

## People Meeting People

Here's proof, if we needed still more, that God has a big sense of humor: he has put a card-carrying introvert — that's me — in charge of this Following Christ 2008 (FCO8) conference we're hosting a year from now. If there ever was a "people job" (not to mention a "people event" and a "people mission"), this is it. The funny thing, despite my underlying misanthropic impulses, I totally dig this gig!

That's because, by God's grace, it's very easy for me to keep in mind that hosting a unique event like FCO8 fulfills a real need: the gathering of key people with key resources (learning, tactical skills, aesthetic genius) who hold strategic positions in the institutions that shape our culture. We want to spur on grad students and professionals to love God and others, encourage them in their often lonely and sometimes hostile environments, and to share techniques for tackling the biggest problems facing the world.



Some of the amazing leaders I get to work with.



Delegates on New Year's Eve at 2002's Following Christ conference, in Atlanta.

The truth is that smart, capable people often live harried, scattered lives that can keep them drained, discouraged, and dis-

tracted. It might seem as if people lucky enough to be grad students or professors might have everything going for them and everything to offer. And that's often true; but from whom much has been given, much is required. To help these people truly flourish and contribute to the flourishing of others — that's the mission of the Following Christ 2008 conference.

## Tidbits

- ◆ What does the world need? That's a big question with many answers — spiritual, economic, medical, educational, you name it. But I think it's safe to say that it needs **lots of faithful people**, some of whom have prodigious learning, some of whom have lots of money, or know how to pray without ceasing, some of whom can wrangle details, some of whom have eyes and ears for beauty, some of whom can rally people to action. That's pretty much the roster of folks I'm on the phone with these days, as we recruit the **nearly 200 people** who will speak, pray, provide funds, and organize for the FCO8 conference.
- ◆ An InterVarsity colleague recently commented about a project I had helped him with, "Thanks for giving me **what I needed and not what I asked for!**" I was delighted to hear that. Over the last few years of collaborative ministry (especially in my former role with InterVarsity's web team), I always hoped to tackle the real needs and bring understanding to them at the same time.

## Coming Up

- ◆ Next month, all InterVarsity staff will trek to St. Louis for our triennial **National Staff Conference**. With over 1,200 present, this will be a major event. We'll be screening a new promo video about FCO8. Please pray for safe travel, good health, and clear communication.
- ◆ In early February, we'll gather the leaders of the FCO8 discipline-oriented tracks (Arts, Business, Humanities, etc.) for a **Track Leadership Summit** here in Chicago. We'll dig in and consider the conference theme of human flourishing and do lots of planning, too. Please pray that these leaders (some still being recruited) would be able to attend, despite their busy calendars.

## Site Seeing

Gimme a W! Gimme *another* W! Gimme *yet another* W!

- ◆ Online lectionaries (for daily Bible readings) usually make you hunt for the date and click through. Here's a single URL that always shows the text of *today's* readings: [pcusa.org/cgi-bin/lectiond.cgi](http://pcusa.org/cgi-bin/lectiond.cgi).
- ◆ Pay for your electricity as Big Business does: at hourly rates set by the free market! If you're an Illinois ComEd customer, learn about the program and administer your account at [thewattspot.com](http://thewattspot.com).

## Boyd's Eye View

- ◆ Last month, we learned that our expected baby (due March 27, 2008) is another girl! We like girls, so it'll be just grand to have three of them in the house — though I must confess to feeling a little outnumbered. I think I can hold my own, though. (But of course we'll have to see about that.) In the meantime, Ann is doing great and really starting to "pop" with that baby getting bigger all the time. Go, Baby!
- ◆ Our local congregation, Grace Evangelical Covenant Church, is taking on the major transition from one long-term pastor (who moved on last year) to a new model of co-pastors. One of the new pastors, Amanda Olson, was called and has been serving with us for several months now. What a blessing she's already been to our congregation! We're waiting to learn the search committee's choice for the second, open position. We're so thankful for Grace and the spiritual community it offers us.

## Prayer Requests

Please pray with me:

- ◆ For the recruitment of FCO8 track leaders and their summit meeting, Jan. 31 to Feb. 2
- ◆ For \$5,000 in ministry donations to be received by Dec. 31
- ◆ For continued good health for Baby Girl (due March 27) as well as for Mama



Papa and Lucy yuk it up at bath time.

## Facts

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Off-Line is sponsored by the  
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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."