



Dear < First name >,

In the midst of so much change, I find it heartening to turn to the pages of the New Testament and listen to the master story-teller, Jesus. Recently I had the special privilege of sharing the pulpit with Pastor Bryan Meyers where we reflected together on one of his stories found in Mark 10: the Good Samaritan. Just go back and read it. It's so good and has so many layers.

My two take aways are this: 1. God manages to simplify even the complicated. 2. God loves surprising stories and characters.

Jesus is asked over and over, *'what is the essence of the law?'*, and once again he simplifies it: **Love God** (with everything you've got) and **Love your neighbor as yourself**. He goes on to describe this guy beat up on the road who is ignored by two religious men and then ultimately is taken care of by a Samaritan who by every definition is an outsider (or a reject himself).

The hero in this story was fiercely despised by the man in pain.

When asked at the end, "which one showed love to his neighbor," Jesus knew the answer he'd hear: the Samaritan who came to the man's aid, put him on his donkey, toted him to a nearby inn, paid what was needed and promised to return. Too bad the religious guys didn't do the right thing because they didn't want to dirty themselves or be delayed in their important jobs.

The hero is the one who showed mercy to another with whom there was a long history of conflict.

Not difficult: Love your neighbor.

Difficult: Love your neighbor. Let's be honest, this can be so hard to do for us!

Back in 1981, the Jesus Centers' founders—two Mary's and two crockpots—decided to show up and show mercy and began to do the difficult: Love your neighbor.

OK, there's a third take away from our story: **God doesn't show love as a formula**. We aren't simply told to go buy a donkey, become an outcast, invest in the local hotel, or walk along lonesome roads.

And thankfully, the Marys never thought: "the only way the Jesus Center can be the Jesus Center is to serve food out of crockpots." It was their way to show mercy and to both serve God and love others as he commanded us to do.

That's what the Jesus Center has been doing for 40 years, and what we intend to do for the decades ahead!

TURN OVER PLEASE

For more information, please call (530) 345-2640 or visit jesuscenter.org to make a secure donation online.



JESUS CENTER

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jesuscenter.org

If you would like to receive this monthly newsletter electronically, please give us your e-mail address:

IN CELEBRATION OF THE JESUS CENTER'S 40TH YEAR, I'd like to make a \$40 donation!

- One-time gift
- Monthly gift



YES, I want to support the Jesus Center's work to help the vulnerable with a financial gift of:

- \$35.00 to help feed and care for 14 people
- \$50.00 to help feed and care for 20 people
- \$75.00 to help feed and care for 30 people
- I am interested in giving regularly through Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)

For Credit Card Donation: Visa MasterCard

Card #: _____ Exp. _____

Name (please print): _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Billing Address : _____

Signature: _____

We are moving to 2255 Fair Street!

In our 20,000 sq foot new home, you will find our administrative offices, a fully outfitted commercial kitchen and emergency sheltering focused on recovery for 60!

After 4 years of planning, research, prayer and collaboration, the Jesus Center will focus on its specialty of recovery focused sheltering by expanding Sabbath House. Sabbath House began providing safe, sober emergency shelter to women and children in 2002 by offering overnight shelter. Eighteen years later, Sabbath House can celebrate that it has been a starting point to thousands of women in our community.

In response to knowing that over 60% of the homeless population are men, we deliberately designed a men's shelter for 25. On the women's side, we've planned for 35. For the first time, the Sabbath House will operate a comprehensive 24-hour/7-days a week program on Fair Street. With the new location comes an updated approach, one we're calling Pathways. We are committed to serving those who are ready to make a change in their life with comprehensive services.

We have built a trauma informed, strengths-based approach to address a wide variety of needs facing participants in crisis. Each participant will co-create their path to an abundant life taking advantage of county and private opportunities at the Jesus Center, the Renewal Center and from other providers to build their capacity and independence. Through working one on one with a case manager and a task coach, participants will work to follow a path towards a healthy life.

Let me share what our amazing Program Director, Shelly Watson, is planning for the Pathways Program:

- **Respite:** This Pathway is an option for a focus on letting the body repair from living in survival mode: sleep, eating well and regularly, knowing where one will keep their belongs, and some self-exploration.
- **Purpose:** This Pathway is an opportunity to dive into their talents, gifts, skills, and purpose. "For I know the plans I have for you" declared the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." ~ Jeremiah 29:11. This Pathway will also allow participants to engage in work therapy, skill building, specific vocational training program and/or the internship placements. Many will ultimately find a job through this work.
- **Independence:** This Pathway is focused on housing, financial health, legal issues, life skills, and will include connecting with a mentor or a sponsor. This Pathway prepares participants to take the next steps towards housing and regaining agency over their life.
- **Wellness:** The Wellness Pathway creates opportunities to pursue physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health. Classes, health education, access to primary care, addiction recovery, and behavioral health services will be made available.



Our experienced staff will join newly hired staff to build a person-centered, trauma informed environment for participants to enter and truly take a deep breath and accept the love of God. We count on community members to join this work as volunteers, trainers, task managers, and bringers of joy and hope!

There are many ways for the community to be involved in our new chapter.

- **Join us in prayer:** this is a big change for our team, our community and for the many folks experiencing homelessness in our community.
- **Join us in sharing our exciting news and pointing people to our website for more information:** jesuscenter.org; renewalcenterchico.org; follow us on Facebook
- **Join us in making an ongoing \$40/month commitment to honor our 40 years in ministry.**
- **Join us in continuing to raise capital to complete our entire plan of the Renewal Center.**
A one-time gift of a pledge over 5 years is welcome!

Please know that we are here to share more about this exciting change. Call us at 530.345.2640 and ask for me, Amber, or Shelly. We will be more than happy to answer your questions!

Blessings,

Laura R. Cootsona
Executive Director