead?" As it turned out, about six months into his Ph.D. work Joey called and said, "I sense God calling me into full-time ministry!"

These are big moves from a God who is active and moving and building his Kingdom! Isn't it powerful to see the LORD work as he called a sinner to faith, connected him to His body the church, started a godly family, and now is calling them into full-time campus ministry? Please pray for Joey, Ruth and little Grace as they begin fund raising, find a place to live, move to Delaware this summer and begin ministry at the University of Delaware. All of this during the pandemic. *Chris Garriott, Campus Minister at University of Maryland*

Stay Connected to RUF!

We have wrapped up a strange year and entered an uncertain summer without the annual ritual of RUF Summer Conference. But Christ is building His Kingdom and continues to use RUF in significant ways! Joey Barnet is coming to University of Delaware, Trip Beans is moving to Maryland to start RUF at UMBC, and several interns are joining us. Visit our Northeast website to see the new people joining RUF Northeast. Go to <http://rufnortheast.org/> or scan this code →



We welcome your partnership in prayer and giving! To donate to RUF go to <https://www.givetoruf.org> or scan this QR code. → Type the school or campus minister you wish to support in the box.



If you would rather receive these newsletters by email, contact us at Northeast@ruf.org. And if you would like to receive weekly prayer requests by email, also contact us at Northeast@ruf.org.

Focus on Will Huss



When interviewing RUF personnel, it's hard to escape the theme of their college experience of RUF being a pivotal motivation to return to the organization. Recently appointed National Coordinator Will Huss is no exception. For Huss, his alma mater Clemson's RUF ministry helped him apply his childhood faith to his chosen discipline, architecture, and gave him a rule to guide his transition to adult life. His youth pastor urged him to at least try RUF; then, a friendly posse of then-campus ministry leader David Sinclair and some male sophomores ambushed him on move-in day. The impactful result was that Huss ended up missing "maybe one" large group throughout his entire four years – an attendance record perhaps spurred on by the fact that he met his future wife, Missy, at the fellowship. When they graduated, Huss's appreciation of the RUF local ministry model motivated him to seek employment not just based on job markets but on where faithful preaching and church oversight could be found.

The lessons Huss began learning at Clemson RUF have figured prominently in his understanding of integrating faith and work. Even though on paper his college studies involved "sticks and bricks and drawings on a piece of paper...it was still a ministry," he notes. From a leadership standpoint, RUF's mission to "take a church and a campus

and connect them" gave him access to an organization – the church – where the solid leadership principles he learned could be applied to serve his career. "Faith/work integration has always been a big focus of mine," noting that though the "widget" is different, the church model of leadership and discipling works to reach both students on campus and co-workers and employees in the office.

Both Huss' RUF involvement and career have been centered in Clemson Presbyterian Church for the past 20 years in Greenville, South Carolina. As ruling Elder of College Ministry, Will and his wife, Missy, have been engaged in a (joyful) marathon of student ministry for decades preceding his role as National Coordinator. Though this spring has been an exception due to the pandemic, the Huss family is accustomed to providing meals and activities to Clemson students on a weekly or even daily basis. The family has hosted female Clemson RUF interns in the past (Will's daughter, Maggie, is named after one of them!). As Huss describes it, being involved to such an extent has enriched his family's life immeasurably – though the number and expense of student weddings they've participated in could serve as a metric! Their way of serving the students has also led many former RUFers to develop gifts of hospitality themselves. A humorous illustration came when a former student called and recounted "leaving the Huss house numerous times past midnight, but now he and his wife can't stay up past ten o'clock!"

When the Husses are not enjoying their time with Clemson RUF students, they can be found watching a variety of movies together, from slapstick comedy to documentaries. And they love to cook, grill, and enjoy their favorite meals outside with their black Labrador retriever, named Bluebell, after the ice cream!

Huss is thankful for the ways that his experience integrating spiritual principles and organizational operations has uniquely prepared him for the role of National Coordinator. He looks forward to figuring out how RUF will "lead, listen, and learn" in light of the need for wise decisions regarding COVID-19 and the desire for racial reconciliation. He is thankful for the prior relationships made through serving on PCA state and permanent committees, which have eased his transition into the role. He's grateful that the internal focus on organizational health is both "what RUF needs right now" and what God has uniquely equipped him to provide.

– by Sarah Durham

Summer Reflections

"There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, 'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other

Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”
Luke 13:1-3



People are upset. Powerfully upset! George Floyd was killed by a policeman. Millions are protesting. Some are calling for police to be defunded. Others are disturbed that police are not better supported. Various violent elements have infiltrated peaceful protests and caused death and destruction. Our

president, governors, mayors, and other leaders have sent mixed signals which have aggravated these tensions. Celebrities feel the world needs their opinions. And as I write this, today’s headline trumpets an increase in coronavirus cases.

People are upset, worried, and confused. And no wonder. At the moment our country is a mess. Real injustices have been done, real injuries have been incurred, conflicting claims are being leveled, a virus is still out control – so of course we are upset, worried, and confused.

The Jews of Jesus’ day were upset, worried, and confused. What Pilate did was terribly wrong and was a glaring insult to the people he ruled. People were upset and wanted to know whom to blame. Certainly Pilate was at fault, but what about the sinners in Judea? Were they responsible for bringing these atrocities upon the country?

Jesus refused to get involved in the blame game. But neither did He soothe public sensibilities by assuring the people that the good folk of Judea were guiltless. Jesus placed the blame at everyone’s feet. We’re all guilty! The first and most fundamental response to injustice and violence is personal repentance. There is more to be said and done, but that is where we start.

Today some people claim an almost divine certainty about who is at fault and what ought to be done to them. I think most people are upset and confused. Whether we are confident, confused, or disagree with each other, we all deserve divine judgement at the hands of our holy God. Praise God that Jesus calmly laid down His life so that we might not experience God’s just anger! Through Jesus we may come to God in repentance, be accepted, and receive

His loving embrace. May RUF and all Christians remind each other of these things and then follow the Spirit’s leading however He guides us.

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This month S.J. Lim begins as the Area Coordinator for New York and New England. My focus will be on the Mid-Atlantic region. I will deeply miss the people and places of New England, but RUF will be more effective with two Area Coordinators covering the growing Northeast. Our next newsletter will reflect the new Mid-Atlantic focus.

*David Green*



## NORTHEAST

Prayer Requests, June 2020

1. Praise for the amazing and creative opportunities to continue reaching students for Christ!
2. Praise for thoughtful, energetic students like Sam who are propelling ministry forward even in this pandemic.
3. Pray for students who find summer away from RUF teaching and friends to be difficult – more so now.
4. No one knows what the fall will bring. Pray for wisdom and flexibility as we plan for next year..
5. Pray for funding to remain solid, and to increase for those who are underfunded.



