

History and current mode-of-operation of the local ISI-ministry, working in connection with the First Evangelical Free Church of Ames

History of the ISI-ministry

After some years of pioneering by several couples, a female church member (Geraldine Nelson, 1977-1991, ISI) took the lead in English classes and hosted internationals in her home as an adult fellowship. She got help from a couple (Jeff & Melissa Gale, 1981-1995, ISI, in 1999 they became missionaries in China) and Bonnie Johnson (1983-1994, ISI). Then also John & Win Stanford (1981-2008) joined the international gatherings in the home of Geraldine and later host homes. Rachel Martin (1996-2004, Reach Global & ISI) took the lead of the team. Randy Hansen joined the local ministry as ISI-missionary in 1998. His appointment is 50%. In 2002 Ed & Margreet van Ouwerkerk (just arrived from The Netherlands) joined the team and they became ISI-volunteers/representatives, since they do not need financial support (Ed has a research position at ISU). Their acceptance as IS-representatives occurred in 2007. Gary & Marilyn Reedy (Reach Global) joined the team in 2007. Their appointment is 50% for international ministry. The gatherings have always been on Sundays in homes until 2006, when the group became too large. The Sunday International Fellowship was held in "Blinks" downtown Ames from 2006 to 2009. Since September 2009 the Sunday International Fellowship gathers in The Plex. Since 2005 a second type of gathering started, the so-called Asian Fellowship, held in the home of Ed & Margreet van Ouwerkerk. Since 2008 Don & Sally Taylor (Grand Avenue Baptist Church) and since 2009 Jay & Flor Fabiosa (Philippines, not-church affiliated) joined the Asian Fellowship team with Randy Hansen and Ed & Margreet van Ouwerkerk. For the social activities the two teams (SIF and AF, see below) closely work together with other ministers in our church and in other churches, since a couple of years: G.P. & Nancy Foote (Bridges International), Dave & Karen Eggert (Bridges International), Al & Elaine Cox (Navigators), and Bessie Fick (Memorial Lutheran Church).

Current mode-of-operation

We operate with two teams:

1. Sunday International Fellowship. Team members: Randy Hansen, Gary & Marilyn Reedy, Ed & Margreet van Ouwerkerk. We meet for scheduling and prayer bi-weekly on Thursday evenings. On Sundays in The Plex we sing and have social contact. Thereafter we split into two study groups: Beginners and advanced. There is childcare. Average attendance: 25 students.
2. Asian Fellowship. Team members: Randy Hansen, Don & Sally Taylor, Ed & Margreet van Ouwerkerk, Jay & Flor Fabiosa, and Elbert Jeyapaul (student, India). We come together in the van Ouwerkerk-home, have an Asian meal, sing, and split into three study groups: beginners, advanced, and discipling. Average attendance: 25 students. We meet for scheduling and prayer bi-weekly on Thursday evenings.

Other team activities:

- ❖ Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas and New Year's Eve parties, semester Start Events, and Easter Brunch
- ❖ Touristic trips: annual 4-day trip to Chicago in spring break, day-trip to Tulip Festival in Pella, day-trip to Des Moines or Minneapolis. Strawberry picking (June), Farm Harvest event (fall).
- ❖ Support of ISU Host Family Program (Friendships International, with G.P. Foote)

Other personal activities:

- ❖ Personal Bible Studies with students, marriage counseling/mentoring (most of us)
- ❖ Cooperation in the FISH-team for dinners in Memorial Lutheran Church (Ed & Margreet)
- ❖ Cooperation with inter-church prayer group on campus (Gary, Marilyn, Ed)
- ❖ Cooperation with G.P. and Nancy Foote in Coffee, Tea & English (Gary & Marilyn)
- ❖ Contribution to E-Free English classes (Marilyn)
- ❖ Hosting an inter-church website <http://ames-international.org> (Ed)
- ❖ Game-evenings (Gary & Marilyn)
- ❖ Movie evenings (Ed & Margreet)

Ed van Ouwerkerk, Ames, January 16, 2010