

Who We Are

A lunch and drop-in program was first opened in downtown Kingston in St. George's Hall in 1985. The Ministry of Community and Social Services agreed to provide partial funding, but in 1996 the provincial government announced that the Lunch Program would no longer be funded. An alternate funding source had to be found. Outreach St. George's Kingston (OSGK) was established in 1997 as an independent, non-profit and secular organization to coordinate resources to provide food and clothing to the poor and to extend financial support to charitable agencies that serve children and/or abused women in the City of Kingston.

Lunch By George has become a social centre welcoming anybody, of any gender, age or background, who needs to find a place of welcome. The only ones who outline their welcome are those who bring in alcohol, drugs, or are violent. They are asked to leave, sometimes need a little help leaving, and will not be welcomed back for a while

Lunch By George opens each weekday at nine. When clients go upstairs, they find coffee and snacks waiting for them. They find moveable seats so that they can sit in groups or by themselves. Many choose to be alone since they are still recovering from spending a night sleeping a couple of feet away from a stranger in a shelter, and it is now time to get away from people. Somebody usually brings a newspaper, or cards. Some like to talk, some just to sit and think. If they are in need of clothing there is a clothes rack, and they can take anything they need from it. If they need personal items – soap, shampoo, razors – they will ask Coordinator Jenny Hurd or one of the volunteers who have a stock of such items. At ten,

soup is served, followed at eleven by a nutritious hot meal.

The food is prepared by Coordinator Jenny Hurd (who has worked in the program since 1990) and her group of thirty volunteers. Three or four people cook and clear up each day, and they come from all over Kingston. The group who prepared the 2013 Christmas Dinner is seen on the front cover. The volunteers feel a calling to work with and for the disadvantaged, the alienated, the marginalized, and those who are just hungry. We would like to say that we soon expect to go out of business, but our numbers are increasing, and we serve an average of 45 meals a day, and regularly serve 70 meals at the end of the month when money is running out. In 2013 we served 8,790 soups and 11,307 meals.

Because of the generosity of individuals, businesses and institutions over the years we are now in a reasonably healthy financial situation. We receive donations of money, clothing and food from many on a regular basis. Among our donors of food in 2013 were the Chit Chat Café, Christ Church Cataragui, Cora's, Empire Life, Food Not Bombs, Kingston Curling Club, The Keg, Liberal Club Food Drive, Loving Spoonful, Partners in Mission Food Bank, St. Andrew's Sharbot Lake, St. George's, St. Luke's, St. Peter's, St. Thomas, Shriners, Taoist Tai Chi, and Tara Food.

If you would like to help financially, you may do so through our web site www.osgk.org. If your employer has a United Way campaign, you can designate your contributions directly to us, or you can mail contributions to Lunch By George, Box 475, Kingston, ON, K7L 4W5

The Board of OSGK is George Boland, Theo Bruce, Gill Cleg-horn, Tanis Fairley (Secretary), David Gordon, Peter Gower (Co-Chair), Avelaigh Kyle (Co-Chair), Don Large (Treasurer), Bill Lennox, Jim McCartney and Linda Morgan.