



MINISTRY UPDATE SPRING 2016 NORTH DAKOTA

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My freshmen year of college was my hardest and loneliest time in my life. My mom had just moved to Arizona, my twin sister and friends moved away for college, I just went through a hard break up, and I was on my own. As a result, I tried to fill the emptiness I was feeling by running to alcohol, drugs, and other guys. In the moment it helped and I enjoyed it, but it would always leave me more empty and the pain and loneliness was still there.

This fall I filled out a survey that Cru had where students could answer questions about God and had the opportunity to meet up with someone to talk more. I had a lot of questions and wanted to learn more, so when Kimmie texted me to meet up, I decided to take that step. We ended up talking for over an hour together about where I stand in my faith. Kimmie asked if I had a personal relationship with God and she ended up sharing the gospel with me. I had heard parts before and was familiar with some of the bible verses she shared, but that was the first time I think I really heard and understood what Jesus did for me on the cross and God's plan and purpose.

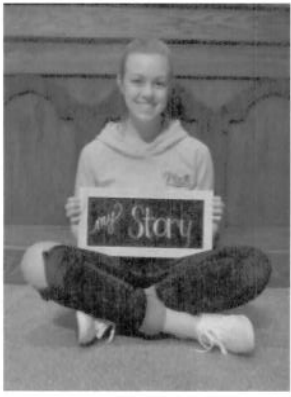
After that conversation, I started attending Cru at Bismarck State College and learning more about God's love and meeting others who were in a similar spot. I also started going to a bible study and meeting up with Kimmie and a couple of other girls to help me grow more in my faith. The fall semester was such a fun and exciting time for me. I started making friends through Cru who were positive influences in my life and really cared about me. It was after a weekend retreat, called Fallapalooza, that I really started wanting to read the bible on my own. I just couldn't get enough and it was so real and applied to my life. I was filled with so much peace and joy in Christ that I would have never thought I would experience. My life and reason for living was changing.

Towards the end of the semester, I heard about another Cru conference called TCX. Money was tight and I was already working two jobs and I really did not want to spend New Year's apart from my twin. I started praying about it and I asked if my sister would come with me. Her faith was not strong at the time, but she said she would go if I paid for her. However, I knew I did not have the money for both of us to go, but then God answered my prayer and he provided in an amazing way. One of the staff told me that they never want money to be the reason someone would miss out and that there was scholarship money available for this exact reason. The morning we were leaving for the conference, at the last minute we almost backed out because of fear, but we made it and it was an incredible experience. We were surrounded by so many college students who loved God and wanted to live for Him. The worship and speakers were so awesome and I learned a lot from them. I remember one talk specifically, where I realized that there were ways I was living and choices I was making that were hurting my relationship with God. I felt guilt and shame, but I was hit by the love of Christ and His forgiveness and that he wants so much more for my life. One of the days we went out and gave food to people in need and had opportunities to share our faith. I left that conference on fire for God and wanting to share Him with others.

I am continually reminded how much I need Jesus and that He is always with me even when I mess up. I want others to know the hope and love of Christ that I never knew existed. It has been cool to see God use me in other people's life and to glorify him with the talents he has given me even though I make mistakes. I have found what was missing in my life and what could truly satisfy the emptiness and bring healing.



Lexis and Kimmie!



This spring we launched an outreach campaign that was a major win! In the world of evangelism, its one thing to talk to a stranger about your faith-it's a whole other thing to talk about it with everyone you know. We launched our first ever Facebook campaign (sharing your testimony with EVERYONE YOU KNOW).

30 students wrote up their testimony and posted it on Facebook. The following day they posted each others story, and repeated that for a few days. in a 1 week period no one would have dreamed that over 3400 people clicked on their stories-and we were even able to see WHERE they were read: the US, Canada, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Norway, Mongolia, France and China. 10 countries visited by the power of story through ND students reaching out!



2016 CRU LEGACY DINNER



NORTH DAKOTA
LEGACY DINNER

04.21.16



In just a few short years Nancy and I will have the privilege of dropping Brynn off at the college of her choosing (let me clarify-as long as it's affordable, she has scholarships and doesn't leave the state). 😊

How would it feel as a parent to drop your child off knowing she was about to enter the greatest amount of freedom, the greatest amount of temptation and the least amount of christian influence in her life? Probably not great.

It's an entirely different feeling dropping off your child knowing they have a Cru group waiting for them-friends that will welcome them and offer to invest in their life.

Because of your generosity, we are able to be present on our ND colleges offering just that! **Thank you for partnership-because of you we raised our 2016-2017 school year Budget!**



Around the house

Spring brought lots of music programs, tennis, and track! Kalli is already getting ready to be a Medora Burning Hills Singer. We are looking forward to a change of pace this summer!

Grateful for you! Troy & Nancy Shirley