

January/February 2021

“Do not be afraid to build castles in the sky. That is where they belong. But once the dreams are in place, Your job is to build the foundation under them.” - Henry David Thoreau

As we turn to a new year, we are hopeful. We are looking forward and are excited for all that is to come in this year. The Covid pandemic has changed life in so many ways for so many people. For us, it has kept us grounded here in Minneapolis since March of last year. And although we are looking forward to the end of this pandemic right along with the next person, this season of being grounded has allowed us to evaluate what we have been doing with the Jesus Kitchen, how to expand, and begin to dream about what the future may hold.

It is sad for us to share, after a lot of praying and a lot of going back and forth...and back and forth again, a few times over...we have decided that unfortunately, we will not make it to the Ocala Rainbow Gathering this year. It was a decision that we didn't come to lightly. But after so much thought and prayer we felt that because Covid is still rampant and now that there are new variants we do not feel it is the wisest decision for us to be going. We believe and strive to do ministry as a family and feel that it is just not the safest and best choice for our family right now.

However, as sad as we are about not going to the Ocala Rainbow Gathering another factor that went into our decision relates back to the dreaming that we have been doing over the last year. And here it is...drum roll please...our big dream: **We are turning the Jesus Kitchen into its own non-profit.**

THE DREAM

For over 20 years, we have been traveling throughout the United States working with the Jesus Kitchen to bring radical hospitality to the traveling counter-culture here in America. For years, we have had it in our hearts to have a safe place of welcome where we can offer hospitality, rest, and discipleship to those who are on their own spiritual journeys in a more permanent location.

We are beginning to put feet to our dream. Our first step in making this dream a reality has been to work at creating our new non-profit called Places of Welcome. Places of Welcome will be an overarching non-profit where, underneath it, we can have different avenues of welcoming hospitality. We will include what we are already doing with the Jesus Kitchen and create new avenues of hospitality. One new avenue we are hoping to create is purchasing a piece of property where we can house a small community of fellow Jesus lovers as well as host those who come our way. We also hope to have a small healing garden where we can work and grow together as well as offering times for meditation, prayer walks, and retreats. We hope that through intentional community, healing gardens, and openness to welcome people from all walks of life, we can create a place of welcome that is tailored to those who live on the margins.

So, what are we doing currently?

The past couple of months have been very busy for us. We are still currently working with Source ministries until we can achieve our own non-profit status. Ben has been busy working at the food shelf that Source runs twice a week as well as tackling all the legal paperwork that goes into starting a non-profit. He has also been working on building a board of directors, having meetings with people to gain wisdom and direction, and learning which steps to take next in the process. Teresa continues to manage homeschooling with the kids and has started building a website for Places of Welcome.

Since we will not be making it to the Ocala Rainbow Gathering this year we are planning to have an online release party for our new website. We will send out more details as we get closer to the release date (hopefully by the end of February/beginning of March).

We are very excited about this new expansion of our ministry. We love what we do with the Jesus Kitchen and look forward to continuing to serve the traveling culture throughout the United States. We are also looking forward to this new opportunity to grow and expand by adding additional avenues to do radical hospitality by creating places of welcome for those who live on the margins.

We are incredibly blessed by you, our partners, by your prayers and support. This new journey into the non-profit world is exciting but also difficult and can be stressful! We invite you to continue to journey with us as we work to build the foundations of this dream and make it a reality.

“...The next time you put on a dinner, don’t just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favor. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks....” Luke 14:12-13 MSG

Prayer requests:

Please pray for us:

- That we can continue to network and meet the right people in this journey.
- That we have wisdom as we create our board of directors and that it will continue to be filled with amazing people.
- For wisdom and encouragement as we walk into what sometimes feels like more than we are capable of.
- For the legal side of things as we work to finish all the paperwork and finalize the non-profit 501c3 status.

We would love to chat with you, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at:

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Many blessings,
Ben, Teresa, Oliver, and Eva

