



## Inspiring Others

June 30, 2021

Rachel Yates

Nice work, Milwaukee Presbytery! You've made the national news yet again and for all the right reasons. In Fresh Impressions today and in our social media, we've shared [the article](#) published nationally about our Matthew 25 efforts. In addition to a feature on Living Hope Presbyterian Church (our newest Matthew 25 congregation), the article recounts some of the other many ways our churches are embodying this gospel message. Others will be inspired by your intentional acts of compassion and charity, not for our glory, but God's.

Thanks to the exceedingly generous gift of our anonymous donor, our active Matthew 25 initiatives are answering the question: "Lord, when did we see you?" Some of you have even multiplied that anonymous donation through match challenges in your congregations and at the Presbytery level. The breadth of your action is astonishing, covering the gamut of our Matthew 25 topics: accessible medical care, affordable housing, criminal justice reform, fair employment, and food security. For each, we seek to be mindful of the intersections of race and poverty that pose stumbling blocks for these essential services.

Seven of our congregations have taken the additional step of affirming the [Matthew 25 commitment](#) at the congregational level, too. We give thanks to God for the ministry promise of Southminster, Tippecanoe, Forest Park, Heritage, Living Hope, Covenant, and Calvary (a note that Calvary was incorrectly omitted from the article as one of the congregations central to the Food for the Journey ministry). Others are exploring what it would mean to make a similar commitment. We are grateful for the careful discernment that underlies your decision.

In all of this, we can see the generosity of our donor and the faithful response of our churches. What we might not see, however, is the ripple effect of what follows. We might never see how the clients at the Waukesha Food Panty or the patients at the Bread of Healing Clinic pay forward the help they received. We might never learn how Project 16:49, Milwaukee Street Angels, or Pathfinders were able to broaden the scope of their services at just the right time, nor how their clients broke through the cycle of poverty. We might never know what students at Maple Tree School were able to thrive after receiving a gift of school supplies and move on to solve community problems as adults.

I regularly receive calls as your Presbytery Executive from other Presbyterians across the country, asking about Matthew 25 projects we're doing. They want to mirror what we've done on medical debt or cash bail or to explore ideas for initiatives. With this latest article, our denominational colleagues might be inspired to take action in ways we will never hear.

Like our generous donor, we might remain anonymous to most of the recipients of our gifts and actions. Our ideas might stick with congregations in other presbyteries, but they'll forget our names. None of that diminishes the impact of what we're doing. It's never been about us. So, for the moment, bask in the spotlight. Let light continue to shine on the good work you're doing in the hope that it will inspire others to do the same, not for our glory, but God's.