

October 25, 2021

Greetings from Orlando,

Forty-seven years ago, I was a Freshman at the University of Michigan and I attended a Campus Crusade for Christ weekly meeting. This came about as my Dad, who really wanted me to go to U of M, had arranged with a co-worker for his daughter to show me around the Ann Arbor campus the year before. She enthusiastically invited me to check out "Crusade". Little did any of us know that this would be a career path decision! This was just the beginning of God's hand over my life that has given me opportunities that I never dreamed of.

While at Michigan I learned how to use the little yellow booklet called The Four Spiritual Laws, and, even more importantly, the little blue booklet about the Spirit filled life. I was in Bible studies, and I led Bible studies. A summer mission before my Senior year sealed my desire to commit my life to spiritual care for others and I learned about nurses serving with Crusade overseas. I could not **not** pursue this, but I really didn't think it would all come together. Then it did! I graduated, joined staff, and in 1979 I headed to Africa as part of a medical team to run a small mission hospital in rural Kenya. Mike joined our team in 1980 and we were married in 1983. I could write a whole letter about our time there but will just say that the days of nursing in Kenya were challenging and a privilege. After Katie was born, we moved to campus ministry at the University of Nairobi. Then Beth was born, and we headed back to the USA.

Our family spent 6 years at Michigan State University in ministry to students with a wonderful team and church. In 1994 we moved to Orlando to serve at Campus Crusade headquarters leading in the New Staff application process. As our girls grew and left home, I became involved in Staff Care and Crisis Management for the Campus Ministry of what has become known as Cru. I mentioned the challenge and privilege of medical work overseas, which followed me through each of these roles and locations. But as you know, God was faithful and provided the courage and wisdom I needed to complete the tasks set before me. The training and discipleship that laid the foundation when I was a student continued through my career with Cru and is one of the things I appreciate most about the organization: there is a commitment to an individual's growth and development whether you are a staff member or a student or are involved in another capacity with Cru. Our DNA is to WIN, BUILD, SEND which occurred in my life and has been my commitment to others while I've been with Cru.

The reason I am reminiscing is to get to my point..... after 43 years on staff with Cru, I am retiring! I feel confident that I've done all that the Lord has called me to for this season and He's provided someone to step in who I respect and is ready to take the responsibilities to a new place. I don't exactly know what my next "work" is but for now I'm excited to take some time off and figure it out. Mike will continue in his role for now. Our next move will likely be to Ohio near Katie's family (we love grandparenting!), but we will stay in Orlando as long as my mom is here. She's nearing 99 years old and has been in hospice for over a year. She's getting good care and is generally happy but it's hard as she declines. I am here for her.

It's hard to express fully how much I've learned from all the people who've been a part of my journey, and how grateful I am. And there's all the people who have been a part of our support team through encouragement, prayer, and giving. We couldn't have done it without you!! I recently led a devotion for our leadership team from I Corinthians 12 about the Body of Christ and spiritual gifts. We each have a part and we each have a contribution. There is none that is not significant no matter how small or big. And the Body is designed to work together, whether we all agree or not. In my years with Cru, it's the people who have made it so great! THANK YOU so much for being there with me and with us.

Though I'm leaving, I qualify to move to Staff Emeritus status which keeps me connected as Mike remains. You will continue to hear from us as we value and need your continued care, prayers, and giving more than ever. As covid subsides we hope to travel again and visit as many as we can. Please pray for us in this transition.

I'll close with this photo from 1993. Mike and I were celebrating 15 years with Campus Crusade for Christ with Dr. and Mrs. Bright! Their leadership and influence are the foundation of Cru and have resulted in the Gospel going to the world.



Thank you and God's blessings,

*Debbie Brown*

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