



## A Simple Gift Brings Hope

**Oftentimes when a nation suffers turmoil, individuals and families are forced to leave their homes.** Many move to the United States in hopes of safety and a brighter future. Both Minneapolis and St. Paul have large immigrant and refugee populations and continue to welcome more families from around the world. International Christian Fellowship (ICF)—one of our ministry partners—reaches out to their community and specifically to refugees in their area. Cru is able to provide them with Compassionate Products™ such as PowerPacks™. These products offer partners like ICF a chance to meet newcomers, to learn more about their needs and to share the gospel.

This summer Pastor Justin and others from ICF planned a neighborhood picnic to meet new families and offer the PowerPacks. They spread the word, inviting people throughout the neighborhood to the picnic. Some families had just arrived in Minnesota that very week from Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda.

One parent was amazed at the gift of the PowerPacks, which contain all the school supplies her children would need to begin the school year as

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## A Simple Gift Brings Hope *Continued from front*

well as gospel material. She explained how different this was from her experience in her home country, “I was buying one book in Africa

and cutting the pages up to give some to each of my children.” As a refugee, she also had to divide one pencil between her children, breaking it into pieces, one little piece for each of them. But now, because of the PowerPacks, they each had their own box of pencils—and colored ones, too! “Thank Jesus for the good, caring people!”

“I was buying one book in Africa and cutting the pages up to give some to each of my children”

Seeing the love of God demonstrated this way, some of the families have joined ICF where they can be rooted and grounded in their faith.

We are always blessed to hear of the ways God uses these products and works through our partners to draw people to Himself! We are grateful for your partnership that makes these gospel connections possible!

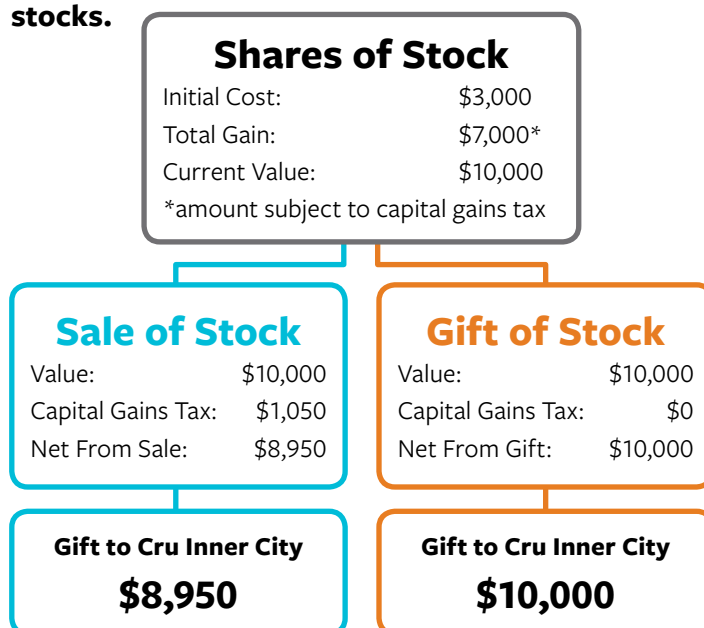
## Before This Year Comes to an End ... *Bring Hope!*

**Your tax-wise gift before the end of the year can create tax advantages for you** while making an incredible impact in America’s inner cities—meeting the needs of the poor in Jesus’ name.

Please consider these wise stewardship options for year-end giving:

- Gifts dated and postmarked by December 31 generate a tax deduction.
- Congress has passed permanent legislation allowing individuals age 70-1/2 or older to rollover a donation of up to \$100,000 from your IRA with no tax penalties and without adding a penny to your taxable income. Plus, it counts toward your required minimum distributions.
- The chart at right shows how donating appreciated assets can save you money on taxes and free up more funding for ministry.

**A gift of appreciated stocks compared to a gift of cash generated from the sale of appreciated stocks.**



*In this scenario, \$1,050 in capital gains tax on the appreciated value is avoided by donating the stock directly to Cru.*



# Thinking Inside the Box

“It’s just a godsend, how many lives you’ve touched—you’ve touched mine! It’s wonderful!”



## **A Thanksgiving meal can go a long way.**

Truly the simple, understated gift of a box of food can leave a legacy, and it certainly has.

This is the 30th year that the inner city ministry of Cru® has partnered with urban churches to reach out with Boxes of Love® in their communities! Countless seeds have been planted and thousands of lives have been touched over the years. Sometimes, meeting this practical need is the first step in changing the direction of someone’s life ...

About five years ago, Wanda’s father passed away in the spring. She’d been very close to him and in her grief, felt despair. Since she was a little girl, she’d thought when her daddy went, she’d stop breathing, too. Now, feeling empty and lost, she gave up—on life, church, and God. She stayed home and stopped eating. “I was waiting on my turn to die,” she said.

That was until one day, there was a knock on Wanda’s door. At the time, she had some family members living with her, so one of them answered the door, knowing Wanda wouldn’t want to see anyone. When Wanda finally and reluctantly came to the door, she saw two men from a local church. With

cheerful faces and a cardboard box in their hands, they explained that her former pastor sent them to give her a Box of Love. Initially, Wanda was stand-offish with the guests, but their love and care for her was powerful. When they explained what the gift was, she began to cry. The two men asked her what had been going on, and they listened as she poured out her heart. Something changed in Wanda that day. The caring presence of the men from her church reminded her of the story of the shepherd searching for that one lost sheep.

Not long after, Wanda was back at church. She decided she wanted to fill the hole in her life left by the absence of her father, so she stepped out in faith and began to lead the youth choir. It didn’t stop there! She later joined the adult choir and became the lead singer there as well! Over the years, she has served and led in many capacities in her church, including working with Cru! To this day, she still loves participating in the Cru Box of Love outreach. She says “It’s just a godsend, how many lives you’ve touched—you’ve touched mine! It’s wonderful!”



## Building Up and Sending Out

**At the inner city ministry of Cru, we serve and mobilize the church to live out God's heart for the poor,** so all can grow in Christ to build spiritual movements everywhere. This summer's Creating Options Together™ Conference, hosted in the Twin Cities, was meant to do just that. The conference slate consisted of speakers ranging from renowned published professors to up-and-coming bloggers, spoken word artists, painters, and an energetic band who led worship. Ministry partners came from all across the country. This included long-time associates and new partners having their first encounter with our ministry!

Our team worked hard to plan an event that would not only encourage those who are doing the work of the gospel in urban environments, but also challenge all attendees to approach discipleship in new ways. The powerful gamut of speakers

“It was so helpful to my own growth and those I attended with”

succeeded in doing just that. Each one contributed to a foundation for understanding the spiritual climate in our nation and offered fresh biblical approaches to discipleship in this context. The messages were followed by round-table discussions to allow for conversation around the impact the talks were having in people's hearts.

Partners were thankful for the opportunity. They quickly and continuously expressed feeling encouraged by the helpful content and the practical tools they received. One partner said, “It was incredible. It was so helpful to my own growth and those I attended with.” We look forward to seeing what new partnerships, opportunities, and even ministries are born of the inspiration found at the Creating Options Together 2016 Conference. Thank you for helping make this event happen through your support, your giving, and your prayers.



# A Personal Word



Milton Massie  
Co-National Director

This past August, Cru, working in the inner city, hosted its second Creating Options Together™ Conference. Our staff did a fantastic job, smoothly running the conference down to the smallest detail.

Their tireless service was like the example that Jesus set for us as His followers. Mark 10:45 says, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” John 13 illustrates this as Jesus washes the disciples’ feet. In both of these passages Jesus demonstrates the kind of life His followers are to imitate.

First, as His followers our purpose is His purpose. As He selflessly served rather than selfishly expected to be served, so are we to give our lives to this purpose. This way of life is entirely different than the world’s way, which often seems full of self-serving agendas.

What I saw of the staff as they served our partners was the beauty of the body of Christ loving our friends and fellow sojourners in the faith! It was a tangible picture of what is called for in Ephesians, “to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.”

Second, it was a demonstration of real love. The last phrase of John 13:1 sums this up, “Jesus loved them (the disciples) to the end.” The selfless demonstration of service to our partners was a manifestation of the “real love” of the Savior for us! This selfless service was a tool that God used to bring about the supernatural impact of the conference. God honors humility and obedience. It was a joy for all of us at Cru Inner City to serve our partners and friends!

With gratitude,

*Milton Lee Massie*

Milton Massie  
Co-National Director



# God Has Not Forgotten Me!

**When Lee, delivering a Box of Love, knocked on Sandra's door and a small child answered, he was shocked by what he saw inside:** an apartment almost devoid of furniture, but jammed with people—several families were living there.

Sandra, an unemployed mother of three, was on the couch—disheveled, incoherent, maybe high on some drug. But in spite of her condition, they talked with Sandra about God's love and prayed for her and her family.

Wracked by substance abuse, deep in despair, her spirit cried out to God

The next day, Lee and his team returned to check in, and they were shocked again.

The apartment had been cleaned. Sandra, answering the door, was alert and articulate. The day before, she told them, had been a turning point for her. As she lay on that couch, wracked by substance abuse, deep in despair, her spirit cried out to God. But she feared her behavior was unforgivable.

At that moment came a knock at the door. "Now I see God has not forgotten me!" she exclaimed.

Sandra and her boys became involved in Lee's church, and she is now employed. "That Box of Love was more than a box of food," Sandra said. "It was a box of hope... of joy!"

This is the gift of love I invite you to give today to families across America. And right now, every \$41.40 contribution by Thanksgiving provides not one but TWO Boxes of Love, each with holiday food for a family of six, thanks to our \$75,000 Matching Challenge. Please be generous today. Thank you!



Please help us meet the needs of more than 159,000 people in the inner city this year.



Your Gift



Matching Funds



Twice the Impact



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Occasionally the names of people featured in this report are changed to protect their privacy.

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