

# HALVORSEN MINISTRY UPDATE



Students from Harvard, Suffolk, Tufts, and MIT at Cru Boston's Fall Retreat

## CELEBRATION!

This year, Cru celebrates 70 years of ministry. We wanted to thank you for the part you've played with our ministry and for your generosity in praying, financing, and working with Cru.

So, how did it all begin?

Seventy years ago this month, Bill Bright, a rancher turned candy salesman, had a life-changing encounter that led him and his wife, Vonette, to surrender to God and the vision of what would eventually become the ministry of Cru.

The Brights envisioned a map where the love of God covered every mile. In 1951, they began pursuing that vision on the campus of UCLA by trying to reach college students with the hope of the gospel. Since then, Cru has grown into a collective of many ministries and people trying to accomplish that same mission in all corners of society.

What began on that one campus has since spread to 10,036 universities, 190 countries and 8.1 billion people across 1,914 languages. From dorm rooms to boardrooms, and basketball courts to courts of public opinion, Cru's aim has continued to be faithfully and strategically reaching every mile of the map with the love of God.

Thanks to your prayers, generosity and partnership with us in sharing and living out the love of God all over the world, this very day, another student, neighbor, professor, athlete, parent or colleague has been or will be touched by the life-changing love of Jesus.

In the 1980s, one such changed-life story began at a high school in Phoenix. There, Cru staff member Debbie McGoldrick taught teen Charmaine Lillestrand how to lead a small group. In time, Charmaine grew in her faith and moved behind the Iron Curtain to help share about Jesus' love in the Soviet Union.

Before moving to Moscow in the 1990s, Charmaine met Vivian Mabuni at the University of California, Berkeley, and taught her to reach out to more women with the love of Jesus and help them grow, share and live their faith. Today, Vivian leads a first-of-its-kind conference for Asian American Christian women.

When Vivian moved to UCLA, she met a senior named Cincy Peterson in the early 2000s. Cincy had never heard of a relationship with Jesus. In time, Cincy learned to walk with Jesus and now, years later, leads Hope Venture, an organization that provides clean water, improved health and education in India, Kenya and Uganda.

Another UCLA student joined a freshman Bible study with Vivian and today serves as general counsel to an African American nonprofit. Yet another UCLA student, a first generation Latina, met Vivian, and today she lives in a neighborhood west of Los Angeles as a foster mom and partners with inner-city churches to mentor their youth.

Because of your choice to partner with us, through other lives surrendered to God, billions of people have had the opportunity to see the story of God's love through the "JESUS" film. What first required a passport and projectors, as well as bed sheets to be used as screens, is now available in the palm of anyone who holds a smartphone, which is 67.1% of the population (or 5.27 billion people).

Through your partnership last summer, a Christian in West Africa checked into a government hospital with COVID-19. He brought with him a battery-powered NewLifeBox, which creates a Wi-Fi hotspot for anyone within 150 feet and provides a link to watch the "JESUS" film in their language.

The patient asked more than 200 other patients to connect and watch. And they eagerly did.

When the hospital released him, the administration required that they keep the NewLifeBox "since it might be infectious, having been exposed to the virus."

After he was discharged, they kept using the device, daily turning it on, transmitting the gospel message in their heart language to everyone in isolation.

These are just three stories of hundreds of thousands that all stem from two lives surrendered to God following His call. None of this would have been or be possible without our staff, volunteers and you partnering together to continue to pursue this vision of covering the map with the love of Christ!

These past seven decades have not been perfect, but Cru has continued to see God's faithfulness. Numerous lives all over the globe have been pursuing together the dream of introducing people to Christ, building them in their faith and sending them out to love the world wherever God calls them to go.

"What the Lord entrusted to Bill Bright 70 years ago we continue to entrust to everyone around us: A passionate love for Jesus, a heart to share the good news of Jesus and a commitment to building new disciples and sending them out to help fulfill the Great Commission," says Steve Sellers, Cru president.

*Thank you so much for making it possible for us to carry this vision on through your partnership. We could not do that without you.*