



Bryan Family Update, February 2011  
West Point, New York

Harvest Foundation [www.harvestfoundation.org](http://www.harvestfoundation.org)  
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**“Equip the saints for work of service, for building up the body of Christ . . .” Ephesians 4:12**



The Hudson River almost frozen!

*I really love seeing young people realize they can be ministers!*

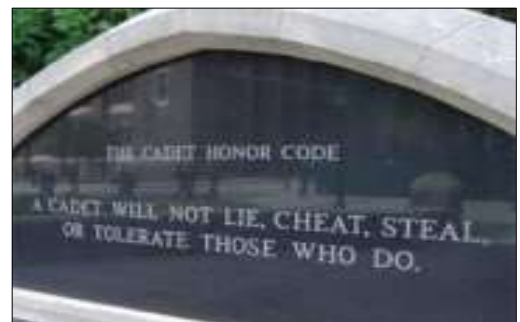
- There is a sophomore cadet who has found meaning to the words “minister of reconciliation”. He is taking on a new identity. He wants to lead Mercy Teams (Seed Projects, some call it) – teams of cadets who meet practical needs, bathed in prayer, using our own resources, as part of the invitation by God to join him in reconciling all things. Today he took the initiative to brief 8 upperclass senior cadets on his plan. His briefing was not perfect or polished, not altogether, but it was a great start. So proud of him!
- This past week I met with a junior cadet – who like most of us at some time – has been disappointed in our local church. He does not like the preaching, music, and the lack of fellowship. His needs are not being met. It was a treat to take him through a study of the purpose of the local church, and how a gathering a believers – if each member uses his/her “body part” within the body of Christ – can be a serious transformational group by God’s help within a community.

Most of my counseling sessions end with a firm handshake or hug – but after meeting with these two cadets – both ended with a look of shock – not a lot of words were spoken. The best way I can describe it is like this: you are doing down a freeway at 60mph, and then take a U-turn. I think both of the cadets are on their way to finding the identity God desires of us all. And hopefully someday, they will sense the calling to “equip the saints for the work of service”.

Please pray for follow-up talks, and that I can gently and confidently explain God’s plan for his local church – so that these men will be able to lead future generations.

**Telling the Truth:**

There a couple places at West Point I have never visited. This past week I found such a place – the conference room of an Honor Committee hearing. After taking a formal oath, I was seated before 20 cadets, who listened to my testimony/character witness in defense of a cadet friend who sat 20 feet away from me.



The story: one of the young men I mentor, one of our cadet Sunday School teachers, recently confessed to cheating on a homework assignment. I cannot tell you how PROUD I was that this cadet publically confessed to this violation, knowing that it will probably incur serious consequence. As a junior-year cadet, he has had time to know the Cadet Honor Code, and will probably forfeit graduation with his class. Plus, there is a good chance that he will be separated from the Academy. Since he is his third year, he requires military obligation – meaning that he has to pay back his time as a cadet and be sent soon to an Regular Army unit, as a Specialist (E-4), and serve his time as a soldier (not as an officer).

I will not write more about this incident, because I want to keep it private, but if you are interested in how this event turns out, please shoot me a quick email note. [eric.bryan@usma.edu](mailto:eric.bryan@usma.edu). Please continue to pray the Academy’s leadership makes the right decision. I believe the best leaders are the ones who learn from their mistakes – not the ones who have squeaky-clean records.

## Celebrating February:

- February – in our family – is a month of birthday celebrations! Berea, Joel, and I have birthdays this month, as does my sister and mom. Jody celebrated a late January birthday, and little John will celebrate a half-birthday on Feb 25<sup>th</sup> (that counts, right?) – so the streamers will be hanging from the dining room ceiling for over a month. It's good to find reason to celebrate!
- In ministry updates, and newsletters such as this, the temptation for me is to search for the exciting, novel, unique things God is doing, and communicate those things to you.



Berea and me "Birthday Buddies" on our birthdays, 5 and 6 February – only hours apart on our birthdays.

God reminds me that He is working at all times, even in the mundane activities of everyday life. I hope we continue to see God's pleasure in the little things: *ordering administrative supplies for children's church, encouraging a volunteer, helping a child paint a picture, changing bed sheets, fixing a smoke alarm, preparing a church bulletin, writing checks, doing an after-action report, calling a grand-parent, shoveling snow, shoveling snow, and shoveling snow.* Our goal is to be consistently satisfied in the everyday tasks of life, even if nothing interesting happens.

## Reason for prayer:

- Pray for a team of cadets who will travel to a men's conference the first weekend of March. I've spent much of the month preparing the team, and setting up an officer to lead the trip. Trips like this are special, for it gives cadets a chance to connect deeply with a Christian mentor, and talk about real life. In some ways I think trips like this are similar to what the disciples experienced when walking with Jesus from Jerusalem to Galilee.
- Conflict resolution. Unresolved conflict never goes away. I continue to learn how important it is to clarify goals, expectations, speak truth, and communicate clearly. Much of the month I have been the middle-man, settling disputes, and getting people to communicate with each other. Please pray for continued strength, and that Christians, myself included, would act in way that pleases the Father.
- I continually need more time alone with You, Father. I need to hear Your voice, and not fall victim to the 100's of voices competing for my attention. I want to be about Your work, and be Your ambassador, not the world's slave. It is unthinkable that You would give me so much work in a day, that this work would prevent me from spending quality time hearing from You. Help me know what work I can let go, and what work is important.
- Father, please infuse me with more of Your compassion. Give me tears again, and a new set of eyes to see everyday people in a new way. Slow me down to see the people in front of me well.