

Happy Monday!

It's been a few months since our last newsletter, so in this mailing I want to share a *quick financial update* as we start the second quarter of 2024, *highlight a particularly encouraging conversation* I had with a student, and finally *share a few quotes from our RUF interns*.

So, scroll down at your leisure!

And thank you for being on our team!

FINANCIAL UPDATE



Through your support, God has faithfully provided for our needs. Thank you.

As we start this new budget year, I am grateful to say “I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied” (Philippians 4:18).

A special “thank you” to everyone who gave at the end of the year.

I was overwhelmed by our partners’ generosity toward our family. Your Christmas cards and kind notes are a real encouragement to Shaunna, the kids, and me.

In 2024, we are expanding our staff team with a new full-time Campus Staff to fill Shaunna’s old position (more info on this coming soon!) and growing our outreach to students at UNCW. This means more meetings with students, more mouths to feed at ministry team dinners and retreats, more Bibles and small group materials, and more need for conference scholarships.

As a result, I’m looking to raise \$200,000 by December 31, 2024 (a \$20,000 increase from last year).

Many of you already give monthly and quarterly [recurring gifts](#), and that really helps us as we plan our expenses for the year. Thank you! Because of your help, we can already expect around \$130,000 to come in throughout the year. This is a tremendous head start, as we expect to have many more friends join our team throughout the year!

If you have any friends or contacts that you think might be interested in supporting our work at UNCW, would you be willing to [connect us?](#)

I will be traveling some during the summer seeking to raise support with churches and individuals, and I am looking forward to see what God brings.



STANDING OUT AT UNCW



On the UNCW campus, RUF students are conspicuous.

When I was watching a UNCW basketball game at home with the kids, Gus and Hattie could pick them out on the TV broadcast. "There's Evan! There's Caden! There's Winnie and Jane!" Sometimes you can pick them out because of their RUF t-shirts (made possible by donors like you!).

Often, they're conspicuous in different ways.

They're the ones laughing the loudest at a table the student union. They're the ones gathering at dusk to play capture the flag outside the freshman dorms. They're also the ones leading campus tours, volunteering at the tutoring center, and showing up with a car full of dorm-mates to church on Sunday morning.

This semester our staff has been praying, and teaching, and hoping that our students would continue to stick out.

But we want them to be noticeable, not just for their school spirit, or their enthusiasm, or even their scholarship. Our deepest desire is that they would be *conspicuous in their character*.

I was sitting across from one of our senior students, a few weeks back. We were talking about his prayer life, our small group, and his efforts at reaching out to younger students. We talked about what God is teaching him through successes and also some very recent failures.

The failures, in particular, were starting to reveal some cracks in his character (failures can be instructive in that way!). He was starting to recognize places where his practice of faith doesn't quite line up with his profession of faith. But whereas in the past, he would've just shrugged off the sense of conviction, now he was taking time to grieve. And repent. And ask for help.

At one point, he looked up at me and said, "I just want to be the kind of Christian where people know I'm a Christian from my actions, not just because I tell them I go to church."

In other words, he wanted to be "conspicuously Christlike."

What a great desire.

In that one sentence, he summed up everything I (and many others) had been praying for him since I met him. RUF has surrounded this student with a whole community, asking God together to grow him into someone who doesn't just "love in word or talk but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). And now, through prayer and

providence, Jesus had brought him to the end of himself. God had graciously allowed him to fail. But he failed in public, in community with others, and he experienced the grace of repentance and reconciliation. And now, with God's help, he's discovering that strong faith usually feels like dependent weakness.

I long to see God grow a whole generation of men and women like this student—conspicuous in their zeal for Jesus. But also conspicuous in their repentance, and in their openness to admit when they've screwed up. Remarkable for their softness and gentleness, their patience and endurance. Noticeable in their quickness to say "I'm sorry," their readiness to ask for help, and offer help to others.

Can you imagine how just a handful those kinds of people might change a church community, or a school board, a workplace, or a neighborhood? You're helping make it a reality. God is growing these people at UNCW! They're here, slowly learning the way of Jesus, stumbling toward maturity.

Friends, we have so much to celebrate.

The need is great— there is plenty of work still to be done. There are more students to reach. But God is on the move and at work on the college campus!