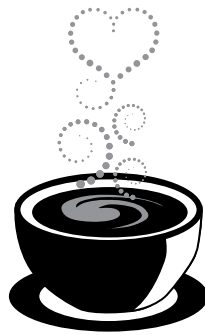


Mission:

To provide a nutritious daily meal to the hungry of the area, as well as to provide a safe and sheltered place for social gathering.



Learn about The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen.
Read all the newsletters.
Donate any time.
www.soup-kitchen.org



The Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen



A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION • 1-269-925-8204 • WINTER 2013 EDITION



Evelyn

We are a family of two. We don't have every dollar to go around, and we always run short of stamps. Food is so high now.

A lot of the time we wouldn't have a meal to eat—we depend on the Soup Kitchen. We are blessed to get a hot meal at the Soup Kitchen every day.

We love it. It's a kind place. People here will take time to help you out in any way they can. They are so wonderful. That is my story.

Thomas

The Soup Kitchen saved my life. My sugar went so low one day that I passed out in the back seat of the car. The Soup Kitchen people called the ambulance for me. When I woke up in the hospital, they told me I wouldn't have lasted another five minutes if the Soup Kitchen people hadn't helped me.



Vic

The Soup Kitchen really helped me out a lot. I was living on the railroad tracks near Riverside when I first came here. I didn't have any food, food stamps or money. I had trouble getting my checks, so I was really hurting. I lost my ID. Barbara helped me get my birth certificate and ID. You guys fed me and helped me. You kept me alive. That's why I asked for your address. I am going to be leaving soon, and I want to send you a card to tell you I'm OK and to see how you are doing.



Clarence

The Soup Kitchen is just like home to me—I come most days. I've been here in Benton Harbor for over 20 years. I came up here from down south. I've never been able to have a real job, just mowed some lawns and like that.

I'm in church now. Last Friday I caught the spirit of the Holy Ghost, and it felt so good. I was sliding backward, but I'm doin' good now. The Soup Kitchen has been wonderful to me.





Homeless?

Below is a condensed version of the US public law defining a homeless person.

- People (an individual or family) who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- A person sleeping in a place not designed for humans, including a camp ground, airport, bus station, or car.
- People living in a shelter.
- A person who soon will lose his place of residence.
- People who have experienced a long term period without living independently in permanent housing and are expected to remain in this position.
- People who live in dangerous situations, such as victims of domestic violence.

The question is, can a person have a home and still be homeless? We can all agree that Vic, living next to the railroad tracks was homeless. Tom, living in his car, is homeless. Lee lives in a relative's dirty, dank basement. Legally he is homeless. People living in a home that lacks essential services such as heat, water, electricity or gas service are also homeless. That property would not be approved for rental, and therefore is classified as unfit for human habitation. So the answer is yes, a person may live in a house and still be homeless.

I am often asked how many of our patrons are homeless. The number living outside or under bridges is fairly small. When you consider all the conditions listed above, the number soars.

What is the personal cost of homelessness? Often it is life. One of our long-time patrons and her boyfriend were found dead a few weeks ago in their home. They were using a heater indoors, instead of a furnace, and were killed by carbon monoxide poisoning. There is never a winter where one or more of our patrons does not freeze to death.

But living that way? No heat is miserable. No water means no sanitation. Quite often there is no way to cook food. Soup Kitchen patrons often receive commodity foods from the USDA. Some of them donate this food to the Soup Kitchen because they have no way to cook it.

Many patrons tell us that their Soup Kitchen meal is the only meal they will get that day. We are here every day of the year to help them because of you, our generous donors, volunteers, and church, business and club groups who support this ministry. While you are at home celebrating the holidays with your family and friends, you can be comforted knowing that the Soup Kitchen will be open. Those who are not so lucky will join their friends for a warm holiday meal here, with their friends, at the Soup Kitchen.

Merry Stover
The Soup Kitchen Inc.

Mark your calendar now for the 2014 Soup Kitchen Events!

January 26th
Texas Hold 'em Tournament

April 6th
Soup Bowl at Kelley's Bowl

April 27th
Tabor Hill Dinner

June 16th
Golf Outing at Harbor Shores

Sponsoring Organizations/Volunteers

Most groups donate the food, cook, serve, and help with light clean-up afterward each meal. The groups below either serve on a regular schedule or have served multiple times during the year.

All Nations SDA Church
Andrews Korean SDA Church
Baroda Church of God
Berrien Springs Middle School Special Ed Class
Berrien Springs Spanish SDA Church
Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
Christian Reformed Church of St Joseph
Church of the Mediator
Coloma United Methodist Church
East Main Church of Christ
Fairplain Presbyterian Church
First Church of God - St Joseph
First Congregational Church - St Joseph
First Presbyterian Church - Benton Harbor
First United Methodist Church - St Joseph
Harbor Country Progress
Hartford United Methodist
Highland Avenue SDA Church
Honor Credit Union
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Hartford
Martin's Supermarkets
Maytag Commercial Laundry Group
Muslims of Benton Harbor
Napier Parkview Baptist Church
New Paradise Baptist Church
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Bridgman
Peace Lutheran Church
Pioneer Memorial Church
Saron Lutheran Church
Scottdale United Methodist
Second Baptist Church
Sister Lakes Community Church
Southwest Michigan Newcomer's Club
St Augustine of Canterbury Church
St Bernard's Catholic Church

St John's Catholic Church
St Joseph Catholic Church, Saint Joseph, MI
St Joseph Catholic Church Youth Ministries
St. Joseph High School Key Club
St Paul's Episcopal Church
St Peter's United Church of Christ
Stevensville United Methodist Church
Trinity Lutheran Church – St Joseph
Trinity Lutheran Church - Berrien Springs
Union Memorial A.M.E. Church
Washington Avenue Church of God
Whirlpool African American Network
Whirlpool Young Professionals
Whirlpool Women's Network
Woodland Shores Baptist Church
Word of Truth Ministry
Zion Evangelical UCC of Saint Joseph
Zion United Church of Christ - Baroda

Other Regular Volunteers:

David & Sheryl Vander Ploeg – bread pickup
John Styf – bread pickup
Mike Whittaker – bread pickup

Dozens of community service volunteers do organizing and cleaning jobs throughout the year.

Christmas Day – the Lulenski Family & Friends
Thanksgiving Day – Nancy and Pete Racine

Regular Donors:

Bob Evans Restaurant
Falak Farms
Golden Brown Bakery
Martin's Supermarkets
Twin City Chicks

*** Please accept our apologies if we have inadvertently missed your group.

YOU – You, the members of our community, donated over 8,000 hours of your time to The Soup Kitchen last year. Hundreds of people and groups have donated food every week. We thank you for your caring and compassion. We cannot provide this vital service without you.





Meet our Staff Members

Barbara Blue

I came here first as a volunteer, then I came back here when I was working with Gateway during my rehabilitation from a serious injury.

Now the Soup Kitchen gives me a chance to work, and I appreciate it. I've come a long way since my accident, and it makes me feel good to be able to work again.



Larry Easton

I am a self-taught cook and worked in and managed many restaurants over the years. I've been a truck driver and a security guard. I like to volunteer

at a lot of different non-profit organizations because I like giving back to our community. I volunteered for the 74th Senior PGA, and I'm going to do it again for the 75th. One of my volunteer spots has been animal shelters, and I adopted two cats from our local shelter. I have donated clothing to the Men's Shelter and Soup Kitchen patrons. I like seeing the guys wearing those things and knowing that the donations are being used.

I enjoy the Soup Kitchen because of the diverse people who come in to eat and to volunteer. It feels good to feed people every day. It makes me realize how lucky I am.



BOARD MEMBERS:

Sue Bailey	Chris Heugel
Jill Beach	Norm McPherson
Rob Burgess	Andy Takacs
KC Gast	Paula Vogie
Debbie Gillespie	

SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS

We would be honored to present the Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call today to schedule a time and date.

SOUP KITCHEN DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

The Soup Kitchen is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Our mission is to feed a nutritious meal to the hungry. Donations to the Soup Kitchen are deductible to the full extent of the federal law. Please consult your tax advisor for further information on the tax benefits of your generous donation.

FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN

Churches are automatically eligible to purchase food at 17 cents (or less) per pound, including food in #10 cans, from Feeding America West Michigan, 1488 E. Empire Ave., Benton Harbor. Unlike other organizations, churches are not required to be a 501 (c)(3). Please think about shopping there first.

For more information, contact Feeding America Manager, Rich Glista at 269-926-2646.

MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAM

The Whirlpool Corporation has one matching gift program to help maximize employees charitable donations.

The Matching Gifts Program matches personal contributions over \$50 with dollars from the Whirlpool Foundation. Full-time, salaried and hourly U.S. Whirlpool employees and retirees are eligible.

Soup Kitchen Wish List

- Canned fruit
- Ground coffee
- Diced tomatoes
- Tomato sauce
- Spaghetti sauce
- Coffee creamer
- Barbeque sauce