

MTM newsletter

MEL TROTTER
MINISTRIES
MAIN ENTRANCE
COMMERCE AVENUE SW

**"Life change doesn't
happen *alone*."**

How MTM volunteers are moving
the needle on homelessness.

+ Exciting Updates: Golf Recap,
Volunteer Opportunities &
The Community Spotlight

September 2023



Reflecting on God's call in Micah 6:8

"What does the Lord require of you?" This is the question posed in the book of Micah. If I am honest, I am far more comfortable thinking about what the Lord requires of other people, not me. Too often I see someone and judge them by their circumstance and think about what God wants them to do. But what about me?

In this passage, it is clear that God was asking this question of the nation of Israel. But God was also asking it of individuals, and I believe He still asks it of you and me. The verse says God has shown us what is good. He then asks not what God requires of someone else, but what He requires of me. In today's world, we seem to have reverted back to judging and prescribing cures for others, rather than looking at ourselves in the mirror.

It is also significant that God answers the question in Micah 6:8. God says that we are to

act justly or do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. Act justly toward or on behalf of whom? Recently, I heard someone ask what part of our faith allows us to exploit people or not help them. **As humans, we tend to be very compassionate toward those whom we know and love. Those that are like us, believe like us, work as hard as we do, live like us. But is that what God requires?**

Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew says that whenever we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the ill, or visit the prisoner in some mysterious way we are serving Jesus. Notice that neither passage puts a qualifier on whom we serve. Care for them only if they are doing everything right, or making the best choices, or agree with us? No, it is far harder than that. God says everyone—period.

How do we seek justice? One devotional I read put it this way:

"For example, if you see someone being mistreated or being treated unfairly, speak up and support them. If you have the opportunity to level the playing field and provide equal opportunity for someone that may be often overlooked, take it to help them. When you have the opportunity to tell someone what Jesus has done for them on the cross, take it. That is showing them true justice. God has leveled the playing field for us all!"

Next, God requires us to love mercy. Mercy is what God has shown each of us. It is God's loving kindness offered to us all. According to the text,





God requires that we love that kind of mercy and grace—as undeserving as we may be. It is hard to show the loving kindness of God. **The question is, as one pastor once said to me, do we believe the scripture or not? If we do, then we must show and share God’s mercy with every single person. We cannot revert back to judging whether or not someone is worthy of mercy.**

Lastly, God requires us to walk humbly with our God. This is hard. Yet it is what God requires. Humility is defined in Philippians 2 through the example of Jesus. He humbled himself and considered others and their needs above his own. Jesus did not try to put himself up on a pedestal or promote himself or take pride in his position; rather, He became a servant. Not only to those who looked, spoke or acted like Him—but for all.

When I was young, there was a popular song on the radio. Some of the lyrics include:

“As I, turn up the collar on
My favorite winter coat
This wind is blowin’ my mind
I see the kids in the street
With not enough to eat
Who am I, to be blind
pretending not to see their
needs?”

I’m starting with the man in the mirror

I’m asking him to change his ways

And no message could’ve been any clearer

If you wanna make the world a better place

Take a look at yourself and then make a change”

My prayer for my own life is that I start by looking in the mirror and asking myself what the Lord requires of me and for whom God is asking me to do justice and to love mercy. I pray that I would continue to grow more like Jesus and become humble in my walk with God.

Throughout this newsletter you will find many exciting opportunities to serve, particularly during this upcoming Thanksgiving season. To feed the hungry, because Jesus said feed the hungry. To clothe those who need clothes, because Jesus said clothe the naked. To care for all those who are sick, because Jesus said care for the sick.

May we all spend time reflecting on these timeless truths and consider what it means for our own lives.

Grace and peace,



Dennis Van Kampen
President/CEO
Mel Trotter Ministries

GOLF RECAP



MTM’s Annual Golf Outing was a huge success! Thank you for coming out, playing golf, and supporting Housing and Workforce Development Programs for our guests. Through these programs, we help individuals obtain in-demand technical skills, secure and keep jobs, and find transitional and permanent housing.

In memory of Dick Wiggins and his commitment to service, MTM presented the annual Dick Wiggins Outstanding Volunteer Award to Robin Bartells. Congratulations, Robin!

A huge shout-out to our platinum sponsors, Andy J. Egan Co., Ram Die Corporation, Rockford Construction, along with all our other sponsors, and each committee member. We could not have had such a fantastic event without your support.



ALL HANDS ON DECK



During his 10-year prison stay, Trevor* became blind. He had no place to go and had many barriers in his way. When he needed to trust and rely on people the most, he decided to take a bus to Grand Rapids after he got released from prison because he had some history here.

When he made it to town, he connected with a local church that kept him in a hotel for a few days, and through that connection, he learned about MTM.

Trevor was not hopeful and was in a lost, dark place – that is when he turned to MTM for support.

As soon as he arrived at the doors of Mel Trotter, he received immediate care. The nursing staff assessed him and decided he required one-on-one care because of the severe visual impairment he was experiencing. Cataracts completely took over both of his eyes. The first step for Trevor was getting him set up with a primary care provider, then scheduling appointments at an eye center to get him care with the end goal being surgery.

Along with medical care, Trevor received hot and nourishing meals, a safe place to rest, one-on-one support, and access to resources he needed to leave homelessness.

Three different guests who were also experiencing homelessness walked next to Trevor, guiding him through the hallways, cafeteria, and other areas during his entire stay at MTM. After a couple months of being at the Mission, Trevor underwent his first of two eye surgeries. Someone needed to stay in the waiting room throughout the duration of the surgery, so an MTM volunteer gave up his day to drive Trevor to and from his surgery and stayed there and supported him all the way through.

Trevor had his second surgery in March. The outreach team at MTM drove him to his surgery, stayed with him until it was complete, and helped him get all the necessary post-surgery medication.

After two successful eye surgeries, Trevor can fully see after six years of being blind!

Through the medical outreach team, he received post-surgery check-ups. They also helped him get his much-needed cell phone functioning, so he could be independent and communicate with his doctors and schedule appointments.

Because of faithful supporters like you and the resources provided by MTM, Trevor has his sight back! Now he is back on his feet seeking housing to continue on a better path forward.

* name changed to protect guest's privacy



What stands out to you about Trevor's story on the previous page? Of course, the miraculous nature of Trevor regaining his vision overcomes you with joy.

But did you notice how many different individuals were involved in making the surgeries happen? A local church, nursing staff, the outreach team, fellow guests, and an MTM volunteer.

At MTM, we often say we cannot do this work alone. Trevor's story is proof of that.

Every day, MTM is working with medical and mental health providers, government agencies, faith-based organizations, and more to walk alongside our guests on their journey. By becoming a volunteer, you can help make a lasting impact for an individual like Trevor.

Volunteering at Mel Trotter Ministries goes beyond just giving your time. It's a way to carry out God's call on our lives as believers. To clothe

needy, to feed the hungry, and to demonstrate the compassion of Jesus to the most vulnerable in our community.

Each of us is created with unique gifts and talents. Whether it's serving a meal, extending hospitality or maintaining the Mission, we all have a role to play in giving back to our hurting neighbors in their time of great need.

A hot meal doesn't happen alone.

A new job doesn't happen alone.

A new home doesn't happen alone.

Spiritual growth doesn't happen alone.

Life change doesn't happen alone.

It takes all hands on deck to prevent homelessness.



WILL YOU
join us?

Visit meltrotter.org/volunteer
to see how you can help.

SEASON OF HOPE

Join us for Season of Hope on October 5 at the JW Marriott! This incredible evening highlights the work done daily at MTM to provide hope and transformation to individuals experiencing homelessness. You'll hear exciting updates and an inspiring message from keynote speaker Ashley Ward. It's a night to celebrate the impact of our community's



generosity and compassion. Come and be part of this special occasion and help us continue to make a difference in the lives of people in our community.

Reserve your seat before registration closes! We can't wait to see you there. Register today!



To register, scan the QR code or visit meltrotter.org/seasonofhope

TURKEY DROP

Turkey Drop is an annual tradition in West Michigan. Mel Trotter Ministries, WOOD Radio and Celebration Cinema partner together for an entire day devoted to collecting frozen turkeys for our neighbors in need in the greater Grand Rapids area.

Participating is easy! You can drive up and drop off one or

more frozen turkeys or sign up to volunteer during the event.

See you at Turkey Drop on November 15 at Celebration Cinema North or South!



To learn more, scan the QR code or visit meltrotter.org/turkeydrop

BACK TO SCHOOL

It's back-to-school season! For all your gently used shoes and clothing needs, visit one of the many MTM Thrift Store locations throughout the greater Grand Rapids area. Through your purchase, you help financially support the programs of Mel Trotter Ministries to end homelessness one life at a time.

For locations and hours, visit: meltrotter.org/thrift



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the community

SPOTLIGHT

Matt and Staci Perkins have been a part of The Community as monthly givers for 17 years. They grew up in West Michigan, and through their church, heard how Mel Trotter Ministries helps individuals experiencing homelessness in the community. Because of their faithful giving over the years, they have provided so many meals, nights of shelter, and hope for our guests.

When asked why they decided to start giving to MTM, Staci said, "I feel like I want to help people in different circumstances, but I don't really know how to do that. And I feel like Mel Trotter bridges that gap. They have the resources, relationships, and the location to make it happen. So, I want to help that effort." By their monthly gift, they believe it's a way to be the hands and feet of Jesus to help others begin on a better path forward.

Staci said, "I really like the monthly support option because it's a really small amount. I wish I could give more, but it does add up...if everybody gives a little, then a lot can happen."

The Perkin's monthly gift—for over 200 consecutive months—has impacted individuals experiencing homelessness in tangible ways, like meals and a safe place to sleep, but it has also impacted them as a family. Staci said, "If you can give to a ministry, you have a part of in that. And I want to have a part in what MTM is doing. It's amazing."

Thank you, Matt and Staci, for walking alongside your neighbors every step of the way on their journey towards a brighter future!

Want to join *the* community?



Scan the QR code or visit:
meltrotter.org/thecommunity



XXCONTACT NAMEXX
XXPRIM ADDR LINE1XX
XXPRIM ADDR LINE2XX
XXPRIM CITYXX, XXPRIM STATEXX XXPRIM ZIP CODEXX
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Thanksgiving

Community Meal

Do you have a heart for serving your community?

Thanksgiving is right around the corner, and we need your help to serve thousands of meals to our neighbors with nowhere else to go.

Your involvement could make all the difference in helping one of our guests chart a new path forward.

It starts with a meal.
And it starts with *you*.



To volunteer, scan the QR code or visit meltrotter.org/thanksgiving

