



Everything Changed



At 17, Beatrice felt unattractive and insecure. She mostly kept to herself.

She lived in the neighborhood near a partner church of Cru®. So, when people from the congregation came by her house to invite her to the church's Youth and Family Day, in spite of her fears, she decided to check it out.

At the Sunday event, the warm and welcoming staff put on a special day-long program with poetry readings, skits, and songs. Then, the pastor gave a

short message about the gospel. At the end of his message, he offered prayer and an invitation to know Jesus as personal Savior.

As the program ended, the church folks began giving away PowerPacks™—backpacks stuffed full of school supplies and a *Book of Hope* for students. The young people gathered to get their new PowerPacks and have supper together.

That's when Beatrice approached the pastor. After their conversation, she prayed to express her

Continued inside...

Continued from front

Everything Changed

faith and receive Christ as her Lord and Savior! She even decided to join the church. Her demeanor completely changed after that day! In fact, the change was so profound that her mother called the church to ask what happened.

“Beatrice had rarely said a word and had trouble making eye contact. Now, she is speaking out and glowing with confidence,” her mom said.

Her demeanor completely changed after that day!

Beatrice soon began meeting with a mentor for discipleship. She learned just how much Jesus cherished her—how He even died to pay for her sin and set her free. That changed everything.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support, which enable our faithful church partners to keep ministering to kids and youth just like Beatrice through tools like PowerPacks. Your gifts help change the world, one child at a time.



This year, over 8,500 PowerPacks were distributed to children across the country thanks to your generosity!



Every year thousands of kids just like Rickey learn about God's love in S.A.Y. Yes!® programs across the country!

Saying “Yes” to a Better Future

In Rickey's neighborhood, growing up wasn't easy. The cascading effects of poverty didn't give local youth a lot of options to thrive. Some kids joined gangs, many dropped out of school. Families suffered as the strains of generational hardship pulled households apart, just like Rickey's.

His home life was complicated. Rickey and some of his cousins were raised by his single grandmother. She was a loving woman, but the burden of raising multiple kids was more than she could carry alone.

That's where Cru® came into play. Rickey's grandmother brought him to a local S.A.Y. Yes!® Center, a ministry of Cru Inner City, when he was in first grade ... and he loved it! It was a safe place for him to play, do homework, and most importantly, to learn about God's love. It was also a stark contrast to the instability and hard lifestyle some of his family members had chosen.

At the S.A.Y. Yes! Center, Rickey had access to mentors who made time for him—to listen, to talk and to know his story. For the next seven years, Rickey was a fixture in the program: being a kid,

studying and growing in his faith.

As a freshman in high school, Rickey came back to the S.A.Y. Yes! program, not as a participant, but as a part-time staff member. He had a chance to give back to young kids in his neighborhood, and to continue receiving mentorship from the Cru staff.

It was a safe place for him to play, do homework, and most importantly ... to learn about God's love.

Rickey is in college now. No longer a young child, he's a grown man walking in the faith he learned throughout his years of mentorship and Bible study at S.A.Y. Yes!. As he reflected on his childhood recently, he commented, “If Cru wasn't here, I don't know where I would be. But I wouldn't be the same person I am today.”

Because of the S.A.Y. Yes! program, churches across the country have the opportunity to reach diverse and lively children who are in the local community.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support—they make it possible for this kind of story to occur over and over again in inner-city neighborhoods throughout the country. You are a tremendous blessing to kids like Rickey!

A Personal Word



Milton Massie
Executive Director/
Steward

Fear is a potent temptation. It strikes all of us, regardless of economic class. Fear of losing power, or money, or work, or relationships. In reality, it all boils down to a fear of losing control over whatever comes next—a fear of all the “what ifs.”

Recently, I’ve been meditating on Isaiah 41. There, we find the Israelites in exile and trouble is brewing on the horizon. They have every human reason to fear.

I love the way God responds to their anxiety in verses 9-10: “You’re my servant, serving on my side. I’ve picked you. I haven’t dropped you. Don’t panic. I’m with you. There’s no need to fear for I’m your God. I’ll give you strength. I’ll help you. I’ll hold you steady, keep a firm grip on you” (MSG).

We fear because we forget: that God is on our side; that he loves us; that he walks alongside us;

that he knows what he’s doing; that he is in control.

We fear because we forget. But in God’s goodness, he uses the community of believers to remind us of who he is. He uses our inner-city partners, who are fighting in the trenches of poverty, the places with the most “what ifs,” to remind us what it looks like to press into fear while holding onto God.

And he uses you. He speaks through your prayers, your strong words of encouragement and all the other ways you step out in faith to show your support. He uses you to remind us that he is good and faithful and in control.

Thank you for walking alongside us, and for constantly helping us remember how great our God truly is.

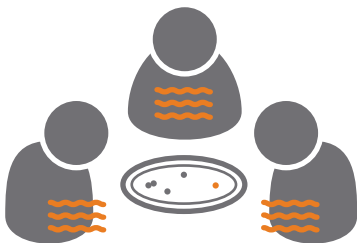
Grateful for your partnership,

Milton Lee Massie

Milton Massie

Executive Director/Steward

A Box of Love®. A bridge of hope.



12.5% of American families don’t have enough food over the holidays.



Thanks to your generosity, we’ll deliver **25,000 Boxes of Love®** to those families for Thanksgiving.



Please pray that God uses these Boxes of Love as bridges of hope—that **5,000 people** will make decisions for Christ.

It Started with a Box



Larry and Wanda, parents of three small children, both had a church background ... but their experiences

hadn't been positive. They had learned about Jesus in the past, but they weren't following him ... and they knew it.

Members from New Hope Fellowship, a local church, who knew Larry and Wanda's oldest son through one of Cru® Inner City's programs for youth, had invited them to worship services in the past, but Larry and Wanda had never been willing to make that step through the church doors.

So one fall day the church came to Larry and Wanda. Two members from New Hope, Brady and Ashley, paid a visit to their house. They knew finances were tight for Larry and Wanda, so they brought a Box of Love® filled with all the ingredients for a Thanksgiving meal!

Brady looked at Larry and asked, "Why don't you come over?"

Brady and Ashley knocked on the door, box in hand, and Wanda invited them in! They began talking about life in general, and then transitioned to a conversation about eternal life. As Brady, Ashley, and Wanda made their way through a gospel booklet, Brady noticed that Larry was in the dining room, paying close attention to the conversation, but keeping his distance.

Brady looked at Larry and asked, "Why don't you come over?" Larry got up and joined the conversation! The four of them discussed God's love, man's sin, and Jesus' death and resurrection. When the time was right, Brady looked at Larry and asked, "Who do you want to be in control of your



Join us in praying for the thousands of families who will receive a Box of Love® this Thanksgiving, just like Larry and Wanda. Thank you for supporting this life-changing ministry!

life?" Larry and Wanda looked at each other, almost as if they were saying, "Are you ready for this?" Larry took a breath and responded, "Jesus."

What had started as a visit to bring the gift of a Thanksgiving meal ended with the gift of salvation! Larry and Wanda asked Jesus to forgive their sins and for help to follow Him!

Every time you donate a Box of Love, you create an opportunity for local churches to share the gospel with families just like Larry and Wanda's. Thank you!



Overwhelmed by Love!



A knock at the door on a Sunday morning ... two strangers standing there ... and a surprise!

Over the previous summer, two of Sherry's three children had attended a summer day camp at Chicago's Agape Center, a local Cru® Inner City partner. Agape volunteers learned of the family's needs. So when Cru's Box of Love® outreach began that November, Sherry's family was on the list for a visit!

Now, Hosea and Rashya gave her the Box: all the fixings for a great holiday dinner, plus Cru's *Knowing God Personally* booklet. Sherry was in tears at the

Sherry was in tears

compassion, and timing, of the gift. Her mother had passed away just five months earlier.

At that moment, Rashya revealed an amazing concurrence: she had lost *her mother* five months prior as well.

Sherry was overwhelmed by the love of this couple as they shared the message of Jesus. She invited Christ into her life right there!

This is the power of God's love, expressed in the gift of a Box of Love. Please be part of it again this Thanksgiving. Every \$41.40 shares another Box of Love, in Jesus' name. Thank you!



Cru Inner City
2112 Broadway Street NE, Suite 100
Minneapolis, MN 55413
(612) 338-0999

CRU.ORG/INNERCITY
innercity@cru.org



Cru is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

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

Cru® Inner City ministry, programs, and products are provided under the trademarks: Compassionate Products™, Creating Options Together™, S.A.Y. Yes! Centers for Youth Development®, S.A.Y. Yes!®, Box of Love®, Boxes of Love®, PowerPacks™, PowerPack™, Summer in the City®, and Urban Immersion™. The Cru® Inner City ministry began as Here's Life Inner City®. The aforementioned trademarks are trademarks of Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc., aka Cru.