

1-2013

Andrews Students GROW

Ashley Meyer
Andrews University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Meyer, Ashley, "Andrews Students GROW" (2013). *Lake Union Herald*. 162.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/162>

This Student Stories is brought to you for free and open access by the Lake Union Herald at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lake Union Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.



SHARING *our* HOPE

Andrews Students GROW

BY ASHLEY MEYER

While working to attain their diploma, some college students may believe there is little time left over for additional faith development outside of Sabbath hours. For two students at Andrews University, however, it is those faith development experiences that are the most important. The student coordinators of GROW group ministries at Andrews are Vimbo Zvandasara Zhou and Claypole “C.J.” Cousins. Under the guidance of Esther R. Knott, pastor for discipleship at Pioneer Memorial Church (PMC), Vimbo and C.J. organize and plan training meetings for the GROW group leaders in addition to leading their own small groups; Vimbo focuses on promoting the ministry in the undergraduate community while C.J. works with the graduate students.

GROW groups are small group Bible studies organized by PMC. GROW is just one aspect of PMC’s mission to “Connect, Grow, Serve, Go” by spiritually strengthening and equipping members for ministry in their community and the larger world mission field. Twenty-five of the 40-plus small groups are student-led. Multiple small groups are held every weekday, so students and community members can choose the time, day and topic that appeals most to them. The groups range in size from three or four members to nearly 20.

Since Vimbo and C.J. began organizing the small groups in 2011, participation has more than doubled. Although they have utilized advertising resources, including emails, posters, newsletters, bulletins and campus televisions, they believe the best way to reach people is through one-on-one interaction. “The main and best way is through word of mouth,” C.J. says. “Our leaders and members are encouraged to develop relationships with others and invite them to their group.”

Although student membership is important, Vimbo believes a small group ministry should aim to increase the number of trained and dedicated leaders from which increased membership should naturally follow. She and C.J. teach their



GROW groups are small group Bible studies organized by Pioneer Memorial Church. These groups help both members and leaders reconnect with their community and grow together spiritually. Pictured are some of the 46 GROW group leaders.

GROW group leaders to lead discussions, engage in daily prayer for their group members, and maintain their own devotional life during the week. To them, the importance of this work cannot be measured. “I think it’s important for students to have a setting where they can openly ask questions they have about God, the Bible, and how to practically live

out their Christianity,” Vimbo says. “Small groups provide a community of fellow believers that can grow together.”

For C.J. and Vimbo, this sense of community is particularly vital. “It is so easy to get lost in the crowd on such a large university campus,” C.J. explains. “Oftentimes, a student longs for a smaller community setting where they can have support, ask questions, grow spiritually and make new friends. GROW groups do this for our students.”

As the name implies, the main theme is growth. “I have a passion for reaching young people like myself with the Word of God, because I have seen how it has transformed my own life,” says Vimbo. GROW groups help both members and leaders to take an hour out of their busy week to reconnect with their community and grow together spiritually.

Ashley Meyer is a student newswriter in the Division of Integrated Marketing & Communication at Andrews University.