

MTM

NEWSLETTER

June 2020

YOU GAVE WENDY A FRESH START!

Your support helped her overcome challenges that led to homelessness.

MEL TROTTER
MINISTRIES

WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

We've been talking to our staff recently about our "why." Why do we do what we do at Mel Trotter? And the answer is simply this: We believe that every person who walks this earth is made in the image of God, and who loves them so much that he sent his son Jesus Christ to die for them.

Because of that, our number one job at Mel Trotter is to demonstrate the compassion of Christ. We want to make sure people experiencing hunger and homelessness know that you can get hope, help and love in the name of Jesus Christ.

In the summertime, that means going out to the parks and roads and passing out cold water and

ice to those who may be exposed to tough outdoor elements. It means throwing open our doors and preparing food for children who have no meal without the free school lunches. And it means showing hurting individuals like Wendy (whom you'll read about in this newsletter) that they are worthy of a good life.

I want to thank you for joining us in that mission through your prayers and support. As I've mentioned before, we simply could not do what we do without you. Especially over the past several months as the nation reels from the impact of the Coronavirus. Your help kept us reaching out to the most vulnerable in our community in the name of

Christ.

May God bless you for your continued support as we head into the crucial summer months. We are trusting God to work through you to help save and transform lives.

Have a great summer!



Dennis Van Kampen
President/CEO, Mel Trotter Ministries

THANK YOU FOR STEPPING UP DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC!

Your generosity reached hurting people during the coronavirus crisis!

As the coronavirus quickly spread across our country and the world, the people we serve became increasingly vulnerable. We asked for your help, and you stepped up for those experiencing hunger and homelessness in our community.

With the increased needs for staff to fill voids left by ceasing volunteer operations, contracting with organizations for supplemental staffing, increased costs of prepackaged and prepared foods, and increased needs for supplies, Mel Trotter Ministries

needed to raise an additional \$100,000 over our budget to operate. We are grateful to friends like you for giving generously.

Because of you, we were able to react quickly, providing alternate locations for our guests to spread out and be isolated when necessary. We were able to transport individuals to local healthcare organizations for testing. Ultimately, you came through not only for our guests - but for our entire community. Thank you!



“THEY THOUGHT I WAS WORTHY.”

Thank you for helping people like Wendy start over with confidence!



At Mel Trotter, we believe everyone deserves dignity, kindness and compassion. God has made us all in His image and with a divine purpose. We want to help people like Wendy gain the courage to turn their lives around.

Your gifts help us show people like Wendy respect and allow God’s love to shine through. Thanks to God’s help and the generosity of friends like you, Wendy’s confidence grew. She even repaired her relationship with her 19-year-old daughter.

“Every day she calls me and says, ‘Hello, beautiful,’ and I say back, ‘Hello, beautiful.’ We build each other up and respect each other,” Wendy says.

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As a child, Wendy volunteered with her mother at the local kitchen to feed those experiencing hunger and homelessness. They even brought toys to Mel Trotter Ministries. But Wendy never thought she would need help herself.

“I was raised to be a nice person,” Wendy explains. Her troubles began when she found herself in an unhealthy relationship. She had few choices because Wendy was still recovering from major surgery and was wheelchair-bound.

Somewhere along the way, Wendy also became estranged from her daughter.

That’s when she came to Mel Trotter Ministries.

While staying in the emergency shelter, Wendy found out about the Restoration Programs. In those classes, she learned about healthy boundaries and relationships. Wendy says, “I’m not letting people run over me.”

Wendy says the compassion of Christ that she was shown at the Mission made her feel loved and valued. “I couldn’t believe that I walked down the halls and the CEO would say, ‘Hi Wendy.’ And I was invited to events like Seasons of Hope. I guess they thought I was worthy.”

Wendy struggled with many health complications while she was here, **but she trusted in God to bring her through it.** Through tears, she shared, “I know that God’s there with me..My big thing was to be able to walk again. I left the hospital in a wheelchair and I asked God, ‘Am I going to be able to walk?’ Look at me — I can walk! I’m in regular shoes and it’s so amazing. It’s God’s doing.”

You helped Wendy make the journey of restoration, from the physical to the emotional. Today, she is a confident, happy woman who has a place of her own. She plans to stay connected with Mel Trotter and the friends she has made.

“I don’t take anything for granted — whatever I get or have earned, God has given me,” she says. “I’m thankful for everything and that I have friends and support.”

Thank you for helping people like Wendy learn that they are worthy of a good and happy life in Christ. Your support makes programs like Job Readiness, Housing Readiness and Step Up Recovery possible and to walk alongside people like Wendy in their journey to restoration through the power of Jesus Christ.



SUMMER SPIKE

When school lets out, more children and families need your help.

With school releasing early due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some children were hit hard. Many were counting on free school breakfasts and lunches. Family budgets were stretched tight and many parents lost their jobs.

Because of these challenges, we are preparing for more children and families who will need help this summer. Numbers always increase during the summer, but Mel Trotter Ministries will likely see more children and families experiencing hunger and homelessness in the coming months.

Kate O'Keefe, one of our ministry partners from Family Promise of Grand Rapids, says, "We see a spike in family homelessness during the summer months. When school lets out for the summer, it can often cause overcrowding."

According to Kent County statistics, of the almost 8,500 people who experienced homelessness in the previous year, more than 2,500 were school-aged kids . . . 500 more than just two years prior!

Families like Tamiqua's are the ones who will be struggling as schools close and the summer heats up. A hard-working single mom of two young children,

Tamiqua found herself in a desperate situation when housing problems forced them to move out with nowhere else to go.

"We were sleeping in my van at night. I had a cooler that I put food for the boys in," she explains. The frightened mom was desperate, but then someone recommended Mel Trotter Ministries.

"It was after hours and I was scared," she said. "I didn't think they were going to let me in. But they did. Everybody was welcoming to my kids. To know that your kids are in a safe, welcoming space . . . the kids were happy being here, having space and not living in a van or seeing me crying."

While at Mel Trotter, Tamiqua was able to get a better job and eventually move with her children back into a house.

This is the kind of help your support will offer children and families experiencing hunger and homelessness this summer. Your gifts not only provide meals and a safe place to stay, but also connect families in the greater Grand Rapids area with restorative programs to help them get back on their feet.

RAISING GOOD STEWARDS OF GOD'S RESOURCES

Today's younger generations need guidance from parents and family members to understand the connection between thriving spiritually and thriving financially. It's important that we show them that giving back is what God calls us to do.

Talking about the future can create certainty, peace and even inspire them to get involved with the values, passions and causes you care about — like the work of Mel Trotter Ministries. Helping our children understand that giving is an act of worship will not only help them manage their money but also become good stewards.

Two things your children and grandchildren need to know as they grow are:

Why you embrace faith. In John 6:44, Jesus declares, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him ..." How were you uniquely drawn to Christ? Communicating your faith journey can help instill a godly legacy and inspire curiosity. If serving Jesus is the "why" that gets you out of bed in the morning, tell them!

Why you have certain personal values. Perhaps you believe a solid work ethic is of utmost importance. What about living with integrity? Exercising financial stewardship or planning for retirement? Are you passionate about supporting a certain cause? If it matters to you, it's worth sharing with them.

Then, you can easily turn your "why" into action, by supporting a ministry or cause that aligns with your values. A charitable gift annuity is a simple way to communicate your "why" to the next generation, receive an income stream for life and bless Mel Trotter Ministries in the process.

Donate things like cash, CDs, savings bonds, IRA distributions, collectibles and more. You can donate now or through your Will or a Trust.

To learn more about raising cheerful givers, visit meltrotter.org/plannedgiving.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Hazard pay for hazard pay

MTM Golf Outing

Plan to attend this year's Golf Outing on June 29, 2020. Proceeds will go towards hazard pay for the front-line staff at Mel Trotter Ministries.

Register to play in-person or virtually! You can play with us at RAILSIDE GOLF CLUB in Byron Center, or play anywhere by June 29 and send us your scorecard!

Register and learn more at meltrotter.org/golf.



SUMMER

Want to help us prepare for the summer months?
Check out this checklist!

As supplies dwindle and numbers of children and families needing help this summer escalate, any donations friends like you can share will be a blessing! Maybe you can gather a few items ... as a family, as a church or neighborhood, or similar.

Here's a quick checklist of items needed as we get ready for summer:

- Bottled Water
- Sheets
- Ice Packs
- Hand Sanitizer
- Sunblock
- Summer Clothing (*shorts, tank tops*)
- Towels



MEL TROTTER MINISTRIES

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meltrotter.org

Our Mission Statement

Mel Trotter Ministries exists to demonstrate the compassion of Jesus Christ, through rescue and restoration for anyone experiencing hunger and homelessness.



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