

PRAISE & PRAYER



FLOURISHING ONLINE

FES Malaysia online Bible study group.

CORONAVIRUS AND IFES

Lockdown. An end to student ministry? It sounds like it should be - but the Lord is able to overcome challenges which seem unsurmountable to us. In his grace, many places are seeing the very opposite. We wanted to share stories of how IFES national movements, groups and regional teams are continuing to disciple, train, serve and share Christ, no matter the circumstances.

A CALL TO PRAYER - VIA ZOOM

Early in the outbreak, students in a sensitive country decided to hold a 24 hour prayer meeting online. 300 students called out to God in repentance and asked him to show them how to respond. Later, 350 students joined an IFES Europe video conference, praying that this crisis would bring revival. Movements in India, the USA and Benin, among others, organised significant prayer events too.

TECHNOLOGY TRAINING FROM THE USA

InterVarsity USA have long used video conferencing and other online apps



in their Study Abroad program supporting US students studying overseas. Based in France, coordinator Sarah Schilling has held training sessions for several hundred staff from across IFES Europe and also for InterVarsity Link colleagues supporting movements all over the world.

DEVOTIONS ON THE PHONE IN ESWATINI



Lockdown in eSwatini became an opportunity to dig into God's Word. ESWAFES General Secretary Mukululi Ncube, volunteers and partnering pastors wrote daily devotions shared via WhatsApp and Facebook.

LIVESTREAM EVANGELISM IN ISRAEL

Times of great change and fear open doors for the Gospel. FCSI Israel General Secretary Rasha Saba shared that they decided not just to



move Bible study and discipleship online, but to livestream a series of evangelistic talks in Arabic, English and Hebrew entitled 'Corona - a Christian look'.

HELPING WITH STUDIES IN COSTA RICA

Poor internet access is an issue for many students in Costa Rica, but Joel and Rachel Watters found that offering an English conversation group motivated students to find a way to get online.

GENEROSITY IN HONG KONG

FES Hong Kong student Harris shares: "Some campus groups have social care programs, which distribute facial masks to street cleaners and the elderly. In Hong Kong, the norm is to wear a mask if you go out, and those without are almost stigmatised. Prices of the masks have skyrocketed, and poor people could not afford it. They would often wear a single disposable mask for days to even a week."





Left: Small groups at online events (like this one at Passion For Evangelism) help participants engage more deeply.

Right: IFES Netherlands students in Delft ran this online outreach on 2 April. Similar events have been held in Ireland, Norway, the UK and Serbia. Two weeks after their first zoom outreach, the Delft students ran an online mission week 'Questions in Quarantine'. Students logged in not just in Delft, but across the Netherlands.

CORONA VIRUS AND IFES continued...

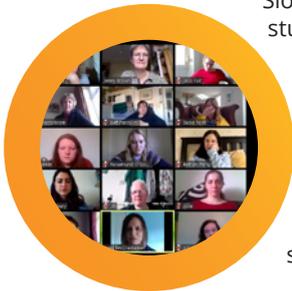
SHARING INFORMATION IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA



The IFES Francophone Africa team and GBUST Togo used their social media presence to spread messages promoting good hygiene and asking students not to pass on false information about the virus.

TRAINING EVANGELISTS IN EUROPE

Social distancing in the UK meant the cancellation of IFES Europe's 'Passion for Evangelism', a conference to train 100 women to share the gospel more effectively.



But organisers decided to go ahead online, meaning that 150 women were able to attend in countries across Europe, as well as Egypt and Brazil.

UNITING IN NEW ZEALAND

Where very small student groups would struggle to gather online, TSCF New Zealand have seen several fellowships, like those around the Bay of Plenty, meeting together to be a stronger encouragement and support to each other. Similar larger groups have been meeting in other places, including Slovenia where 40 students have been studying the Bible together.

SERVING IN KENYA

FOCUS Kenya staff have filmed videos for students. In one, Waruguru Maina shared practical ways students and graduates can serve their communities - like shopping for the elderly, looking after



key workers' children, being caring employers and advocating for policies which help poor and vulnerable people.

Sadly this flourishing is not happening everywhere. In countries with poor internet access, the closure of universities has meant the end of student ministry in groups. Staff and volunteers are doing what they can by phone, but it is very difficult. Planning for IFES regional ministry is hard too, as some countries may be relaxing restrictions as others tighten them.

Please keep the situation, as well as the initiatives above and others like them all over the world in your prayers. See the latest updates and stories, or make a gift to support student ministry at this challenging time at: ifesworld.org/coronavirus/

IFES PEOPLE: JOHN CRISWELL

IFES HEAD OF PEOPLE AND CULTURE



John grew up in the USA thinking he'd follow in his father's and grandfather's footsteps by becoming a pastor. "I felt a sense of calling to ministry in high school, but I didn't really know what that meant," says John. So after studying English and public communications at university, and attending seminary, he became a pastor - but increasingly felt a call to be more involved in missions.

John has since served for 20 years in IFES roles in Europe, Eurasia and North America. He has also been involved in organising major events including north American student missions conference Urbana and IFES quadrennial World Assembly. Most recently he has been a Regional Director for InterVarsity/USA.

John will begin his role as IFES Head of People & Culture in July 2020. He will lead the Human Resources team in supporting global staff, with a focus on learning and ongoing professional development. John writes:

"I'm very grateful to IFES for the invitation to serve the worldwide fellowship. It feels like a homecoming for me, which is a wonderful foundation to build on as we strengthen teams that build ministry. Please pray for clarity in this new role and wisdom to discern where to begin, that a spirit of freedom (to be who they are and fulfill the ministry God has given them) would be formed in the teams of IFES (Galatians 5:1) and finally that God would provide sufficient funding for my support."

CONTACT DETAILS

ifesworld.org

IFES International Services (UK)
5 Blue Boar Street
Oxford OX1 4EE
United Kingdom

+44 (0)1865 263 777

L'IFES est une organisation déclarée à Lausanne, Suisse. IFES is a registered charity in England and Wales (247919), and a limited company (876229).

