



NATIONAL REPORT

WINTER 2024



Boxes of Love® ... Food and Hope for Struggling Families!



A full table — all the fixings — and her entire family ... it was Barbara's dream for Thanksgiving.

But as a struggling widow on a fixed income, Barbara couldn't afford the expense of a special holiday meal. With grocery prices soaring (many items as much as 20% higher than last year), she

knew her holiday dream was far out of reach.

Until a friend like you helped bring our Box of Love® outreach to Barbara's Detroit community!

She couldn't believe her eyes ... when our inner-city partner church showed up on Barbara's doorstep with a surprise: a large Box of Love with a turkey and all the delicious trimmings for a

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Food and Hope for Struggling Families!

Thanksgiving meal for six.

“This was a lifeline for her,” said one of the volunteers who prayed with Barbara.

“After prayer, I decided to help Barbara unpack the contents of the box to help her get organized. When she opened the box, she started crying.”

When Barbara looked inside, she saw a Bible and gospel literature. She had never owned her own Bible before and was thrilled by the beautiful gift of God’s Word!

In the few weeks since receiving her Box of Love,

Barbara has grown in her new-found faith. At the same time, church volunteers continue to reach out to build relationships and disciple the Box of Love recipients, using skills the volunteers received in pre-outreach evangelism training.

Thanks to your financial partnership with Cru® serving in the inner city, hurting people in some of America’s most vulnerable communities are finding the light of Christ amid darkness. Thank you for making it possible. *Your faithfulness is changing lives.*

In 2023, thanks to your prayers and support, Detroit delivered 1,500 boxes through 55 partner ministries — that’s 9,000 meals! Nationwide, 20,000-plus Boxes of Love® were distributed in 26 cities by 440 partners. To God be the glory!





This is our mission field ...

- According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, homelessness hit a record high in 2023. **Roughly 20 out of every 10,000 people in the U.S. experienced homelessness on a single night.**
- **Homelessness among families with children rose 16%.**
- **653,100 people nationwide experienced homelessness** during a single night in January 2023 ... a 12% increase from 2022.

Together, we will continue to reach out with help and hope — and the life-changing love of Jesus Christ!

Hope Partnership

Share Jesus with people in our inner cities

Hope Partners are a core group of committed friends who help to make all our evangelistic campaigns happen, month by month.

This simple auto-giving program enables you to serve alongside our inner-city teams without ever leaving home ... making a beautiful, personal impact on the lives of men, women, and children in need.

With a monthly gift of support, you'll be helping children and adults, families and individuals ... meeting immediate physical needs, and leading them to faith in Christ.

Please join with us as a Hope Partner today!



Become a Hope Partner.
Visit give.cru.org/hope to learn more.



An Easter Bag for Devon ... New Life for His Family!



Brian and Donna were trying their best to provide for their small family. Donna worked outside the home, but Brian was unemployed, which gave him time to care for their 4-year-old son, Devon.

As the young family struggled to make ends meet, they began to feel less of an urge for physical blessings ... and more of an urge for spiritual ones.

That's when they met the outreach team from Glow Church, which was hosting an Easter Bag distribution at its Chicago site.

The Easter Bags were provided to Glow by Cru® Inner City — thanks to the caring partnership of friends like you. In each bag is a toy, crayons, candy, and gospel literature, plus a colorful beaded bracelet that explains the plan of salvation.

Devon was thrilled to receive the special gift! And Brian and Donna were touched by the church's generosity and love. As the gospel story was shared with the children

and their families, Brian and Donna felt a stirring within ...

“The gospel message of Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection had a powerful impact.”

“The gospel message of Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection had a powerful impact,” said David West, a member of the church. “The family was really searching for a strong biblical foundation and longing for a sense of Christian community and fellowship.”

That afternoon, Brian and Donna recommitted their lives to Jesus and became members of the church. Little Devon regularly attends children’s church. And Brian has also found a way to contribute by serving on the congregation’s technical team.

Thank you for helping Brian, Donna, and Devon find the spiritual hope they were searching for through new life in Christ — this Easter, thanks to you, many inner-city children and families like them will discover the Good News of God’s amazing love!



Prayerlessness

“We say we’re followers of Christ, but when do we invite God into our conversations?”



I recently read an article about godlessness. It wasn't so much an essay about secularism, but a direct challenge to Christian believers to avoid the temptation of squeezing God out into the margins of our ministry-filled days. At the heart of the piece was a discussion on prayerlessness.

It got me thinking about our tendency to sideline God by relegating prayer to when it's convenient.

We say we're followers of Christ ... but when do we invite God into our conversations? Is it at the end — after we've got everything on the table and it's already been hashed out? Or do we offer a cursory prayer in the beginning? Such an approach fails to communicate a desperate dependence upon Him that says every breath I take is a testimony to His Presence.

In Genesis 2:7, we are told that *the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature* (English Standard Version).

The very fact that He put His breath of life in me at the beginning of creation means that every time I breathe, I can say, “Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, God, You gave me the breath of life.” That means every time we breathe is an opportunity to praise Him, to testify to His Presence. John 14:15-16 tells us this is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit, our Advocate.

As believers, we must demonstrate a consistent posture of dependence. If I say I'm a follower of Christ, there is no work more important than serving Him. If we are serving Him, how better to accomplish that work than by sitting with Him to hear His heart?

We know how because Jesus modeled it for us. He bathed everything in prayerful conversation with His Father. He did it in the Garden. He did it during miraculous healings and then He retreated for more prayer in preparation for future work.

If Jesus made this a priority, as busy as He was, how much more do we have to prioritize it?

Grateful for your partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milton Lee Massie".

Milton Massie
Executive Director/Steward





A warm blanket. Dry socks. And the eternal love of Jesus Christ!



Lenny was intently listening as volunteers from All Nations Church of God in Christ shared the gospel — he was enthralled ... and seemingly numb to the brutal temperature.

Before long, tears streamed down his cold cheeks. Juanita, one of the volunteers, asked why he was crying.

“I’m not ready to die,” the 58-year-old told them.

Lenny suffered from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Homeless, and on the streets, he was using drugs to cope.

“We assured him that Jesus loves him,” Juanita said. The team gave Lenny a Homeless Care Kit, provided by Cru® Inner City — containing a blanket, hat, scarf, gloves, socks, and toiletry items. Also inside was a gospel tract, which they used to explain

Thank you for making this wonderful ministry possible to people in desperate need.

the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

It changed his life.

Lenny prayed the prayer of salvation with Juanita and the church volunteers and enthusiastically embraced his new brothers and sisters in Christ!

“It was such a wonderful experience,” Juanita shared.

“Lenny was so happy to receive the Homeless Care Kit. And that

gift opened his heart to hear about the love and care of Jesus. He was so grateful and humble for all that was given and shared with him.”

Thank you for making this wonderful ministry possible to people in desperate need.

Please do it again this winter by giving generously to provide Homeless Care Kits. Thank you!



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Cru is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

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