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December 2023,

*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

*Matthew 6:19-21*

Friends of JJM,

This can be a complicated time of year. While there is so much joy and warmth to remember as we celebrate the incarnation of Christ, in the holiday season the lows can sting all the more.

Last week I sat with a woman in our office who came to us in need. She explained to me how her husband has needed fusions along his spine and was in a season without work. She and her son also had medical issues this same year and they were at a breaking point. With sincerity and tears beginning to form she expressed their situation and need for food. I asked her to wait while I got something for her. I went and grabbed a “Jesus Blanket” which has a legacy from our founders to be a tangible reminder of God’s presence covering us in hard seasons. We talked a while longer, I thanked her for coming and assured her of God’s abundant joyful provision.

I am so thankful we’re able to ease those woes for families experiencing hard times. This year, we’ve been able to bring this type of **provision to 730 families**. Each family that walks through our doors has a story, many never thought they’d be in the position they are in. Each is greeted by amazing volunteers, a warm building, and food to sustain them. To supply these families with this provision we’ve been blessed with **nearly 700,000 lbs of food**. This food doesn’t only serve the people who walk through our doors. Each month we help supply **9 other food ministries** we supply feeding **an additional 600+ families** throughout the West Michigan area.

Writing this year end review is one of my favorite parts of being the director here. We have been so provided for by God through well established food supplier connections and amazing volunteers. As well as Churches, individuals, and local businesses giving financial support.

In the above passage I was reminded of Jesus’ boldness, no topic was off limits for him. As we approach Christmas, the war for our affection becomes more apparent. The gravity of getting goods and storing up riches can be strong. We have to fight, reminding ourselves the season’s foundation is the celebration of Christ coming to us. Christ the greatest gift, calls to us to turn our eyes from the desire of getting, storing up, and the fear of self-preservation to trust in him. He is the provider, we need not worry about all the things, food, clothing, tomorrow’s provision.

You can see Jesus' logic as he turns from our above passage to our worry about our own provision a few verses later (see Matthew 6:25-34). Let's be bold to remind ourselves that God is concerned for us, that he is our provider, and we need not hoard riches and goods in fear. In this season, let's look outward to storing our riches up in heaven.

We at JJM pray you will have a deeply peaceful, meaning filled, Christmas as you rest in the good news that God came down to be among us and save us from our many woes. Blessings to you all.

### **Current realities**

This year has been tight. I expect we've all felt the pinch. Walking out of a grocery store scratching your head about how it costs that much to get the same items as normal. As a non-profit, we've felt that as well. This year, we have seen a record number of families signing up for our service. With the need never being greater for the families we serve, our needs have increased. To continue to meet these needs we continue to rely on the generosity of the caring community around us.

Like many non-profit organizations, we rely on half our budgeted income to be supplied at year end. As you can see below our total operating budget for the year is \$220,100. This pays for our rent, utilities, vehicle maintenance, gas, and three staff to run the organization. We currently still need to see \$72,500 more to sustain this work. Thank you for all your giving, prayers, and future support of this ministry. We are so thankful to all those behind this effort and know we couldn't do it without your caring partnership!

### **Current supply needs**

*Inside our glass double doors, there is a shelf to the left with labeled bins for supplies.*

Egg cartons - We have seen an amazing inflow of egg cartons! We currently don't have need for more but will keep you posted!

Shopping bags - We would happily take any clean shopping bags for our shoppers to use.

### **The current biggest volunteer needs**

Currently, we need cleaners on Thursday and on Saturdays. To sign up for those and to see a complete list of current volunteer needs on our website [jjmwm.org/biggest-volunteer-needs](http://jjmwm.org/biggest-volunteer-needs)

With Gratitude,



Geoff McGannon - Executive Director

Year to date financial update:

**Budgeted income:** \$220,100 **Contribution income:** \$162,200 **Current deficit/surplus:** -\$72,500