

### Book it: December 27–31, 2008

With Urbana behind us, the decks are cleared for the next big thing — and I couldn't be more pleased: we're rolling full-speed-ahead on *Following Christ 2008*, our national conference for graduate students, faculty, and professionals. We've been looking forward to FCO8 since the day the last one ended, held in Atlanta back in 2002.

I'll be serving this time as the overall conference director (expanding my FCO2 role as program director). We're busy with a number of aspects:

- Along with two colleagues, I visited **three of Chicago's biggest hotels** last month to scout out the best location. (The pictures scattered about here are some of the many snaps I took as the hotels' staff showed off their facilities for us.) We're 99% sure we'll be in Chicago —

but how to choose among three great hotels? And what a big decision! Please join us in praying for wisdom selecting our site.

- We're putting together tiered teams of **leadership** to provide oversight and do the heavy lifting that's needed to be 100% ready to deliver a top-notch conference experience for our 1,500 delegates. Please pray that we'll get the right people in the right spots to help us shape the program.

- My colleague Katherine Miller, directing operations for FCO8, has been building our first-draft budget. Please pray that we'll be **good stewards** of the opportunity to host an event like this, as well as of the resources it takes to pull off.

I hope many of you will be there! Mark your calendars now: *Following Christ*, December 27–31, 2008.



### Tidbits

◆ Wow! The *Open for Business* conference at Urbana 06 went great! We've been praying and working since 2005 to put together "something the Lord could use" — and it seems he has. With 1,200 in attendance, we heard gifted speakers, enjoyed great worship together, and networked into the wee hours. You can listen to all the plenary sessions and seminars at [ofb.intervarsity.org](http://ofb.intervarsity.org), or download a colorful summary report at [ofb.intervarsity.org/images/ofb-report.pdf](http://ofb.intervarsity.org/images/ofb-report.pdf).

◆ One of my odd little responsibilities is Keeper of the Domains. (I wish I had a nameplate that said that.) We're up to 231 names as far as I can tell, everything from [aftervarsity.com](http://aftervarsity.com) to [whatisadisciple.org](http://whatisadisciple.org). Oh yeah, and of course [intervarsity.org](http://intervarsity.org)!

### Coming Up

◆ I'm working with GFM's Women in the Academy & Professions to plan and implement an email newsletter and website, called *The Well*. A national ministry connecting female grad students and faculty is groundbreaking — where both the opportunity and felt needs are great — so this is a particularly exciting project to be working on.

◆ We're making a concerted effort to find the very best speakers to address our complex audience at *Following Christ 2008*. I'll attend lecture series and conferences often, **keeping my ears open** for speakers who understand the university world, from accounting to zoology. What a privilege it is to seek out people who can speak from Scripture and a life lived in engagement with our culture. (Any suggestions? Please pass them along!)

### Site Seeing

So many cool ideas out there for web-based services these days:

- ◆ Do you wish you had a phone number for people to dial that would ring all your phones (say, home and mobile) at once? You can get one from **GrandCentral.com**. (Mine is 773 321 8161.)
- ◆ Do you wish you could participate in global business development? You can: become a microlender via **Kiva.org**, making loans as small as \$25 to individual businesspeople in the developing world.

### Boyd's Eye View

We got a delicious foretaste of coming spring here in Chicago this March, with several days in the high 70's. We can't wait! We haven't really had time to get cabin fever this winter, but we're definitely ready for spring. We most look forward to being able to expand our family life out into the backyard for playing, eating, and gathering friends. Maybe you'll be one of our guests in '07? We'd like that.

Our eleven-month-old is crawling like a streak, babbling all the time (she especially likes blowing raspberries back and forth with us), and making friends all around the neighborhood. I recently discovered how much friendlier and more accessible the staff were at Home Depot when I was accompanied by Lucy! She charms them all.

We simply love having Lucy in the house. Ann has been remarking recently how much she enjoys taking care of Lucy and being with her almost all her waking hours. We feel very fortunate that we're both able to work from home (Ann just part-time these days), so that we get a maximum dose of Lucy-fication every day.



Lucy and I standing tall against our beloved Chicago skyline.

### Prayer Requests

Please pray with me:

- ◆ For FCO8 site- and leadership-selection and budgeting
- ◆ For wisdom planning *The Well* newsletter and website
- ◆ For our finding the very best speakers to invite for FCO8 (and safe travel doing it)

### Facts

#### Jonathan Boyd

Associate Director  
Graduate & Faculty Ministries  
Web Producer  
Information Services  
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

5231 N Saint Louis Ave  
Chicago IL 60625-4705  
(773) 321-8161

[jboyd@octothorp.us](mailto:jboyd@octothorp.us) ≈  
[jboyd@intervarsity.org](http://jboyd@intervarsity.org)

*Off-Line* is sponsored by the  
Bully percent sign: **o!o**

*To make a tax-deductible contribution to support my ministry, make checks payable to InterVarsity and mail to PO Box 7895, Madison WI 53707. Please include a note saying "For Jon Boyd." You can also give securely online; for info, visit [JonBoyd.org](http://JonBoyd.org) and click on "Donate."*