



DIVINE INSPIRATION

STEVE CRISPIN'S CALLING GROWS INTO MINISTRY



It started almost 30 years ago, simply by knocking on doors in the inner city to invite the neighborhood kids to church. From there, longtime District Manager Steve Crispin and his wife, Joan, grew a ministry. What started from humble beginnings is now an organization that changes lives.

The Crispins are part of a large inner-city ministry, Power Source, through the Princeton Pike Church of God in Hamilton, Ohio. They devote countless hours to helping people in need, providing food, clothing and access to medical care, in addition to worship and fellowship. Perhaps, most importantly, they offer a chance for a better life.

“When I got back from Vietnam, I decided I needed to do something for somebody besides myself,” Crispin said.

The idea stayed with him for years that he needed to do something. Several years later, that something became a calling – divine inspiration.

In 1991, the Crispins started with a van to transport kids to church. Services were initially held in the church gymnasium. “We knocked on doors every week ... and started bringing the kids in,” Crispin said. A lot of inner-city kids weren’t going to church anywhere. And it just grew from there.”





Over time, they grew their audience and needed more transportation, but they managed it with the help of generous benefactors, including some from the Kimball Midwest family. Just a couple years ago, former Division Manager Jesse Tatum and his wife, Donna, bought one of the vans Crispin uses for the ministry. He has also received support from the McCurdys.

Power Source eventually outgrew the church gymnasium and began leasing space at a community center to accommodate the 150-200 people who attended services every week.

Then, about 10 years ago, a miracle occurred that made a huge difference to the ministry. Crispin could not view it as divine intervention.

After learning about the Power Source ministry, a historic church in the inner-city neighborhood, St. John's, offered their assistance. The church had a big, industrial kitchen where the Crispins could prepare meals. It was an ideal space in the perfect location. St. John's gifted them the building for \$1. Power Source finally had a permanent home.

"That was a God thing, of course," Crispin said. "We've been down there the last 10 years, right in the inner city ... perfectly placed. Right across from the police station. We feed the kids every week."

Power Source provides a safe place for low-income (often single-parent) families to grow and be challenged physically, mentally and spiritually. But their outreach includes other segments of the neighborhood population, as well. They assist the homeless people and those suffering from addiction.



It's a tough ministry. Crispin compares the neighborhood to the Wild West. Drugs and violence are a huge problem. Shootings are a regular occurrence. But even though it's tough, there is hope.

Harold and Rhonda Swiger, who lead the Power Source children's ministry, said of Crispin, "Steve didn't know at the beginning what kind of effect he was going to have on the community as he would go door to door and talk to the mothers, fathers and children to invite them to church."

Thirty years later, it's clear the Crispins have changed lives. Many of the kids who were involved in the Power Source ministry found success and have gone on to make a difference in the world.

Two sisters who grew up in the ministry from a very young age received scholarships to college. They both went on to complete master's degrees after finishing undergraduate work. Now they work as school counselors in Cincinnati.

Brothers who were part of the ministry as children received college basketball scholarships. After completing their bachelor's degrees, they went on to teach and coach at schools in Texas and Oklahoma, respectively.

Others have grown up to work in other ministries in the region. Still others have found success in business or other pursuits.

Joan Crispin, once in charge of the church kitchen, gave the opportunity to a man who turned his life around after spending time in prison. He makes

sure a nice, hot lunch is served every Sunday after church services – sometimes the only decent meal the families get all week.

These are just a few stories the Crispins had a hand in over the years.

In addition, Power Source has partnered with other organizations to help the community. At one time, a local hospital group worked with Power Source to provide free health screenings, counseling and rides to medical appointments. Power Source once provided space in their church for the Pathway to Hope Pregnancy Care Center. They also work with food banks and other organizations. Fringe Riders, a local motorcycle club, uses space at the church to store food for their charity work.

Through it all, Crispin serves in multiple capacities – teacher, minister and mentor among them. He helps raise funds to support the ministry. He maintains the schedule for the use of the building, ensuring speakers and musicians come in who are relevant to the community. Crispin even officiates at weddings and funerals.

He does all this in addition to working for Kimball Midwest.

"It's been a real blessing that God gave me the ability to do something like that," Crispin said.

For more information about
Power Source Ministries, visit
ppcog.com/inner-city-ministry

