

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 2020 EDITION



Photos: Top left and bottom left show guests waiting for lunch service to begin. Middle left is a Soup Kitchen group making hot dogs with sauerkraut and giardinera. Bottom right is the group from St. Augustine's Episcopal and 1st Presbyterian of Benton Harbor. Top right shows lunch delivery to one of our working guests—a Dial-A-Ride driver.

The Soup Kitchen is open every day of the year, as usual. Many other things have changed.

Our most common question now is, "When will you open the dining room?" Because of the size of our dining room, we can seat fifteen people socially-distanced. Average winter crowds are 90—120. If only have 90 guests on a day, we will need six seatings to serve everyone. Each seating works like this: trays are delivered to each seat, guests eat, then the entire dining room and both rest rooms must be emptied, cleaned, and sanitized. That process will take at least 40 minutes, and that is if we invest in some expensive sanitizing sprayers.

The bottom line: it will take until 4:30 to complete lunch service. The timing is unrealistic and the process would be very expensive. We would also need a second set of volunteers for every day because most would not be able to volunteer for an eight-hour shift.

So the answer is, we will reopen the dining room when it is safe for all of us to be in the kitchen and dining room together without fear of catching a deadly disease.

The next most frequent question is, "Can you serve hot food." Yes we can, and we have been doing so. Hot food is a little more involved and requires different containers and procedures, but we have already successfully chili, soups, hot dogs, sloppy joes, casseroles, pizza, and goulash in to-go lunch bags.

We are working out the processes for coffee service which is the guest's current top request. That will soon be a staple. With six months respite from coffee service, we have a huge supply of coffee on hand.



While you are settling down to your holiday dinner, rest assured that the Soup Kitchen will serve a hot Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner to all our guests.
Thank you for your support.

Soup Kitchen volunteers and donors seldom know any of our guests, but they understand one very important thing. It's not about them, it's about helping someone. The Soup Kitchen is here every day to offer a hand up. A kind word, and a good meal can be of immeasurable value to folks have little else. The story below could be about any one of you.

Love Stays

A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside. "Your son is here," she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times. He reached out his hand. The marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement. All through the night, the young marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile. He refused.

The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night. Along towards dawn, the old man died. The marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited. Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her.

"Who was that man?" he asked. The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered. "No, he wasn't," the marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life." "Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed."
The next time someone needs you ... just be there.
Stay.

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

The Soup Kitchen is staffed daily by volunteer groups of all types. Most groups donate the food for their day at the Soup Kitchen. Volunteers contribute over \$450,000 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 Unitarian Universalist Church
- Chef's Corner
- Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Christian Reformed Church of St Joseph
- Church of the Mediator
- Coloma United Methodist Church
- Fairplain Presbyterian Church
- First Congregational Church, St. Joseph
- First Presbyterian Church, Benton Harbor
- First United Methodist Church, St. Joseph
- Freedom Life
- 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
- Southeast Michigan Neeocomers Club
- St. Augustine of Canterbury Church
- St. Bernard's Parish
- St. John's Catholic Church
- St. Joseph Catholic Church, Saint Joseph
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Stevensville United Methodist Church
- Storyline Church
- Trinity Lutheran Church, Berrien Springs
- Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Joseph

- Woodland Shores Baptist Church
 - Woodland Shores Baptist Church
 - Zion Evangelical UCC of Saint Joseph
 - Zion United Church of Christ, Baroda

Other Volunteers:

- 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

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- K.C. Gast, President and Secretary
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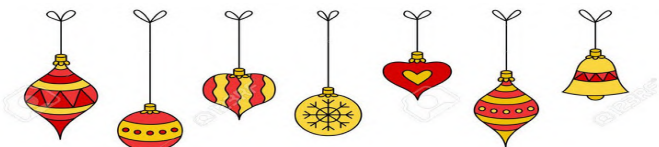
SOUP KITCHEN DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

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.

GIFTS of STOCK SHARES :

The Soup Kitchen can accept direct donation of stock shares. Please email m@soupk.org or call for more information.

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.



BISTRO DINNER ON TRACK FOR APRIL 25TH!

You are invited to attend our next Bistro Benefit Dinner on Sunday, April 25, 2021 at the Bistro on the Boulevard!

This benefit dinner event has been The Soup Kitchen's major fund-raiser since 2009. The donation is still \$80 per person. This exquisite experience includes hors d'oeuvres, entrée of choice, dessert, wine, beer and gratuity, with a cash bar for cocktails.

Please join us for this grand meal in the lovely ambiance of the Bistro in St. Joseph, featuring its scenic view of Lake Michigan. The generosity of the Bistro family is notable, as they donate all proceeds to The Soup Kitchen.

This event is held in remembrance of Barbara Whitwam who served the guests of The Soup Kitchen for many years.

All who have attended or donated to the dinner in the past will receive an invitation in the mail in March. Please contact the Soup Kitchen to be added to the list.

Other Soup Kitchen Events

We are assembling this newsletter in early November. At this time, our other usual events are on hold. If and when we can have an event safely, we will let you know on our web site and Facebook page. Please call or email the office if you have questions or need more information.

DO YOU KNOW

***That one in every seven people in Michigan struggles with hunger?
One in every five Michigan children goes hungry.***