

## 31 August 2020 Southern Wisconsin Cru Ministry Update

Myriads of students are converging on universities for the new year. Every year this happens. And every year we plan to welcome them and engage them as best we can with the invaluable gospel. We believe the university setting still provides one of the best environments for reaching people for Christ and building the future leaders of the faith. Of course with Covid-19, things are drastically different, filled with unknowns and big challenges. Though many things have been moved online, masses of students are still planning on living on or near campus.

All summer we have been considering new ideas to reach out to students in person and online. Knowing campuses are requiring the use of facemasks, we ordered 2,800 Cru branded masks highlighting our campus movements and our key social media accounts.



I can imagine students zoning out during a lecture and deciding to take a look at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Cru's Facebook page after seeing a

student's mask.

Being able to get to know us first online is critical for reaching so many of the digital natives of this generation. Of course, we intend to have multiple ways for those who first engage with us online to get to know us and Jesus personally.

It looks impossible to pull hundreds of students together in the same place for our weekly meetings and large socials. So an emphasis will be to coach our leaders to "win small." We will charge our students to find

ways to meaningfully serve others around them, to have picnics on campus, day trips to parks, and invite new students to their off-campus homes for backyard fires and warm conversation. If we can't meet for a huge fall retreat in October, maybe discipleship groups can find cabins and campgrounds for special overnights. In these and other ways, our students, volunteers, and staff will find ways to share the gospel with the lost while also building up believers.

Though we are restricted, the gospel is not chained (2 Tim 2:9). Please pray the Bible studies they lead outdoors, in their apartments, and online will be teaming with spiritually hungry students vitally encountering God and his people.

Please pray for us. We want this world-wide shake-up to draw people to Christ and excel our ministry's fruitfulness. There's so much to figure out with so much opportunity. May this be the time when Cru and the whole Christian church made needed adjustments, sought the Lord in fresh ways, and became better ambassadors for Christ, for the glory of God.

Grateful to you,

*The Southern Wisconsin Cru Staff Team*



As we seek to reach this new freshman class, we thought you'd be encouraged by Erika's story. She was reached as a freshman and is now a super student leader.

## Erika: A Changed Life

*In middle and high school, I (Erika) just wanted to be loved. I thought that if I was a good student and person I could earn the approval and affection of my family and peers. I thought the more I did, the more affection I would receive. I was extremely self-critical and constantly frustrated when I couldn't figure out why I didn't feel like I was enough. I thought that I would only be accepted when I was acceptable to everyone. So, coming into college, I felt exhausted and desperately alone.*

*In my first week as a freshman at UW-Madison, I ended up running into an old friend from middle school. She was a Christian, and she invited me to join a Cru Bible study with her in our hall. Initially, I joined because I figured I could make friends within the study, but I eventually found a joy far greater. My friend only stayed at Madison for a semester, but I stayed in the Bible study for the whole year.*

*Over the course of my freshman year, I felt God pursuing my heart like crazy. But I still wrestled with not understanding what it meant to be adopted as a child of God. Growing up, I had a distant relationship with my dad, so understanding the covenant love of our Heavenly Father was something I wrestled with.*



*Second semester my freshman year, I finally understood God's covenant love through reading Hosea. There is nothing I can do to earn God's love; it's by grace, a completely undeserved gift, that He loves me and desires to have a personal relationship with me. I surrendered my life to Him that night.*

*Since then, I've realized that godliness is grown based on my own obedience and submission of the Lord's will over my life, not doing things to earn His love and favor. It is a daily dying to myself. I've weighed the cost, and I rest in the promise of knowing that Christ is and will always be worth it. In Him, I've found new life and joy like I've never experienced.*

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