

## Middle School Challenges and Opportunities

“Please don’t address me as a ‘she’ or ‘her.’ Please refer to me as a ‘they’ or ‘them.’” This statement was told to me by a teacher at a local middle school. She has had several students communicate this desire to her and knows that many students at school are struggling with their gender identity. These students will dress and act and refer to themselves as either “gender-neutral” and others as the opposite sex of their sex at birth. This has become a very common experience.

This issue of “gender identity” was the topic of my paper that I (Rochelle) wrote for the Christian Worldview and Ethics course that I took in January as

one of the requirements to complete my certificate from the Institute of Biblical Studies with Cru. It breaks my heart that students, ages 11 – 14, are struggling with and even are rejecting the beautiful persons God created them to be. They need to hear about how much God loves them and how precious they are to Him.

Although I am not allowed to teach about gender issues directly on the public-school campus (the Principal shared that restriction when a student brought up the issue), we are allowed to teach God’s Word in the club. We have fo-

ocused on Jesus and how He heals, forgives, helps us with our hard times, and our temptations recently. Besides our weekly meetings, we have special outreaches where we invite the whole school and the Gospel is shared.

Our recent Pizza Party was attended by 36 kids! Of those, 29 stayed and heard the message that Jesus is our Friend who is always with us and who loved us enough to die for us. Several students commented that they liked learning about Jesus and His salvation, and they expressed an interest in possibly coming to our Cru club. Please pray for more children to want to learn God’s Word. We want them to experience God’s love for them, as the young men and women God created them to be.





#### SPECIAL PRAYER REQUESTS FOR UKRAINE:

1. Pray for peace in the Ukraine, The people there are experiencing great danger and hardship daily, and now over 2 million have fled for nearby European nations. You might pray scripture over Ukraine, such as Ps 144.  
In v.2 it says “He is my loving ally and my fortress, my tower of safety, my rescuer. He is my shield, and I take refuge in Him. He makes the nations submit to me.”
2. We have 120 Ukrainian staff serving the Lord with Cru. Our leaders are caring for them and helping them leave the country if that is what they desire to do.
3. Pray that humanitarian aid lines in and out may be made safe by both sides.
4. Pray for the many churches in Eastern Europe who are giving aid, lodging, food and sharing the Gospel with the refugees, and who are helping others leave the country.

#### PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. We presently have 13 new missionaries who will be trained in our Spring New Staff Orientation online conference. We thank God for them. Please pray for their encouragement as they step out in faith to trust God to meet all their needs and to use them to reach others with the Gospel. In the last year our team has seen God raise up 173 new staff and 95 interns. Pray that the Lord will raise up many more like them.
2. Pray for more students to join the Cru club and attend our weekly meeting. Pray for new volunteers for next school year.
3. Thank God for His provision of a used Grand Caravan for us at a reasonable price! Please keep praying for Josh and his friend Ben as they continue to receive chiropractic care for their neck and back pain.
4. Please keep praying for Andy and Ryoko to find a house to buy in April. Housing prices continue to rise and inventory is low. Pray we can be a great help to them during this time of transition.

Thank you for praying so faithfully!

*With love in Jesus,  
Steve & Rochelle*