



Illini Life Christian Fellowship
SPRING BREAK 2015
MEMPHIS

To the generous donors who made our spring break trip to Memphis possible,

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

God did a powerful and transformative work through the team of students who made the trip to Memphis, TN, this spring break. Your funds and prayers went further than you may ever realize. They helped make the homes of four families safer, warmer and drier while simultaneously training a team of college students in cross-cultural ministry.

Illini Life has a long history of ambitious Spring Break missions work. In January, we put bold invitation before our students:

1. Give up your spring break.
2. Join a team that needs to raise \$13,500 in 7 weeks.
3. Let God stretch your faith as you are immersed in the challenging issues of urban poverty, racial reconciliation, and the mission of the Church.

Thirty-nine I-Lifers responded to that call and spent their week serving in the neighborhood of Orange Mound in Memphis. We repaired four roofs and spent many hours giving care and empowerment to homeowners in the name of Jesus Christ. The work was both physically and spiritually demanding. Here are just a few highlights:

~ Just 3 days before the trip, we were still \$2,500 short of our fundraising goal. But our team worked hard and God is faithful. At 9 p.m. the night before our departure, we tallied up the gifts and learned that we had exceeded our fundraising goal of \$13,500 by \$150. Amazing! But God wasn't done -- in total, the team raised \$15,046. Any additional funds raised for the trip are directed toward future Illini Life missions work.

~ Students heard challenging messages through chapel and daily devotions. They had a night of "exposure visits" with professionals and families who have chosen to live in the inner city to be missional neighbors with the poor. They engaged in spiritual conversations with men and women trapped in drug addiction, prostitution, physical and mental illness, and generational cycles of poverty.

~ An international student from Korea, who participated in the missions trip, became a follower of Christ!

This newsletter is an attempt to capture a few memories and lessons learned from our time in Memphis. May it serve as an expression of our appreciation for your partnership in this gospel work!

In Christ,

Fred Kirstein and Casey Summers
Illini Life Christian Fellowship Staff
Memphis 2015 Project Leaders



"The most memorable part of Memphis for me was throwing up on the side of the road in Effingham. Besides that trauma, I was really blessed by getting to spend over an hour visiting with our homeowner, talking about life and connecting with her. Our team was also able to give her a new ceiling fan, which was a ton of fun." ~Russ Dietrich



"What I observed in Memphis made me find God in real life. How God was there for my homeowner Nia. What God had given to Nia, her precious art skill and her adorable and smart daughter. I was so sure that I heard God telling me that Nia's daughter was a pure work of Him. I saw how God had worked in Nia's life to save her from sin. When I saw this, I blamed myself for pushing God away. I wanted to get my relationship with God back. On the last day, I prayed to God. It was then that my emotions exploded. I cried and asked God for forgiveness, promising to never push Him away again." ~ John Oh



"Roofing was an incredibly fun experience -- but the best part wasn't banging nails or getting to climb around on a 45 degree angle roof or even using a drop saw, but knowing that we were helping out our homeowner. When she thanked us, every sweaty moment was worth it." ~ Evelyn Li