



“This is the best job at Urbana!” IV Staff member Marc Papai (3rd from left below) declared as he burst into the Exhibitors Prayer Room. The rest of us readily agreed. Our team in the photo below was charged with praying for the 1250 missionaries and other exhibitors at InterVarsity’s Urbana Missions Conference, December 27-31, in St. Louis, MO. We interceded, prayed with those who had special concerns, and walked the Exhibit Hall



constantly—praying for and with the exhibitors. Some of the answers to prayer were immediate and amazing—a lost passport found before we said “Amen,” missing exhibit materials arrived just in time, voices of speakers with laryngitis were restored before their presentations, initially shy exhibitors began enthusiastically interacting with students, security issues were resolved. We joined in praise with two exhibitors who led a student to the Lord. The surprised missionary exhibitors remarked, “I guess *this* is the mission field, too!”

For those of you who remember Urbana at the University of Illinois in Urbana, IL, with 8,000 students singing IV Hymns in 4-part harmony, accompanied by one person on a piano, led by a solitary song leader, and John Stott expositing in a suit and tie surrounded by other white male speakers in suits and ties—things have changed. If you want a taste of Urbana '09, you can hear and see most of the plenary program at <http://www.urbana09.org/program/overview.cfm>. Check it out. You are in for a treat! This was my best Urbana experience, ever.

Of the 17,000 participants, more than 7500 committed themselves to long term or short-term mission involvement. If you figure in that about 2,000 of those attending were already missionaries and InterVarsity staff, that’s about half of the participants! A total of 62 indicated first time decisions to follow Christ. Yes, even a missions conference is a mission field!

On New Years Eve we met as a team to bless and pray for each other. As I prayed for the staff on the prayer team who were facing



deficits (all of us), I asked God for “delightful surprises on our donor reports” when we returned home. Thanks to many of you, I found lots of delightful surprises. That helped to make a substantial dent in my deficit. Thank you for your generosity!



My final activities for NCF in the next five months include some writing assignments, developing Bible study and devotional materials for NCF Staff conference in March, sorting through 40 years of files and projects to archive them, mentoring and preparing others to take on my roles and assisting NCF's new Interim Director, Jane Hall, in our leadership transition. Jane (third from left in our Prayer Team photo) took on the Interim Director role on December 1—and still fulfilled her prayer team duties while taking on additional responsibilities for NCF's exhibit at Urbana. She is doing a great job. Please pray for her in this new role.

May the Lord richly bless you in the coming year!

Love in Christ,

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Upcoming events:

March 15-16—NCF Staff Leadership Team Meetings

March 16-19—NCF Staff Conference, Valley Forge, PA

April 12-15—IVCF National Spiritual Formation and Prayer Staff Meetings



*Engaging students and nurses with the Good News of Jesus Christ
to bring God's love and healing to nursing and healthcare*