

## Title: Urbana 2022 – Tremendous Success in Spite of Tremendous Opposition

January 2, 2023

Thank you for praying for our Urbana adventure!

We encountered a LOT of opposition. From the 175 InterVarsity staff and Immanuel community volunteers who had registered for Urbana, gone through back-ground checks (so they could work with students younger than 18), and committed to being on the team, almost 20 were unable to make it. Some were trapped in Buffalo, where all flights were cancelled and the state police announce that anyone trying to get on the interstate would be arrested. Some tested positive for COVID or encountered other major medical problems days before the conference. And others encountered huge personal/family crisis situations shortly before the conference.

One person, who gets the award for trying the hardest, stalled in the middle of the interstate for hours in 50-below-zero weather in Montana, and then spent a couple of days in South Dakota recovering from some kind of illness. Finally, after stopping three hours from Indianapolis for desperately needed sleep, he woke up at one o'clock in the afternoon on Saturday and realized he wouldn't be able to check out of the motel, get back on the road, find the conference center, check-in at Urbana, and take care of necessary admin issues for being on a team that works with students in time to actually provide any ministry. So after spending the whole week trying to get to the conference, and driving **fourteen hundred** miles, he had to turn around and start the long trip home.

On top of all of this, the person who is Peter Horton's boss, who has been intimately involved with the whole InterVarsity-Immanuel-Approach adventure, and who was planning to be present in the Immanuel-Approach ministry room as the senior representative for InterVarsity (Peter was also supervising six other prayer teams, so could only check in with us briefly and occasionally), had a serious medical issue immediately before Urbana that prevented her from even getting to the conference. And I struggled with persistent health problems, that caused me to lose three to five hours of work-time each day, for the six weeks immediately prior to Urbana.

Furthermore, the App that was supposed to provide a platform for students to plan and schedule prayer sessions crashed, forcing us to *totally* rearrange our logistics at the last moment.

**BUT IN SPITE OF ALL THIS RESISTANCE**, we were still able to provide tremendously successful Immanuel prayer ministry for the staff and students at Urbana. My estimate is that we provided close to **twelve hundred** Immanuel sessions, which included sessions with students, sessions with InterVarsity campus staff workers, sessions with InterVarsity staff from other teams at Urbana, sessions with staff from other ministries that were having conferences nearby, training/mentoring and practice sessions for the IV staff on our team during the orientation day immediately before the conference started, and sessions our team members provided for each

other when anyone got triggered during the ministry days. There were even a few sessions with “innocent bystanders,” like the session some of our IA volunteers had with a guy on the custodial staff for the convention center, and the session one of our volunteers had with a non-Christian who noticed her “Prayer Team” tag and just came up to her and asked for prayer.

Furthermore, an **amazingly** high percentage of recipients had good results. Some may find this hard to believe, but my careful estimate is that **ninety-nine percent** of those receiving ministry (including the innocent bystanders) were able to connect with the tangible, living, interactive presence of Jesus.

More details (including a detailed discussion of my estimate regarding percentage of good results), and lots of fun stories, to follow in future e-newsletters.

Again, **thank you, thank you, thank you** for your prayers.

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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