



Resurrection ... and LIFE!



It's not hard to imagine that a congregation named Resurrection House Baptist Church takes the gospel message seriously. So, when Cru[®] Inner City offered the congregation an opportunity for evangelism training as part of an upcoming Easter Bag outreach, church leaders not only jumped at the chance — they took it a step further.

Once their training was completed, they turned their sights on the congregation's teenagers, encouraging the young people to exercise their

evangelism muscles. As a result, the teens presented the gospel to 50 children who attended the church's Easter Bag outreach!

They used colorful Good News bead bracelets to share God's love, where each bead represents one element of the gospel story. The children were also given crayons, a toy, a treat of candy or fruit, and a *Meet the King* booklet — all carefully tucked inside special Easter Bags.

Through the Resurrection House event, nine

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children and five adults all decided to trust Christ for salvation, with one family already joining the church. Five other families expressed an interest

in attending the weekly services.

One of the new families — a husband, wife, daughter, and grandchild — were especially moved by the outreach, with the wife and granddaughter accepting

Christ after listening to one of the teenagers share the gospel using the beads! The granddaughter was so excited that she declared she wanted to share the Good News during the church's next outreach.



The teens presented the gospel to 50 children who attended the church's Easter Bag outreach!

“We are home!” the father declared at the end of the event.

Thanks to dedicated friends like you, similar stories are being repeated across the country as partner ministries share the love of Jesus through Compassionate Products™ you provide.

We're so grateful for your partnership. Thank you for your compassionate support of Cru serving the inner city!

Emi's Epiphany!

“I was missing an essential element of my faith.”

Emi was in the middle of a 13-week discipleship class when she had an epiphany. Despite her committed walk with Jesus, there was no intentionality when it came to discipleship.

“There's Scripture about keeping the Sabbath holy, and I feel like that applies to me ... and loving your neighbor, I feel like that applies to me, too,” she said. “But it seemed like I kind of ‘skipped over’ the Scripture on discipling others — really building community with other Christians —and never took that command personally to heart before this discipleship training.”

But as the Cru® Inner City discipleship course unfolded at a church in Chicago, Emi realized she was missing an essential element of her faith.

After completing the course, Emi has a new perspective on the importance discipleship plays in spiritual formation and accountability. Every minute

of the experience, including homework and the one-to-two-hour post-work commute, was worth it.

“I know Scripture says go into the world and make disciples of other people,” she said. “I have never seen that as a command on my life. I know it's something that the Lord says we should do. But until now, I had never seen it as something that I have to do.”

Since completing the course, Emi is now investing in one-on-one discipleship training with a teen at her church while they work to expand youth ministry.

What a beautiful testament to your faithful support. Your generosity is meeting physical and spiritual needs ... and linking people to ongoing discipleship and ministry.





“The seeds you sow will one day reap a harvest!” — Cynthia Massie

It was a quiet afternoon at the Agape Center in inner-city Chicago when the phone broke through the silence.

“I don’t know how to ask this...” the voice on the other end told Cynthia, one of our staff leaders.

The caller identified himself as Ramone. He went on to say he was a student at the center 27 years ago and now lived out of state. He was recently diagnosed with depression and anxiety, but the medication he was given just wasn’t working.

Feeling hopeless, he began to practice what he learned at the center all those years ago: *Prayer*. And it worked. Soon, Ramone was feeling better, so he asked God to remind him of past moments when he didn’t need drugs or “other forms of pleasure” to feel good.

“Memories of the Agape Center rushed to my mind,” Ramone said. “It was a time when I felt safe and good and pure.”

Ramone wanted to know who might still be at the center, which operates a S.A.Y. Yes!® after-school program. Before calling, he visited the center’s website and recognized several faces. *Were there others?*

“I saw Mr. Massie and Mr. Marc on the website



Our awesome S.A.Y. Yes! Centers for Youth Development® are located in areas of need in America’s inner cities ... offering after-school programs that mentor at-risk children. With tutoring, homework help, healthy snacks, athletics, arts and crafts, Bible studies, and so much more, we’re reaching children with the life-changing love of Christ — sowing seeds of faith that will one day reap a harvest!

and all the programs there,” he said. “Y’all are doing the same things for kids that you did for me and my friends. You were like family to us.”

The divine timing of the call — a needed reminder of the impact of the discipleship programs within the Agape Center’s four walls — was not lost on Cynthia or the center’s staff members.

“Ramone’s call was a testimony of many years of sowing,” Cynthia said. “We were beautifully reminded that the seeds we’re sowing now will one day reap a harvest!”

God is reaching children ... and adults! ... with His love through our 56 S.A.Y. Yes! Centers for Youth Development® across America. Thank you for making it possible — you are making a difference in so many lives.

Off the Sidelines ... Playing for Christ!



Like most teen athletes, Tyler prefers his football action on the gridiron, not the sidelines. Thanks to his attendance at a faith-based sports camp, his commitment to Jesus has also shifted from spectator to active player.

“He’s on the field and playing in the game,” said Jaye Hill, who coordinates JAM Camp™, a joint venture between Cru® Inner City and its sister ministry Athletes in Action®. “He’s serving the Father and serving others.”

Held each summer at the AIA® headquarters in Xenia, Ohio, the camp is designed to provide sports clinics in football, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. JAM — an acronym for Jesus, Athletics, and Manhood — also builds its program around the gospel, instilling leadership and discipleship into the teen participants. Tyler and a group of other teens from Detroit traveled to Ohio to participate in JAM.

When Tyler first arrived at camp, he had a minimal understanding of Jesus, but his leadership skills stood out. As the week went on, the 17-year-old began getting up early every morning to join one of the adult mentors in prayer, walking the grounds and preparing the day’s lessons.

As in any sports regimen, practice boosts player skills, and Tyler has demonstrated similar improvement in his spiritual walk, thanks to the continued influence of the camp’s mentors and twice-monthly Bible studies launched at the end of camp.

“He’s more attentive to his personal relationship with the Father, and he’s holding his fellow brothers in Christ accountable to their faith, challenging them with God’s Word,” Hill said. “I totally believe that he’s been transformed through the camp and the Bible studies. He’s a great kid, doing his best to follow Christ.”

Thank you for making life transformation possible through your great support!

Thanks to friends like you who make JAM Camp possible, Tyler’s commitment to Jesus has shifted from spectator to active player.



A Lesson on Leadership



Milton Massie
Executive Director/
Steward

Samuel was just a boy when he was commissioned into service for the elderly priest, Eli. As his master rested, so did Samuel — until he heard a voice speaking to him. Samuel went to the priest, asking what he said. But the voice wasn't Eli. The third chapter of 1 Samuel records two more instances where Samuel hears the voice.

It is Eli who realizes God is talking to Samuel, but Samuel doesn't recognize His voice.

“Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears,’” Eli tells Samuel (1 Samuel 3:9 ESV).

This Old Testament passage speaks volumes in today's celebrity-driven culture, a fad that, unfortunately, has seeped into the church.

My heart is vexed by how the Western church perceives leadership. Leadership has also become celebrity-driven.

Leadership is viewed as some height to attain. Once we attain it, we convince ourselves that we've reached the pinnacle of all that God wants us to become. It's an idolatrous pursuit.

We know this because neither God nor Jesus ever referred to people as leaders. In the passage involving Samuel, notice what he doesn't say: “Speak, Lord, your future leader is listening” or “Speak, Lord, your future globally known speaker is listening.” He uses the word “servant,” which is how Jesus describes Himself in Luke 22:24-27.

In this synoptic account of the disciples arguing over who would be greatest in the kingdom, Jesus not only told the disciples that He wouldn't tolerate

an attitude of superiority among them, but He also postured Himself among them as one who serves.

This is consistent in all of Jesus' teachings on servant leadership. In the case of Matthew 11:29, He describes himself as one who is meek and lowly in heart.

If the God of the universe describes Himself and His Son as servants, why do we have such a problem embracing this description for ourselves? Could it be because of our tendency to clamor in our flesh? We clamor for recognition and titles as if our significance is connected to it.

If we truly believe what God says about us is more important than what others say about us, I would argue that God's go-to description of us is “servant” versus “leader.”

I believe this is a more fitting posture for Christ-followers who have leadership assignments.

In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul writes, “This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (ESV).

As stewards, we may bear the responsibility of leadership, but we are not owners. We live in a culture that praises ownership, but Scripture tells us God is the sole — and soul — proprietor. That means leading Cru® Inner City is my assignment until the next person is appointed to steward it.

In the meantime, may we keep our focus heavenward.

Grateful for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milton Lee Massie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Milton Massie
Executive Director/Steward

P.S. Want to dive deeper? Read Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45, Luke 22:27, and John 13:15.





The Ultimate Back-to-School Party! PowerPacks® ... and JESUS



The little boy and his mom entered the church and sat in a quiet corner. Bryce clutched his brand-new PowerPack® tightly

... beaming at the colorful backpack filled with school supplies provided to Word Becoming Flesh Church by Cru® Inner City.

Cynthia Hollis, a volunteer at the Back-to-School event, noticed the little fellow and his mom. Bryce, who is autistic and non-verbal, needed a break from the noise and crowds of children having fun outside the church.

Cynthia used the quiet time to interact with the pair and began reading them a booklet about the

gospel message. Bryce was enthralled. His face said it all: He loved the story of Jesus!

Struggling to speak and mustering everything he had to say, “JESUS,” the boy pointed at his heart. *Both mom and son prayed to accept Christ.*

Struggling to speak and mustering everything he had to say, “JESUS,” the boy pointed at his heart. *Both mom and son prayed to accept Christ.*

Later, as Bryce roamed the church grounds, his face glowed as he carried a certificate commemorating his life-transforming decision ... and it all began with the gift of a PowerPack.

Today, you can offer PowerPacks® — and life-transformation — to children and families of the inner city. *How many can you help us give this year?* Please be as generous as possible!



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