

May 22, 2020

Dear «greeting»,

“I need to be connected. And I want to serve.” That’s what Sarah, an incoming freshman at New England Conservatory told me over FaceTime the other day. Sarah is a cellist. “I believe music is my opportunity to be a **beacon of hope.**”

We all need a beacon of hope right now, don’t we?

You are part of a special community commissioned for a time like this.

- People like us **pray**.
- People like us **trust** that God is at work in this season.
- People like us wade into the mess of students’ lives and show the **joy** of Christ.
- People like us are looking for beacons of **hope**.
- And people like us **love** to see Jesus change lives.



For years, we have labored alongside you to build God’s kingdom. But then Covid 19 turned the world upside down. We know how you might be feeling because our world was turned upside down too. Like many of you, we’ve been juggling schooling in a different way. Like many of you, we’ve been on more zoom calls than we can count. And like many of you, our plans for the spring and summer have come to a screeching halt. We were planning to take a group of students back to the Middle East this summer, in fact, we would have left this weekend.

Considering all this turmoil, we could be frozen by fear. But we’re choosing to step out in faith. This isn’t a surprise to the Lord. And perhaps this summer at home can be a gift, because it gives us the space and time to get ready and try new outreaches to connect with students digitally over the summer months. **One creative thing we just launched is a weekly gathering and small groups. 80 students signed up!**

Brian loves the Lord of the Rings stories. I texted him a great passage the other day: "I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

So, what should we do?

None of us wished for Covid 19 to happen in our time. We didn't want all the schools and universities we work with to close and move virtual. No hugs; no shared meals; no sports; no meeting students in person.

What do we know? We know the sun will rise. We know that students going to schools in Boston need Jesus. We know Jesus is the King. And we know Jesus longs for people to enter His Kingdom.

A quick example: Lucy, a girl I get to disciple from Northeastern University, came to Christ 2.5 years ago. She has gone from never really talking about spiritual things with anyone, to starting to talk about spiritual things with me and our women's small group. Now, in the middle of COVID19, she's at home with her family and is

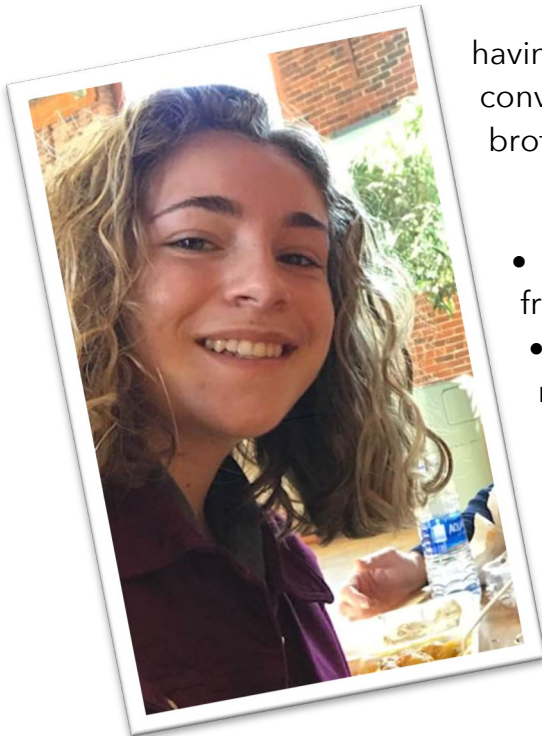


having gospel conversations with her mom, dad, and brother. Would you pray for her gospel witness?

And so, what will we do?

- We will be there (wherever "there" is) for freshmen
- We'll learn by practice the new language we need to speak virtually
- We'll keep persevering in Christ.

One opportunity: we've had a bunch of incoming freshmen reach out to us. Students like Esme, an incoming freshman from BU have already been getting involved in virtual worship nights and in our summer ministry meetings. This wasn't



possible in the past - because these incoming students weren't in Boston yet. But now there's an opportunity to help students who desperately want to be involved get plugged into gospel community before they ever arrive on campus.

What will it cost?

Our summer expenses will be lower this year because we're no longer moving our family of 5 to the Middle East for six weeks. Normally, we'd need to see the Lord bring in \$25,000 to pay for that mission trip and get us ready for the fall. Part of what we raise every spring covers not just our summer travel, but also our ongoing ministry expenses throughout the fall. This spring, we need to raise \$15,000 in special gifts.

It would be foolish not to acknowledge the different financial times we all find ourselves in. If you are in a place where you can give, we would be so grateful. It would allow us to stay fully engaged this summer as we pivot toward summer ministry, make sure we still get full paychecks, and have the resources we need when students begin the fall, either virtual or on campus.

Would you prayerfully consider what the Lord might be asking you to give during this season? In the past, you've been able to give \$«merge». We wonder: would you consider doing that again?

In the last few weeks, Brian and I have connected with dozens of incoming freshmen like Sarah. They have been **a beacon of hope** to us. And so have you. It has been such an encouragement to be on this mission to college students alongside you. You're helping raise up the next generation of leaders. Thanks for persevering in Christ and working alongside us to be beacons of hope to a new generation of students.

Loving our Adventurous Lord,

Brian & Malisa

p.s. Thanks for being a beacon of hope to us. Thanks for considering a gift by June 21. You can give online at www.brianandmalisa.com/give. Thanks.





Yes! I want to be a beacon of hope and help raise up the next generation of Christian leaders.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to "Cru"
or give online at www.brianandmalisa.com/give