the CRANFILLS

TAYLOR, LYNSEY, MAXI-ANN, LAWSON

CHURCH PLANTERS to CHICAGO

"How shall they *believe* in him of *whom they have not heard*?..."

Romans 10:14

January/February

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Dear Pastor and Church,

I want to begin by thanking you for your continual support through prayer, service, and finances. You have helped us reach where we are today, and we cannot move forward into what we believe God is calling us to without you. This truth was reinforced during an interview I had with a fellow church planter who began his work 20 years ago on the West Side. He told me that you cannot make it without prayer and financial support from churches that share your vision for reaching people for Christ in major cities.

With each of these letters leading up to our first Sunday morning service, I want to make sure you understand something a mentor often tells me: "We are not waiting; we are working." To live that out, I'm sharing with you one thing I've been learning and one thing I've been doing. What I've been learning comes from a quote in one of the books from my training program: "God's church preaching God's gospel is God's strategy for change in our world. The greatest need for our cities, many of which are less than one percent gospel-believing, is the renewing light of the gospel." (Jon Dennis). And one thing I've been doing is intentionally engaging new people as I meet them in everyday life.

When you intentionally engage new people, you see God answer prayers for real connections with those who need Christ. One example is a man I met at Panera, where I often work on training and sermon preparation. I've been talking with him regularly and encouraging him to come to church. He isn't actively involved in a church, and from what I can tell, he knows about God but doesn't have a salvation testimony. Please pray that God continues to work in his heart and that I'm given a chance to clearly share the gospel with him. Also, please keep praying that God opens more doors for us to build relationships with people just like him.

I also want to give you insight into what we're facing as we seek to reach people with the gospel. Recently, during lunch between an outreach event and my afternoon study time, I overheard five high school girls telling jokes that made me laugh—until their next comment stopped me cold: "I have never read the Bible, not once." These girls attend the high school right beside my home, right here in America, in a major city, and they have never opened a Bible. I don't remove responsibility from parents or the girls, because they have access, but I do want you to feel the weight of this reality: we are ministering to a city and a younger generation that is not only rejecting Christ's claims—they are unaware of them.

Lastly, I'm including the link again for you to sign up for daily prayer. As I said in my first letter, the goal is to have someone praying every day of the year: https://signup.24-7prayer.com/signup/83405a

With Love, Taylor, Lynsey, Maxi-Ann Cranfill, and Lawson.

Did you know?

- Chicago has been identified as the most stressful city to move to, according to a study of 47 major U.S. cities by a large moving company. For more details, read the full article here: https://shorturl.at/gFlo0. I hope this helps you understand what our family is adjusting to and the importance of spending time on training.

Prayer / Praise:

- Grateful for new friendships being made with people in the City
- Pray for wisdom in upcoming decisions
- Pray to build purposeful relationships for the gospel

We celebrated Lynsey's Birthday in January!

Preaching Missions Sunday

We got lots of snow at the end of January!

Maxi is learning so much at Awana in her Cubbies group!

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