
March 2023

When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. After he sat down his disciples came to him. Then he began to teach them... Matthew 5:1-2

Matthew is a beloved gospel of mine. It was the first gospel I read after choosing to follow Christ. In his gospel Matthew presents a new authoritative teacher. The Jewish people had Moses as their great teacher of God's instruction. Now here was someone like Moses, and yet more.

Jesus was a new Moses and more. You can glean a hint of Matthew's intention in presenting Jesus this way when he begins this section with "He went up the mountain." This is a pointed phrase pointing back to Moses' going up the mountain to deliver God's instruction to his people.

What happens after this ascent is what I want to leave you with this time; Jesus sat down waiting for those who would gather for his instruction. Those who wanted to come he allowed, those who came he taught. His invitation is open. It is an invitation to allow him to teach. It is both a humble and expectant position. He is the teacher, those who come to him he will instruct. The Jewish people thought they had it figured out, yet they needed God's instruction. The question for us is, "Are we willing to be taught?" To listen afresh and be instructed, as they needed it so we need it.

As I've been preparing to look into Matthew and Jesus' words in this sermon I've been reading a commentary by Scot McKnight. When considering how to take Jesus' words, I was helped by his exhortation to consider what Jesus says at the end of his sermon. He desires for us to put his words into practice, to build our lives on the sure foundation of his divine teaching (Matt 7: 24-27).

Jesus, as Matthew points out throughout his letter, is both a new Moses and Immanuel - God with us. In that way he is a better Moses. Matthew's hope is we would gather around Jesus and hear his instruction, hear it and obey. The next few times we will dive into some of these instructions and consider how to obey, how to be a disciple or student of our teacher, Jesus-God Immanuel.

All who came he provided with God's loving instruction. He is a provider and we seek to honor his heart as such here at JJM. Our distributions have been busy, some 10-20% busier than before. People are still stretched thin. Covid food relief dollars have ceased, while food prices are still 11% above pre-pandemic prices. Food is expensive right now and we are honored to offer God's supply to those who need it!

Continue on back...

All this while food supply has been tight. A lot of our typical winters are supplied by food from California. With all their drought and subsequent flooding their produce has been harder to come by. All of this affects our current reality, but God is still providing. There are food rescue programs that have been increasing in Ottawa county amongst food pantry partners. Good things are afoot and God continuously provides for us to serve those who come in need! Praise be to him!

Changes at JJM

So we can continue to give witness to God our provider, we are expanding our food ministry and transitioning our clothing ministry. Last year we had to turn away 1,800 lbs. of grocery goods as well as chips and health products because we simply didn't have enough space. We look forward to continuing to serve the needs for clothing through our partnership with the amazing team at Micah's House while adding to our ability to have more food resources available for those who come through our doors. Micah's House is an amazing clothing ministry sponsored by Georgetown CRC. We welcome your prayers for a smooth transition and the growth of God's provision for those who need it! "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12:4-5)

Current supply needs

Family Fare receipts - We no longer need them anymore. They discontinued their program. Thank you for the years of thoughtfully saving those for us!

Egg cartons - We have a wonderful problem, we have been gifted more eggs than we have cartons. If you can, please drop off any clean egg cartons inside our glass double doors.

Shopping bags - We are a little low and would happily take any clean shopping bags for our shoppers to use (there is a shelf to the left with labeled bins).

End of the year funding

We met our funding goal for the year, thank you for your generous support of our ministry!

Current biggest volunteer needs

Grant writing - If you have experience and would like to help us in this area that would be great!

Wednesdays:

Pantry Help (restocking food) 11:15am - 1:30pm

Pantry Help (restocking food) 3:30pm - 6:00pm

Fridays: Warehouse help 10am -12pm (sorting food)

Saturdays:

Check in Help *Bilingual need* 10:30am - 1pm

Pantry Help (restocking food) 10am - 12pm

Pantry Help (restocking food) 12pm - 1:30pm

If you are interested in helping us out please go to our website - jjmwm.org/volunteer

With Gratitude,



Geoff McGannon - Executive Director

Year to date financial update:

Budgeted income: \$36,700 **Contribution income:** \$34,500 **Current deficit/surplus:** -\$2,200