

March 2014



Dear friends of the Matthew 25 House:

This is my winter update covering the comings, goings and doings in the house and the lives of the men who call 330 South 2nd Street "home."

The house currently has three residents, and we have a number of applications from men desiring to be placed in the Matthew 25 House upon parole. I anticipate that within the next couple of weeks we could have a full house once again. It is exciting to see men applying who have a sense that God is calling them to be part of the Matthew 25 House.

Head Resident

Jonathan has departed the Matthew 25 House after being part of it since July 14, 2011. On February 9, 2014 more than thirty friends gathered to celebrate Jonathan's accomplishments and his next stage of life. He is currently working for Smith Machinery in Ames, IA and living in Boone, Iowa. During the time Jonathan lead the house he guided it to the next level. Because of his heart for Jesus Christ and for men he helped create an atmosphere where men were able to grow in their faith and change their lives. Jonathan would tell you that his most disappointing times in the Matthew 25 House were when other residents would decide to turn their back on the guiding principles that he knew would create success. When this happened it was only a short time before they fell back into the pit of their past and were ushered out of the House or back to prison. His most rewarding times were assisting men to make life changes and witnessing his own personal growth. Jonathan is missed, but it is amazing to see the work that the Lord Jesus Christ has done in his life.



(Jonathan)

Jonathan's Celebration Party

Jonathan's departure has given Eric Rojas the opportunity to step into the head resident role. Eric also has a heart for men and a deep desire to see them succeed in their new life. He also has made, and is still making, significant changes in his own life and relationship with Jesus Christ. We look forward to the direction that Eric will bring to the Matthew 25 House.

Current Residents

Brady – Brady is working diligently on living a new life that will allow him to realize both his short-term and long-term life goals. He is currently working for Integrity Construction and enjoys going to work each day. He has found success in his job and a group of co-workers who are supportive and encouraging. Brady is very thankful that his employer was willing to take a chance on him. Brady's passion for his children and family seem to grow with each passing day. His vision of someday being the father he knows that Christ wants him to be has been a strong motivating factor in his life. He has had the chance to spend a couple of weekends with his family and each time he sends me text messages with pictures of his young son with a big smile on his face. I have seen significant changes in Brady since coming to the Matthew 25 House. He looks at the world differently and he accepts others' observations of his actions in a humble manner.

Ryan – Ryan is our newest member of the house and I am enjoying time spent with him. He has found work as a roofer and now, with the warmer weather, has been able to start working. Ryan is a young man in his early twenties but has a sincere desire to change his life. He has demonstrated a humble heart and a willingness to listen to others and be willing to see their point of view. These are nice traits to see in a young man. I know these traits do not always come easy to him but through his determination to change and his growing relationship with Jesus Christ Ryan is moving forward with his plan to change his life and put his past behaviors behind him.

Past Residents

As happens on occasion we have had a couple of residents make life decisions that required them to move out of the Matthew 25 House since my fall report. Some who have left under these conditions are doing fine and others are not doing well. I am always amazed and saddened at how quickly a person can self-destruct when he places himself in compromising situations.

Events

The men of the Matthew 25 House had the privilege of attending Quest 2014 in late February. This is the third year for the House to take a group to Quest, and each year our band of brothers has grown. This year we had ten in our band, a number of whom attended Quest when they were in the Matthew 25 House. The impact was so great they desired to continue to attend. I do not have the time or space to fully describe the amazing things that happened in the lives of our band of men during Quest and in the days and weeks that have followed. Our bond as friends and Christian brothers has grown greatly because of Quest 2014. I have never felt so burdened, yet so alive, as I have since the Quest retreat as I explore deeper relationships with the men of the Matthew 25 House and the band of brothers. Every year the men from the House find that Quest is the most significant spiritual event in their lives. If you have an interest in learning more about Quest I have included a link: <http://www.lowaquest.com/>

THE BAND OF BROTHERS / QUEST 2014



Steve Larson, a board member of the Matthew 25 House, is currently leading a Bible study on Monday evenings at the Matthew 25 House. We are studying the book of Ephesians. It has been a great study and the men have shown great insight as they ponder the words of God together.

I want to **welcome our newest Matthew 25 House Board Member Don Baustian** aboard. We know he will be a valuable asset to the leadership of the Matthew 25 House. Thanks for your willingness to serve!

In my last update I asked if anyone knew of a set of free weights that the Matthew 25 House could obtain. I want to thank all of you for your generous responses. We now have a nice set of free weights that the men are enjoying and I watch them use.

I hope this short update provides you some insight into the Matthew 25 House and the men currently living there. If you have any questions about the house or the application process, please contact me. If you desire to communicate with any of the residents you may send them a letter at the address below, or I would be glad to provide their email address.

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