

STARTING AN ISM AT A LOCAL CHURCH

Setting the Stage for a Church-based ISM

- The full congregation needs to be exposed to the ISM vision
- Every church is unique and situated in a unique setting, and God will direct the birth of an ISM suited for the unique context of each local church
- Adoption, ownership, and support of the church leadership is indispensable for the birth and sustained development of any new ministry
- A visionary, catalytic leader with a committed, core leadership team of volunteers, exercising their gifts, is crucial
- It is important to discern the resources and giftings your volunteers have to match the needs of the students and the implementation of your services
- Collaborating with area ISMs and churches is a high value

The Impact of ISM on a Church and Its Members

- Increase in the congregation's ethnic diversity
- Volunteers experience being a cross-cultural ambassador
- Church members from children to retirees utilize their varied gifts for service
- Some may eventually become full-time missionaries
- Practical discipleship and leadership development in process
- Connections for missionaries or church members planning to go to the home country of students
- ISM is high yield with low or no budgetary cost
- Shared journeys of faith

Volunteers

- Training can be done on a Saturday morning, through mailings, through EI courses
- Learn through experiential immersion in serving and relating cross-culturally
- Monthly planning and prayer meetings

Ideas for a Large Metro Church (Truro Anglican Church)

- Monthly Potluck & Program: games and socializing before dinner, then a small-groups interactive time with guided questions and a facilitator, and then the main presentation of the evening
- Special events and opportunities: Day trips around the area, sightseeing, free, used-but-clean winter clothing, free items for the apartment, driving lessons, conferences, and beach trips
- English conversation partners for ESL students
- International worship services and Bible studies
- Recruit students through the University International Student Services Office (ISSO) or through partnering with existing ISMs

Ideas for a Small Rural Church to Host a Weekend in the Country (St. Matthews Parish Church)

- Collaborate with an existing ISM
 - Enjoy nature: kayaking, canoeing, fishing, a walk through the woods, seeing gardens, an airplane ride using a grassy airstrip, and all-terrain vehicle rides
 - Lecture on cross-cultural transitions/culture-shock in the Fall and Reentry Preparation in the Spring
 - Students stay with host families, these relationships can continue beyond the weekend
 - Attend Sunday morning service (use simplified format and explain service)
 - After service hold a luncheon with a time of debriefing and sharing by both students and hosts
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