

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.



The Benton Harbor
Soup Kitchen

**Learn about the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen.
Read all the newsletters.
Donate any time.
www.soupk.org**

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION • 269-925-8204 • Winter 2019 EDITION



Where are they now?



Don

Mike



Robert

Matt

Many of you ask about the guests we have featured in the newsletter. Here are some updates on the last four you met.

Mike is now working full-time in Niles and is staying with his daughter. Matt is now out of the shelter and has his own apartment. Don has also moved out of Benton Harbor into his own place in Berrien Springs. Don has made some big strides in consolidating and reducing the amounts of medications that he takes, and he says he is feeling much better.

Through a fellow church member, Robert found work as a facilities manager for the Benton Harbor Housing commission. He helped two of the housing complexes over a several-month period, including repairing the frozen-pipe damage at Harbor Towers.

Robert's background includes managing and supervising construction of several multi-million dollar hospitals in California, one of which was Opera Winfrey's Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara. By the time you read this, Robert will have started his new job as Facilities Supervisor for Lakeland Spectrum Hospital.

These men are among the many guests who return to say hello and let us know how they are doing.

Here are a few past comments by these guests: "The Soup Kitchen offers good food and the opportunity of help. I like to keep coming back here; it is a calm refuge for me. The Soup Kitchen always makes me feel welcome. It is like a vacation – a restful meeting place for people. I look forward to coming here.

2020 Soup Kitchen EVENTS — Mark Your Calendar Now!

EUCHRE Tournament, The Livery Brewery, Sunday, January 26, 2020

21st Annual SOUP BOWL, Kelley's Bowl, Sunday, March 29, 2020

Past players for Euchre and Bowling will be contacted via email.

Benefit Dinner, Bistro on the Boulevard, Sunday, April 26, 2020

Past diners and donors will receive invitations in the mail in early March.

Golf Classic, The Harbor Shores Golf Club, June 15, 2020

Look for more event information on our website and on Facebook. If you wish to be added to the contact list for any event, please call the office (925-8204) or email m@soupk.org.

New Board Member Yolanda Thrash

Hello, my name is Yolanda Thrash. I'm a single mom of two young men. I have worked for 18 years at Michigan State University Extension as a Community Nutrition Instructor. I serve a diverse population with dignity while helping them reach their full potential. I currently serve as a leader for the hospitality center team at my church.

My first experience with The Soup Kitchen was through United Way of Southwest Michigan and Public Policy Associates as a facilitator on the Community Food Club Initiative Plate Place. I started volunteering at the Soup Kitchen shortly after that, and am now a Board Member. Serving on the board is a great honor and privilege.

I want to inspire and motivate others through my story. I was a teenage mom and I worked myself off public assistance. I was struggling to pay my bills, and even became homeless. That experience humbled me, and I became resourceful, persistent, and determined to make a better life for me and family.

I worked a full time job while attending college. I struggled in school and questioned whether college was for me. It took hard work, patience, and determination, but I was rewarded. I faced the challenges and overcame obstacles to reach my goals. I'm living proof that your current situation doesn't determine your future.

I wanted to be a part of something greater, and The Soup Kitchen is the perfect place for me to make a difference. I enjoy serving, helping and talking with the people we serve at the soup kitchen.



Volunteer Beth Wassilak

Beth's husband Fred started volunteering at the Soup Kitchen 8 years ago after he retired. Beth joined him in 2015. Together they have volunteered 142 times, which is over 600 hours of service.

Beth said: "Serving our community is rewarding to us and our friends from church. We are pleased to share what we are blessed to have. When I am at the front serving window, I am able to share a smile and a welcome. Everybody needs that."

"Working at the Soup Kitchen has been a rewarding experience and a good learning experience. Working together has made us a better team. I have learned a lot about preparing large quantities of food, which is different from home cooking. I have also learned a lot about food safety at The Soup Kitchen.."

The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen is made possible by the contributions of our sponsoring Organizations and Volunteers.

Our Soup Kitchen is staffed by volunteer groups of all types.
Most groups donate the food for their day at the Soup Kitchen.
Volunteers contribute over \$450,00 worth of work every year.

Without you, we would not exist.

Serving Groups:

- 1st Source Bank
- Anchor Church of God
- Andrews Korean SDA Church
- Beck Family & Friends
- Berrien Springs Middle School Classroom
- Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- Chef's Corner
- Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Christian Reformed Church of St Joseph
- Church of the Mediator
- Coloma United Methodist Church
- Fairplain Presbyterian Church
- Freedom Life Church
- First Congregational Church — St Joseph
- First Presbyterian Church — Benton Harbor
- First United Methodist Church — St Joseph
- Friends of Soup Kitchen
- Harbor Country Progress
- Hartford United Methodist
- Highland Avenue SDA Church
- Martin's Supermarket
- Michigan State Police
- Moms With A Mission
- Napier Parkview Baptist Church
- Peace Lutheran Church
- Pioneer Memorial Church
- Saron Lutheran Church
- Scottdale United Methodist Church
- Second Baptist Church
- Southwest Michigan Newcomers Club
- St Augustine of Canterbury Church
- St Bernard's Parish
- St John's Catholic Church
- St Joseph Catholic Church, Saint Joseph, MI
- St Paul's Episcopal Church
- Stevensville United Methodist Church
- Storyline Church
- Trinity Lutheran Church — St. Joseph

- Union Memorial A.M.E. Church
- Woodland Shores Baptist Church
- Zion Evangelical UCC of Saint Joseph
- Zion United Church of Christ -- Baroda

Other Volunteers:

- Dave and Sheryl Vander Ploeg — donations pickup
- Christmas Day — Wallace Family and Friends
- Thanksgiving Day -- Grande Mere Inn
- Dozens of community service volunteers

Regular Donors:

- Benton Harbor Bee Company
- Benton Harbor KFC
- Falak Farms
- The Flour Shop
- Golden Brown Bakery
- Hanson Logistics
- Hillside Farm
- Ma's Organic Garden
- Martin's Supermarkets
- Memories of India
- Panera Bread
- RB Miller Farms
- Silver Beach Pizza
- ThompTech Web & Computer Services
- Twin City Chicks
- Whirlpool Test Kitchen

Board of Directors

- Leslie Ashmore
- Sharon Austin
- Rob Burgess
- K.C. Gast, Vice President and Secretary
- Debbie Gillespie, President
- Julee Laurent
- Rob Romano
- Alex Schaeffer, Treasurer
- Andy Takacs
- Yolanda Thrash
- Chris Woodward

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.

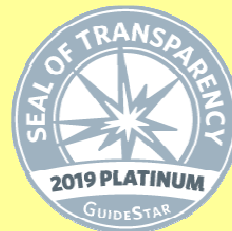
MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAMS

Please participate in matching gifts if you are eligible. The Whirlpool Corporation matching gift program matches personal contributions of \$50 and up. Because of your support, the Whirlpool Foundation is always one of our top five revenue sources. The Soup Kitchen office can send or email you the matching gifts form.

The Thrivent Choice® program: Eligible members invited to direct Choice Dollars can recommend where Thrivent should distribute some of its charitable funds among thousands of enrolled 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, including The Soup Kitchen Inc. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or ask your representative for more information.

The Soup Kitchen

has attained Guidestar's Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest level ranking.



Our community is blessed with people who see a problem and go into action to help those in need. The young volunteers pictured above are great examples of this spirit, and they, and others like them are our future. The students on the left are from the LMC honors program; those on the right are a team from the Miss Saint Joseph Pageant. Because of your support, our young guests (right) will have the opportunity to grow up healthy. We hope to see them join our High School and College students in the future.



Food is a language, a way of communicating love and honoring tradition. It is something to be enjoyed and savored—and shared.

SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS

We would be honored to present The Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call or email today to schedule.