



JUNE/JULY 2020

The peculiar has become normal in a “Pandemic World.” We’ve all read enough of these types of emails and newsletters lamenting the loss of the known and familiar. So we’ll spare you. In the midst of the unusual, God is still using Cru to change the hearts and minds of college students. Our fellow SE Ohio Cru staff teammate Emily Baumhoer recently shared this story with us:

Jen is not (yet) a Christian, but her roommate is and has been regularly inviting Jen out to Cru events and having spiritual conversations with her for about two years now. Jen has been really open and curious to learn more about Christianity and the Bible, but she’s also consistently expressed a difficulty finding or having “a personal faith”.

So this semester, we’ve been going through a Bible study together, geared towards nonbelievers that seeks to answer the questions “Who is Jesus?” Each study uses stories from the gospels to illuminate an attribute or role of Jesus (i.e... “Jesus the teacher”, “Jesus the redeemer,” “Jesus the life-giver” etc.).

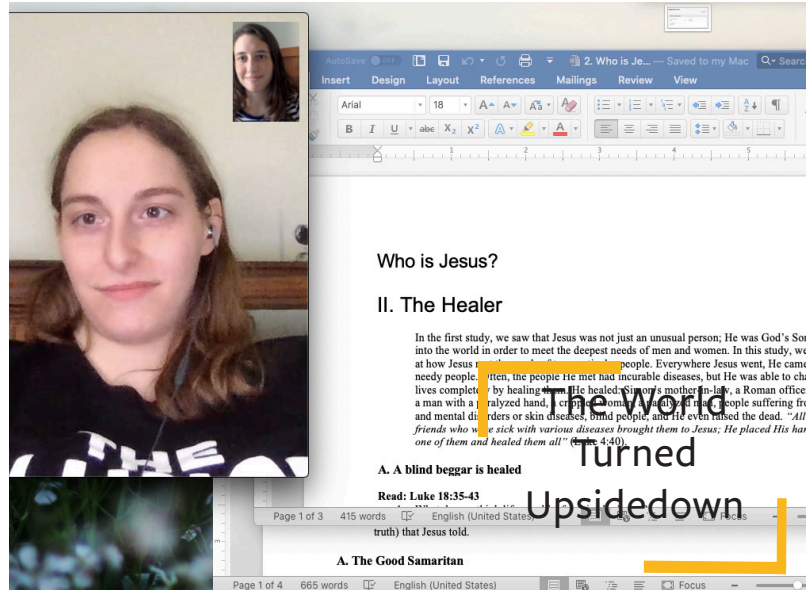
I was nervous Jen wouldn’t be interested in our studies anymore once students were no longer on campus and we’d have to start meeting online, but I was pleasantly surprised by her enthusiasm to continue reading through Luke, even if that meant doing so virtually!

The first week we met over FaceTime, the topic was “Jesus the Healer” and Jen’s immediate comment was “you know it’s a little ironic that this is the topic in the middle of a pandemic” - so true! I hadn’t put that together, but it was a good reminder for me that God is in control even when the world feels wildly out-of-control.

Every week was so refreshing getting to talk with Jen about who Jesus is; it consistently felt like a reorientation towards God and his goodness. And Jen must have felt similarly because a few weeks in to our virtual meet-ups, she sent me a text that said, **“Hey Emily, I just wanted to say a quick thank you for taking some time out of your week for us to ‘meet’ it really helps add some stability to my day even though the world has turned itself upside down right now.”**

I really don’t think it was me that was adding stability and peace to Jen’s life; I think it was God’s faithful pursuit and gracious love found in the pages of Scripture and the person of Jesus. Join me in praying that as Jen continues to encounter this love, that she would finally discover the faith she’s been longing for.

*Amen, Emily! We pray that you, too would experience the stability and peace Jesus offers us, even as we continue to live in such unusual circumstances. I personally believe that this is an unprecedented moment in history that open doors previously locked tight to allow us even greater effectiveness in evangelism! Clay and I are both as excited as we are apprehensive, and we hope you’ll join us in praying for God to use us in unique ways this coming school year.*



Jen & Emily’s Zoom Bible study set-up for each week.

Yours in Christ,

*Clay + Emily*

# FAMILY UPDATE

## SUMMER IN SELF-ISOLATION

Because of my pregnancy, we have continued to be fairly strict with self-isolating to protect me and our unborn son. If we're honest, it hasn't been much fun. However, we're grateful that we're all safe and can continue to work.

I have continued to work on graphic design for our ministry. This has involved a pretty significant amount of "re-tooling" our materials, since so much will be different about the fall. In fact, I feel like I've made ten different versions of everything because we just don't know what is going to happen!

Clay is continuing to work on raising our needed financial support. We are happy to say we have nearly met our first goal, which will allow him to go back to working with students on campus at least three days a week once school starts again.

Both of us completed an Institute of Biblical Studies course early in the summer, and now are working on some long-neglected self study projects we've been putting off forever.

Elliott continues to be healthy and he and I are enjoying the cooler weather at my parents' home in Northern Michigan, where we relocated for part of the summer so my mom could provide childcare for Clay and I as we work. (After 3 months of trying to work without any form of childcare, we both cried "uncle" and reached out for help. We're much happier and more productive with some regular help!)



## PRAISE + PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for Jen, and other students like her. Ask the Lord to use this unique time to reveal longings and felt-needs that only Jesus can meet, and to allow us to be the one to show them that.
- Pray for us as we are in continuing need of raising more financial partners to join our ministry to replace some partners who have had to step down. Praise God, He has been so faithful in providing for us, and we are so grateful.
- Pray for us as we finish up our summer. Emily's due date is at the beginning of the school year, so we will need to be ready for both that and the start of on-campus ministry in the fall at the same time!
  - Specifically, would you pray for God's provision with childcare? There's a very real possibility that the students we have relied on as babysitters won't be a safe choice/able to work at all, depending on how COVID-19 goes in Athens, and daycare doesn't seem to be an option either. Pray for a solution that is safe, reliable, and affordable.
- Pray for the heart of students, especially freshmen, who are preparing to return to campus. We have no idea what the fall holds, but we trust our unknown future to a known God. Pray for wisdom and creativity as we find new ways to evangelize!
- Praise God for His faithfulness. Our one constant in all of this upheaval is the fact that He is the same yesterday, today and forever.