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February, 2002

Patience, please...

"Dear Lord, if you could just build community in Union's fellowship, fix the issues we have with connecting with You and each other, light a fire in the students to boldly witness to their peers, teach us how to reach the Jewish people and the Greek system on campus, help students to open up time in their schedules for You, for each other, and for their pre-Christian friends, and bring lots of people to know you this term, that would be really great. But while we're at it, can we talk about Skidmore too? God, if you would, please show students that you are the answer to all their struggles, and all their problems. Teach them that you desire a relationship, and a life commitment from them. Give them all a desire to settle into local churches. Help them to grow, to be more mature, both in

their relationship with you, and in life in general. Help them to be committed, Lord, to anything. Teach them the value of fellowship, and community, that they may desire to strengthen your body on campus. And may many Skidmore students come to know you this semester as well. In Jesus' name, Amen."

I confess to you that I often want to pray this way, to laundry-list my many struggles and frustrations with these campuses before my Lord. Not only that, but I would like Him to answer each of them, exactly as I request, and if He'd do it within the next week, that would be nice. You know, while He's at it, He could just convert everyone on both campuses, all at once.

I think that the theme of this semester (and perhaps my whole life!) is going to be patience. God knows what He's doing, and He knows exactly how long it's going to take. More pointedly, He knows me pretty well too, and He knows that if He were to answer all of my requests the way I ask them, all at the same

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Gal. 6:9

time, I wouldn't be able to handle it. And what would I learn in the process about patience, about faith, and about hope, if God did everything right away?

I heard a great quote at InterVarsity's National Staff Conference in the beginning of January:

"Hope is hearing the music of the future. Faith is the courage to dance to it in the present."*

Can I see the big picture that God has set before me? Do I have hope that He will reach these campuses, these students? Do I have the faith to act on that hope, rather than to give up and decide that God has excused Himself from the voids at Skidmore and Union?

The answer is, yes, I have hope. I can hear that sweet music of new life playing in the future. Sometimes it's booming, and sometimes it's pretty faint, but God, in His graciousness, always allows me to hear it. And I pray daily for the ability to dance in the present with faith that the music will play.

* quote by Peter Kusmic, via Lisa Espineli Chinn

A Student's Thoughts

It looks like God's been teaching my students the same lesson. Here's a thought from Jen, a faithful freshman at Union:



"This week I went to the girl's Bible study that IV has every Monday night and I was so blown away at the way God spoke to me. He had really been teaching me about waiting on Him and waiting for His timing and that night we did a study on waiting. The way we wait is a measure of the hope we have in Christ. God's presence in the people at IV is evident and I am so excited to see what He is going to do during the next four years!"

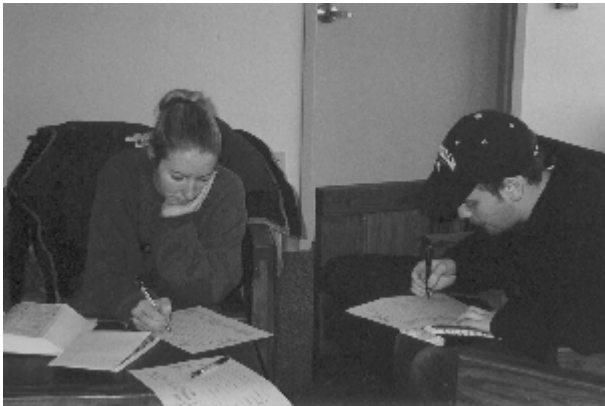


Thank You for Your Prayers!!

This ministry could not go on without the power of your prayers!

Requests for this month:

BCC – The entire fellowship at Union is going through the Becoming a Contagious Christian training during Friday night large group meetings. It will continue for most of the winter and spring. Pray this training will bear fruit in their relationships with their pre-Christian friends, and pray for good preparation and leadership as I teach it.



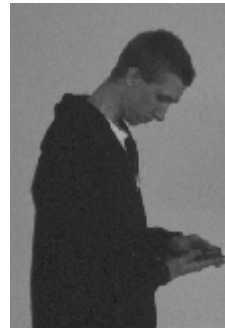
Union leaders hard at work at January's Leaders' Days retreat

Community and Commitment – Community and commitment are two things the Skidmore fellowship desperately needs in order to be an active presence for Christ on campus. Please pray for commitment to grow and friendships to flourish.

Funding – As of right now, this ministry is over 60% funded (in both given and intended support)! Please pray that God will continue to provide, and that I will reach my full budget of \$44,183 soon. The sooner I am fully funded, the sooner I will be on campus full-time.

I am greatly blessed to be serving in partnership with faithful servants such as you!
Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Serving Him,
Danielle



Dan, Skidmore's President, at Leaders' Days 2002

Care – Pray for the Skidmore leaders and me as we discern the best strategy for caring for the spiritual and emotional needs of the substantial group of freshmen the Lord has blessed us with this year.

Diverse Worship – Because the Union students represent so many cultures and church traditions, they've decided the best way to worship God together is to experience everyone's different styles of worship. Pray that it will be an exciting time of learning from each other, growing as a community, and really experiencing the fullness of what unity in Christ is all about.

Utmost 2002: Through His Eyes – At our springs retreat this year, we're going to be talking about how God sees the world, and what we have to do with it all. Pray that many would come and be challenged to go forth and make disciples of all nations.



"[The kingdom of God (at Skidmore and Union)] is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants..." Mark 31-32