



Fall 2023 Newsletter

Volume 02 | Issue 01 | Illini for Christ

Fall Semester Review

This fall, we could say, was full of ups-and-downs. It did not *quite* get off to the start that we had hoped for as Jon had pneumonia for two months and we have been experimenting with new roles and role revisions from last semester. This stalled some of the plans for the ministry, but we were still able to schedule fun activities, service projects, and introduced a new Wednesday evening class called *College Spirituality*.

Two new students joined us this fall, one undergraduate who is from Illinois and one graduate student who is from Singapore.

All things considered, it has been a good semester, and we are excited to share what happened with you!

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The Pavilion: Fall 2023

Leah Gateley, Parkland College Graduate

Starting at the beginning of the 2023 fall semester, Illini for Christ began collecting items for the Pavilion Behavioral Health System. Some of those items that the Pavilion needed included clothes such as t-shirts, sweaters, underwear, and pants as well as books for ages 5 and up. During the last Wednesday evening class of November, Illini for Christ sorted through all the donated items.

We are excited to announce that we received over double the amount of clothing items that were donated last year. We also collected over 40 children's and adult fiction books. We are grateful for everyone who contributed to our clothing/book drive for the Pavilion this fall semester.

*As an alum, what role
did Illini for Christ
play in your time at
UIUC, Parkland, or at
Philo Road church? Let
us know!*

A Ministry Team

This semester Illini for Christ began to develop a ministry team. This team is made up of current Philo Road Church of Christ members and college students. Ruthie Counter, author of *Upon the Face of the Waters* and staff member at Parkland College has served as our Adopt-a-Student Coordinator. Kingsley Boateng, ministry leader of Philo Road's Acts 2 Ministry and faculty at UIUC has served as International Student Coordinator. Leah Gateley, who is graduating from Parkland College this fall, has served as our Service Project Coordinator. Marie Shaffer, a senior at UIUC, has served as our Fun Activities Coordinator. We are thrilled to have willing and capable people to serve in these roles!

Caring for Kenya

Daniel E. Sani, UIUC Graduate Student

I joined the team to Kenya with modest expectations; however, upon arrival, I was deeply moved by the warm reception and the global spread of Christianity. My interactions with local high school students, where we discussed career choices and decision-making, unexpectedly positioned me as an inspirational figure they could look up to.

This experience, coupled with profound conversations with fellow volunteer Charles Chesschir on life, faith, economics, and politics, profoundly deepened my appreciation for God's sovereignty, offering me a new perspective on selfless service and its far-reaching impacts.



Campus for Christ: Lipscomb University

Jon Smith, IC Interim Campus Leader

Lipscomb University hosted the 2023 Campus for Christ Conference in Nashville. Emma and Jon attended to learn what other campus ministries across the country are doing to serve and serve with college students on their campuses. They connected with campus ministers at the University of Arizona, Washington University-St. Louis, Purdue University, the University of Delaware, and the University of Mississippi.



College Life

Marie Shaffer, UIUC, Senior

Illini for Christ had a lot of fun together this past semester! The first trip we went on was to Matthiessen State Park. The warm autumn provided perfect weather for trail hiking and canyon exploration. The muddy shoes were worth it for the beautiful sites! Before leaving for Fall Break everyone brought a dish to share at Friendsgiving. Costco rotisserie chicken filled in as the perfect last minute ‘turkey’ for the evening. We got to share stories, good food, and quality time with one another before all going home to our families. Afterwards we worked together to solve puzzles at Brainstorm Escapes. Everyone made it out of the escape room just before time ran out. These activities provided great opportunities to get to know the new students and also get to share some time with the friends that are soon to graduate!

Alumni Stories

We are looking for alumni stories! Illini for Christ and the Philo Road Church of Christ have had many undergraduate and graduate students through the years, and we want to hear from you!

If you have any interest in sharing memories from your time at UIUC or Parkland College OR if you would like to share how your faith was formed or aided by your time in Champaign-Urbana, we *really* want to hear from you.

Please contact Jon Smith at jonglen25@gmail.com or call the Philo Road Church of Christ at (217) 344-1659. Or feel free to message the Illini for Christ Facebook or Instagram accounts! May God bless you in your current and future endeavors – Jon.