

## InterVarsity Immanuel Approach Adventures Jan 2023 through Spring 2024: (Updated 10/30/23)

2023-2024 is turning out to be bigger for InterVarsity and the Immanuel Approach than initially anticipated. Here's the update:

- First of all, I just want to say again how encouraged we are regarding Urbana. We had a ministry team of 150 Immanuel Approach facilitators (75 volunteers from the IA community and 75 InterVarsity staff), and we provided almost 1,200 sessions for staff and students. This next number is so high that I worry people will dismiss it as impossible, but after many hours of data gathering and careful analysis, it looks like at least 97% of recipients experienced a connection with the living, tangible, life-giving presence of Jesus. And again, many, many students said, "This is the first time I have ever actually *felt* the living, tangible presence of Jesus!!!"
- An ongoing piece of important good news is that InterVarsity is continuing their own internal training. That is, several of the senior staff are now using a "customized for InterVarsity" version of the basic training videos to provide Immanuel Approach training within the organization. And this will continue indefinitely without requiring any of my time or additional resources from the Immanuel Approach training fund.
- Another ongoing piece of important good news is that a "free sample" Immanuel Approach session is now included as a routine part of the onboarding process for all new staff. And these incoming staff are also encouraged to ask for additional IA ministry if they notice themselves getting triggered in the course of their work.
- Yet another ongoing piece of important good news is that 30-40% of Peter's time has now been designated to help the Immanuel Approach spread throughout the organization. (One of my most important contributions going forward will be to provide consultation and backup for Peter.)
- More encouraging news is that Peter and I are running another mentoring group. As mentioned in earlier notes, these mentoring groups provide intermediate/advanced training for staff who have already been through basic training. Some of these staff with intermediate/advanced training will help with the ongoing basic training within InterVarsity.
- Even more encouraging news: After the hugely positive results with Immanuel Approach ministry with students at Urbana, campus staff have not only been given permission to use the Immanuel Approach with students, but are being encouraged to do so. Peter and I now regularly hear campus staff commenting about Immanuel sessions they have provided for students. A particularly fun, very recent development (just heard this from Peter a few days ago) is that both campus staff *and students* are now asking if student leaders can be trained to facilitate IA sessions. (I am especially eager to see what happens as staff and student leaders start using the Immanuel Approach to help non-Christians experience the living, tangible presence of Jesus.)

- Furthermore, Peter is working to find more ways for people in the wider Immanuel Approach community to participate in Immanuel Approach efforts, especially providing support for InterVarsity chapters on campuses that are close to them).

And then there's the January 2024 staff conference in Orlando:

- This is the "2023-2024 is turning out to be bigger for InterVarsity and the Immanuel Approach than initially anticipated" part of the story. I sent out a note last spring saying that the spread of the Immanuel Approach throughout the IVCF network will become more and more self-sustaining, as I increasingly hand over training, supervision, etc. to Peter and other staff. (And this is already happening – yeah!) However, after the hugely, wonderfully positive experience with the Immanuel Approach at Urbana, the InterVarsity leadership team decided that they would like to offer Immanuel Approach ministry to the 1,000+ staff who will be attending their triannual staff conference in Orlando, January of 2024. (Most recent registration numbers put staff attendance at 1,080). And I have been asked to help with recruiting, preparing, and leading this Immanuel Approach ministry team.
- Note that IA ministry for the Orlando conference will be powerfully strategic. At present, 17 staff have been through an intro training package (just the initial steps to the point of connection with Jesus), 218 have been through the full basic training, probably more than 100 of these full-basic-training staff have had additional intermediate-advanced mentoring/coaching of some kind (hard to estimate, since we don't have careful tracking for informal mentoring outside of official mentoring groups), and between 300 and 500 have received at least one IA session (hard to estimate, since we don't have any way of tracking the many informal sessions that staff are providing for each other). This is wonderful, but *most* of the 1,764 InterVarsity staff in the US have still not been trained or experienced an IA session for themselves. We are hoping to be able to offer more than 700 ministry spots at Orlando. (Again, please pray that staff at the conference will take full advantage of this opportunity.) If 700+ staff have powerfully positive personal experiences, that will REALLY help IA continue to spread throughout the wider organization.
- Furthermore, Peter has just recently focused a new aspect of his dream/vision with respect to the Immanuel Approach and InterVarsity. He is hoping that he and the Spiritual Foundations team can help the culture and identity of the whole organization become more experiential and more relational, and that the Immanuel Approach can be at the center of this. I wholeheartedly, enthusiastically support this new hope, but at present he has only shared these new thoughts with a few others. Which means that there are about 1,750 staff who have not yet even heard about this new dream/vision (let alone embraced it). Hundreds of staff having powerfully positive personal experiences at Orlando will also REALLY help Peter in moving forward with this new initiative.
- I have already spent a lot of time recruiting. (In fact, most of my Immanuel Approach work for InterVarsity so far this year has been recruiting and prepping for the Orlando

staff conference.) The onsite team of 60+ is now in place (Yeah! A big thank you to all those who have volunteered), and we are working on getting the zoom team in place. Also, our current plan is to have beginner InterVarsity staff sit in with our onsite ministry teams, so that the hundreds of ministry sessions will simultaneously provide hundreds of mentoring/modeling sessions. (For a variety of reasons, we will be doing the mentor/model setup instead of our earlier plan of InterVarsity staff providing additional ministry stations.)

- During the conference, I will be in the prayer ministry room for all of the ministry time, to provide onsite consultation regarding any issues or questions that come up regarding Immanuel Approach ministry, and to lead the team of expert troubleshooters who will provide consultation to any facilitators needing help.
- Each afternoon after the ministry time has closed, I will be available to the prayer ministry teams and InterVarsity observers for debriefing. Note that this will also provide intermediate-advanced training for any InterVarsity staff on the team.

Finally, here's the update regarding the Immanuel Approach training fund:

- The good news is that contributions that have already come in have fully covered all my training time, consultation time, and training materials for 2020, 2021, 2022, and the first quarter of 2023. (Thank you!)
- However, as mentioned above, 2023-2024 is turning out to be much bigger than initially expected.
- The big challenge is that we need to raise almost \$20,000, in addition to what has already come in, in order to cover all of the IVCF Immanuel Approach adventures we have already accomplished in 2023, those that we have planned for the remainder of 2023, and the Orlando staff conference January 2024. (Considering everything we've already accomplished, and everything we're hoping to accomplish, I think this is a bargain!)

In addition to discerning regarding your own giving, please share this note with others who might be able to help with support. (For example, friends who support InterVarsity and are excited about the Immanuel Approach, and who've been saying things like, "My accountant has just advised me to make an additional charitable contribution for tax purposes. I just wish there was a way to make a contribution that would support both IVCF and the Immanuel Approach.")