



Maiorano Minutes

2nd Quarter 2016



What's Going On in 2016?

We have heard the statement from many people that things seem strange, unusual, difficult, stressful, and spiritually challenging. People are stressed, rushed, pushed beyond their limits, feeling pressured and oppressed. Even as I listen to Christian music, there seems to be a theme in song after song: just breathe, take time to sit at Jesus' feet, slow down, get out of the rat race. It makes me wonder if there is a stirring in the world that people are feeling - Christian and non-Christian alike. There seems to be an uneasiness or restlessness in all areas of life. When asked what they think is responsible, the comment from everyone is they just don't know. God has many ways to get peoples' attention. He uses weather, events, and "strange" occurrences in life. Our question should be, "What is He trying to say?" and "Are we listening and paying attention?"

Our life is no different. There have been many strange events in the last six months. Unique situations with the students, strange events in the family, and many challenges in our lives. We want to be found faithful in taking the time to listen to God's voice and following His leading.

Events of 2016

Let's start with the classroom events. We have just completed our sixteenth year of educating students as part of the ministry. We technically had no graduates; however, we did say goodbye (somewhat) to Joshua and Sam in January. At 15, they have completed their first semester of college and have done very well. What a joy it has been to watch these two mature into some pretty incredible young men. Naomi hopes to join them at the Middle College High School in August. Our prayer is that Sam and Joshua will have an opportunity to keep an eye on Naomi as she tries to adjust to this new environment. There are five others that hope to join them for the 2017-2018 school year. This will drastically change the dynamics of the classroom!

Sam and Joshua finished a week before us, so they came to join us for the last week in the classroom. Sam taught the students some writing skills. Both boys helped with our forensics unit the last week of

class which was a big help to me. They also had a chance to talk, in depth, with their fellow students explaining their difficulties, adjustments, and the high points and low points of college life. They talked about the importance of the family relationships that our classroom builds and how those relationships upheld them and allowed them to help each other. They shared how these relationships, being built right now, translate into the real world experience. On May 19th, we had a program for the parents, and again the boys had the opportunity to tell the parents what their children will have to prepare for if this is the road they want to travel.

Part of my adjustment in all of this was realizing how much I depended on these two boys. Many times people ask me how I can handle teaching children from 2nd or 3rd grade to 12th. The answer is by using my older more advanced students to help the younger students. Both Joshua and Sam were leaders in the classroom. They were my go to men whenever something needed to be done. They were my discussion starters. They were always there to help explain how to do a project to another student, and they did a great job. Sam was my right hand man when it came to grading, critiquing writing assignments, and pulling together plans in class and then executing them. Now I need to look to new leaders and learn how to encourage those leadership abilities in younger students. As I said, classroom dynamics are changing, and I need to change with them and that isn't always easy.

As of next year, we are looking at all students returning but Naomi who will find out on June 21 if she will be headed to Middle College. We have another student whose family life is in a bit of turmoil right now. They are not sure where they will be living or what will happen in the fall. That makes 11 or 12 returning students, and one of the student's sister is looking at coming in the fall. With 12 or 13 in the classroom we are praying about how many others we may be willing to take. As we make these decisions, we need to be looking into the future (as much as that is possible). If I continue to loose those students who have been my helpers, will I have new ones to take their places or do I need to be cautious as to who we take. Fortunately God has always brought just the right amount.

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Note change
of address

Trip to PA/DC

In the 2016-2017 year, we will be studying American History. Normally this meant bringing a group of students to the East coast in the Spring to visit some of those historical places. As Jim and I discussed this trip, we discussed the crowds in Washington DC around cherry bloom festival. We got on the internet and started doing some research. When in spring is a good time to come to avoid crowds? The answer was - there is none. The absolute best time to come in is in mid-September to November. So we did some quick figuring and decided that we would come over our October break. We are planning to come to the East from October 15-26.

Our next question was who would be eligible for the trip. We looked at the classroom and said that it would be open to high school age students. That left nine eligible students. Out of those nine there were seven interested in going. Then there were those who were unsure of where they stood for earning the money and the ability to complete all that was required in order to come. There were some that didn't keep up with the work that needed be done in and out of the classroom. We are now left with three students (Trey, Storme, and Noelle) who will be coming on this trip along with Jim and I.

Our plans at this time are to visit Philadelphia, Washington's Crossing, Valley Forge, Gettysburg, Ft. McHenry in Baltimore and then spend three full days in Washington. We will visit the Holocaust museum, the monuments, the Smithsonians, and hopefully taking a tour of the capitol building. We are waiting on confirmation for that. We are also planning a trip to Hershey and Lancaster. You will hear more about our trip in our next newsletter when we have some more details.

Bible Classes

We continue our study in the book of Revelation. We will be finishing it over the summer. It has taken a year to get through the whole study. What a blessing it has been for all of us. We still have a large group with new faces coming all the time. There is excitement as we move into this last part of the study.

Our Sunday morning fellowship is beginning to grow. We have been working through the Bible in chronological order for several years. We have spent quite a bit of time over the last month or two on a study on the Sermon on the Mount, learning how we are to put feet to our faith.

Health Report

Jim and I are both continuing to work on our health. We are both feeling much better and our blood tests look better each year. We are making steady steps to regain our health. We continue to make changes in our life as part of this journey. We are still working on putting limits on the amount of work we do each day (which is hard for both of us). I have been able to work on adding exercise to my daily routine. We have been working on getting the proper amount of sleep each night (that is still the hard one). We are taking time for ourselves and each other. The area that we are trying to focus on right now is the time we spend at our Savior's feet. As we work on reconfiguring our lives, we are taking a long look at what is truly important and what we need to let go of.

God's Answers to Prayer

1. Sam and Joshua made it through their first semester of college.
2. I had the opportunity to fly down to FL and spend a week with my mom and sister. It was a great time to relax in the pool and have time to visit. Jim held down the home front.
3. The end of the 2015-2016. It was a very different year and full of challenges. Through it all, we feel like we have grown and learned how to adjust. God has entrusted these students to our care for a given time, and we want to be sure we are doing the best we can to ground them in God's truths.
4. Regaining our health and feeling better.

Please Pray For the Following . . .

1. Joshua and Sam are taking summer courses right now. Pray for them to stay focused and do what needs to be done for these two courses.
2. Our students over the summer. There are several that want to continue to work on their schooling, so we are making ourselves available for those who want to come in.
3. Preparations as we plan our trip to the East coast in October.
4. We continue to evaluate our lives and the ministry and how to best accomplish what God wants us to do for the children and adults alike. There are so many needs in so many areas. We were once told that a need doesn't constitute a call. Sometimes it is hard to say no when you see so many people who need help. We have had to prayerfully evaluate who God wants us to help and in what capacity.