

**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](http://www.soupk.org)

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION • 269-925-8204 • Spring 2021 EDITION



These photos, courtesy of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, show their group putting together sack lunches on February 26th. There is a lot to do when preparing everything "to go.!"



St. Paul's provided all of this meal except for the sweet rolls that were donated by Golden Brown Bakery.



# *Questions Come Our Way Every Day*

The Soup Kitchen perseveres, no matter the weather, diseases, or other impediments that come our way. We field questions every day; these are some of the most-asked questions.

- **Do people still come, even though it is a sack lunch?** Yes they do. A sack lunch is a great thing when you are hungry. It is rare when a guest does not say, "Thank you" or "God bless you" when given a lunch.

- **Do you have more people coming because of job losses?** We expected that, but it did not happen. Supplemental income, extended benefits and the food available in the pandemic response are working well for our guests.

- **Can I volunteer now?** Probably not. We are asking a small, close group of trusted volunteers to serve to avoid exposing staff to Covid-19.

- **When will you open the dining room?** No time soon. With the requirements for social distancing and sanitizing, we would be serving lunch until about 5pm.

- **How much does a lunch cost?** A hot lunch (our usual meal) on a tray costs about \$3 to make and serve. A sack lunch costs between \$4 and \$4.25.

- **When can my kids and I come to help?** Besides us restricting new volunteers, there are laws governing minors volunteering. Kids 12 to 17 may volunteer with restrictions and with a parent/adult accompanying them. State law prohibits anyone under 12 from being in a commercial kitchen.

- **When do you serve?** Our serving hours have not changed; we start serving at 11:30 and finish at 12:45. When it is very cold, we start whenever guests arrive.

- **Do you have any job openings?** Not at this time.

- **How can my church or business volunteer?** Please call the Executive Director at 925-8204 to discuss group service.

- **When can I bring a donation?** We take donations between 9am and 1pm daily, every day of the year.

- **Is it better to send you a check or donate online?** The best way to donate is whatever is easier for you. But if you mean what do online donations cost us, we pay the usual 2.5% for credit card processing for online donations. We don't pay fees on top of that. Online receipts are generated and emailed immediately which saves us time and money. The time savings means more than you know – The Soup Kitchen has one full-time administrative employee. If your gift is \$50 or below, it is more cost-efficient for us if you donate online.

- **Who really supports the Soup Kitchen?** 70% of Soup Kitchen revenue comes directly from you, individual donors, local organizations, and companies. Less than 2% comes from government funding. The rest comes from our four events – the Euchre, Bowling and Golf tournaments, and the Memorial Dinner at the Bistro. (Please see page 3 for information on this year's dinner benefit.)

- **How did the pandemic affect the daily attendance?**

Comparing the pandemic year to the prior year, our overall attendance has gone down by 2.7 guests per day.

- **Who wants to go back to hot meals?**

Everyone—guests and volunteers!

The Soup Kitchen served 452,796 meals from 2010—2020.

***You, our volunteers and donors, made this possible!***

## Annual Soup Kitchen Benefit Dinner Has a New Look

The annual Soup Kitchen Benefit Dinner on Sunday April 25, 2021 at the Bistro on the Boulevard will be a little different this year, as it addresses concerns about COVID-19.

Donors will have one of two choices: The special dine-in meal in the restaurant, or a take-out, curbside pick-up meal. The menu choices are the same for both. The donation remains at \$80 per person with all proceeds going to The Soup Kitchen. This special dining experience includes hors d'oeuvres, entree of choice, dessert, wine, beer and gratuity. There will be a cash bar for cocktails while dining in.

Invitations will be mailed by mid-March to past diners and donors. If you have not received an invitation, please call 269-925-8204 or email [m@soupk.org](mailto:m@soupk.org).

Dinner seating at the Bistro will be limited to 6 per table for 90 minutes, starting at 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Curbside pick-up times are between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

When you receive your invitation, please read it carefully, fill out the menu card, and *make sure that we have your Phone Number* so you can be called to set up your reservation time for either dining-in or curbside pick-up.



PLEASE JOIN US  
AT THIS UNIQUE

## *Benefit Dinner for The Soup Kitchen*

Hosted by

The Bistro on The Boulevard  
Sunday April 25, 2021.

**Chef Cheryl Bernacchi**, the executive chef of the Bistro on the Boulevard, is again the architect of our benefit dinner menu.

The descriptions of Chef Cheryl's cuisine quite often use the words both "innovative" and "excellent." As diners at the Bistro know, new dishes and the flexibility of ordering lunch dishes at dinner time or creating your own menu from small plates have only enhanced their enjoyment of eating at the Bistro on the Boulevard.

The Bistro has been offering take-home meals for their fans throughout the pandemic. Their considerable expertise ensures that your dining experience at home will rival that of dining in.



## Golf Outing Fundraiser on June 21

On Monday, June 21 at Harbor Shores we'll have our 9th annual fundraiser. The 18-hole shotgun scramble will begin promptly at 1:00.

Cost is still 140.00. Note that instead of gathering indoors after the event for food and beverages, we will be [safely] providing golfers with libation and food on the course this year as a part of their golf package.

Prizes for closest to the pin, longest drive (men,) longest drive (women,) and low net (team) will be awarded immediately at the end of the event.

If golfers would like to enjoy more libation after the event, the clubhouse will be open to all, with masking and social distancing required.

For more details or an e-mailed sign-up sheet, contact [kcgast@yahoo.com](mailto:kcgast@yahoo.com).

### **The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen: Feeding People Every Day of the Year**

The Soup Kitchen Inc. is staffed by volunteer groups of all types. Volunteers contribute over \$450,000 worth of labor every year.

***Without all of you, people would go hungry.***

**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](mailto:m@soupk.org) 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](http://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.



**Required Minimum IRA Distributions Back on Track for 2021**

Legislation passed in December reinstated Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). You can reduce your tax burden by transferring all or part of your RMD, up to \$100,000 per year, to a nonprofit like the Soup Kitchen. Why not make 2021 the year you stop paying taxes on distributions you don't need?

**Required Minimum Distributions must be taken by:**

Individuals age 72 or older per passage of the 2019 SECURE ACT, or

Individuals who turned 70½ before 2020

An easy way to make a gift from one of your major assets.

**Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from your IRA are:**

Not included in your taxable income – a tax free distribution.

Counted toward your RMD.

Available to individuals age 70½ or older at the time of your gift.

Required to go directly from your IRA to the Soup Kitchen (Tax ID 38-2288520.)

Not to exceed \$100,000 annually per taxpayer.

Restricted to outright gifts to charity where you do not receive anything of value in return.

Subject to an offset if you made a contribution to your IRA in the year you are taking the QCD.

**MAKE 2021 THE YEAR YOU STOP PAYING TAXES ON INCOME YOU DON'T NEED!**

*Food is Everybody!*

**SOUP KITCHEN PRESENTATIONS**

**We would be honored to present The Soup Kitchen story to your organization. Please call 925-8204 or email [m@soupk.org](mailto:m@soupk.org) today to schedule.**