



Ministry Update for the Browns  
July 2020

## (VIRTUAL) SUMMER MISSIONS!

Though travel was out of the question this summer to attend a Cru summer mission domestically or abroad, students had the opportunity to participate in virtual summer missions. At Unto's (Cru's humanitarian arm) Digital Summer Mission, students learned about a wide variety of topics relating to humanitarian work. They were given disaster scenarios and collaborated to develop response strategies. They listened to speakers on topics like racial tension in the US, the theology of advocacy, and dignity. Further, they were able to break out into small groups based on their interest in refugee care, women's health, agriculture, or engineering. Their aim is to express the kindness of Jesus to people living in the toughest places on earth by relieving suffering, restoring dignity, and revealing hope." Olivia Rice, a junior at Liberty University, attended from her home in Minnesota, about an hour from the hotspot of Minneapolis. Olivia shares: "I learned how difficult and complex the humanitarian crisis is right now and just how close the mission field is to my own home."



Olivia Rice, pictured in the middle, at Lynchburg Cru's Fall Retreat 2019

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# DOWNTOWN WITH THE BROWNS

## SUMMER Reconnect

### LYNCHBURG CRU DOES SUMMER CONNECT!

*Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.— Proverbs 19:21*

What a blessing the Word of God is, and especially the wisdom literature of Proverbs! In these unprecedented times, it can serve like balm to a weary soul, as we lean into the sovereignty of God and are reminded that, though at times mysterious, His purposes truly prevail. Though we have had to modify programming and tactics, as long as there are college students in Lynchburg, our resolve in our mission does not change: reaching students with the good news of Jesus Christ!

### THE WEARING OF MASKS

This summer we have, along with many other Cru movements around the country, been investing in students in the Lynchburg area through a virtual platform called Summer Connect. Summer Connect offers students a chance to explore with God and others by growing relationships and asking hard spiritual questions. We have wrestled with topics like embracing God's love, finding identity in Christ, and stewarding one's ethnicity. We have "gathered" on Zoom weekly to enjoy two dimensional fellowship, great teachings by pastors and speakers from all over the US, and lively discussion on very personal subjects.

One of the more poignant messages was from author and pastor Kevin Butcher on the topic of "The Barrier to God's Love." Pastor Kevin used the idea of a mask (very appropriate in this day and age!) in communicating authenticity before others and God. On the OUTSIDE, what the world sees, we portray things we want others to take away from meeting us (perhaps that we are capable, smart, and resourceful). On the INSIDE, we keep hidden who we really are (we feel inadequate, we are limited, and we are insecure). Breaking into smaller groups on our Zoom call, we were able to discuss what our masks looked like on the exterior and interior. It was a powerful time of vulnerability and transparency as our students felt emboldened to reveal their true selves to one another. We celebrated the camaraderie that we are able to have as the body of Christ — that we are able to fully love and accept one another because we ourselves

are fully loved and accepted through Jesus. In a season of life where projected image feels critical, and in a world that literally mandates the wearing of masks, we are grateful to have opportunity to remove them (metaphorically!) among the family of God. Praise be to God for His indescribable gift!

### SOCIAL DISTANCING SOCIAL

Though many students are either working, attending summer classes, or out of town altogether, we did manage to get a very small social distancing social for Lynchburg Summer Cru! Virginia is now in Phase Three of reopening, so several of us took advantage of this and went downtown for chicken and waffles, walked near the Blackwater Creek Trail, and topped off the evening with Maylinn's rolled ice cream. Even though we (when not eating) wore masks and stayed six feet apart, it was a wonderful time to experience some degree of togetherness!



### PRAY FOR THE BROWNS

- We anticipate that several of our ministry contexts will be virtual in the fall. Please pray that the Lord will give us creativity in connecting with students and reaching them with the gospel.
- Please pray for our returning Cru leaders at our high schools and colleges: that the Lord will prepare them for this unique time in history.
- Please pray that Summer Cru finishes well and students continue to be sanctified through the teaching and fellowship!

*We'd love to know how we can be praying for you in this season! Please text or email any requests you may have. We consider it an honor to be able to intercede on your behalf!*

Love,  
Andrew, Jena, Olivia, Logan and Samuel