

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

Sept./October

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Dear Pastor and Church,

We want to start by expressing our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support through prayer, financial contributions, and encouragement. It is truly a blessing to hear from various individuals each week, sharing a verse, offering prayers, and providing words of encouragement. I am reassured knowing that our support comes not just from churches or individuals sending money, but from people who genuinely care about us and the ministry that God has called us to, in reaching the wonderful community of Chicago. In this prayer letter, I hope to share insights from a recent conversation I had with a pastor who founded a church in Chicago over 20 years ago. During our one-on-one interview about ministry in the city, the pastor discussed the Parable of the Sower—a passage that many, including myself, may often overlook due to its familiarity. However, as he elaborated on the parable, he examined each ground condition:

- Hard Ground: The sower casts seed that falls by the wayside, where birds quickly come and eat it up. He explained that this occurs because the ground is hard, preventing the seeds from taking root.
- Rocky Ground: Here, the seed falls on stony soil, springs up quickly, but dies just as fast due to adverse conditions.
- Thorny Ground: In this stage, the seed grows alongside thorns, which ultimately overtake and choke the new plant, rendering it lifeless.
- Good Ground: Finally, the seed that falls on good soil takes root, grows, and yields varying amounts of abundant fruit.

After describing these biblical stages of sowing, the pastor drew parallels to the ministry in Chicago as a sower of gospel seeds. He noted that Chicago represents a first ground condition city, where the ground is hard, dry, and cracked due to inadequate soil management, making it easy for birds to devour the seeds. He emphasized the need for perseverance, preparing to spend a lifetime casting gospel seeds on this tough terrain, where cultural, societal, and dark spiritual forces oppress the people. He further mentioned that all we can do is pray for God to allow some seeds to penetrate the cracks in the hard ground, reaching the good soil beneath. We should pray that when these seeds do reach that good ground, they will yield fruit—thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and even a hundredfold. Thus, I urge you not only to pray for us as we strive to sow these seeds and seek good ground but also to ask God to soften your heart for our city in a renewed way. This will empower you to pray more fervently and, perhaps, consider answering the call to help us plant the church or even plant yet another church in our quest to reach these needy individuals.

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

Did you know?

- Western Avenue is the longest continuous urban street in the world
- Chicago has a greater population (2.7 million) than 15 entire European Countries

Prayer / Praise:

- Grateful for the conferences we have been in over last two months
- Grateful for multiple new supporting churches
- Grateful for the training progress and lessons I have already learned
- Pray that God would allow us to finish up the last bit of support of the next several months
- Pray to build purposeful relationships for the gospel



Maxi-Ann started Preschool



Preaching in West Virginia in a Missions Conference



Teaching Teen class



Family visiting in September for Maxi's Birthday

82%

Support Level